

THE PRESS & SOCIETY

R. D. PARIKH

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THE PRESS AND SOCIETY

This serious study attempts to show the close relation between the press and the different social institutions and groups—all existing within the larger society. In particular, it aims to locate these institutions and groups and to show the manner in which they are knit together and connected with the press.

This is indeed a major study with a sociological approach to the subject of that very important unit of society, the press, a medium of mass-communication. Though the analysis drawn and the conclusions arrived at emerge from the study of the Gujarati language press in Western India, (existing since the early 1820's) particularly selected as an illustration, it is a very significant contribution to the newly emerging Sociology of the Press.

The relation between education and the press, particularly the former's role in the growth and change in the nature of the latter; the interconnections between the press and trade and commerce; the relations that would exist between the government and the press and the influence that technological changes make on the press—these are some of the aspects of society shown to be significant for the emergence and existence of this immensely important and dynamically effective unit of society—the press.

This study attempts to put forth a model which can be applied to other speech communities, here as elsewhere, so as to determine the institutions and groups effectively engaged in the functioning of the press.

THE PRESS AND SOCIETY

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A Sociological Study

R. D. PARIKH



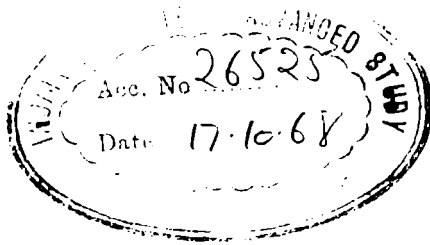
BOMBAY
POPULAR PRAKASHAN

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First Published

August 1965

Saka 1887



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY PUBLICATION No. 6
M. S. UNIVERSITY OF BARODA

301.16
P217



Library IIAS, Shimla



00026525

Printed by Shri M. H. Patwardhan at Sangam Press Pvt. Ltd.,
383, Narayan Peth, Poona 2 and published by Shri G. R. Bhatkal for
Popular Prakashan, 35 C Tardeo Road, Bombay 34 WB.

*TO MY BROTHER KANUBHAI AND
BHABHI TARALAKSHMI*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have been greatly indebted to the persons in charge of the newspaper establishments and libraries who permitted me to refer to newspaper files etc. I also express my obligation to the leading personalities and journalists in Gujarat who helped me by giving useful information during informal interviews. I owe a deep sense of gratitude to Professors M. N. Srinivas (Delhi University) and I. P. Desai (The M. S. University of Baroda). Professor Srinivas had inspired me to take up this study and had helped me in its initial stages. Professor I. P. Desai's guidance and advice throughout this work can hardly be evaluated in words. I am equally indebted to Dr. Ian Rae-side (School of Oriental and African Studies, London University) and to Dr. David Pocock (Institute of Social Anthropology, Oxford University), who critically read the manuscript and made suggestions which have been very valuable indeed. My friends Mr. Shanker C. Bhatt (News Editor, All India Radio), Mr. Yagnesh H. Shukla (*Bombay Samachar*), Mr. Ranchhodlal Vayada (*Jansatta*) and Mr. Shanker N. Bhatt were kind enough to help me by way of discussion on several points arising here.

Finally, while acknowledging my indebtedness I must say that I alone am responsible for all that is said and done here.

M. S. UNIVERSITY
OF BARODA, 1965.

R. D. Parikh

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INTRODUCTION

AN ATTEMPT is made here to suggest a sociological approach to the study of the press. It is based on the proposition that the press is one of the institutionalized forms of communication and is related to certain social institutions and groups, all obtaining within the larger society. What is aimed at is to locate these institutions and groups and to demonstrate their relation to the press.

The Gujarati language press existing in Western India since 1822 is selected for study as an illustration, it being easily available for the purpose.

During the preliminary exploration it was noticed that its nature and growth can be shown to be related to:

Technology :*

- (i) The technique of printing and changes in it,
- (ii) Employment of the means of communication such as the post, telegraph, telephones and the teleprinter,
- (iii) Employment of mechanised means of transport such as the railways.

Education :

- (i) Spread of literacy after the introduction of formal education,

* By an institution is meant here a *set* of interwoven processes, patterns, relations, sometimes instruments and norms built around a function or functions.

Prior to its introduction in India by the people from the West, technology had become an institution in the above sense in the Western culture. Its institutional features began to be manifest in India since its introduction by the Westerners, hence, technology is treated here as an institution.

- (ii) Establishment of centres of higher learning (Universities).

Government:

The form of government; its policies expressed in rules made regarding printing and publishing in general and regarding the press in particular.

Certain Groups:

- (i) Emergence of groups of persons with divergent interests such as commercial interest, political interest and religious interest,
- (ii) Emergence of groups with different ideas and ideologies about economic, political, religious and social re-organization.

Trade and Commerce.

Before proceeding to relate the above to the nature and growth of the Gujarati press it may be mentioned here that these are its concomitant and inseparable aspects deemed to have precise meanings here. Take nature first as an illustration. Nature means the essential features, attributes or characteristics of a thing. In the present case, the Gujarati press was found to have several specific features or attributes. Of these, the communication of information about various occurrences was one, about trade and commerce or about sale and purchase of things was the other, and, communication of views on economic, political, religious and social changes was the third, and, so on. In particular, what was so specific about the press was that it included matter meant to entertain or instruct its readers. In course of time one or the other of these features became more frequent and prominent than the rest in a way that could be measured by the space that it occupied in the journals. Whatever of these features became frequent and prominent thus is taken as indicative of the nature of the Gujarati press. In particular for instance, it was found that during its initial stages (ap-

proximately from 1822 to 1852) the Gujarati press was communicating information almost entirely devoted to trade and commerce, while, later (that was from 1852 to 1864) it was devoting itself mainly to social reformist views, and, these were followed subsequently by political views mainly. Other matter did appear alongside but it was given only a secondary place. In the present context therefore, the communication of commercial matter or of reformist or political views is taken as indicative of the nature of the Gujarati press during these periods.

Growth implies increase. In the present context, growth of the Gujarati press means increase in the quantum of matter contained in the journals, in the size of the journals, in the frequency of publication of the journals, in the number of journals published, in the number of places of publication of the journals, in the circulation of journals, in the number of places of circulation of the journals and lastly, increase in the readership of the journals.

Nature as well as growth in this case have been treated separately to show that some of the social institutions and groups facilitated a change in the nature of the Gujarati press, and, when its nature changed its growth was effected. Similarly, when these institutions and groups helped its growth, its nature too changed, and, so on. Thus, the overall relation between the Gujarati press and the institutions etc. is demonstrated. This works on the following lines in particular:

1. When it emerged, the Gujarati press was associated with the commercial interest groups in Western India. These were comprising of Parsis, Hindus (Banias, Bhatias etc.) and Mohommedans (Kucchhi Memons, Khojas and Bohras). Publication of matter pertaining to trade and commerce being its main feature characterized its nature then.

2. Emergence of a group aspiring to bring about religious and social reforms — the *Sudharawala* (Social reformists) including Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Mr. Karsandas Mulji, Mr. Narmadashanker Kavi, Sir Mangaldas Nathubhai, Mr. Mahipatram Roopram, Mr. Dalpatram Kavi and

others—and its association with the Gujarati press brought about a change in the nature of the latter; it became a vehicle of social reformist views mainly.

3. This change in its nature had repercussions on its growth, but rather adversely—journals devoted entirely to social reformism lost clientele gradually because the 'traditionalists' who were in a majority did not favour the reformist views of the 'moderners' who were in a minority.

4. By about the year 1864 the Gujarati press secured a varied and wider clientele in the different parts of Western India; its circulation increased both numerically and spatially leading to its further growth. Its growth at this stage was indicated, moreover, by increase in the size of the page and in the number of pages in the journals which were started from different centres. This growth was possible, also, due to,

(i) Changes in the technique of printing :

The earlier Gujarati newspapers were lithographed or were printed with manually cut type. They were printed on a hand-operated press which could bring out just a few small sheets per day at considerable cost. Later, the machine-made type was used for setting on bigger matrices which were operated by steam. These could print hundreds of bigger-size copies in a few hours and that too at cheaper cost. Moreover, availability of readymade printing equipment prompted some persons in places like Ahmedabad, Kheda and Surat to publish newspapers and thus the number of Gujarati journals increased.

(ii) Introduction of formal education and consequent spread of literacy :

After the introduction of formal education the number of literate persons in Western India increased. That provided the Gujarati press with a wider readership leading ultimately to its growth.

(iii) Introduction of mechanised and speedier means of transport—the railways:

The construction of railways contributed to the spatial expansion of the Gujarati press as the railways carried newspapers over longer distances from the places of their publication and thus helped to actualize the potential readership of the Gujarati press created by the spread of literacy.

- (iv) Introduction of speedier means of communication—the post and telegraph:

The postal services helped the Gujarati press in this respect since the newspapers could be distributed among distant subscribers speedily and at nominal cost through the post. Besides, the regular postal services helped gathering more news to fill in the space of the larger-size newspapers. So did the telegraph facilities. More news could be procured for publication telegraphically in a very short time from places far and near.

- (v) Increase in trade and commerce:

With an increase in trade and commerce in Western India a need was felt to adopt means for sales promotion of goods. This was best ensured by advertisements and these fetched additional revenue to the press. This revenue went a long way in financing newspapers which were growing in size. That helped them to accommodate additional advertisement matter and to get still more yield.

5. As the Gujarati press obtained a varied and wider clientele, its nature changed: it became mainly a vehicle for ventilating the needs and grievances of the people who were becoming rather uneasy due to the policies of the Government.

6. As more and more people looked upon these policies to be affecting them, the more did they evince their interest in the press and that ensured its larger circulation and it grew further.

7. With the emergence of groups which formulated the popular needs and grievances into a well-knit political

terminology and after the identification of the Gujarati press with these groups (The Bombay Association, The *Sharda Pujak Mandali* and finally the Indian National Congress), the nature of the Gujarati press changed once again—it became a campaigner against the Government which was providing the image of an ‘alien domination’.

8. As the appeal and consequently the membership of these groups increased, the further growth of the Gujarati press took place.

To conclude then, this study aims to demonstrate such an interplay between the social institutions and groups on the one hand and the nature as well as growth of the Gujarati press on the other. It aims to depict thereby the close connection that the press has with the society in which it functions.

CHAPTER ONE

EMERGENCE OF THE GUJARATI PRESS

THE PRESS (meaning journals of different periodicities) emerged in India in the wake of British rule and its consolidation. It was started for the first time by Westerners and in the English language. It exhibited before the Indians a novel method of communication which was unknown so far in India. This new method of communication was adopted in this country at different places by different groups as and when factors facilitating such an adoption materialized. Presently it will be seen how initially the English language press came into existence in India. Then, the emergence of the Gujarati press will be discussed.

Since the early 18th century various people from the West including the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French, and the British, had been struggling to establish themselves in India. Of these the British, through the East India Company, consolidated their power in parts of Bengal, the Madras Presidency and Western India towards the latter half of the 18th century. They were able to restore stability in these parts and particularly in the cities like Calcutta, Madras and Bombay.

Along with the restoration of law and order and with the expansion of the power of the East India Company, the number of Englishmen coming and settling in these cities was continually increasing. The majority of these Englishmen were either the covenanted servants of the Company or were connected with it in some other way as 'surgeons, lawyers and professional men of various kinds', and quite a few of them were trading with distant ports in Europe and China.' These Englishmen who had come to this foreign land had necessarily an identity of interests. These

interests having minimised their differences of opinion, the relations between them began to grow and they began to live in this alien country like one community.

