

ECONOMIC STUDIES IN COASTAL ANDHRA. I.

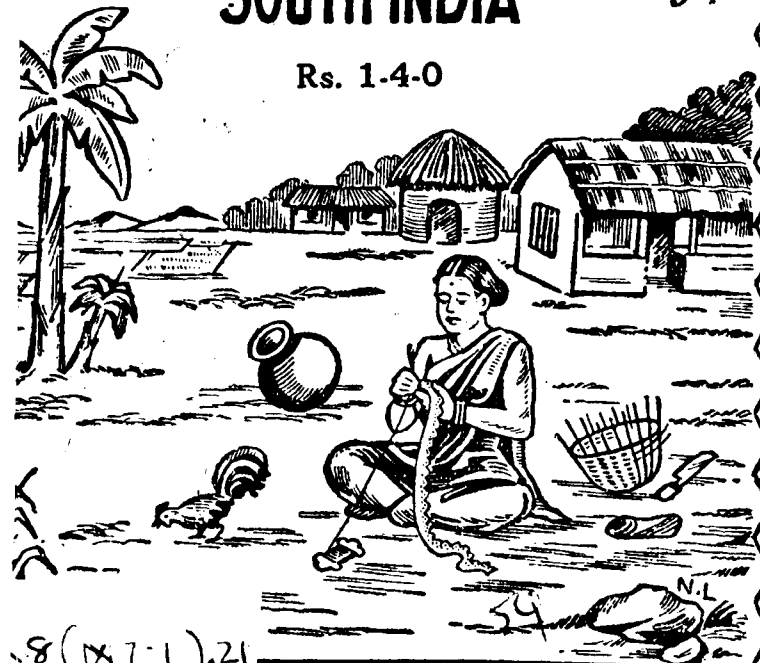
1



THE COTTON LACE INDUSTRY OF SOUTH INDIA

81

Rs. 1-4-0



8(17;1).21

77

N46

46885

BY
IAN TEKUMALLA, M.A., B.Ed.
'ART, MADRAS HAND LOOM WEAVERS'
CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LTD., MADRAS

THE COTTON LACE INDUSTRY OF SOUTH INDIA

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
THE COASTAL ANDHRA

BY
VISWANATHAN TEKUMALLA, M.A., B.Ed.

SENIOR ASSISTANT, MADRAS HAND LOOM WEAVERS'
PROVINCIAL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LTD., MADRAS

WITH A FOREWORD BY
W. R. S. SATHIANATHAN, I.C.S.,
REGISTRAR OF CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES, MADRAS

THE SAIDAPET WEAVERS' CO-OPERATIVE SALE SOCIETY LTD. No. 1049

SAIDAPET

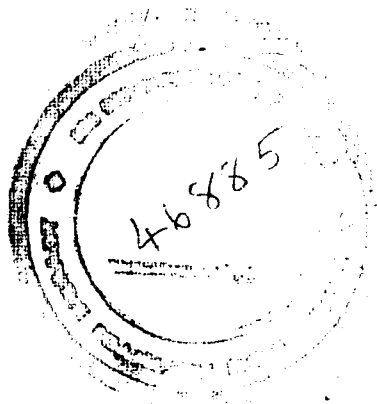
Manufacturers of :

HIGH QUALITY LUNGIES

DURABLE TEXTURE

COLOUR GUARANTEED

54
JANUARY, 1946



To
MY SECOND SON
THE CHILD OF ANGELIC GRACE

AUTHOR'S NOTE

For some years past, I have interested myself in the problem of promotion of cottage industries. With a view to study first hand the condition of the various cottage industries in the country, I toured extensively in some parts of the Coastal Andhra in 1941—43 and collected valuable data. It is my eager desire to make the results of my study available to the public, particularly at this time; for, thanks to this global war, industrialisation of the country has become the main interest of every Indian, and planning to achieve it on proper lines the primary concern of every *thinking* Indian. Hence this series—Economic Studies in Coastal Andhra—dealing with industries in general and cottage industries in particular.

This brochure entitled "The Cotton Lace Industry of South India" is the first of the series. It deals with the rise and growth of an exotic industry which by virtue of certain favourable conditions has been trying to become naturalised in this country. This industry is one of those cottage industries that have drawn but little public attention on account of the fact that till recently the market for them has been only external. Now that there has of late been a change of attitude in social circles at home, lace having been accorded a place of importance in personal wear and home furnishing, I hope that this brochure will help development of this artcraft on sound lines.

I am grateful to W. R. S. Sathianathan Esq., I.C.S., Registrar of Co-operative Societies, Madras for his kindness in writing a foreword to this book.

It is my earnest endeavour to publish early the other books of this series so that they may contribute their little mite to the proper development of our industries.

VISWANATHAN TEKUMALLA

FOREWORD

In spite of the fickleness of Dame Fashion, I am convinced that a slump in the lace industry, whenever it may occur, cannot last for long. The exquisite quality and the infinite variety of South Indian Lace Products can always ensure a good market.

Mr. Viswanathan Tekumalla has written a clear and graphic survey of this industry and his suggestions for stabilising it are sound.

I have had the pleasure of visiting the famous Mission Centre at Dummagudem and have also seen the fine lace work at Narsapur. The workers are mostly poor, illiterate women and it is indeed amazing how cleanly, delicately, and accurately they quickly turn out many varieties of fine lace. All honour to the deft fingers and inherent artistry of Indian Womanhood!

Extreme poverty of the workers and their low standard of living is the surest guarantee that this handicraft cannot be suppressed by the machine. At the same time the cupidity of many of the private *entrepreneurs* and middlemen has led to much sweated labour and the producer seldom is paid a fair wage. The salvation of the worker by ensuring her a living wage and co-ordinating and centralising the marketing of her wares, seems clearly to lie, apart of course from some really splendid Missionary endeavour, in co-operative organisation. A co-operative society has recently been started at Narsapur, chiefly for evacuees from Burma, and is already making rapid strides. It has engendered a new spirit of hope and independence in its worker-members. Lack of sufficient fine thread at reasonable

prices is the chief difficulty and bulk purchase of raw material by a central co-operative agency for distribution to societies is the only sound solution. If this is coupled with organised and centralised co-operative marketing, thereby eliminating the parasitic middleman, the future of this cottage industry will indeed be bright.

Mr. Tekumalla's *brochure* is useful and interesting, displaying painstaking research and constructive thought.

Madras,)
18th March '45.)

W. R. S. SATHIANATHAN.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
AUTHOR'S NOTE	... iii
FOREWORD	... iv
 I. RISE OF THE LACE INDUSTRY IN SOUTH INDIA	... 1
 II. DEVELOPMENT OF THE LACE INDUSTRY IN THE COASTAL ANDHRA	... 4
(1) The Great War and Before	... 4
(2) From the Great War to the Economic Depression	... 5
(3) The Economic Depression and After	... 18
(4) During the Present War	... 32
 III. PROSPECTS	... 32
 APPENDICES	... 42
A. Some Important Varieties of Lace Products	... 42
B. Comparative Prices of Some Varieties of Lace	... 43

The Cotton Lace Industry of South India with Special Reference to the Coastal Andhra¹

CHAPTER I

RISE OF THE COTTON LACE INDUSTRY IN SOUTH INDIA

Embroidery² which in its conception is a pastoral art³ has attained its highest developments in Northern and North-western India and consists of a rich variety of forms. In South India, there is ~~not~~ such a variety. The important form of embroidery commonly found in South India, through centuries past, is *chikan work*⁴ which in fact holds the place in India (particularly Northern India) that lace holds in Europe.⁵ But the

¹ The Coastal Andhra forms the north-east end of the Madras Province and comprises six civil districts, namely Vizagapatam, East Godavari, West Godavari, Kistna, Guntur and Nellore.

