

THE
COLLECTED
WORKS
OF
MAHATMA
GANDHI

VOLUME FORTY-THREE



THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION

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fashionable khadi-wearers could not be regarded as advancing the sentiment for khadi. Anyone who uses khadi with knowledge will start denying himself all foreign goods which he can do without.

Let us now turn to boycott. It is madness to try and boycott everything. The idea is indefensible.

It is impossible to boycott only British goods or British cloth. This is because such goods or cloth can find their way into the country under the guise of other foreign goods or cloth. During the days of the Partition of Bengal, British cloth was being sold as swadeshi with the British markings on it removed. So when we think of boycotting British cloth alone, no purpose is served except that of giving an impetus to cloth made in Japan and other countries.

So far I have considered the matter only from the view-point of the boycott of foreign cloth.

But if we consider the situation after swaraj, if we consider the interests of the starving millions, we can only think of khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-4-1930

176. *MILL-OWNERS OF AHMEDABAD*

In saying that I am greatly pleased at the kindness shown by the mill-owners of Ahmedabad, I am not merely being polite: I am expressing the deepest feelings of my heart. Their presence on the eve of my departure from Sabarmati, their visits to me from time to time and finally their coming to Surat in a group out of their affection for me are a happy indication that this struggle is not directed against mill-owners or against capitalists.

However, I myself attribute a special significance to their presence and their blessings. I have been associated with them now for almost fifteen years. During this period, despite the fact that perhaps some of them regarded my conduct as being detrimental to their interests, they have accepted me as a friend and our relationship has been cordial even when there has been a dispute between us. I believe that their co-operation on this occasion is, to some extent, because of that relationship. If this conclusion is correct, I have the right to expect some more practical support from them in addition to their presence and their blessings.

They have taken a step forward by their decision that henceforth they will boycott foreign cloth and use only swadeshi cloth. This resolution, though commendable, has loopholes. Some may

regard khadi as swadeshi. Others may prefer mill-made cloth with a border that is made of foreign yarn. The dharma of swadeshi cannot be practised in this manner. In my opinion, the purest form of swadeshi to the extent it is practicable is khadi. If this is not possible, then swadeshi should mean cloth made in mills owned and controlled by Indians out of yarn spun in those mills. If even this cannot be done, not only is swadeshi meaningless but it is also harmful from the point of view of boycott.

If mill-owners encourage khadi and run their mills with an eye to attaining the object of swadeshi, I regard the boycott of foreign cloth as something very simple. If I find the time, I hope to consider this subject in detail in a separate article. Here I wish to show how and in what ways mill-owners can specially assist this movement. It is beyond argument that the relations between mill-owners and workers should be friendly. If, instead of opposing each other, they were to help each other they would encourage the cause of swaraj. In this regard the following points should be borne in mind:

(1) Mill-owners should carefully remove the everyday inconveniences the workers have to face.

(2) Since mostly I am not there and Sheth Mangaldas is old—even older than I am—there should be a permanent *panch* to solve problems as they arise.

(3) Mill-owners should consider the Majoor Mahajan a friendly body and have faith in it. They should make full use of its assistance and co-operate fully with it.

(4) With a view to improving their moral and social condition labourers should be given financial and other assistance whenever there is need for it. In other words, schools, hospitals, reading-rooms and such other institutions meant exclusively for them should be supported without anything being expected by way of return.

(5) Those labourers, clerks and others who wish to participate in civil disobedience or such other national work, should be given help and wherever it becomes necessary to relieve them, this should be done reserving their right to return. If it becomes necessary to support the families this should be done.

(6) In order to free labourers from the vice of drink, mill-owners should start canteens and provide recreation to suit their tastes. In order to induce abstention those who give up liquor should be recognized and encouraged in various ways.

(7) There should be no profit motive behind the production of cloth by mills. The purpose of such production should be boycott of foreign cloth.

(8) Mills should never produce cloth with the intention of

passing it off as khadi; they should not mark it as khadi or stamp it with the spinning-wheel; instead, they should produce such qualities of cloth as cannot be found in khadi at present. In other words, they should decide upon the quality of cloth to be produced in consultation with the Charkha Sangh.

(9) Mills should stock khadi, propagate it and give of their talent and experience for its production.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-4-1930

177. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

April 6, 1930

MY DEAR REGINALD,

I hope you had my previous letter¹.

The letter from Wilson² is quite good. God will keep you out of harm's way.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4534. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

178. LETTER TO LALA DUNICHAND

DANDI,
April 6, 1930

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

The news that Lala Shamlal of Rohtak has been arrested has prompted Lala Surajbhan to rush to the Punjab. I have approved of the suggestion. Please make what use you like of him. I do hope that you and Mrs. Dunichand will not fail to sacrifice your all in this final battle for freedom.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5588

¹ *Vide* p. 177.

² After the addressee had written an apology to Wilson, author of the critical comment in the *Indian Daily Mail*, the latter sent a "very friendly reply" which was forwarded to Gandhiji.