People forming such a community need activities which can help them to maintain contacts among themselves as well as to create an atmosphere of the common culture which they shared in their own country. They need agencies, besides, to keep themselves in touch with the affairs of their motherland, which they have left behind. They require moreover, channels for maintaining their contacts with the administration under whose aegis they are living and under whose patronage they are trading five thousand miles away from their homes.

For the fulfilment of such needs, the British settlers used to arrange 'dinner parties (*Burra-Khana* — the Grand Feed), dancing parties, picnics, hunting expeditions and occasionally theatricals'.² And conversant as they were with the press in their country, they could satisfy their interest in European events by procuring even out of date newspapers from England.³

Still, however, they felt the need for 'something' which could help them in communicating personal and commercial intelligence, in keeping in contact with one another and with the administration. Now that their numbers were increasing and their activities expanding,⁴ communication by word of mouth was quite inadequate to meet their needs. Something more extensive was needed to fill in the lacuna in the life of a community which had started building up its commercial and political future in this foreign land.

Indicative of this widely felt need was an announcement affixed to the gates of the Council House in Calcutta in the year 1766. The announcement, whose author was one Mr. Bolts, read:

'To the Public:

Mr. Bolts takes this method of informing the public that the need of a printing press in this city being of great disadvantage in business and making extremely difficult to communicate such intelligence to the com-

munity, as is of utmost importance to every British subject, he is ready to give the best encouragement to any person or persons who are versed in the business of printing to manage a press, the types and utensils of which he can produce. In the meantime, he begs to inform the public that having in manuscript many things to communicate, which most intimately concern every individual, any person who may be induced by curiosity or other more laudable motives, will be permitted at Mr. Bolts' house to read or to take copies of the same. A person will give due attendance at the house from 10 to 12 any morning'.⁵

Now, printing was not known in India before 1556. It was introduced here for the first time by the Portuguese (in Goa) for publishing Biblical literature.⁶ In the British Indian territories efforts to set up the first printing press were made by Mr. Bhimji Parekh, a native of Western India. Mr. Bhimji Parekh had asked the Court of Directors of the East India Company to send a printer from England as 'he hath curiosity and earnest inclination to have some of the *Brahmini* writings in print'.⁷ Even then Mr. Bolts' announcement produced no response until the year 1780 when Mr. James Augustus Hicky was able to set up a printing press in Calcutta for the specific purpose of bringing out a newspaper, the *Bengal Gazette or Calcutta General Advertiser*, in the English language—the first newspaper ever to be published in India.⁸ This was followed by the *India Gazette* in the same year. Published in English, this journal too was edited by two Englishmen, Mr. B. Messink and Mr. Peter Read. Then came into being the *Calcutta Gazette* in 1784. Within a couple of years of Mr. Hicky's pioneering attempt five journals were founded in Bengal, while Madras saw the birth of its first newspaper, the *Madras Courier*, in October 1785 to be followed by the *Madras Harakuru* in 1791.⁹

The contents of all these journals which were published in English and which were edited by Englishmen were meant mainly to cater to the needs of the British commu-

nity living in India. As such they contained 'parliamentary reports, editorials on subjects of interest to the resident Britons, on events in England, on the army and, at times, on the reported plans of the native rulers'. In addition to this type of information, the early English newspapers contained, 'news-letters and reports from Paris, Stockholm, Vienna, Madrid, China, Rio de Janeiro and other countries of interest'. The social news columns included lists of arrivals and departures in the British community and announcements of births, deaths, and engagements'.¹⁰ They contained at times attacks on the administration and at times lengthy laudatory notes on the 'deeds of some British enthusiasts which could go a long way in improving the lots of the natives'.¹¹

II

Turning to the West of India, Bombay during those days was emerging as a busy commercial centre. The total clearings at Bombay harbour were nearly 75 foreign and an equal number of coastal ships with a total tonnage of nearly 60,000, amounting to an aggregate value of Rs. 81 lakhs.¹² As the Gazetteers describe it, 'Bombay being the only perfectly secure spot in that quarter of India, it had drawn to it in the course of years many of the native inhabitants together with much of the wealth of the adjacent countries'.¹³ They add, 'each year brought fresh and more wealthy settlers and every sea breeze wafted into the crowded harbour of Bombay, ships of every port from China to Peru'.

And it was indeed so. Bombay was attracting many Parsi, Hindu (including Bania, Bhatia and Lohana) and Mohomedan (including Kucchhi Memon, Khoja and Bohra) businessmen from Western India. The number of these inhabitants was increasing every year. When the population of Bombay was estimated at nearly one lakh in 1780, those from Western India among them were about 6000. These included 3087 Parsis, 1637 Banias, 266 Bhatias and several hundred Lohanas and Mohomedans.¹⁴

Almost the whole trade of the Island was in the hands of these Western Indians who had opened their business firms both in Bombay and in stations far off in the other parts of Western India, according to the Gazetteers and the author of *Mumbaino Bahar*.¹⁵

These traders who had set up trade connections between Bombay and their branches in Western India, used to exchange* letters for communicating commercial information. References to such letters have been found in the old account books of one Bombay businessman who had to pay 'emergency charges for transmitting one letter to Surat'. Such letters have been alluded to also in *Mirat e Ahmadi* (1760),¹⁶ and in the transactions of the *Parsi Panchayat* of Bombay.¹⁷ These letters were carried by couriers or messengers known locally as the *Kasad* and *Khepia*.¹⁸ The *Kasad* and *Khepia* worked under the supervision and protection of a divisional head known as *Madadho*. A *Madadho* lived in each of the big commercial places such as Broach, Surat, Nadiad, Kapadvanaj and Ahmedabad.¹⁹ In addition to these *Kasad* and *Khepia* who mostly carried letters, there were *Angadia* who used to deliver costly commodities as well as letters from one place to another. The letters thus exchanged between traders in the different commercial centres in Western India contained commodity prices and stock positions and were thus helpful in carrying on trade between the different places such as Bombay, Surat, Broach, Kheda, Nadiad, Kapadvanaj, Dholka, Ahmedabad, Ghogha and Verawal.²⁰ The agents or traders used to describe in their letters the local climatic conditions as well as some local events. They used to write about local economic and political conditions, moreover, with a view to explaining the price fluctuations in their respective regions. It is even claimed that the news about Nadirshah's sack of Delhi was known in Western India through such letters.²¹

* It appears from the Gazetteers that the exchange of messages was carried on in those days through couriers and runners plying between different centres in country ships and through jungle tracts.

While information used to be spread in different commercial places through this method of exchanging letters, local information in such places was disseminated in a different way. There used to be *criers* and drum-beaters known locally as the *Pokarchi*²² and the *Dandiyo*²³ respectively. They moved from street to street with a bronze gong or a drum. After attracting attention they shouted loudly to communicate to the people whatever information had to be spread. Sometimes warnings of imminent floods in the low-lying areas were proclaimed through the *Dandiyo*;²⁴ sometimes announcements regarding local gatherings were made through these *criers*.²⁵

The trading communities in Bombay in particular needed information about the arrivals and departures of ships, as the latter carried different commodities and even passengers from the coastal ports. That need was fulfilled by some local enterprising merchants and ship-owners by engaging *criers*,

'who went round the native town, halting at centres where businessmen and women congregated. There were a couple of *criers* with lungs of brass and stentorian voices. Each took his turn. The *crier* would stand at one of the recognized business centres in the native part of the fort, while all and sundry gathered round him. He then proclaimed the date on which the vessel would start, the name of the *bundar* (port) from which the start would be made, the names of the ports at which it would anchor to embark and disembark passengers. The programme of the departure of the vessel would be repeated in different market places like stereotyped recitation'.²⁴

Such areas are known, even today, as '*Dandiya*' Bazaars in Broach and Baroda.

** Even twenty years back local announcements regarding precautions to be taken against floods or epidemics were being made through the *Dandiyo* in Baroda, Broach and Surat. What is more, during 1936-1940, many children have shouted announcements after beating a *thali*, (a brass plate), about public meetings, movie shows and dramatic performances to be held in the streets of Baroda.

In this way, the indigenous methods of communication employed in Western India towards the end of the 18th century included *Kasad*, *Khepia* and *Angadia* who were the vehicles of inter-centre communication and that too between different commercial firms; they included, moreover, *criers*, drum-beaters and the *Dandiyo* for mass-communication. All these indigenous methods could effect communication, but rather imperfectly. They were not speedy nor always reliable and above all they were rather costly. The charges for carrying information varied from courier to courier and according to the distance traversed and the urgency of the matter to be communicated.²⁵ The common feature of these indigenous methods of communication was that they were mostly *oral* and whenever they were written, they involved just a few persons and hence were limited.

However, communication in written rather than oral words would be needed by the trading community in Bombay. The traders in that city had to keep themselves in touch with the details of the schedules of the incoming and outgoing ships. They had to keep in touch with their variegated cargo. They had to keep pace with the prices which were current in the market so as to cover and sell commodities from time to time.²⁶ In other words, the increasing trade and commerce of the city of Bombay needed extensive, rapid and cheaper communication which would be relatively more enduring than that by the oral methods. Their written communication was quite meagre, it being hand-written only. The alternative to manuscript communication would have been printed matter, but the technique of printing had not reached Bombay in those days. Though printing was made use of by about 1780 in Bombay by a Parsi gentleman, Mr. Rustom Carsaspjee, who brought out a 'Calendar for the Year of the Lord 1780',²⁷ it was not harnessed for communication purposes even by Westerners in Bombay. Though they were conversant with both the technique of printing as well as with its use for communication purposes, they carried on without it for some time and used to procure English journals from Calcutta.²⁸

This continued till 1789 when an Englishman set up a

printing press and started the *Bombay Herald*, an English weekly journal from Bombay. No issues of this journal are traceable; though the Bombay City Gazetteers and other authorities state that it was the first journal ever to be printed in and published from Bombay.²⁹ The journals to appear next in Bombay were the *Bombay Courier* and the *Bombay Gazette*, both in English and started by Englishmen. The earlier issues of these two journals are not traceable, but judging from their subsequent issues it appears that they were started in the years 1790 and 1791 respectively and that the *Bombay Herald* had merged with the *Bombay Courier* in 1791.³⁰

III

The *Bombay Courier* referred to above was a weekly, published from Bombay. It was started by Mr. Luke Ashburner. Printed in the *Bombay Courier Printing Press* by Mr. Joseph Burne it contained four pages, each with four columns. On its title page appeared the emblem of the East India Company's government.³¹ From the accounts given by some English observers who had a chance to see the earlier issues of the *Bombay Courier*, it appears that it contained announcements about the arrivals and departures of ships from British and other ports containing merchandise in which the native businessmen were dealing. It contained notifications issued by the local administration from time to time. A large space in this journal was devoted to the interests of the resident Britons, while, next to that, space was occupied by announcements pertaining to the sale of local premises and other goods. At times the *Courier* published literary comments; occasionally letters from readers appeared but mostly it acted as a vehicle for communicating notifications and advertisements issued by the Company Administration in Bombay.³²

All the matter being published in the *Bombay Courier* was in English and had thus a limited area of communication. The Company's Administration must have been aware of this as also of the importance of communicating in the

local languages, more particularly in Gujarati, as 'most of the city's trade was in the hands of the Gujarati speaking people from Western India and Gujarati had consequently become the *language par excellence*, the language of the bazaars'.³³ But, it was not possible to publish anything in the Gujarati language as there was no provision for Gujarati printing. That was so firstly because Gujarati type for printing purposes was not available then; secondly because few among the natives could take to printing, there being a taboo on even touching the ink used for printing purposes as it was believed to contain animal fat.* Consequently upper-caste Gujarati Hindus who could afford to invest money in printing would not take to it because of the taboo.