² Embroidery includes "all forms of needlework, but excludes ornamentation applied on the loom, such as is seen in the manufacture of *kincohs*, *jamdanic*, *tapestries*, *carpets*, and the like." *Imperial Gazetteer of India: The Indian Empire*: Vol. III, p. 218.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

⁴ *Chikan work* is a form of embroidery on some white washing material such as *calico*, *muslin*, *linen* or *silk*. There are various methods and stitches. In Madras silk is the material most generally employed. (*Ibid.*, p. 221.)

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

lace industry did not exist in India earlier than the first quarter of the last century when it was first introduced in South India from Great Britain.

Even in England, this industry was first introduced¹ from its original home—the continent of Europe—by some Flemish Protestant Exiles who, fleeing from the persecution of Philip II of Spain in the Low countries, came in 1563 to Kent. The Englishmen learned the craft from the exiles. During the centuries that followed, this industry underwent many vicissitudes due to changes in taste and fashion and yet remained a handicraft. But by the twenties of the last century, mechanisation of the lace industry began and seriously affected the handicraft. It was about this time that the pillow lace industry was introduced in South India by Christian Missionaries.² This act was obviously due to a desire to teach the native converts some useful craft. It might also be due to the hope that the low cost of production in India would enable the handicraft product to compete successfully with the factory product of England. This industry was not, however, very popular in our country for several decades.

By the last quarter of the 19th century the competition of factory lace became so serious in England as to cause a rapid reduction in the wages of handworkers. By about 1880 few of them found lace worth making. "The pillows were laid aside and mothers no longer

¹ For fuller information *Rural Industries of England and Wales*, 1927, Vol. III, Chapter on Lace-making, may be read with interest.

² Report on the Lace Industry in Madras, 1926, Miss D. Tweddle, p. 3.

taught their daughters the craft. Most of the lace schools had died about 1870."¹

It was about this time that Mrs. Cain introduced another type of lace work—the darned net work—in the Madras Presidency. She taught the craft to some women at Duminagudem, an Agency village in the East Godavari District. At first the workers found it very difficult to learn the craft.² For that reason, probably, the industry did not spread rapidly and no mention was made of it by E. B. Havell in his *Report on the Arts and Industries of the Northern Circars*, written about 1886. It, however, spread considerably after the famine of 1897³ for it afforded a useful occupation to the poor women of the place.

During the last quarter of the 19th century there was a very rapid fall in the number of lace workers in the British Isles. For instance, in Bedfordshire the number fell from 6,728 in 1861 to 4,792 in 1881 and then to 1,148 in 1901.⁴ It was during this industrial ebb in the British Isles that the Irish Crochet lace⁵ work was introduced in the present Kistna and West Godavari region of the Madras Presidency so as to give work to a few widows.⁶

¹ *Rural Industries of England and Wales*.

² Miss Tweddle's Report, p. 5.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁴ *Rural Industries of England and Wales*.

⁵ The Irish Crochet lace was produced in Ireland during the middle of the last century and having for a time remained a domestic industry confined to Ireland, began to spread later in France, Austria and Germany on the continent. (*Ibid.*)

⁶ Local Tradition, however, says that the industry was introduced by Miss Mac Rae of Scotland about sixty years ago.

Thus at the end of the last century there were in South India three distinct types of lace industry—pillow lace, darned net work, and Irish Crochet lace, not to mention a fourth called filet lace and practised here and there on a very small scale. As the handicraft was dying in Europe, it was growing in India; and during the first decade of this century, it became “a popular industry in South India.”¹ An attempt will be made here to trace the development of the industry in the Coastal Andhra.

CHAPTER II

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LACE INDUSTRY IN THE COASTAL ANDHRA

I. The Great War and Before

Before the Great War, the three important lace centres (for the matter of that even now the most important ones) in the Coastal Andhra were Narsapur and Palakole and Dummagudem—the first two of Irish Crochet work and the third of darned net work. Work was done there at schools and other institutions mostly by Christian women and to some extent by non-Christian women, under the supervision of missionaries. Though the number of workers steadily increased, yet the work had not been taken up by non-Christians and private merchants on an extensive scale; for, at the Madras Exhibition of 1915-16 only one private merchant of Cuddappah exhibited lace together with thirteen mission

¹ *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. III, p. 221.

institutions of different parts of the Presidency.¹ Lace making was so intimately connected with missionary activity that it was classed under Mission Industries at the Exhibition. Lace was made frequently to special order² and exported abroad through the agency of the Victoria Technical Institute. Though the quality of lace, in general, was good, that of the Godavari district lace seems to have been particularly so; for it was specially appreciated by W. S. Hadaway, Superintendent, School of Arts, Madras.³ The varieties produced were lace, doyleys, tray cloth and the like.⁴

In the early days, since the Missionaries, who had the monopoly, could not cope with the demand, the orders passed on to local people. Month by month fresh orders arrived and passed on to the private merchants who thus gradually secured a world wide market.⁵

II. From the Great War to the Economic Depression

The years immediately following the War were a period of industrial boom. The lace industry increased markedly but trade fell mostly into the hands of private merchants. Thousands of Christians, Hindu and Muslim women found work. It was stated that in 1926 there were 4,000 workers in the Narsapur and Palakole area and 1,600 in the Rajahmundry area (East Godavari Dt.)

¹ *The Book of Madras Exhibition*, 1915-16.

² *Ibid.*, Note on Victoria Technical Institute, p. 411.

³ *Ibid.*, Note on Mission Industries, p. 437.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Note on Mission Industries, p. 437.

⁵ *Miss Tweddle's Report*, p. 4.

and 900 at Dummagudem.¹ Large quantities of materials—hook and thread for crochet work and net for darned network—were imported from England. Three hundred yards of net was used every week at Dummagudem about 1926.²

The crochet work of West Godavari was highly organised³ though the merchants had little technical knowledge. They did business through middlemen who distributed thread among workers and received finished products from them. Work was paid for by the piece on the basis of quality and time spent on it. Patterns of a particular standard had fixed prices. The quality was good and the work was "surprisingly" clean. Work was diligently supervised and poor and soiled work was rejected by the best merchants. Rejected lace used to be sold by the workers at the Palakole weekly fair to smaller merchants for what it might fetch. The products of Narsapur—Palakole area consisted of doyleys (doileys), table centres, lace edgings, etc. The darned net of Dummagudem was used extensively in Ladies' Lingerie and for dresses, table centres, tray cloths, handkerchiefs, etc. Dummagudem wedding veils were worn all over the world.⁴

The patterns at Narsapur—Palakole consisted of a mixture of leaves and roses joined into a complete piece. The parts were made by separate workers and disposed of. A row of 20 leaves cost as. 2 (inclusive of thread

¹ Miss Tweddle's Report, p. 11.

² Ibid., p. 5.

³ Ibid., p. 4.

⁴ Ibid., p. 5.

valued at nine pies) or a row of 24 leaves cost the same exclusive of the cost of thread. The earnings of workers varied much, due to irregular work and employment. The crochet workers earned Rs. 6 to Rs. 12 a month while ordinary and good darned net workers earned as. 3 to as. 4 and as. 6 to as. 8 a day respectively.¹

Only a small percentage of the lace found sale at Calcutta, Bombay, Mussouri, Simla and other places in India. This consisted mainly of the rejected lace and lace produced by small merchants. The rest of the output was exported mostly to U.S.A. and Canada, Australia, Newzealand and other British colonies and to a small extent to the British Isles, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and other European countries and to Fiji Islands, Barbados, and Cape Colony.² The lace meant for export was carefully inspected. A black cloth was spread over the floor and every piece of lace was examined and weak places were strengthened. The lace was packed in cheap palmyra baskets, costing as. 1½ to as. 3 each, and sewn in cheap cloth and despatched by parcel post.³ Selling was done mostly through private orders received from abroad. Other methods too existed: for instance, the American Baptist Mission, Rajahmundry, sent lace to a secretary in America who in turn passed it on to secretaries in the States. The Victoria Technical Institute also did some business.

