HAND-SPINNING AND HAND-WEAVING
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AND
HAND-WEAVING
An Essay

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INTRODUCTION

It will be remembered that early last year Sjt. Reva Shanker Jagjivan Mehta, the Joint Treasurer of the National Congress, announced a prize of Rs. 1000 for the best essay on spinning. The judges appointed were Sjts. Ambalal Sarabhai, Shankerlal Banker, Maganlal Gandhi and myself. Sixty eight essays were received. After much deliberation, the judges decided to distribute the prize between Professor S. V. Puntambekar at present of the Benares Hindu University and Sjt. N. S. Varadachari. The essay that is now being presented to the public is the result of the joint effort of these two winners who were requested to amalgamate their essays and give a joint production. It is difficult to say how far the effort is an improvement upon the originals. But workers in the vast field of hand-spinning will find ample material in the following pages to strengthen their position and I should be much surprised if the sceptic does not find enough food for reflection.

The authors have applied themselves to an examination principally of the following propositions:

Are there millions in India who require a supplementary occupation, the majority be-
ing idle for want of it during at least 4 months in the year?

Is hand-spinning the only supplementary occupation and if it is, can it be easily taken up by the people?

Is it possible to sell Khaddar woven from hand-spun yarn among the people in the teeth of the competition offered by foreign and Indian mills?

The reader will find that the authors have endeavoured to give an affirmative answer to all these important questions. Is it not the duty of every one who wants to see an amelioration in the condition of India’s masses carefully to read what the authors have stated and to support the Khaddar movement if they accept their conclusions? Let them denounce it as a waste of effort, if they can dare controvert the facts adduced by the authors.

Sabarmati, November 16, 1926.

M. K. Gandhi
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. History of Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving in India before the Advent of the British</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Ruin of Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. The Possibilities of Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving and a Comparison with the Mill Industry of India</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Boycott of Foreign Cloth through the Spinning Wheel Discussed</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INDEX

Amalsad Mr. cited 175
Arrian on cotton 17
Aristobulus on cotton 14
Arthasastra, Spinning regulations 9 to 12
Barbosa quoted 19, 20
Baines, Dr. quoted 96
Bernier quoted 20
Bolts, "Considerations" 56
" corruption of E.I. Company 61, 62
" oppression of weavers 65 to 67
Boycott of Foreign Cloth Considered 218 to 234
Buchanan Dr. Survey of North and South India 70 to 79
Burke, Edmund quoted 121
Calvert Mr. quoted 137
Carder When Born 26
Caesar Frederic quoted 20
Cotton and Food Prices 119
Coubrough on Boycott 224, 225
Cultivation and Acreage in India 133 to 135
Dadabhai Naoroji 129
Defoe, Daniel quoted 50, 51
Duties on Khadi 1800 to 1812. 82 to 84
" on Indian goods 1857. 98
Edward Maclaghan, Sir, quoted 151
Edye (Census Officer U. P) quoted 135
Elphinstone, Montstuart quoted 21
Estimates of Indian Incomes 130, 131
Forbes Watson, Dr. quoted 35, 37
" Survey of 100 to 106
" Gangetika" for Muslins 13
Hand-Spinning and Hand-Spun Cloth
" in ancient times 1 to 12
" Buchanan's Survey 70 to 77
" Duties on in 18th century 82 to 86
" Exactions of Toll-house 90 to 92
" Forbes Watson's Survey 100 to 106
Hand-Spinning and Mutarfa tax on 93, 94
" oppression of weavers in 18th century 58 to 62
" as poor law 12
" Prohibited in England 51
" Trade in 1657–60 44
  " 1673–83 48
  " 18th century 52 to 54
  " 1800–1805 68, 69
  " 1813–1833 88, 89
  " 1870 in Bombay 109
  " 1870 in C.P. 106
  " 1870 in Bengal 110

Hand-Spinning and the Charkha
" Advantages of 154 to 155
" Boycott through the charkha 226 to 234
" Bounties for 185 to 189
" Decentralised condition. 133 to 135
" Extension of Agriculture 148
" Fine and medium counts 171 to 174
" Help rendered by 142, 143
" Mills compared with 196 to 216
" Objections to considered 127, 153, 155
" Possibilities of 158, 159
" Remunerative or not 152
" Spurious khadi considered 193
" Voluntary spinning 184

Handloom Industry
Decline in Madras 111 to 113
No of looms in India and Production on 160, 233

Herodotus on cotton 13
Houghton (Census Officer C.P.) 136
Kale, Prof. on Spinning 152
  " on Boycott 223, 224
Lecky on Indian trade with England 49
  " on Boycott 219
Linschoten quoted 20
Mann, Harold Dr. quoted 135
Macaulay quoted 49, 57
Manu, on Spinning 12
Marco-Polo quoted 19
Milburne’s Oriental Commerce, reference to 79
Moreland, Dr. on trade in 16th century 23, 24
Mill Industry in India

• Boycott and the Mills 226
• Comparison with hand-spinning 196 to 219
• Costs compared 207 to 216
• Future of 202, 203
• Progress of Mills 197

Muslins of Dacca 13, 28 to 42

• Cotton for 30
• Figures of output 34
• Names of 37
• Spinning apparatus for 32 to 34
• Dr. Taylor on 29, 31, 41
• Trade in 39, 40
• Superiority of 35, 36

Muslins of Chanderi and Arni 104, 105

Nearchus on cotton 14
Nicolo Conti quoted 20

Occupational Census of India 144 to 146
Orme on Spinning 69

Periplus on Indian cottons 17
Pliny on Muslins 18
Pyrard quoted 20, 24, 25, 28

Railways, effect on cloth trade 117, 118

• Cornwell quoted 118
• Chapman quoted 117

Rigveda, references to 4, 5, 6
Rivett Carac quoted 106, 107

Sayce, Dr. quoted 13
“Sindhu” for Muslin 13
Sukraniti, reference to 11

Tavernier quoted 21, 29
Thompson (Bengal Census Officer) 135, 136, 139

Trade Routes in Ancient India 15, 16

Dr. Ure on Musli 29
Vatsayana, reference to 8

Vedas, Spinning in 3, 5

• Dress in 7
• Weaving in 3, 5, 6

Wilson’s History quoted 85, 121