But that taboo did not apply to some people such as the Parsis. A Parsi gentleman, Mr. Jijibhai Beramji Chhapgar could be engaged, therefore, by the *Courier Printing Press* as a printer. At the instance of his employers Mr. Jijibhai Chhapgar succeeded in 1797 in 'cutting' Gujarati type for printing purposes, 'without any other help or information than what he gleaned from Chamber's Dictionary of Arts and Sciences', according to Mr. Robert Drummond, author of some vocabularies, who met Chhapgar in 1799.³⁴ The type 'cut' by Chhapgar was movable, yet there appeared an unbroken line connecting different letters at the top. The Gujarati script so prepared was known as the *Mahajan* script.

The Westerners who had exhibited the use of the printing technique for communication purposes in the English language were to become pioneers in harnessing that technique for communication in the Gujarati language as well. The Gujarati type made by Chhapgar for the *Courier Printing Press* was made use of for the first time in the English journal the *Bombay Courier* dated 28th January, 1797. A Gujarati notification issued by the Company Ad-

A reference to such a taboo is available in an announcement published in 1840 in the '*Digdarshan*' a Marathi periodical published from Bombay: *Digdarshan*, Vol. I, p. 212.

** *Chhapgar* meaning Printer.

ministration appears in that journal, reiterating a previous order issued orally, prohibiting unrestricted movement of stray cattle in the Fort area of Bombay city.³⁵

The frequency of communication of information in the Gujarati language in the *Bombay Courier* went on increasing. The contents of such information were also changing. In addition to notifications of the Company Administration, there began to appear by about 1798 advertisements addressed to the local inhabitants by private individuals and firms. Typical among them were: announcements of auction sales of commodities and premises, announcements about loss or misplacements of articles, announcements about programmes of ships passing through the Bombay harbour and resolutions of company meetings.³⁶

The resolutions etc. were published in Gujarati in this English newspaper and additional off-prints of them were distributed in all principal towns and villages in Gujarat. It may be noted here that the type used in these Gujarati advertisements had changed—the line at the top of letters was deleted in subsequent printing.

These Gujarati advertisements published in the columns of the English journal as well as the indigenous methods of communication could meet the immediate requirements of commercial communication to some extent. They could cope with the communication needs of a limited number of people with limited commercial activities. But the year 1800 witnessed an important event—the transfer to the Company of the whole administration and revenue of Surat which was already in trading connections with Bombay. This put Bombay in possession of political authority almost co-extensive with that which the British enjoyed towards the beginning of the 20th century. Moreover, the bulk of trade had nearly doubled compared with that of the previous decades and circumstances were sufficient in themselves to occasion a rise of population in Bombay. Captain Hall who visited Bombay in 1812 estimated that there were 1,03,786 Hindus (Gujarati and Maharashtrians), 27,811 Mohommedans, 13,156 Parsis, 14,454 native Christians and about 1,725 Europeans (resident and troops) living in

Bombay at that time.³⁷ Of these, he estimated, 'quite a large number were from Western India, trading in commodities, that is, exporting to and importing from inter-coastal and foreign ports'. Such an increased population as well as increasing trade and commerce necessitated some new way for spreading business information, and now that the Westerners had showed them a modern method of mass-communication by utilising printing, the local population of Western Indians realised how much more extensive, rapid, cheap and permanent the new method could be as compared with the local indigenous modes of spreading information both oral and hand-written. Some of the local groups adopted therefore the method of spreading information by publishing handbills in Gujarati and distributing them gratis at large.³⁸

IV

Advertisements in the Gujarati language were printed and published, as mentioned above, in the English journal owned by Englishmen. Gujarati hand-bills as well were printed in the *Courier Press* owned by Englishmen. Besides, English and Marathi books sold in Bombay were printed at the *Sreerampur Missionary Press* in Bengal. There was no vernacular (Gujarati or Marathi) printing press in Bombay till Mr. Fardunji Marazbanji, a Parsi gentleman, set up one in 1812.³⁹ Fardunji had migrated to Bombay from Surat in search of some gainful occupation in 1808. He was patronised by Dastur Mulla Pheroz, a Parsi scholar, in whose library he was doing some book-binding work. He used to visit the *Courier Printing Press* frequently to meet his friend Mr. Jijibhai Beramji Chhapgar, who, it may be remembered, had cut the fount in Gujarati and who was looking after Gujarati printing work in the *Courier Press*. Having seen what a printing press could do, particularly one with Gujarati type, and being conversant with book-binding work, Fardunji decided to start a Gujarati printing press. He prepared Gujarati

type himself and took the assistance of the women folk in his family for polishing and finishing it. He set up a printing press in 1812 naming it the *Sri Samachar Press*.⁴⁰ There is no explanation for the name that Fardunji gave to his printing press; *Samachar* means *news*. Maybe Fardunji had visualised the possibility of bringing out a newspaper from that press in the future.

Be that as it may, Fardunji brought out from his *Samachar* printing press occasional hand-bills etc. to start with. He then brought out his independent publications. The first among them was an almanac (Hindu *Vikram* era calendar) published in 1814. It became very popular as soon as it was published and was out of print in no time. In 1815 Fardunji published the Gujarati versions of some religious books for the Parsis. He also brought out from his press the Gujarati translation of Murrey's book on English grammar. All these publications made his printing press known among the Gujarati inhabitants of Bombay.⁴¹ Besides the printing establishment, Fardunji was running a well-organized courier service through which he used to distribute letters locally and in different centres in Western India. He also kept a number of *Kasad* who used to carry letters to different centres, and knew thereby how dissemination of information had come to be a felt need of the Gujarati commercial sections in that part of India. No wonder he visualised the utility of a '*neeoozpaper*' as he put it, especially in the Gujarati language,⁴² and proposed to publish one.

He put the proposal before his agents and couriers in the different centres. He also consulted his friends and particularly his patron Dastur Mulla Pheroz who was a very influential personality in the community. Being supported unequivocally from all quarters, Mr. Fardunji Marazban sought permission of the Bombay Government on 26th February, 1822, to start the proposed newspaper which he was to print in the Gujarati language and which was to be named as the '*Shree Mumabaina Samachar*' (Bombay News).⁴³ The Bombay Government having granted permission on 9th March, 1822, Fardunji addressed a peti-

tion to the then Governor-in-Council requesting 'aid to the proposed venture'.

Mountstuart Elphinstone was the Governor of Bombay at that time. His characteristic views on the press are expressed in the following minute recorded in 1821,

'I look on the art (of printing and publishing newspapers) as too great a blessing to be withheld without the clearest and most incontrovertible reasons and I see no such reasons in the case of India. That the press may in the long succession of ages cause the natives to throw off our yoke is possible and even probable; but it will in the first place destroy the superstitions and prejudices of the natives and remove the pressing dangers created by the entire marked separation between them and their conquerors and this effect is certain while the other is problematical'.⁴⁴

The Government of Bombay favoured the proposal of Mr. Fardunji Marazban by sanctioning promptly Rs. 1200 as subscription for 50 copies of the weekly for one year. Fardunji secured advance subscriptions from about 150 persons. These included 67 Parsis, 14 Englishmen (officials and traders), 8 Hindus and 6 Mohommedans. Some of these subscribers were in Bombay, Surat, Broach, Kheda and Ahmedabad.

Mr. Fardunji Marazban issued an announcement on 10th June, 1822, in which he declared that he had decided to bring out a weekly newspaper in Gujarati, '*Shree Mumbaina Shamachar*', from the 1st July that year. He added, 'It will be interesting to know that among the English people there is a practice to publish newspapers while we Indians have no such vehicle for communication. Besides, the Englishmen value the newspapers so much that they preserve them for future references. I propose to bring out from my printing press such a newspaper; it will not only guide us in purchasing or selling things but will also entertain. The newspaper craves the support of all, it craves the blessings of God the

Almighty'.⁴⁵ He issued, what he termed as, the 'Prospectus of a Weekly Guzzarattee Newspaper entitled *Bombay Na Shamachar* to be edited and printed by Fardunji Murazbanjee' in which he declared,

'The first number of the work will be issued from the press on Monday the 1st July and continued on every ensuing Monday. The *Bombay Na Shamachar* will consist of,

- (i) Advertisements,
 - (ii) Foreign and Domestic intelligence,
 - (iii) Occurrences from English and Indian Newspapers,
 - (iv) Choice selections and moral lessons, as well as writings on rational subjects from the English and Persian books,
 - (v) The ships' arrivals and departures,
 - (vi) All approved communications from our correspondents,
- ALSO, (vii) Curiosities, anecdotes, poetry and other amusing and edifying miscellanies,
- (viii) Mostly however, interesting heads of commercial matters including extensive and accurate Price-Current will be given'.⁴⁶

In a subsequent announcement Mr. Fardunji Marazban appealed to the people to patronise the journal and requested them to advertise their goods etc. in the 'new newspaper'. He declared, '*Shree Mumbaina Shamachar* will publish information about the sale and purchase of commodities in Bombay and elsewhere, provided that those desirous of getting such information published, pay the due charges thereof'. And with a view to making the journal popular in official and non-official quarters, he said, 'It will include news about the Company's officials, about their arrivals, departures, their appointments; about births, deaths and engagements in their families'. He paid high tributes in that announcement to the '*Dharam Raj* of the Company' and wrote in eulogising terms about the

Governor-in-Council, Mountstuart Elphinstone, for 'their great benevolence'.

Fardunji had acquired a working knowledge of the English language, and he began to keep himself abreast of all matters published in the contemporary English journals. He engaged two translators for adopting matter from the English newspapers. He thus finalised all arrangements for the publication of the proposed weekly which was going to be printed with the type that he had made and with the mechanical device of a hand-pressure-press. He made arrangements to distribute it at different centres through his own courier service and fixed Rs. 24 as its annual subscription.

The first issue of the *Shree Mumabaina Shamachar* (*Bombay Samachar*) was out, as scheduled, on the 1st July, 1822. It was printed on rather rough paper in 8" × 12" size. It contained two columns on each page, there being four pages in the initial issue. The type used for printing purposes was fixed in such a way that a dot appeared after each word. Every page being eight inches lengthwise contained a column of four inches each, each column in turn contained 50 lines on an average.

The newly started Gujarati weekly evoked some interest locally. Its circulation increased by one hundred copies within only four weeks of its publication.⁴⁷ Besides, as it invited correspondence, a letter to the editor (called *Charchapatra*, meaning letter addressed to the editor for raising some public issue) appeared in its issue dated 29th July, 1822. It was about the 'Adhik' (intercalary) month in the Hindu calendar. The letter evoked some controversy about religious observances during that period. In the next issue appeared the editorial reply to this along with some more letters on the same issue.

As regards the news items, they were mostly gleaned from the existing English journals. They were supplemented, gradually, by news-letters from Broach, Navsari, Surat, Kheda and similar centres. Some of them described local climatic conditions, some again the local crop positions or events of local importance.