¹ Miss Tweddle's Report, pp. 4 and 5. In England at that time a worker earned 3s. to 7s. a week.

² Preliminary Report on the Survey of Cottage Industries in the West Godavari Dt., 1929, p. 66.

³ Miss Tweddle's Report, p. 4.

Lace trade was brisk for a few years following the War. The production increased and it was estimated that one merchant at Narsapur—Palakole could produce monthly lace worth Rs. 10,000.¹ The extent of production at Dummagudem is indicated by the fact that Rs. 67,682-2-0 was given as wages to 900 workers in 1924.² The exports were equally large: From 15th June 1920 to 15th January 1921 the exports from Narsapur—Palakole to an American firm amounted to Rs. 1,50,000. In 1921 the exports amounted to Rs. 3,00,000. At Dummagudem, the exports (not to mention sales in India and Burma) amounted to £ 3,001-19-6 in 1923 and £ 2,205-9-1 in 1924.³ The profits of the merchants were good. Hence many merchants entered the field and their number was forty in 1924 in Narsapur—Palakole alone. Business by merchants now preponderated and at the British Empire Exhibition (London) of 1924, the lace exhibits were mostly those of Jonah and Joseph Coy. of Narsapur—Palakole.⁴

In 1924 an adverse change came over the lace industry and trade. After the peak year, 1921, the annual exports of Narsapur—Palakole fell to Rs. 1,00,000; but this was not perceived by the merchants because they were often rice and paddy merchants and had little knowledge of the foreign lace market.⁵ Nor did the lace workers notice it because there was no personal link between the producers and the consumers—the workers

¹ Miss Tweddle's Report, p. 4.

² Ibid., p. 5.

³ Ibid., p. 4.

⁴ British Empire Exhibition Guide, 1924.

⁵ Miss Tweddle's Report, p. 5.

and the merchants—and the former were merely concerned with production. So production progressed as before and by 1924 stocks accumulated everywhere.¹ Work became irregular and workers were employed only when the merchants received orders. New workers could not be taken. For instance, at Dummagudem there was a long waiting list of workers, many of whom had been practising the work for some time, hoping to be taken on.² Discontent arose among workers, some of whom began to complain of inadequate share in the profits.

It became imperative that something should be done to develop the industry and to give regular work to the poor workers. So the Government of Madras appointed Miss B. M. Tweddle of the Wesleyan Mission to conduct a comprehensive survey of the lace (and embroidery) industry in the Presidency in order that sufficient data may be available for making definite proposals for its improvement and development.³

Miss Tweddle visited 8 centres in the Coastal Andhra besides 32 centres in the rest of the Presidency:⁴

<i>Name of Centre</i>	<i>Name of Institution or individual</i>	<i>No. of workers employed</i>
1. Narsapur-Palakole.	Lace Merchants.	4,000
2. Rajahmundry.	The A. E. L. M. Lace work.	1,600
3. Dummagudem.	Mrs. Cains darned net-work.	900

¹ Miss Tweddle's Report, p. 5.

² Ibid., p. 6.

³ G. O. No. 1361, Development, dated 2nd August 1924.

⁴ Miss Tweddle's Report, p. 11.

<i>Name of Centre</i>	<i>Name of Institution or Individual</i>	<i>No. of workers employed</i>
4. Narsaraopet (Guntur Dt.)	The A. E. L. M. Lace School,	43
5. Waltair (Vizagapatam Dt.)	The Convent. The Daj Raj Hindu Widows'-Home.	35
6. Gudur (Nellore Dt.)	The O. E. L. Mission Lace School,	29
7. Tuni (E. Godavari Dt.)	Miss Priest.	23
8. Ongole (Nellore Dt.)	The A. B. Mission Girls' School.	14

In March 1925 she submitted her Report but pointed out the demand of experienced workers for an inquiry into the conditions of the Overseas market. The Government also saw that the work done by her would be rendered largely nugatory unless it was followed up by such an investigation, particularly when there was such an accumulation of stocks; and so entrusted this work also to her.¹ She visited 11 centres in the producing countries, namely, Ceylon, Strait Settlements, China, Japan and the Philippines and studied the system of production and sale in lace factories and cottage industrial establishments. She also visited 4 important centres in the consuming countries, namely, Canada, U.S.A. and the British Isles and interviewed lace experts and saw many importing firms. And in March 1926, she submitted her Report. In view of its importance, it may be summarised here under five important heads:

1. General situation of production and sale

The accumulation of stocks and unemployment were not universal. This situation existed only where selling

was not properly organised but simply dependent on spasmodic private orders. But at places where selling was organized and effected through the agency of an institution or an interested individual, the extent of the demand was known fairly well and no problems arose. For instance, while at Narsapur—Palakole there was accumulation of stocks, at Rajahmundry where the A. B. Mission sold through an agent in America there was no worry about markets. There was a market for Indian handmade goods if it could be reached. At the Wembley Exhibition lace headed the list of sales amounting to £ 2,853-6-0 out of which the sale of Narsapur—Palakole lace alone amounted to £ 1,000.

2. Causes of decline in lace trade of India

(i) There was a serious fall in the world's demand for lace due to decline in purchasing power, caused by the War. In one large distributing house in England, the turnover fell by 70 per cent since 1913.

(ii) Wearing apparel for which lace was largely used was always influenced by fashion. At that time there was a change of fashion. Indian lace, particularly the crochet lace, was out of fashion and of favour in high class trade while at the same time the markets were flooded with that class of work.

(iii) The standard of work was considered low. Jacoby, the greatest lace authority in London, considered the best Indian samples ordinary and commonplace, while Miss Whiting, the lace expert of New York, deplored the use of foreign designs by India. The standard was made lower by the export of poor work at times.

¹ G. O. No. 333, Development, dated 9th June, 1926.

(iv) Indian lace had to compete with foreign machine and handmade lace which sold very cheap. For instance, Chinese handmade lace of 4" width sold at 4 d. a yard in England while Indian lace of the same quality required 6 d. a yard for *making alone*.

(v) Unlike other lace-making countries, India had to pay high customs duties both at home and abroad. The customs duty on raw material was 15 per cent *advalorem*. The duty on raw material used at Dummagudem alone was Rs. 3,354-11-0 in 1924. The import tariff was 90 per cent in U.S.A. and 50 per cent in Australia and Newzealand. These items together with postage and insurance made the selling price of Indian lace high.

3. *Conditions in the lace producing countries which affected the Indian Industry*

The labour conditions in the Philippines were the same as in South India but in China they were dreadfully bad. The bulk of the lace was produced as a handicraft and then finished and packed in factories. Raw material and finished products moved free of duty between producing and consuming countries. The contact between U.S.A. and the Philippines was so close that "the pulse of fashion in New York was immediately heard in Manila." Business was organized. American experts taught lace making. In China the conditions were so bad that merchants and people accepted very low offers in Chinese New Year season due to need for money.

4. *Conditions in lace consuming countries which affected the Indian Industry*

It was felt that Indian lace was not extensively used because it was not sold on a commercial and well-organised basis. It was also expressed by experts like Miss Whiting and Mr. Jacoby that Indian lace would find ready sale in the high class market, in spite of a high duty, if it was unique and Indian in character and design. Not the quality and durability of the Indian lace, but its high price (when it was out-of-date and commonplace in design) was severely criticised. Jacoby strongly advised India to "break away from competition and produce something original, something truly Indian in design, similarly useful, but unique." He suggested two alternatives :

(i) Improving the industry by appointing an expert.

(ii) Producing practical and at the same time artistic household articles (with or without lace) of an Indian character—curtains, bed spreads, table cloths, tray cloths, luncheon sets, table runners and afternoon tea napkins.

5. *Recommendations*

On the basis of this study of the lace industry, Miss Tweddle made the following *definite* recommendations :

(i) The abolition of the customs duty : The duty on raw materials might be abolished since the materials were being used only by poor workers and would be re-exported as finished product. A refund of the year's

levy would enable the disposal of the stocks at reduced prices.

(ii) The establishment of a Central Distributing Agency:—Many institutions of out of the way places were put to much inconvenience and expense in obtaining raw materials. A Central Agency like the Victoria Technical Institute working through a reliable Madras firm would serve the purpose without necessitating the creation of a separate Government department.

(iii) The establishment of a Central Collecting Depot in Madras:—Such a depot would be in closer touch with overseas markets than private individuals. Purchasers abroad would prefer to deal with a single responsible agency.

(iv) The appointment of an Agent in London:—He would be the link between the Collecting Depot and the purchasers abroad. Since the lace trade fluctuated, he would study the conditions and advance information of pending changes in fashion, patterns and materials. He would also represent Government at Trade Exhibitions.

(v) The appointment of a lace expert.

(vi) The adoption of original and unique Indian patterns and designs; and the production of artistic and practical household articles.

Miss Tweddle emphasised the need for prompt Government action in the interests of the people. Accordingly the Government invited suggestions from the public.¹ The time also was favourable, for in 1925

¹ Order No. 833, Development, dated 9th June, 1926.

there were signs of improvement and a demand for work of novel and unique design which France was trying to monopolise.¹

Much did not come out of this endeavour of Miss Tweddle and the earnestness of Government; for the Government did not approve of the recommendations for the removal of the customs duty and the appointment of a lace expert. They, however, agreed to appoint an Agent in London. With regard to the Central Distributing and Collecting Depots, they saw the need for a strong central organization in the Presidency capable of keeping in touch with the work at home and the requirements abroad; but felt that the Women's Committee of the Victoria Technical Institute, Madras, would be by virtue of its experience and knowledge useful for the work in view.²

Shortly after, in 1927, with the object of collecting information about the existing cottage and rural industries which might form a basis for the revival and extension of rural industries on an economic footing, the Government of Madras ordered a survey of cottage industries in the Presidency.³ A special officer conducted, in 1927-28, the survey which included that of the lace industry also. The report does not show any appreciable improvement in the lace industry; but it, however, gives a few interesting details which may be mentioned here:

¹ Miss Tweddle's Report, p. 12.

² Report on the Survey of Cottage Industries in Madras Presidency, p. 94.

³ Ibid., p. 2.

Whereas in 1925, the Japanese lace industry was one of "no great importance,"¹ it now became a rival to the Indian industry.² Centres like Tinnevely changed over to some extent to embroidery and drawn-thread work, but the lace centres of the Coastal Andhra still stuck to their old type of work and design.

There were 3,000 women and girls of all castes, mostly Christians, *Pallis*, and *Telagas*, engaged in lace-making.³ At Masulipatam, in the Kistna District, a few Indian Christian women and girls did lace work as a hobby for their own use.

Crochet thread, namely Diamond card thread, No. 30 of Ermen Co. Glasgow, was supplied by Central Agency, Madras to the local merchants at Rs. 4-9-0 per gross cards.

Work was done at home and each worker could work 2 to 2½ cards of thread into lace in a day of about six hours. Specialisation in lace parts still obtained.

The middlemen paid the workers as. 1½ to as. 2 for a row of 20 to 24 leaves. The hawkers bought rows at 8 per rupee and sold them at 6 per rupee to middlemen. On the whole the middlemen and the hawkers earned about 12½ per cent as profit. A woman worker earned as. 6 to as. 8 a day and a girl as. 4 a day. There were a dozen skilled workers who earned as. 12 to one rupee a day.

¹ Miss Tweddle's Report, p. 14.

² Report on the Survey of Cottage Industries in Madras Presidency, p. 93.

³ In the course of my inquiries at Narsapur in 1942, I came to learn that about that time some women were given *charkhas* by a local gentleman and taught spinning. After a time the *charkhas* were taken away by him; and, finding no other occupation, all those women took to lace-making.

Only 3 per cent of the lace was consumed in India and the rest was exported overseas. There were eight merchants at Narsapur—Palakole. Their profits were 12½ to 20 per cent.

The products consisted of doyleys, table centres, tea cloth borders, oval centres, comesol tops, bonnets, pillow shams or cases, night dress cases, lace edgings (lace by the yard), table runners, pin cushion covers, tea-cosey covers and door and window curtains. The last types were made only to order. The overseas price of the products ranged from 3 s. 6 d. to £ 14-4 s. a dozen including packing and freight.

The Report made two suggestions:—

(i) The improvement and extension of embroidery work.

(ii) The direct participation by Government in the lace business: The Women's Committee of the Victoria Technical Institute might serve as a link between the cottage and the London Agent as suggested by the Government; but the main difficulty was the market. The workers had to depend on institutions and the latter on the Victoria Institute for marketing. The Institute could not, however, buy all the products and unless the workers were sure of readily marketing the products, they would have little inducement to work. "What is required is that the London Agent should be intimately acquainted with the types of products that the industry can put on the market and devote his attention to finding markets for them. The Government should purchase the types for which a steady demand is discovered and send them to their agent for sale. This will involve

Government in financial risk, but it cannot be helped if the industry has to develop."

III. The Economic Depression and After¹

The suggestions of the Special Officer came none too soon for the betterment of the art and the artisan. But they were inopportune; for every country, India not the least, soon found itself in the throes of an Economic Depression. This world catastrophe reduced the purchasing power even of the rich countries of America and Europe which in normal times revelled in the use of "the inexpensive touches of charm," namely, lace products, and made it hard for them to indulge in their use as freely as before. While the world's demand for lace declined, the price of raw material and finished products also fell, bringing down with it the wages of the lace workers to less than two annas a day. Consequently many of the lace workers (among whom were those who had changed over from falsehair and wig-making to lace-making for economic reasons) gave up lace-making as unremunerative. Others still plied their old calling for want of a substitute. Private lace merchants and institutions found it no easy job to explore markets for their products. Some big merchants and institutions which had already built up some business through canvassing agents were, however, still able to dispose of their products to some extent. For instance, Jonah and Joseph, a private firm of Narsapur—Palakole lace area and the

¹ This section is based on my personal investigations at the lace-making centres of the Coastal Andhra and the information kindly furnished by the Victoria Technical Institute to which my thanks are due.

Mission Institution at Dummagudem were able to have some business through the agency of some lace experts of America. The adverse effect of this great economic slump on lace industry is seen from the fact that the sale of lace at the Victoria Technical Institute fell in 1933-34 to about fifty per cent of what it had been in 1928-29.

The spell of Depression having slowly passed away in 1934-35 there were efforts at economic rehabilitation everywhere. Popular taste for art and luxury slowly revived holding out to the lace industry a prospect of an early recovery of the lost ground. But the odds were at first not all in favour of India. China had for long been a serious rival and the revival of the lace trade made her crazy again. Egypt was no less eager to capture world markets. Japan which had been considered in 1926 "not an important country" in lace making, now became a formidable rival. Their craze for foreign markets was very intense and they employed every measure to capture them. India plodded on in the old rut unable to keep pace with her rivals in trade until circumstances tended to turn the wheel in her favour. The Sino-Japanese War reduced the supply of lace from China; and, for some political and other reasons, America was somewhat informally boycotting Japan. She was now inclined to favour the Indian production more and more.

Already there was some lace trade between India and U.S.A. and the British Isles. Some private merchants of Narsapur—Palakole lace area and some Mission institutions like those of Dummagudem and Bhimavaram in the Coastal Andhra exported lace to

U.S.A. and elsewhere. Many Mission institutions in the South also carried on lace trade to some extent. The Victoria Technical Institute did lace business on behalf of several institutions of the north and south of the Madras Province. These lace exporters did business with several firms like Leacock & Co., New York, through the agency of lace experts such as Miss Gertrude Whiting and Miss Easily of New York who canvassed orders and also posted the exporters with information regarding the popular fashions and lace designs. Now other firms like the Queen Lace Co., and Fallani & Cohn, of New York entered the field and offered to transact business with India independently or through the Victoria Technical Institute.