When the *Bombay Samachar* had completed one year of publication the number of its subscribers had increased further. The names of these subscribers were published in the newspaper as a token of the receipt of the subscriptions. Maybe it worked as an inducement to more people to be subscribers. From particulars about these subscribers it appears that most of them were traders and that the *Bomay Samachar* had spread not only in Bombay but also in Daman, Navsari, Surat, Broach, Kheda, Nadiad, Ahmedabad, Div and Ghoga.⁴⁸

The *Bombay Samachar* throughout devoted quite a considerable space to the 'Price Current' and to details about export and import of commodities. When some of the readers suggested the inclusion of 'useful and instructive matter' in the journal the latter began to publish 'good advice for straightforward conduct', 'instructions about the manners and customs of the people',⁴⁹ and, quite frequently poems to entertain the readers, in addition to the regularly published commercial information.

Corresponding to the increasing commercial activity in Western India, the need for commercial information also increased, so much so that the *Bombay Samachar* in its issue dated 20th March, 1831, contained 16 pages mainly full of such information. Of these, four full pages were containing advertisements, some of them even illustrated. The enterprising editor, being convinced of the importance of a Gujarati journal meant to cater to the communication needs of the Gujarati speaking people in Western India, imported from England new Gujarati type at a cost of Rs. 11,000. This machine-made equipment could print more matter: could fetch still more revenue and prompted Marazban to convert the weekly into a daily as will be seen in the next chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

SOCIAL REFORM

THE TOTAL AMOUNT of exported commodities from Bombay harbour during 1820-21, was to the tune of Rs. 1,55,25,954 and the imports amounted to Rs. 1,09,58,456 at that time.¹ Within a decade from this time, that is during 1830-31, the amount of exports alone reached a total of Rs. 2,50,86,803 and the imports by that time touched a total of Rs. 2,25,85,494.² This overall increase is indicated also by the amount of premium paid to marine and other insurance companies during that period. It had shot up to lakhs of rupees in a single year.³ Moreover, the Gazetteers mention, by 1830-31 there were several firms in Bombay working as bankers, brokers, agents and money-lenders, in addition to several hundred shops and establishments dealing in grains and cereals, bullion, cloth, brass and copper, iron, tobacco, liquor and hides. Almost the whole of this trade and commerce and the financial concerns were in the hands of Gujarati speaking people from Western India, people whose numbers were increasing in Bombay every year. They were importing commodities like grains, cotton, wool, tobacco, opium and precious stones worth lakhs of rupees from different commercial centres in Western India, such as Surat, Broach, Kheda, Kapadwanj, Khambhat, Ahmedabad and Ghogha.⁴ The annual exports from Ahmedabad alone, for instance, would amount to rupees seven lakhs by that time. Consequently, more commercial information needed to be communicated and the space allotted to the publication of this information in the *Bombay Samachar* had increased from a column or two in the beginning to several pages by 1831. As it was very essential for many a businessman to keep in touch with

the price-current and the details of imports to and exports from Bombay, and as these were published regularly and fully in the *Bombay Samachar*, the circulation of the latter increased locally as well as in commercial places outside Bombay. With increased circulation the popularity of the *Bombay Samachar* grew further as indicated by the satisfaction expressed by Mr. Fardunji Marazban for 'the kindness of the patrons who were subscribing to the journal'.⁵ Along with its increasing circulation and growing popularity, the number of advertisements appearing in the *Bombay Samachar* also increased. At times it contained four pages full of advertisements out of a total of 16 pages per issue.⁶

Mr. Fardunji Marazban decided to convert his weekly into a daily. He made an announcement to that effect in the weekly issue dated 2nd January, 1832. It said, 'We shall now publish a single page every day except Sunday so that information can be communicated urgently and without delay'.⁷ Fardunji was aware of the difficulties in procuring information for a daily newspaper: even the practice of appointing correspondents had not been adopted, to say nothing of a news-agency. He addressed 'a request to his subscribers, patrons and wellwishers to communicate to him any matter worthy of publication'. He also urged them 'to help the new daily by way of advertisements' and narrated the 'various advantages to business accruing from publication of advertisements in a newspaper'. Fardunji appealed to all Gujarati speaking people to entrust their printing job-work to the *Bombay Samachar* printing press and assured them that 'such work would be carried out promptly and at cheaper rates'.

The first issue of the daily *Bombay Samachar*, the first daily newspaper in the Gujarati language, was out on 3rd January, 1832. It contained a single sheet printed on both sides. Each page was divided into two columns and out of the total four columns, one and a half were full of price-current, while, half a column contained information about the incoming and outgoing ships with details about their cargo and the names of their captains. News, mostly

gleaned from the English journals such as the *Bombay Gazette*, the *Bombay Courier* and the *Bombay Native Observer*, occupied one and a half columns, while the remaining half column was devoted to advertisements, sundry announcements and the 'lucky numbers securing prizes in a lottery'.⁸ The matter received for communication through the new daily increased and the second issue of the *Bombay Samachar* dated 4th January, 1832, contained four pages. As the news, advertisements and commercial information went on increasing, the issue dated 6th August, 1832, contained six pages full of price-current, details of ships and their contents, news about arrivals, departures and postings of the Company's officials, letters to the editor, a poem and advertisements—all arranged systematically and closely printed with the newly imported type.

Fardunji's was not the only printing press in Western India at that time. By 1832, there were nine others—eight in Bombay and one in Surat.⁹ Some of them were lithographic ones and some were printing with movable type. Again, out of the 10 printing presses, one was run by Christian missionaries, four were owned by Englishmen, two belonged to the Company Administration and three printing presses were owned by Parsis. The Company presses were used for official publications, the mission press for religious ones. Four of the printing presses were used for publication of newspapers, books and sundry job-work. The remaining three printing presses were exclusively carrying out book-printing although they undertook such job-work printing as they could get.

Printing presses depending only upon job-work would be on the look-out to secure the printing work of some periodical so as to obtain a steady income.* Or else they would themselves contemplate publication of some periodical. They would do this so as to fill in the 'vacant' time which they would be otherwise forced to pass for want of enough printing jobs. These, despite the progress of book

* *Darpan*, a Marathi journal, was printed in 1832 for its editor by Mr. Cowasjee Cursetji in the *Parsi Messenger Press*.

printing, would still be insufficient and too irregular to make the running of a printing press a worth-while proposition. In either eventuality, more printing presses would imply the probability of the publication of more periodicals. This is suggested by some instances. The *Bombay Samachar* came into being in 1822 after the *Samachar* printing press was set up in 1812. Again, the weekly called the *Mumbaina Varatman* came into being in 1830 after Mr. Naoroji Dorabji 'Chandaru alias Halkaru', its editor, had set up the *Chabuk Printing Press*. The same was true in the case of the *Jame Jamshed*. That weekly came into being in 1832 after Mr. Pestonji M. Motiwala had set up the *Jame Jamshed* (lithographic) printing press in 1828.

It is very likely too that the publication of a periodical from a printing press would help in fetching in more job-work. It had been seen earlier that the editor of the *Bombay Samachar* used to invite job-work in his columns. Similarly the editor of the *Varatman* used to insert the following notice in his weekly :

'The proprietors of the *Varatman** beg to inform the public that they have lately received a supply of English and Goozerattee Types of every description, the former from England and the latter from Calcutta. All orders for printing books, pamphlets, library catalogues, letters, circulars, forms or receipts, notices of tradesmen etc. will be executed at the lowest (sic) rate than any printing press in the Presidency. All reports of public institutions, literary and benevolent societies &c., printed at still lower rates. Orders addressed to the editor of the *Varatman* at his office will be thankfully received and promptly attended to'.¹⁰

It is enough to say that the technological advance in printing opened up the wider horizon of mass-communication.

* The *Mumbaina Varatman* was renamed as the *Mumbaina Harkaru ane Varatman* in 1831.

To revert to the newspapers — this last weekly was re-named, once again, as the *Mumabaina Chabuk* (*Lash*).^{*} It was converted into a bi-weekly in 1833. It contained six pages. One of them was devoted to advertisements, one to commercial information and one full page was allocated to letters to the editor. In the remaining pages were published news and sometimes articles pertaining to the Parsi community. The practice of publishing such articles was adopted by Mr. Naoroji Dorabji 'Chandaru' alias *Halkaru* ever since he launched his *Varataman*—the earlier version of the *Chabuk*. This was as a result of a newly emerging group within the Parsi community, which was associated with *Halkaru's* journal in creating public controversies on community issues. It appears from the annals of the *Parsi Panchayat* of Bombay during that period that some articles were meant for casting aspersions on the *Panchayat* much to the chagrin of the leaders of that organization. Following the new practice, the *Bombay Samachar* also joined Naoroji *Halkaru* in the controversy: it too began to attack the *Panchayat* leaders. It is on record that to meet the attacks of both these journals, one of the groups of the Parsis launched a weekly, the *Jame Jamshed*, from 12th March, 1832.¹¹ Under the editorship of Mr. Pestonji Motiwala and under the patronage of Sir Jamshedji Jijibhai, the leader of the *Parsi Panchayat*, the *Jame Jamshed* started meeting the challenge of the other journals. The controversies led to acrimonious attacks on one another; it was alleged that the strife was being fanned only to raise circulation. Be that as it may, since these newspapers started engaging one another in quarrels affecting the different groups, public discussion of community issues became one more task of the Gujarati press by the middle of the 1830's. And thereby a background was prepared for the addition of a new dimension to it.

II

In 1793, when the East India Company's Charter came

Editors used to give the English versions of their Gujarati newspaper-titles.

OF ADVANCE

before the British House of Commons, Mr. Wilberforce had raised the issue of 'doing something for imparting formal education to Indians'. But the matter was shelved as the House of Lords would not agree to this measure. In 1813, Mr. Wilberforce again raised the issue and the British Parliament agreed to 'set apart a sum of rupees one lakh for the Revival and Improvement of Literature and Encouragement of Learned Natives of India and for the Introduction and Promotion of Knowledge of the Sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories in India'.¹² During all these years, a school started in 1719 by Rev. Richard Cobbe to impart religious education to the children of European employees of the Company was in existence in Bombay. It was given an annual grant of Rs. 3,000 from the Company since 1807. In 1815, that is, two years after the British Parliament had sanctioned the sum referred to above, the management of that school was transferred to a newly set up body named the Bombay Education Society and Indian children were allowed entry into the school.

The scope of the Bombay Education Society was enlarged in August 1820 when a meeting of its members was convened with Mountstuart Elphinstone, the then Governor of Bombay, in the chair, 'to consider ways and means for promoting the moral and intellectual progress of the Indian people by disseminating among them knowledge of European Arts and Sciences'. At that meeting, a branch of the above Society called the Native School Book and School Committee was set up for the implementation of these objectives. The resolutions passed at the above meeting indicated that the primary responsibility of the Committee was to prepare text-books on modern lines for use in schools. In 1822 an independent organization called the Native School Book and School Society was set up.* The

* In this connection it may be noted here that similar organizations were formed in Madras and Calcutta. All the three organizations kept in touch with one another. At the general meeting of the Calcutta School Book Society held on March 5, 1828, it was resolved '—— a copy of the Report now read be forwarded to the Bombay

Society appointed a committee to go into the question of education. That committee said in its report that, 'the first and principal evil consists in the deplorable deficiency of Books for Education and Mental Improvement'.¹³ Realising that the paucity of books in the vernaculars was created by the lack of printing facilities in the presidency, Captain George Jervis, the secretary of the Society, addressed a petition to the Government on 4th October, 1823. He requested the Government, 'to help procuring Gujarati and Marathi types and a lithographic press'.¹⁴ Again, Capt. Jervis invited writers to translate English books into Gujarati and Marathi. He declared that the Government would finance the translation work and independent works in these languages.¹⁵ As a result of these efforts, several books were printed and were put into circulation to meet the requirements of the newly introduced formal education. The Native School Book and School Society (renamed as the Bombay Native Education Society) mentioned in its Report for the year 1825-26 that 'nearly 6400 copies of Gujarati school-books on different subjects were in circulation, while, efforts to increase the number of schools continued'.