But it was not easy for the lace producers of the Coastal Andhra as of the rest of South India to cope with this increased demand; for though the Indian lace products were greatly admired and even displayed at Exhibitions in America, yet the business organisation of the Indian firms was far from satisfactory. In respect of production and supply, the Indian lace industry had three defects:

First, it generally lacked good design. Lace was made chiefly for export; and yet the lacemakers in general had little knowledge of the varieties and designs demanded by the consumers from time to time. Only a few big merchants and large institutions had some knowledge of the changing tastes and fashions abroad but they kept their knowledge to themselves.

Secondly, it was not known with definiteness how much lace could be supplied at a given time. Due to

rapid changes in designs merchants or institutions had very little stock on hand except in narrow and low-priced varieties. The supply was somewhat inelastic. Private merchants could increase their production in the required varieties to some extent at short notice by employing additional hands temporarily, if necessary, but philanthropic institutions could not do this so easily. The average monthly production capacity of each institution was about Rs. 500 and it could at best reach Rs. 1,000. But this increase was bound to be slow since time was required to train new hands to make them produce the required varieties. It was estimated by certain lace producing institutions that production of lace to order on a considerable scale would require two weeks to three months according to the width and quality of the product. In consequence, much delay was apt to be caused in executing an order where as, while distributors in the importing country were prepared to allow an year's time for the execution of an order, the retailers required the goods within half this period.

Thirdly, the method of packing and transporting the goods left much to be desired. Lace was usually sent in baskets, often improperly packed. But the importers liked to have their goods packed flat and unfolded between card boards. Moreover, the Indian exporters in general had little knowledge of the customs laws of America which were very severe. Even the slightest non-observance of the customs regulations was sure to put the exporters and importers to trouble and expense.

It was evident that these defects should be set right before any lace trade on an appreciable scale could be carried on. Hence the interested American firms sought

to rectify these defects: They offered to send lace experts to India to train the Indian lace workers in producing good designs. They made earnest inquiries as to the capacity of the country in lace production. They also tendered advice regarding the packing and despatch of products. As it were, the ground was prepared for the resumption of lace trade on a very large scale.

The lace producers also reacted favourably to this situation. The price of thread was still as low as during the Depression and the wages also had not risen. Yet there was the satisfaction that their products would be readily marketed and that they would have regular work. Hence they were eager to do their best. But War broke out in the West; and all hopes of the producers fell while even the prospects became dim for the present.

IV. During the Present War¹

1. The Centres and the Workers

At present the lace industry is, from the point of view of occupation, as important in certain parts of the Coastal Andhra as the handspinning industry in the *Khaddar* centres. Lace is produced very extensively in the West Godavari District. Not only Narsapur and Palakole and the villages around them but also Bhimavaram, Tanuku and several villages around them have this industry. Dummagudem has risen to greater importance than before. Lace is made at Ramachandrapuram and Cocanada in the East Godavari and Masulipatam in the Kistna District besides a few other towns and villages scattered in the Coastal Andhra.

¹ Based on personal investigations made by me in 1942 and 1943.

Christians, *Pallis* (*marakas* or fishermen caste) and *Kapus* have been making lace for some decades in West Godavari. But now other sub-castes like *Kalalis* (toddy-drawers) and *Komatīs* (baniyas) have entered the field. It is not quite possible to state correctly the number of persons engaged in the industry. The exact number will be known only when the census figures of 1941 are published. The estimate made by some workers stands for the district, at over half a lakh; but this may not be reliable. One important lace merchant of Narsapur stated that he could only say that the number doubled itself during the past decade or more. One old worker of Narsapur said that at Narsapur the number of families engaged in the industry stood at about 2,000 (during the past decade or more) but the difference was that while formerly one woman in every family made lace, now two or three women were engaged in the industry. It is said that 75 per cent of the Christian, 50 per cent of the *Palli* and 15 to 20 per cent of the *Kapu* families of the lace region are doing lace work in the Narsapur—Palakole area. The workers are mostly 9 to 40 years of age.¹ But some of them are between 40 and 60 or more. Some workers of over 70 are still making lace. At Masulipatam there are over 30 families of Hindus and Muslims who know the work.

2. Raw Materials and Work

The raw materials used are a knitting hook and cotton thread. Both are of British make and have to be imported. The hook which is usually No. 5½ costs as. 2.

¹ It is stated that in England old and feeble and crippled women are largely engaged in the industry.

The thread used is Diamond thread Nos. 12 and 30 of Godfrey Ermen Coy., Ltd., Glasgow. Each thread card consists of a 100 yards of thread. No. 30 thread is largely used. Usually brown and white thread is used; but of late other colours like yellow, green, red and blue (all of light shades) have come into vogue in certain cases. The thread is bought at Bombay and Calcutta firms by the local merchants from whom smaller dealers buy. Yarn purchases are made in cash. The price of thread cards was as. 11 to as. 12 if white and as. 12 to as. 14 if coloured (in 1942). It was complained that it was very difficult to get enough thread even at high rates and that no substitutes could be used, because the European consumers would condemn its use as inferior work. Japanese yarn which was available in some quantity was found not suitable since the shades of colour lacked uniformity which was essential for producing an artistic effect in a piece of coloured stuff.

The workers usually make lace as part-time occupation after doing their household work. They work about 6 hours a day. But there are some workers who are engaged for 10 hours as whole-time occupation. This latter group consists of girls and old women and sometimes relations who go there for a brief stay. For some families this is hereditary work. At Masulipatam and other places where lace is made only as a hobby the work is not regular at all. On the whole work is not done for two months in a year.

Usually some 3 or 4 cards are worked in a day. Some good workers are said to finish even 6 cards in a day. There is not now much waste except in the case of children and beginners. Of late there has been a craze

for lace work. One educational officer of the Narsapur range has observed that this industry has begun to do more harm than good; for the workers are so crazy they work far into the night in flickering lamp light which spoils their eyesight. Women go to the village well with their lace-making equipment and begin to work there if they have to wait for their husbands to get water.

There is specialisation of work—making of leaves and roses, edging etc. as before. This is a sort of division of labour which enables quicker work. The Christians, *Pallis* and *Kapus* do the best quality of work.

The products made at Narsapur—Palakole are doyleys, lace edgings, table centres, oval centres, bonnets, pillow shams, night dress cases, comesol tops, tea cloth borders and curtains, to mention only a few of the many varieties.

3. Organization

Production is not organised except in a few cases and is usually done in a variety of ways: At Masulipatam and a few other places in the Coastal Andhra, lace is not produced on a commercial scale. At places like Bhimavaram (West Godavari), Dummagudem and Cocanada (East Godavari) and Waltair (Vizagapatam District) Guntur and Gudur (Nellore District) where there are educational and other institutions managed by Missionaries or small Christian Colonies, lace making is done under the supervision of the institutions or private individuals. In the former case work is done at the institutions or sometimes at the homes of the workers;

but in the latter it is done at home and the lace is delivered to the employer. But at Narsapur—Palakole which is the chief producing region, the industry is almost exclusively in the hands of the merchants the majority of whom are Christians. These merchants have organised themselves into an Association. Only 5 per cent of the lace makers do independent work. These independent workers buy thread from the local merchants and sell the products to the smaller local merchants and to travelling dealers at the weekly shandy at Palakole. The remaining 95% of the lace makers work for the merchants—big and small—of whom there are at present 40. The business of the bigger merchants who are a few in number is more organised than that of the smaller ones. The bigger merchants do transactions mostly through middlemen who belong to the fisherman and toddy-drawer caste groups, and to a little extent directly with the workers. Only some of the old local workers have direct transactions with them. But all the others receive yarn from middlemen and deliver the products to them. These middlemen usually go to the homes of the workers even of the villages nearby at intervals ranging from one week to one month, for distribution of raw material and collection of finished products. It is said that even now there are some cases of workers working at the home of a middleman. The smaller merchants usually have direct transactions. Raw material is distributed by them among the members of the family, relations and a circle of friends and the finished products are collected. They also purchase lace at the Palakole shandy and from some hawkers. These hawkers who also belong to the fisherman and toddy-

drawer caste groups, are a separate group of small businessmen. There are, both men and women hawkers. They go about distant villages like Antarvedi (access to which is well-nigh difficult) and purchase for cash or on credit, the loose parts like roses and leaves from the workers there and sell them to the middlemen or small merchants or independent workers of Narsapur—Palakole or at the Palakole shandy. Thus the whole system of production is disorganized. The deplorable condition is evident from the fact that it is said that members of the same family work sometimes under different employers.

There is no co-operation among the workers and the merchants. It is, however, thought that the Christians, who are a little more educated than the Hindus, are slightly better than the Hindu workers in this respect. There is an attitude of exclusiveness in the workers and merchants. Most of the lace-working women do not know where their products are sent and what price they would fetch. The height of their ignorance can be judged from the fact that very few of them know that the industry was introduced by some enterprising Missionary from a philanthropic motive. The story current among the present workers is that a certain washerwoman brought this art to Narsapur from Rangoon and taught the local women. Each merchant keeps his market a close secret; he gives a particular type of work or pattern only to a particular group of middlemen or workers. The workers also do not show their patterns and designs to their fellow-workers.

Each worker is given some six dozen thread cards at a time which she has to make into lace and deliver to

the merchant or middleman at intervals of two to four weeks. In some cases products—finished and semi-finished—are delivered weekly and even daily.

The patterns and designs are mostly copied from pattern and design books imported from abroad. The big merchants and some of the institutions catering to the foreign market get the books from abroad. Hence their products are not too old-fashioned. But the small independent workers, the small merchants and the workers in the distant villages—all of whom usually cater to the local and Indian market do not have the latest designs. It is said that some patterns and designs are made by some experienced workers themselves and that some of the designs were borrowed by China; but this seems to be an exaggeration.

Training in lace work is not systematised to an appreciable extent. Where work is done under the supervision of Mission institutions, the work is taught to the beginners at the institution by some trained teachers. But the number of girls and women who learn work thus is not very large. At Narsapur—Palkole where work is done on a commercial scale the training is not good. Some of the workers are those that have learnt lace making at school; but most of the workers learn only from old and experienced workers. The mother or some good neighbour trains the beginner in lace making.

4. Markets

The lace market is of three types—local, Indian, and foreign.

(a) Local :—Local sales consist of sales at the Palakole shandy and private sales. The hawkers who purchase mostly loose parts and a few finished products at the surrounding villages sell them at the Shandy. Some independent workers also sell their products there. Sometimes the workers sell away, at reduced rates, their work which is rejected by the merchants. The private sales consist of the sale of loose parts by hawkers to middlemen and workers of Narsapur—Palakole as well as the sale of finished and semi-finished products by women employed by one merchant to some other merchant or individual on account of dire need for money.

(b) Indian :—Some small merchants sell their products in Northern India, particularly at the hill stations of Simla, Mussouri, etc. They go at intervals to Northern India and book orders from Missionaries, European soldiers, and officers and sometimes take a small advance from them. Sometimes they sell lace to tourists also. According to one merchant, a tax of Rs. 1-8-0 is levied from every lace seller who visits Mussouri and other hill stations; but if the lace is sent per parcel post the tax is not levied. Hence merchants usually send lace per value payable parcel post. The Victoria Technical Institute also caters largely to the Indian market. The products of Dummagudem are largely marketed in India also by the Institute.

In the Northern Indian market there is much Chinese competition. It is said that due to war much Chinese handmade lace is being sent to India because the Indian market has become wider due to the coming of European and American soldiers and officers and also, probably because it is less risky to send goods to India

than to other countries. Consequently the price of the Indian products has fallen even in the home market. It is said that a piece which sold at Re. 1 in 1938 fetched only Re. 0-12-0 in 1942.

(c) Foreign:—The local and Indian sales are far larger than some years ago. Yet they form only a small part of the total sales. The bigger merchants, the more important Mission institutions, and some European women employers cater to a foreign market. Foreign sales are effected in two ways: Some Mission institutions and other centres of production, among which Dummagudem and Rajahmundry may be mentioned sell through an agency. For instance, the products of Dummagudem are marketed by Victoria Technical Institute on consignment basis both in India and abroad. But the big merchants of Narsapur—Palakole meet foreign orders directly. It is stated by the Crochet Lace Manufacturers' Association, Narsapur, that about £ 100,000 worth of lace is annually exported from the Narsapur—Palakole centre alone.

5. Earnings

The margin of profits of the several people engaged in the industry varies widely. The institutions which sell lace on an organised basis have moderate profit. The Victoria Technical Institute takes only a commission of 3 to 5 per cent on sales.

Large variations are seen in the profits of the private merchants. Formerly when the demand for Indian lace was large and the number of merchants was small, the merchants earned a great deal. But now individual

sales and profits have fallen for obvious reasons. The profits of merchants doing business in India itself vary more than those of the big merchants who do overseas business. It has been stated that these small merchants are able to get 3 annas in a rupee as margin of profit.

The middlemen still clear large profits of about as. 2 in a rupee while hawkers get even as. 4 in a rupee in their transactions with workers of distant villages.

But the greatest sufferers are the poor workers. Their average income is low due to several causes:

(a) During the last war their wages were Rs. 0-4-0 per thread card but in 1942 the wages were 1 anna per card for superior work and a little over half-anna per card for ordinary work. The income of the workers of Narsapur and Palakole is slightly larger than that of the workers of adjoining villages because the former do joining of loose parts and finishing which requires much skill.

(b) Sometimes when the products are soiled or otherwise not satisfactory they are rejected by the employer. The workers sell away such work at the Palakole shandy for half the price or so thus getting the price of the thread and losing the wages for labour. (c) Sometimes the hawkers who purchase on credit do not pay the dues to the workers and put them to much loss of material and labour.

Consequently the average earnings are very low. According to one worker the daily earnings are Rs. 0-2-6 for superior work and Rs. 0-1-9 for ordinary work. The average monthly earnings are said to be Rs. 4 for a full-time worker and Rs. 2-8-0 to Rs. 3 for a part-time worker. An important merchant stated that the daily earnings fell from as 12 to about as. 2 or as. 3.

Some old merchants who formerly paid every month are now said to be delaying payment for many months. Others are said to be paying every week and sometimes in advance also.

The general result is that while workers formerly earned enough even to invest on jewelry, the present workers are not able to get a bare living wage.

CHAPTER III

PROSPECTS

The present condition of the lace industry indicates that while on the one hand it is suffering, on the other the number of workers engaged in it is on the increase. This situation, peculiar as it is, is serious enough to demand immediate attention with a view to setting the industry in its proper form.

In considering the shaping of the industry four important points must be remembered: First, Man is not merely utilitarian in outlook but is also gifted with an æsthetic sense. Secondly, he looks for variety in beauty in pursuing which he does not entirely eschew what once appealed to his higher sentiments but only endeavours to improve upon it or adapt it to new conditions of life and thought. Thirdly, lace-making is a decorative craft and the superiority of handmade lace over the factory product is universally admitted. Fourthly, in India, lace-making is an exotic handicraft which caters to a foreign market which prizes originality and native character in design and work; and no art-craft, even of indigenous origin (for instance the *Kalamkari* and *Pile-*

carpet industries of the Coastal Andhra) has even catered exclusively to the needs of a foreign market without impairing its individuality and native grace.