Literacy went on increasing in Gujarat since then. That created a need for more and more books—text-books and other general works. As more books were in demand, the printing activity got a fillip. Gradually the number of printing presses began to increase and by 1850 many more printing presses had been established, not only in Bombay but also in Surat and Ahmedabad. As these cities got printing facilities, the number of books published from each of them began to increase. That helped towards augmenting literacy as well as fostering reading habits.

Native Education Society and the School Book Society at Madras, with the congratulations of this meeting on the encouraging progress which each is making in promotion of Native Education, and that those Societies be assured of the cordial pleasure it will afford this meeting, by any means to contribute to their increased prosperity and usefulness' (Quoted in Das Gupta A.C.), (ed.) *The Days of the John Company—Selections from Calcutta Gazette, 1824-1832*, (Calcutta, 1959), p. 304).

Not only that but the availability of a printing press also provided possibilities for the emergence of newspapers from each of these cities.

To revert to education, as seen earlier some Britishers and Christian missionaries believed that it was their bounden duty to 'avert the ignorance and superstitions of natives of India'. It was believed by most of them that 'there was but one remedy for all that, and it was education'. Many an Englishman was of the opinion that, 'if there be a wish to contribute to the abolition of the horrors of self-immolation and of infanticide, and ultimately to the destruction of superstitions in India, it was scarcely necessary to prove that the only means of success would lie in the diffusion of knowledge'. Mountstuart Elphinstone who held such views was making efforts to set up educational institutions in Western India. It was mainly through him that the Bombay Native Education Society came into being in January 1827. When Elphinstone relinquished his gubernatorial post, a meeting was held in his honour under the auspices of the above Society on 22nd August, 1827. It was resolved at that meeting to set up an 'Elphinstone Fund' for the spread of higher education. Contributions were collected for the purpose and a fund of rupees three lakhs was created. The money was to be spent 'for the spread of English education and for teaching European Literature and Physical Sciences to aspiring students'. To commemorate the efforts of Mountstuart Elphinstone, the 'Elphinstone Institution' was set up and it was decided to invite Western professors to teach these subjects under the auspices of the 'Elphinstone Professorship Fund'. Professors Orlebar and Harkness were invited in 1833 under this scheme on an honorarium of Rs. 1,000 per mensem.

A controversy had ensued by that time as regards the nature of the education to be imparted to the 'natives' of India. It reached its peak after Macaulay's minute on 2nd February, 1835, in which he had emphasised the need for English education. That controversy was put to an end by a resolution declared in the name of the Governor-General. It said,

'The great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European Literature and Science among the natives of India and all the funds approved for the purpose of education would be best employed on English Education alone'.

Under these circumstances the Elphinstone Institution was functioning in Bombay and an English school was started in 1842 in Surat under the headmastership of Mr. Dadoba Pandurang, a product of the Elphinstone Institution. One was started in Ahmedabad too. Those who could avail themselves of the opportunity joined these institutions. As gleaned from the life-accounts of those who were associated with these institutions, it appears that almost all the teachers were Englishmen, although some were Parsis, Maharashtrians (Prabhu) and Gujarati Hindus. From the same source it appears that the subjects taught included Mathematics (Algebra, Geometry and Trigonometry), Physics, Chemistry, English literature, History—mainly Western, Geography and Philosophy of Morals.

The number of students studying in the Elphinstone Institution was gradually increasing. In 1848 some of these students started the Students' Literary and Scientific Society. They were inspired by Professors Patton and Reid. These two Englishmen acted as the President and the Secretary respectively, of the Students' Society. Within three months of the foundation of the parent Society, two vernacular branches were organized under the appellation of '*Marathi Gnan Prasarak Sabha*' for Marathi speaking Hindus and '*Gujarati Gnan Prasarak Mandali*' for the Parsis. The object of these organizations was 'to promote the dissemination of knowledge among the uneducated masses by reading and discussion of essays on literary, historical and social subjects; by lectures on physical and chemical sciences accompanied by experiments, and, by the publication of cheap monthly periodical literature suited to the requirements and tastes of the people'.¹⁶ To these vernacular branches was added, in April 1851, the '*Buddhi Vardhak Sabha*' for Gujarati Hindus. All these organi-

zations came into being mainly due to the efforts of the Western teachers working in the different institutions. These Westerners not only founded these organizations but also guided their deliberations and frequently expressed their views on the Indian social conditions.

III

Among the leading Gujaratis of the time were Messrs Dadabhai Naoroji, Jamshedji Jijibhai, Naoroji Fardunji, Mangaldas Nathubhai, Karsandas Mulji, Pranal Mathurdas, Mohanlal Ranchhoddas, Durgaram Mehtaji, Mahipatram Roopram and Narmadashanker Kavi who were living in Bombay and other cities in Western India. Some of them belonged to the traditionally superior castes; some came from relatively well-to-do families. In the newly started educational institutions which they had joined, they came to know about the Westerners' views directly as also through their friends such as Mr. Bal Shastri Jambhekar, Mr. Dadoba Pandurang, Dr. Bhau Daji, Mr. Gopal Hari Deshmukh and Mr. Jagannath Shankersheth. It appears from the life-accounts of the leading Gujaratis that they were rather perplexed to notice that some aspects of their way of life, so scrupulously adhered to by them and by their fellow-Gujaratis, became the object of criticism and pity to the Westerners. And as some of them put it, their perplexity increased because these Westerners who were becoming their 'models' exhibited a different set of values about life. They began to take a keener interest in the aliens' culture. When friendly British administrators like Sir T. C. Hope and Mr. A. K. Forbes,* zealous teachers like Professors Patton, Green,

* Mr. Alexander Killnock Forbes was a friend of several Gujarati personalities in those days. He had a good command over the Gujarati language. He was the founder of the Gujarat Vernacular Society in 1848 at Ahmedabad and the first president of the *Gujarati Sabha*. He was compared with King Bhoj for his scholarship and patronage to learning. In a couplet much in vogue in those days it was said that, 'but for Forbes Gujarat could not have been resurrected', *Memoirs of the Late Hon. A. K. Forbes, by Tripathi Mansukhram Suryaram (1877), p. 7.*

Orlebar and Harkness** and the Christian missionaries† in some places expounded the ideas and ideals characteristic of the Western culture, 'a dilemma was created in their mind' according to Narmadashanker Kavi.¹⁷ He adds, 'the more we immersed ourselves in the study of Western culture, the more was our thinking activated; the more was our imagination excited. Especially, when we studied Western history, we began to visualise a way of life similar to that of the Westerners. The Western culture provided us with a new frame of reference on many matters'.

Judging from that point of view, these Gujaratis began to question, as did their Western contemporaries, the worthwhileness of many indigenous beliefs and practices. They agreed with the Westerners in criticising them. They called some of their own beliefs and practices, 'unwanted, harmful, evil and barbarous'. Many of them began to declare such views through lectures and papers read before

** Prof. Green was the headmaster in the first English School started in Surat. He was the teacher of Mr. Nandshanker T. Mehta. He taught his pupils 'the crux of English literature' said Nandshanker once. He had written a book in 1857 defending the Indian Mutiny of 1857. He was boycotted by Englishmen residing in Bombay for that (Ref. *Nandshanker Charitra* — Biography of Nandshanker by, Mr. Vinayak N. Mehta, 1916). Prof. Patton was the teacher of mathematics in the Elphinstone Institution, Bombay. He was a champion of female education. Narmadashanker has called him the 'father of female education'. It was at Prof. Patton's instance that the students of the Elphinstone Institution had started in 1848, the Students' Literary and Scientific Society and its vernacular branches. (Ref. *Students' Literary and Scientific Society, 1848 to 1947-48, op. cit.*)

† By about 1832, Christian missions had been set up in Ahmedabad, Bombay, Daman, Diu (Saurashtra), Kheda and Surat. Of these missions, the Roman Catholic Mission was functioning in Daman and Diu (till recently Portuguese) for more than a century. Other missions in the different places included the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, The London Missionary Society, The Baptist Missionary Society, The American Board of Missions, The Church Missionary Society and the Scottish Missionary Society. For a detailed account of these missions as well as of the role of the different missionaries, Ref. Ingham K. 'Reformers in India: 1793-1833: An account of the work of Christian Missionaries on behalf of Social Reform', (Cambridge, 1956).

the *Gujarati Gnan Prasarak Mandli* and the *Buddhi Vardhak Hindu Sabha*, organizations which had come into being at the instance of some Westerners as seen earlier. They declared that 'their fellowmen should change their way of life : should aspire towards a better one similar to that of the Westerners'.¹⁸

These Gujaratis who held such 'views' and who accordingly wanted their fellowmen to change their life-pattern were popularly known as the '*Sudharawala*',* that is, the 'Reformists'. These reformists were eager to spread their views among the masses so that the latter might give up their 'traditional' ways and be 'modern'. They realised that it was not possible to do that as effectively, either by word of mouth or even by discussing at length in the *sabhas* and *mandalis*, as it could be done through publishing some journal devoted mainly to spreading views. They therefore launched the *Rast Goftar*, the *Gnan Sagar*, the *Gnan Prasarak*, the *Buddhi Prakash* and similar journals, some from Bombay and some from Surat and Ahmedabad as 'educated' readers and printing facilities were available there.

The *Rast Goftar* was published as a fortnightly from Bombay in 1851. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji who was a student and later a professor in the Elphinstone Institution, and who was closely associated with other reformists, was made its first editor. He was to work without remuneration while the journal was financed by Mr. Khurshedji Nasarwanjee Cama. The first issue of the *Rast Goftar* was out on 15th November, 1851. It was declared therein that reformism among the Parsis was its primary aim. It said, 'the *Rast Goftar* will stand for explaining *good things* to the Parsis with a view to eradicating *unwanted* and *harmful* practices : with a view to bringing

Masani R.P., Dadabhai Naoroji (London, 1939), p. 58. Those who aspired to affect *Sudharo*—betterment in the society—were known as *SUDHARAWALA*—Reformists. Parsi journalists introduced this term into the Gujarati language. It had a loose connotation in the beginning. In course of 'time *Sudharo* suggested specifically, 'social reform', and the social reformists came to be known as '*Sudharawala*'.

about reforms . . . as such, about a thousand copies thereof will be distributed gratis'. The journal was printed in the *Daftar Ashkara Press*. It did not contain advertisements. Later, some of its patrons requested the editors to issue the *Rast Goftar* once a week instead of once a fortnight. They requested the editors, besides, to increase the size of the journal. Accordingly, the *Rast Goftar* was issued twice a week from 15th January, 1852. The editors declared, 'to spread the journal at large, its subscription has been fixed at only two *annas* per month. We however request those who can afford it to pay more and thereby help us in running this journal'.¹⁹ It is reported that this request was well responded to and donations were received by the editors. These enabled them to keep the journal running. The editors were aware of the value of advertisements which provided a regular revenue. Accordingly, they invited advertisements but lowered their rates to eight lines per rupee. Gradually, the *Rast Goftar* began to include matter pertaining to reform among the Hindus too.²⁰ Its main campaign was for widow-remarriage. It said in its issue dated 27th March, 1853, 'the nerves of the Hindus, it seems, are made of iron. Ah, what a torture they inflict upon a widow!' Again it wrote under the caption, 'liberate us (widows)'²¹ and again, it said, 'in the present British regime one's life is taken, if at all to be taken, at a stretch by hanging, while we (widows) are tortured to death'. From then onwards, the *Rast Goftar* went on writing on reform for all—the Parsis as well as the Hindus—and gave the utmost prominence to reformist views though it did contain some news and a few advertisements. In the annual list of items appearing in the *Rast Goftar* during 1860, the editors have included 97 articles under 'reformism'²² while the news content formed about 68 pages out of a total of 364 pages per year and the advertisement revenue on the basis of the rates it fixed would not go beyond Rs. 500 per year.²³ Though about eleven hundred copies of the journal were issued every week, the *Rast Goftar* had sustained a loss of Rs. 8,000 during the ten years of its existence. It had to make good that loss

from donations. Ultimately it was merged in 1861 with *Satya Prakash* which was edited by Mr. Karsandas Mulji, a Hindu social reformist.²⁴

IV

The *Buddhi Prakash* was a fortnightly run by the *Buddhi Prakash Mandali* from Ahmedabad. In its first issue dated 15th May, 1850, it declared,

“Those who have launched this journal are convinced that the mind of the people should be turned towards learning and knowledge (but) it is not possible to do so . . . it is rather difficult to ‘enlighten’ the people or to ‘reform’ them . . . without the help of a journal like this; this journal, ‘*Buddhi Prakash*’ aspires to cultivate a ‘taste for reading’ among our people and to ‘change’ their views”²⁵

This journal which was run by the *Buddhi Prakash Mandali* became defunct, however, within a year or so of its publication. It was restarted under the same banner by the *Vidyabhyasak Mandali* in 1854. This organization, like the *Buddhi Prakash Mandali*, was devoted to the ‘cause of enlightenment among the people’. Its organizers approached a similar bigger organization, the Gujarat Vernacular Society, for financial help in running the journal.

A brief reference to this organization becomes necessary here.

The Gujarat Vernacular Society was founded on 26th December, 1848, mainly through the initiative of Mr. Alexander Killnock Forbes. Mr. Forbes was posted in 1846 as an Assistant Judge at Ahmedabad. He was ‘pained’ like his other compatriots living in India at that time, to ‘notice the abysmal ignorance of the Gujarati people’ and was, ‘weary of the superstitions prevailing among the masses’. He convened a meeting of the leading citizens of Ahmedabad during the Christmas of 1848 for

'general discussions'. It was decided then to start the Gujarat Vernacular Society. The object of this 'learned institution' was 'to publish Gujarati translations of some valuable English books : to set up a library and to collect therein some useful books'.

When the organizers of the *Vidyabhyasak Mandali* approached the Gujarat Vernacular Society for financial assistance in running the *Buddhi Prakash* the latter granted it under a special resolution.

The *Vidyabhyasak Mandali* brought out the first issue of the monthly *Buddhi Prakash* in April, 1854. It was declared, "The *Vidyabhyasak Mandali* feels that people have still not cultivated enough liking for 'reading' ... they hesitate to spend money on reading books. It is proposed to publish this magazine so that people may get greater benefit verily, at cheaper costs". As regards the nature of contents to be included in the *Buddhi Prakash*, it was stated that "The *Buddhi Prakash* will contain articles on history and similar subjects : it will publish biographies of eminent men : it will include such other matter as would 'enlighten' our people : as would help them to benefit thereby" etc.

Some time later, when the *Vidyabhyasak Mandali* was not in a position to run the journal, the Gujarat Vernacular Society itself took over its publication. Mr. T. B. Curtis, Mr. A. K. Forbes and others who were members of the managing committee of the Gujarat Vernacular Society advised the board of management to appoint Mr. Dalpatram Kavi, the well-known Gujarati poet, as its editor. The *Buddhi Prakash* (which is still being published) had a circulation of more than a thousand copies by that time but it was read mostly in the cities and towns of Gujarat and that too by a certain section of the Gujarati people. It contained matter pertaining to 'social reformism' only occasionally accompanied by a note that the magazine aspired to disseminate 'knowledge' among the people : it aspired to banish superstitions, to bring about 'reformism'.

Reiterating the aims and reviewing the contents of the

Buddhi Prakash the following poem was published in its issue dated January, 1860 :

'An infant, I, *Buddhi Prakash*, full of zeal for reformism, have completed six years of my existence. O friends, come out to reform the country with all your might and tact; (because), if we do not help ourselves in that regard, we, the Gujaratis, will be deemed to have abandoned our great vows'.

'I entertain great hopes this year. I feel confident, the Gujaratis will not lag behind : I hope besides, the unwanted beliefs and practices will be banished : superstitions will disappear and the rays of the sun of knowledge will pervade all around'.

'This infant *Buddhi Prakash* requests all, with folded hands, let reformism prevail everywhere'.

V

Public discussion of issues affecting the community had become one of the tasks of the Gujarati press since the *Chabuk* and *Jame Jamshed* came into existence. The *Rast Goftar* was launched mainly to perform a similar task. But, herein it became the object of criticism of its contemporary *Chabuk*. The *Chabuk* contradicted, invariably, everything appearing in the *Rast Goftar*. Especially matter pertaining to reformism—whether with reference to the Parsis or to the Gujarati Hindus—was not spared by the *Chabuk*. These harangues continued for quite a few years. The editorial burden of the *Rast Goftar* was borne by Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji. He was assisted in that by his friends including Mr. Karsandas Mulji who actively helped him by contributing articles on reformism and who later became a member of the '*Rast Goftar* Syndicate' to run that journal when Dadabhai left for Britain in 1855.

Meanwhile, a controversy ensued between the *Brahmins* and the *Maharajas** (religious heads) of the *Vallabhite**

* The *Vallabh Sampradaya* (the *Vallabhite* Sect) of *Vaishnavism*. The followers of this sect worship the child-form of Lord *Krishna*

sect of Hinduism. The *Brahmans* living in the *Bhuleswar* locality of Bombay made 'grand offerings' of food-stuffs (*Chhapan Bhog*) to God Shiva and later partook of them. This was objected to by the *Vallabhite Maharajas*. They censured the *Brahmans*. They even ruled that those who had partaken food dedicated in the name of God Shiva had consumed *Shiva Nirmalya* food and had lost, hence, their ritual status. 'Their status could be restored', they declared, 'only by undergoing purificatory rites etc'. The *Maharajas* went a step further. They made use of the columns of the weekly *Chabuk* to lash out against the *Brahmans*. Even more, the *Vallabhite Maharajas* began to cast insinuations against all, including the reformists, who had been ignoring their superiority.

To combat such 'anti-reformist views' and moreover to flout the authority of the *Vallabhite Maharajas*, the reformist camp launched a weekly *Satya Prakash* (Light of Truth) in 1855 under the editorship of Mr. Karsandas Mulji who had already exercised his pen by writing in the *Rast Gofar*. Karsandas undertook to edit this weekly gratis and Sir (then Mr.) Mangaldas Nathubhai consented to make up for a certain period any financial loss that might result in its management. The weekly was priced at annas two per month. It was printed in the *Bombay Samachar* press and later in the *Ap Akhatyar Press*. On the first issue of the *Satya Prakash* a symbolic picture appeared. A 'philosopher' was shown standing with a balance in his hand. The right hand scale of the balance was shown rather lowered and the left hand one lifted up. In each scale a man was shown. The man in the right (lowered) one was engrossed in writing. An inkpot, a pen and a few books were shown lying beside him. The man in the left, lifted up and hence not as weighty as the right scale, was sitting on a couch in the midst of a garden. A money-box was shown near him, besides.

In the first issue of the *Satya Prakash* the following note appeared :

and are equally devoted to the *Acharyas* (*Maharajas*—the religious heads) of the sect.

‘Worthy and kind readers, you are handling today a new-born baby. Dear countrymen, as you are aware, we do not have any journal which can cultivate virtues, learning, industry and good conduct among the Gujarati Hindus : We do not possess such a journal which can perform that task at cheaper costs’.

‘Dear friends, we have adopted today a dangerous weapon. Instead of proclaiming beforehand how we shall wield that weapon, we shall say only this : May God grant us the good sense of using this weapon judiciously and impartially’.²⁶

Karsandas wrote in the *Satya Prakash* against the ‘orthodox’ beliefs and practices of certain groups. He named these groups as the *Kudharawala* that is, custodians of the traditional practices. He did not spare even the *Vallabhite Maharajas*. He declared, ‘The *Maharajas* are no less full of sins and pollutions; how dare they name the *Brahmans of Bhuleswar* as sinners’?

The traditional group under the leadership of the *Maharajas* was eager to meet the attacks of the reformists contained in the *Satya Prakash*. Hence, it was rumoured at that time, the *Chabuk* was bribed by that group to refute the allegations of the reformists. Karsandas gave rejoinders by writing in the *Satya Prakash* and in the *Rast Goftar*.

The *Vallabhite Maharajas* and their followers realizing further the power of the press in public controversies, published a periodical, ‘*Swadharna Wardhak ane Sanshaya Chhedaka*’ (The stabilizer of one’s religious faith and the averter of religious dilemmas), specially to meet the harangues of the reformists. They and their supporters wrote in this and in the *Chabuk* against the reformists. Karsandas, who was retorting to them, wrote in the *Satya Prakash* dated 21st October, 1860, an article entitled, ‘The True Religion of the Hindus and the Contemporary Fake Sects’. In that article it was contended that ‘The *Maharajas* were misleading the populace by concocting unauthorised and spurious versions of the Hindu scriptures and

were not justified in expecting the devotees to surrender their daughters and wives to them (i.e. the *Maharajas*) in the name of so-called *Samarpanam*—dedication'. The *Maharajas* were advised further in that article, 'to give up such practices of exploiting the devotees' etc.²⁷

The leader of the *Vallabhite* group, one *Jadunathji Maharaja* who held the *Gadi* (Seat of Worship) at Bombay and who claimed a large following throughout Western India, characterised these remarks of Karsandas as 'baseless'. He contended that these remarks and the whole article which appeared in the *Satya Prakash* were 'unfounded' and hence 'defamatory'. He claimed from Karsandas, the editor of that weekly, as well as from Mr. Nanabhai Rustomji Ranina, a Parsi gentleman, the printer of the journal, Rs. 50,000 as damages for the alleged 'libel' and filed a suit (known popularly as the *Maharaja Libel Case*) in the then Supreme Court at Bombay.²⁸

After protracted hearings the suit of the *Maharaja* was dismissed. The reformist group emerged victorious; Karsandas was to receive Rs. 11,000 as costs that he had to incur for meeting the challenge of the *Maharaja*. Sir Joseph Arnold, the presiding judge, observed during the course of his judgment that,

'To expose and denounce evil and barbarous practices, to attack usages and customs inconsistent with moral purity and social progress, is one of its (of the press) highest, its most imperative duties. When those evils and errors are consecrated by time, fenced round by custom, countenanced and supported by the highest and most influential class in society, when they are wholly beyond the control and supervision of any other tribunal, then it is the function and the duty of the press to intervene, honestly endeavouring by all the powers of argument, denunciation and ridicule, to change and purify the public opinion which is the real basis on which these evils are built and the real power by which they are perpetuated'.²⁹

. These views were reflected in almost the whole of the Gujarati press. The *Rast Goftar* (which had merged with the *Satya Prakash* and which was renamed as the *Rast Goftar ane Satya Prakash*)* contained a series of articles explaining the purpose of the social reformist movements. People were exhorted to take up the cause of reformism and to co-operate with the *Sudharawala* in their campaigns.³⁰ The *Bombay Samachar* (daily) published the day to day proceedings of the case from its start. Commenting upon the whole incident it expressed 'a satisfaction that *Sudharo* (Reform) was victorious after all'. It 'felt happy that *Sudharo* was well on its way to progress in Gujarat'.³¹ In a subsequent article it eulogised 'reformism and the untiring reformists'. It advised the reformists to continue their campaign and enumerated 'many a belief and practice which needed to be reformed'.³² The *Jame Jamshed* (another Gujarati daily) joined its contemporary Gujarati news-papers in commending reformism. It called upon the people to 'change their life-pattern in view of the changing modern circumstances'.³³ The *Buddhi Prakash* commenting upon the incident advised the *Maharajas* to 'devote their time to doing good to the people'.³⁴ It exhorted people to take to reformism and to advancement of knowledge for that purpose.