It follows from this peculiar nature of man's æsthetic outlook that while there is a large demand for Indian handmade lace and lace products of a unique and original character, India is not able to rise to the occasion. It is because the handicraft has not yet been naturalised in the country. This naturalisation is the *sine qua non* of the proper development of the industry and can be achieved only by a reorientation of the industrial policy, relating to the industry and the reorganisation of the industry itself on its production and marketing aspects: I venture to suggest here the main lines that may be followed with advantage:

1. Production

(a) Raw materials:—Though in an art craft the labour factor is more important than the cost of raw material¹ yet in the Indian lace industry, the raw material is rather costly on account of its foreign source, the cost of transport and the import duty. The present war has made it costlier and scarce. It is said that the world-famous *saris* worth about Rs. 150 each are not being made on account of non-availability of net. Important merchants and workers at Narsapur—Palakole are eager to obtain a substitute for the Crochet thread they use and in fact asked me if I could obtain it for

¹ It was estimated in England in 1926 that the price of thread might be 3½ to 4½ per cent of the price obtained for work by the Midland lace-makers.

them at any cost. This raw material can be produced in India with advantage. Since this is not possible at present, arrangements must be made to obtain and supply it to the workers at reasonable rates. But it must be remembered that the time is ripe for producing it in India.

(b) Labour :—The number of workers engaged in the industry is large and it is practised as a hobby in some places. It is the hereditary occupation of several families who have thus acquired skill. These features are encouraging, but the conditions of labour are bad and call for reform :

It is impossible to state (it was so in England also) what proportion of the sale price of a piece goes to the worker. But it may be stated that before the Economic Depression the earnings of the Indian lace workers were fairly comparable with those of the English worker from the standpoint of relative cost of living. But now they are too low to afford a bare living, while the profits of the middlemen and merchants are still considerable. The workers are becoming discontented and some of them are eager to take to either handspinning or reeling of sewing thread which latter industry has, of late, become increasingly popular though the capital required is about Rs. 50 for a hand-driven reeling machine. It is significant that their association with thread is so strong that they are inclined to choose another industry connected with thread only. It is, however, necessary to remove this discontent among the workers. This can be only achieved when a larger percentage of the sale price of lace is made to go to them instead of to the middlemen.

It is stated that in Japan the artisans work 12 hours and in England at least 7 hours a day. In the Andhra the women work for 6 to 10 hours. But work is not regulated. Superior work requires, after 2 hours of work, as much of rest. Then again, the boiling over of a kettle or the cry of a child may demand the immediate attention of the worker. So the workers must regularly work for a fairly long time.

Often women work at night in dim lamp light. This has caused many workers to become so defective in sight and consequently so less efficient in work that they are obliged to choose some other craft. This work at night is an important matter. The disabled workers may be allowed to take to handspinning or thread reeling which they like but the others must be protected. In some places in England the lace workers use "a candle-stool—a stool on which a candle or a rushlight is set, the light shining through four glass flasks filled with water, set on wooden posts around the candle. The light was magnified by the water in the flasks to such an extent that twelve women could work by the light of one candle."¹ The device might well be adopted today by many women who work in ill-lit country cottages. The flasks when not in use may be kept in rush baskets.

2. Organisation

(a) Distribution of raw materials :—The distribution of raw materials and the collection of finished products through an organised institution or agency will save the poor workers from exploitation by middlemen.

¹ *Rural Industries of England and Wales*, Vol. III, pp. 59-60.

It is reported that in England extinction of the industry was prevented where organisations supplanted private dealers.¹

(b) Standardisation of quality :—The clean work and the quality and durability of Indian lace have won general approval everywhere. But sometimes work of poor quality also is exported. This poor quality is usually due to the fact that the work of different artisans who are responsible to no one agency is knit together into a complete piece. It is therefore essential that while the division of labour is retained for good, the different workers should be made responsible to an organised agency and also be made to co-ordinate their work with a view to improve and standardise the quality of their products.

(c) The types of goods, their patterns and designs : The history of lace-making in England shows that the exotic industry could be naturalised by the adaptation of the patterns and designs by the workers to the ever-changing tastes and fashions at home. From this standpoint, the Indian industry may be said to be defective : The products are very little used at home and they are not in keeping with the taste abroad. Though in 1925 Jacoby suggested that India might produce practical and artistic household articles of an Indian character, the Coastal Andhra does not seem to have given due weight to his considered opinion. The Crochet industry is still pursued with slight improvements here and there. It is a pity that embroidery (which is considered even in the West as more closely connected with the æsthetic tastes

¹ *Rural Industries of England and Wales*, Vol. III, p. 60.

and talents of the average woman)¹ is not yet popular in the Coastal Andhra. It is high time that this useful craft was learnt by the lace workers.

The design of the lace is of the greatest importance, especially in the finer and more elaborate varieties ; and it is said that the merit of Chinese and Japanese art products consists in their original and native designs. The need for such development in Indian lace was emphasised by foreign experts ; for otherwise the consumers would prefer the better kinds of machine-made lace to hand-made lace of commonplace design.

The products of Narsapur—Palakole were condemned in Western markets on the ground of lack of originality ; yet no change for the better has been effected except probably in very few cases. Production of a few samples here and there is no good. Such products of unique and original pattern must be produced on a commercial scale.

(d) Training :—Production of unique products on a large scale requires an improvement in the technique of production which can be acquired only by systematic teaching and training. It was found in England that the lack of proper instruction resulted in the turning out of poor work. At Narsapur—Palakole teaching is done usually by an artisan who, howsoever experienced in the work, cannot be a good teacher. What is now required, is the training of workers by an expert, as in the Philippines, in well-organised institutions. Such training in England is said to have improved the design-drawing of even children. Even adults can receive

¹ *Rural Industries of England and Wales*, Vol. III, p. 69.

training with advantage. It is learnt that of late American firms and experts are preparing designs for the Indian lace maker. The services of an expert will be of immense advantage to the lace maker at present.

3. *Marketing*

The market as well as the marketing is disorganised in the case of the lace of the Coastal Andhra ; for though the products of Dummagudem and Rajahmundry have organised sales to some extent, those of the Narsapur—Palakole region, which is by far the largest centre, have no organised business.

Though a very small percentage was formerly absorbed in the home market because lace did not find a place in the Indian costume, of late lace has become popular among Indian women also. It is no more associated with only foreign tastes and fashions. It is significant that the Victoria Technical Institute has increased its lace business by six times what it was a few years ago and that the sales in the home market are partly responsible for the increase. This progress must be kept up. This can be done only when the producers can cater to the Indian tastes. This turn in the lace industry, i.e., this increased association of lace design and work with Indian life, will certainly help the craft to be naturalised and to assume an Indian character which will be reflected in the products. Such a change will satisfy both the home and foreign markets.

The Indian business is said to form a small fraction of the lace business of the foreign market due to lack of organisation. Orders are often not repeated because

whenever Indian lace is ordered, great delay is found in the execution of the orders by the sellers. It appears that the retailers of lace in the Western markets expect to have their orders attended to within six months. If business is done through organisations this delay can be avoided. The Philippines could sell in 1923 lace valued at Pesos 12,746,529 (Peso equals about 2 rupees) due to organised business.¹ It is also stated that in England whereas the superior Devonshire lace found no demand, the Midland lace of the same quality could be easily sold because business was done through organisations which could reach a wide circle of customers.²

It is now clear that the industry can be developed if there are organisations which can produce and distribute products in the best interests of the artisans and to the entire satisfaction of the consumers. But what should be the nature of those organisations ? At present lace is produced and sold by merchants and institutions. The merchants and most of the institutions are looking for private profit. So it is essential that this organisation should be co-operative in form and outlook.³ Wherever the industry is in the hands of merchants or institutions inclined towards exploitation, co-operative societies may be formed. But institutions which are inspired by motives of service should be treated as one co-operative unit. These societies and good institutions must be organised into a federation of co-operative socie-

¹ *Miss Twaddle's Report*, p. 13.

² *Rural Industries of England and Wales*.

³ In England it was felt that much could not be done by mere Associations because the workers were not organised or represented in the Associations or consulted by them.

ties. It is desirable that the Women's Committee of the Victoria Institute should be composed of the representatives of this Federation, for the influence and long experience of this Institute can thus be pressed into service. This sort of co-operative organisation will help to link the producers and the consumers and to co-ordinate demand and supply.

Since many artisans are eager to have co-operative societies, much initial capital will be forthcoming from them as well as from the institutions. But the co-operative organisation may have other difficulties at the outset: The artisans, ignorant of business principles, may expect high profits immediately. Propaganda is of value in inculcating moderation in such a case. Again, the artisans may expect to realise the value of their products very soon. It is only reasonable that they should do so. Hence it is desirable that part payments should be made in advance. This should not be difficult because when business is organised and demand and supply are co-ordinated, there will be little difficulty in selling the products soon.

Much depends on the artisans themselves; but the Government has no small part to play in the development of the industry. It can help the industry by means of financial aid and regulation of trade policy. Even as long ago as 1926 Miss Tweddle drew pointed attention to the need for Government financial aid at least for a few years; but nothing was done by the Government. It is high time that the importance of this measure was realised. As regards the trade policy, it is of the utmost importance to note that arrangements for the movement

of raw materials and finished products free of duty or at preferential rates will greatly develop the industry. In this respect nothing favourable seems to have been effected. On the other hand the Government has imposed an export ban on several Indian products including crochet goods. Though the United Kingdom has already lifted its export ban, the Indian Government has not yet done so. The Crochet Lace Manufacturers' Association, Narsapur has addressed¹ the Andhra Chamber of Commerce pointing out that "there is no reason why our Government should still sit tight over export fence. If they still sit tight, other nations may capture that trade and it would be futile to open the stable after the horse has been stolen." The Association has also stated that some buyer friends in South Africa are ready to buy all the Indian products and has requested the Chamber to sponsor a resolution in the Federation Session and to move the Export Advisory Council, Madras, regarding the matter. It is desirable that the Government should begin to interest itself in the Industry with this act of grace.

It has been observed by those responsible for the revival of lace-making in England that after all lace-making is either a sweated industry practised only by the most needy, or a delightful hobby for leisured people whose time is not reckoned in terms of the necessities of life. Now let it be hoped that the Indian artisans will prove that it is neither a sweated industry nor a delightful hobby, but a practical and artistic art-craft practised by those who have behind them genius and skill accumulated during several centuries past.

¹ *The Indian Spectator*, Delhi, dated 7th Feb. 1944.

APPENDIX A

SOME IMPORTANT VARIETIES OF LACE PRODUCTS

Very few of the lace workers and dealers in lace really know what a rich variety there is in lace products. One usually sees in our country but a few varieties in common use. It will be of interest to note that the following varieties are in common use in foreign countries like America :

Insertions and Edgings	Bodice trimmings
Beadings	Doyleys
Motifs	Table centres
Appliques	Side board covers
Collars and Cuffs	Tray and tea cloths
Sailor collars	Bed spreads
Stoles	Fans
Yokes	Baby caps
Capes	Limerick lace
Scarfs	Made up underlinen
Berthas	Valenciennes lace
Boleros	Venetian lace
Flouncies	Smocking
Handkerchiefs	Tapestry
Chemise tops	Wedding veils

B. COMPARATIVE PRICES OF SOME VARIETIES OF LACE

	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945
1. L. M. S. Lace Industry Nagercoil.	Rs. 6-7-0	Rs. 5-1-0	Rs. 2-11-0	Rs. 5-2-0	Rs. 3-14-0	Rs. 4-6-0	Rs. 5-3-0	Rs. 5-15-0
Lace in 6 yards lengths ...	22-4-0	20-6-0	19-2-0	18-1-0	21-3-0	20-10-0	26-2-0	26-2
Luncheon set	8-13-0	6-8-0	5-8-0	12-3-0	3-5-0	3-6-0	3-12-0	10-3-0 (Napkin)
1 Set of Dollies	23-6-0	22-9-0	15-13-0	19-9-0	20-8-0	21-8-0	22-1-0	31-2-0
Table cloth	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
2. C. M. S. Mission Lace Industry, Dummagudem.	9-8-0	6-6-0	6-2-0	6-2-0	5-8-0	...	15-8-0	...
Lace centres	5-4-0	8-0-0	10-6-0	10-0-0	...	...	66-0-0	...
1 Set of Dollies	26-3-0	26-0-0	30-0-0	55-0-0	25-0-0	...	20-0-0	...
Lace dinner set	...	...	...	...	...	...	24-0-0	...
3. Christian Poor Women's Lace works, Roypetta Narsapur, W. G. Dt.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Lace dinner set	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Lace Table cloth	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Lace Dollies	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

THE SOUTH INDIA CO-OPERATIVE INSURANCE SOCIETY LIMITED.,

Armenian Street, MADRAS

PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY

Since its inception the record of the Society is one of continued progress and prosperity. The Society has no shareholders and all profits belong to its members. Its transactions are substantial. Working and management are arranged on a very economical basis. The general conditions of its contracts are liberally drawn and meet all contingencies.

We have got policies to suit everybody's taste.

Agencies on lucrative terms are offered in all districts.

For particulars, apply to :

• V. VENKATACHALAM, M.A., B.L.,

Secretary.

PULLAMPET HANDLOOM SAREES

The Pride of South Indian Handloom Industry.

NOW PRODUCED BY

**THE PULLAMPET PADMASALI WEAVERS'
CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION AND SALE
SOCIETY LIMITED**

(The biggest in Cuddappah Dt. with 350 looms)

AND SOLD AT THE EMPORIUMS OF
**THE MADRAS HANDLOOM WEAVERS'
PROVINCIAL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LTD.**

and by numerous other Cloth Dealers at
several centres in the Madras Province

Available

in 80's and 100's in 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 yards

FAST COLOURS AND GUARANTEED SILVER LACE

Ideal for Marriages and Presentation.

**Our Genuine 100's Dhotis and Upper Cloths
are a speciality**

Ask your favourite Cloth Dealers to supply you only

PULLAMPET CO-OPERATIVE HANDLOOM FABRICS

Address all enquiries to the Pullampet Padmasali Weavers'
Co-operative Production and Sale Society Ltd., Pullampet

(President: V. V. RAMAN.)

BEAUTY CUM UTILITY IN CO-OPERATIVE HANDLOOM FABRICS.

The Handloom Weavers' art, the highlight of oriental splendour, is now harnessed to produce Co-operative Handloom Fabrics of Quality and durability. With popular designs and distinctive modern trends, dress materials which will satisfy the fastidious tastes of fashionable Ladies and Gents are stocked and **SOLD AT OUR SALES EMPORIUMS IN THE MADRAS CITY AND DISTRICTS.**

Every time fresh stocks are being distributed direct from the Handlooms eliminating middlemen's profits at controlled rates.

**DHOTIES, SAREES, SHIRTINGS,
TOWELS, PRINTS, GINGAMS,
CHINTZ, FURNISHING FABRICS,
TABLE LINEN, BEDSHEETS, KER-
CHIEFS, COATINGS, MOSQUITO
NETS, QUILTS, PILLOWS, ETC.**

**THE MADRAS HANDLOOM WEAVERS'
PROVINCIAL CO-OPERATIVE
SOCIETY LIMITED**

Post Box No. 1367 G.P.O., MADRAS

9/2/84

Economic Studies in Coastal Andhra—

I. LACE INDUSTRY OF SOUTH INDIA

**With Special reference to
the Coastal Andhra ... Rs. 14**

2. COTTAGE INDUSTRIES

What they are ... 0 5 c

3. POST WAR PLANNING—FOOD AND TEXTILES

(Ready for the Press

4. WOOLLEN INDUSTRY OF THE COASTAL ANDHRA—CUMBLIES AND PILE-CARPETS

(Ready for the Pres.

2

[illegible]