By 1861-62 the Gujarati press had become thus a whole-hearted exponent of reformist views in addition to being a vehicle for the communication of information. The process of transformation had set in few years earlier in 1851. At that time, however, mainly the *Rast Goftar* was publishing reformist views. Other journals published their routine matter, commercial information mainly, and occasionally some information about reformist activity. Gradually, these journals began to devote a column or two, and at times more, to reformist views. By 1855, these views and information about the 'reformist movement began to appear more frequently and elaborately in the Gujarati press. At that time the *Rast Goftar*, the *Satya Prakash* and the *Buddhi Prakash* were journals mainly devoted to

* It will be referred to, however, as *Rast Goftar*.

reformism. The others such as the *Bombay Samachar*, the *Samachar Darpan* and the *Jame Jamshed* were newspapers mainly for communicating variegated matter. But, they too joined the reformist movement and supported the reformist group. They published news about their activities and wrote articles to that effect. The *Samachar Darpan*, for instance, in its issue dated 29th November, 1855, had said, 'we have been watching with distress the activities of the *Vallabhite Maharajas* and their followers—we have been receiving many letters in that respect from some readers we feel confident that the orthodox practices will disappear because, as knowledge spreads among the people they will accept the reformists' views they would not tolerate such misdeeds of the *Maharajas*'.²⁵ Similar comments appeared in the *Bombay Samachar*, dated 21st December, 1855, and the *Jame Jamshed*, dated 25th December, 1855.

As the reformist group began to grow and as its activities began to attract public attention, by 1860-61, the campaign for reformism through the Gujarati press was further reinforced. The number of journals containing reformist views had increased by that time : in addition to the journals referred to above, there were several others including the *Buddhi Vardhak Granth*, published from Bombay by the *Hindu Gnan Prasarak Mandali*; the *Gnan Prasarak* or the Diffuser of Knowledge—published from Bombay by the *Ganean Prasarak Mandali*; the *Gnan Deepak* or the Lamp of Knowledge, published from Surat. This was, according to its editor, 'a monthly periodical issued under the auspices of the Gujarat Book and Tract Society with a view to forwarding the moral, mental and spiritual improvement of Gujarat'. There were also the *Satya Deepak* or the Lamp of Truth published from Bombay by Mr. Karsandas Mulji assisted by Mr. Nanabhai Rustomji Ranina, and the *Gnan Sagar* published from Surat by the *Swadesh Hitecchhu Mandali*.

Along with the rise in the number of reformist journals and the increasing space devoted to reformist views in the different Gujarati newspapers, the scope of the press cam-

paigns was widened to encompass not only a few issues but the entire social fabric. Instead of confining itself to widow-remarriage or the doings of the *Maharajas*, the Gujarati press began to write on many beliefs and practices prevalent among the Gujarati Hindus. These included dowry, child-marriage, seclusion of women, denial to women of the opportunities to receive education, the practice of breast-beating among women in public and collective mourning, the ban on travel beyond certain limits, particularly travel overseas, etc.

This phase in the Gujarati press continued for about a couple of years. Gradually, by the middle of the 1860's, reformist writings became less frequent. The different journals which were writing at length on several aspects of the Gujarati Hindus' life began to write occasionally on some topic such as female education or foreign travel. The space devoted to reformist views was shrinking. In the annual table of contents of the *Rast Gofar* for 1865, the editors have included 49 items pertaining to social reform.³⁶ In the subsequent year they have included 37 items under that head.³⁷ On a similar perusal of the contents of the *Buddhi Prakash* it is found that more emphasis was given to the spread of learning, to scientific inventions and to industries.³⁸ While the *Bombay Samachar* and the *Jame Jamshed*, both dailies with wide circulation in Western India, contained two and at times three pages full of advertisements and the rest of the space devoted to news, they published occasionally a brief note about the activities of the *Sudharawala*. The same was the case with the *Samachar Darpan*, daily from Bombay. While, journals like the *Kheda Vartman*, (weekly started from Kheda in 1861) and *Gujarat Mitra* (weekly published from Surat since 1864) took up local problems mainly. A marked change could thus be noticed in the nature of the content of the Gujarati press by the middle of the 1860's.

There were several reasons for this change. The main one was that the social reformist movement was itself losing its momentum as it was opposed by quite a majority of people in Gujarat and also because it was confined to cities

like Bombay, Surat and Ahmedabad. The urban intelligentsia who were guiding it and who were contributing to the different journals were fast losing their leading lights. Some of them like Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Mr. Mahipatram Roopram and Mr. Karsandas Mulji stayed abroad intermittently. Others were absorbed by the government in the educational service, which kept them away from the centres of reform. Especially, the task of preparing Gujarati school-books demanded their full-time devotion. As a result of this, many reformists could not participate in the reformists' meetings nor could they write in the journals on these subjects. The *Buddhi Vardhak Hindu Sabha* of Bombay which provided a platform to the social reformists and which acted as a centre for disseminating the reformists' views, could hold only ten meetings during 1862-63 as against 22 that it had held during 1855-1856.³⁹ The receding trend of the social reformist movement is indicated by the contents of the reformist journal *Buddhi Prakash*. During 1864-65 and onwards it contained mostly matter pertaining to the advancement of knowledge and to new inventions etc.⁴⁰

There was one more incident which had repercussions on the reformist movement. An economic crisis affected the cotton and the share markets in Western India after 1865. Prior to that crisis, that is in 1862, as Prof. Gadgil has quoted, 'began the period of extraordinary prosperity, caused by the rise in the price of cotton, which followed the American blockade. In those years, the ryots would, under ordinary circumstances, have suffered severely from the constant deficiency in rainfall during five successive seasons. But, the abnormal value of the produce made the scanty crop of a year of drought equal to the full crop of a good season'.⁴¹

The Gujarati businessmen received an economic fillip on account of the rising cotton prices. The author of the 'History of share and cotton speculations in Bombay' describing this observes, 'not less than 50 crores of rupees worth of gold and silver earned from the foreign markets began

to be flowing during the first few years of the 1860's in Gujarat, the land of cotton'.⁴²

'But', he and the Gazetteers add, 'the year 1865 resulted in a severe fall in cotton prices and a consequent economic depression. Many a Gujarati businessman was caught in the crisis'. Most of them were either the reformists or the supporters of the reformist camp. The people who were not happy with their activities did not advance them any loans to meet the crisis. More, they seized the opportunity to show their disapproval of reform and the reformists' activities and even withdrew their private deposits from the reformists so that the latter were rendered insolvent.

To turn to the third reason, almost all the journals devoted to the cause of social reformism had to be distributed gratis, to start with. They being views papers, were confined to certain sections only. That limited their income. Again, their subscription rates ranged from one and a half to two rupees per annum. On the other hand the cost of production of these journals would be much higher than that. Again, those who were running them owned no printing establishment. They had to get their journals printed at presses such as *Daftar Ashkara*, *Ap Akhatyar* or *Bombay Samachar*, which belonged to others. It was not possible for the reformist journals, hence, to supplement their income from job-printing. Their income could have increased to some extent by advertisement revenue. But, here again, the bulk of the advertisements was consumed by the Gujarati journals (dailies etc.) with longer standing and wider circulations. The reformist journals were suffering from a chronic paucity of advertisements. Whatever advertisements they secured were not highly paying, as they had to lower their advertisement tariff by comparison with others. Due to all these handicaps the reformist journals were economically unviable. They were running at a loss, and had to depend upon donations to make good that loss. But donations would be intermittent. They could not be a constant source of support. Even these donations ceased to flow after the econo-

mic crisis referred to above. The reformist journals had either to become defunct* or merge with others or overhaul their contents so as to be in line with other journals.

The other journals had joined the reformist campaigns when their circulation was limited and confined to smaller sections. As they expanded, such journals had to cater to the tastes of a variegated readership. They had to publish matter pertaining to everyday problems of the people who were struggling to adjust themselves to the changing circumstances after the political upheavals and the upsurge of 1857. Most of the journals had to put the controversial issues of reform into the background. If the reformist journals wanted to be in line with the others (in order to continue their existence) they too had to abandon highly controversial issues and give a wider coverage to other matter, satisfying the tastes of a wider and mixed clientele. That is, they too had to change, as did their other contemporaries, to keep pace with the times.

To sum up : the Gujarati intelligentsia, which had views on social reform instilled in it by the newly introduced 'modern' education, started spreading such views through the press and changed the nature of the latter by the early 1860's. But that could be only for a brief period because the reformist views could not be integrated into the social structure. Hence the tenor of the press changed: it made a shift in order to meet the popular expectations as will be seen in the next chapter.

* The reformist journal *Satya Deepak* run by Mr. Karsandas Mulji had to be closed down from 31st December, 1865. Commenting upon that, the daily *Samachar Darpan* said in its issue dated 1st January, 1866, 'If such journals have to be closed down, indeed, the cause of social reformism will suffer'.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PRESS AND POPULAR GRIEVANCES

I

FOURTEEN GUJARATI JOURNALS were in circulation by about the beginning of the 1860's.

The matter published in these journals was variegated. Advertisements appeared in almost all of them but some of them, like the *Bombay Samachar* and the *Jame Jamshed*, gave more news, those like the *Buddhi Prakash* and the *Gujarat Shala Patra* confined their matter to particular articles while the *Dandiyo* devoted its space to comments exclusively. Weeklies like the *Rast Gofdar* or the *Kheda Varatman* or the *Gujarat Mitra* published news, comments, *charchapatra* and some topical matter.

There was no fixed quantum of one matter or the other published in the different journals. Besides, the type of matter varied as much as did its quantum from journal to journal. But, taken as a whole* the printed matter in all the journals during this period, advertisements occupied about one-fourth of the total printed space. The remaining three-fourths of the space can be sub-divided as follows :

* The percentage of matter published in the Gujarati journals has been arrived at by the following method :

Three issues of each of the 14 journals were taken at random. The pages, that is, the printed matter in each of them, were measured length and breadthwise in inches. The total inches of printed matter were divided into (A) advertisements and (B) matter other than advertisements. The latter, that is, (B) was sub-divided further into different heads (a) Commercial news, (b) Other news, (c) Miscellaneous matter, (d) *Charchapatra* and (e) Comments, and the percentages were fixed by taking the total printed space as 100.

- (a) Commercial news : about 40 per cent of space
- (b) Other news (Political, social, sundry) : about 20 per cent of space
- (c) Miscellaneous matter (Poems, tit-bits etc.) : about 30 per cent of space
- (d) *Charchapatra* : about 5 per cent of space
- (e) Comments regarding reformism etc. : about 5 per cent of space

Six more Gujarati journals came into existence by about the beginning of 1870. Of them, the *Parsi Punch* (weekly) and the *Vepar Patrika* (trade journal brought out on the China Mail day) were published from Bombay. The *Necti Prakash* (weekly) was added from Broach, while Ahmedabad added three more—the *Ahmedabad Samachar*, the *Tikakar* and the *Chandrodaya*. All of them were weeklies. The total number of Gujarati journals thus came to 20 by the beginning of 1870. That number went on increasing, and the year 1871 saw 28 Gujarati journals in circulation. Bombay had added four new weeklies, the *Indian Critic*, the *Sunday Review and Dandiyo*, the *Yazadan Parast* and the *Arya Mitra*. One more weekly, the *Surya Prakash*, was brought out from Surat, while *Kheda Necti Prakash* was added from Kheda. Ahmedabad added one more with the publication of the *Gazette of Gujarat* (the total number of journals issued from Ahmedabad being five) and Kapadwanaj for the first time had a weekly, *Chandra Prakash*, bringing the total number of Gujarati journals to 28 and making the number of places of publication six. Some of these journals had ceased publication, many new ones* had come into being, and the upward trend in the number of publications of the Gujarati press continued to persist.

* The Reports on the Native Newspapers mention that the weekly *Mahudha Samachar* was published from Mahudha (Kheda District) during 1872 and the weekly *Adal Insaf* was published from the same place in 1875. From the same Reports it appears that Nadiad too had a weekly publication, *Duniya Dad*, for some time.

Along with such an increase in the number of journals, the number of pages in each of them had also increased. The dailies contained from four to six pages per issue. The printed space was 17 inches in length and 12 inches broad on each page. That was divided into four to five columns. The weeklies like the *Rast Goftar*, the *Gujarat Mitra*, the *Surya Prakash*,** the *Broach Varatman*, the *Kheda Varatman* and the *Hitecchhu* contained from 12 to 24 pages per issue. The printed space on each of them was 11 inches in length and 8 inches broad per page.

This increased correspondingly the matter published in each of the journals. The total contents which had so increased can be divided into, 1. News, 2. Comments, 3. *Charchapatra*, 4. Topical Reports and Articles, 5. Advertisements and 6. Commercial Intelligence or Price-current. The price-current covered quotations, not only from the Bombay market but also from the Calcutta, Madras, Liverpool and New York markets. The news covered happenings in India, other Asian countries and Europe. Again, the news which appeared in the Gujarati press included matter received through the inland post, the sea-mail or that received telegraphically. The comments had become more varied and elaborate. They touched a wider range of subjects from domestic events to those of international importance. The *Charchapatra* were as usual on controversial issues. Their number had increased so much that the editors had to defer their publication to subsequent issues. The topical reports and articles which were published mostly in the monthlies and in the weeklies at times, dealt with local social, religious, educational or literary issues. The advertisements had grown both in the space occupied and in their variety. Some of them announced the sale of new products, wonder drugs, household materials and books etc.; some of them

** It was a common practice in those days for journals in India to publish comments in the vernacular and English. The *Hitecchhu* and the *Surya Prakash* followed that practice. The comments in the two languages were generally identical, yet phrases used in both differed sometimes.

publicised the Gujarati dramatic performances being staged in Bombay; some of them gave details of newly set up lodging and boarding houses in Bombay while some of the advertisements announced the particulars about newly floated companies, banking concerns and lotteries.

Next to this increase in the number of journals, in the number of pages and in the variety of matter published, there was an increase, also, in the circulation of the Gujarati press. It appears from Government reports¹ that the aggregate circulation of the dailies had reached a total of 2090 copies per issue, while that of the tri-weekly and the weeklies together was more than 10,000 copies per issue. And the monthlies had touched a total of 1705 copies, bringing the total number of copies per issue in circulation to about 14,000.

The overall expansion of the Gujarati press described above was related to several circumstances in Western India during that period. As before, trade and commerce was one of them. After the introduction of steam-driven vessels and after the construction of the railways, trade had grown in Western India. It received a further fillip after textile mills² and other industrial concerns were set up in the presidency.³ Increased trade and commerce created a need for sales-promotion means—advertisements in particular. And now that the press was there to fulfil this need, advertisements in the different Gujarati journals began to occupy a major space. When newspapers like the *Bombay Samachar*, the *Jamc Jamshed* and the *Rast Gofdar* raised their advertisement tariffs,* they could obtain more revenue from the advertisements. Again, increasing commercial activity implied more job-printing (of books of trade, forms, vouchers etc.). That provided more income to journals owning their own printing establishments.

By this time there was further improvement in the printing technique. Formerly, most of the Gujarati journals were lithographed. The matter was written first by calli-

* From eight lines per rupee, these journals raised the advertisement rates to four lines per rupee per insertion.

graphists and its impressions were re-traced subsequently from stone-beds. As the matter was in hand-written characters, it consumed more space, more time and more money.* The newly designed type-setting method facilitated the inclusion of more matter in the same space because the machine-made type had a smaller and sharper face as compared with the lithographic characters. Next to that, there was an improvement in the method of obtaining impressions. The newly introduced hand-driven and later the steam-operated printing equipment helped the publication of large-size newspapers more rapidly (therefore with the latest information) and at cheaper cost than before.

Now about the increase in the contents: news for instance. Formely news was gleaned from the English journals. Later, the Gujarati journals procured news through the post and also through the sea-mail. It was stale and being scarce it was exhausted soon. The increased frequency of the Gujarati journals needed more news, more rapidly and continuously than before. This could be provided after the telegraph lines connecting Calcutta, Agra, Bombay, Peshawar and Madras were opened for general traffic in 1855. This could be provided, also, after the completion of submarine telegraph lines between India and Britain in 1860 and after the construction of land telegraph lines between the two countries in 1865. And more news could be collected after the Reuter's news agency began to supply news in bulk to the Indian press.⁴ The increase in quantity of news and matter in the Gujarati press was possible, moreover, after the postal services in India were rationalised and uniform postal rates were introduced in 1854.⁵ It was facilitated more, particularly when the post

* It will be interesting to note here that many times the absence of the calligraphists from the printing presses delayed publication of some journals for weeks together. Ref. *Gujarat Shala Patra*, Vol. III, January, 1864: 'An apology for delay'—cover page. Moreover, the calligraphists being specially trained persons charged more as compared with type composers who needed a little skill. Besides, the stone-beds were costlier, more space-consuming and required more labour for movement.

was carried by the railway-mail service, and when the postal rates were lowered still further. These facilities enabled the newspapers to procure a wider range of news and other matter from various places in Western India at cheaper rates and more frequently than in the previous years.

With the growth of population and with the increase in educational facilities in Gujarat, the number of literate persons had also increased. Their exact number during that period could not be obtained because they were spread over Bombay and Island, over the British territories extending from Bombay to Saurashtra and Panchmahals and in the princely states including Sachin, Dharampur, Rajpipla, Baroda, Khambhat and many smaller states in Saurashtra. The educational set up in all these administrative units differed. Hence the number of persons who could read and write differed from place to place. Yet on the basis of the section on Instruction in the Bombay District Gazetteers it appears that literacy had been rapidly increasing in Western India. From the reports on education (published in the *Gujarat Shala Patra*, Vol. I, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 1861, and Vol. VII, No. 5, 1867) it appears that there were 27 schools with 1469 pupils in 1841 in the different districts in Gujarat. These increased upto 733 (642 for boys and 91 for girls) with 47781 (44085 boys and 3696 girls) pupils during 1867-68. This increase in literacy in Gujarat created a potential readership of the Gujarati press.

After 1854 although uniform postal rates were introduced, the rates for carrying newspapers were fixed at two *annas* upto the first three and a half *tolas* (one *tola* = 11 gms. approx.), four *annas* upto six *tolas* and so on. Such being the postal charges, the subscription rates of many journals had to be raised; journals used to mention their subscriptions net and with added postage charges per annum. When the postal charges were revised in 1866 (by Act XIV of 1866), newspapers could be sent upto any distance in the country at one *anna* for the first 10 *tolas* of weight and so on. That enabled out-station subscribers to

obtain their copies at a cheaper cost. Not only that, due to the reduction in postal charges, more pages and hence more matter could be included in the different journals. Journals like the *Rast Gofdar* contained 16 and at times 24 pages which, under the reduced postal rates would cost an *anna* worth of postage. It may be said here that most of the Gujarati journals had fixed one and a half rupee as additional postage per year after the new rates were introduced, while dailies like the *Jame Jamshed* did not mention additional postal charges along with their subscription rates but included them in the latter."

All this could happen mainly after the railways were constructed in Western India. The construction work had commenced in 1854, it neared completion in 1864, and, by 1880 there were three different railway lines in the Gujarat area. One of them was the Bombay Baroda and Central India Railway (known then as the B.B. & C.I. Railway), the other one was the Bhavnagar and Gondal State Railway and the third was the Gaekwad's Baroda State Railway; (all these railways have been grouped together now as the Western Railway). The B.B. & C.I. Railway covered 389 miles between Bombay in the south and Wadhwan (Saurashtra) in the north. It was constructed between Bombay and Ahmedabad in 1864, and was extended upto Wadhwan in 1872. In details, the railway lines connected Bombay, Vapi, Udwada, Bulsar, Billimora, Navsari, Surat, Broach, Ankleshwar, Baroda, Anand, Nadiad, Mahemdabad, Barejadi, Ahmedabad, Viramgam and Wadhwan—south-north; and, Baroda, Dabhoi, Anand, Umreth, Dakore, Thasra, Godhra, Dohad, Mehsana, Palanpur, Limdi, Bhavnagar, Dhoraji and Gondal in the interior. Some of these places were district headquarters, while most of them were busy commercial centres in Western India, in all of them there were people who would be interested in reading a journal.

It is evident that speedy transport facilities, extensive communication arrangements and increase in literacy helped in stepping up the circulation of the press.

But, its readership was still larger than its circulation.

That was so on account of a number of libraries and reading-rooms started in Gujarat.

In 1855 there were ten libraries and reading-rooms in Bombay, one in Surat and one in Ahmedabad. By the middle of the 1870's, reading-rooms were started in Bombay, Surat and Navasari in the Surat area, Broach and Ankleshwar in the Broach area, Baroda and Dabhoi in the Baroda area, Kheda, Mahemdabad, Anand, Sojitra, Thasra, Umreth, Napad, Dakor, Veersad, Kathlal, Kapadwanaj, Mahudha, Petlad and Nadiad in the Kheda area, Godhra, Dahod, Lunawada and Devgad Baria in the Panchmahals area, and Ahmedabad, Sarkhej, Sanand, Barwala, Dhandhuka, Dholka, Dholera, Patan, Kadi, Mehsana, Modasa, Paldi, Sadra, Idar, Palanpur, Radhanpur, Visnagar, Viramgam, Kharaghoda, Ghogha, Amreli, Bhavnagar, Rajkot, Bhuj, Mundra and Mandvi in the northern parts of Gujarat covering Ahmedabad, Banaskantha, Sabarkantha, Saurashtra and Kucchh areas. All these libraries and reading-rooms were obtaining several Gujarati journals⁸ and were providing a constancy of subscription as well as a multiple readership to the latter, operating thereby in keeping up the growth of the Gujarati press.

II

Along with its further expansion since the beginning of the 1860's, various caste, sect and economic interest-groups were being associated with both running and reading the Gujarati press. Each of them incubated one or the other grievance against the Government for the latter's policies. Particularly its economic policies were creating an immediate and more crystallized dissatisfaction among the people.⁹ Some people were not happy with the newly introduced land revenue system. They were unhappy because they had to pay their revenue dues in cash rather than in kind which was the practice prevailing before. They had no alternative but to dispose of their products at the current prices in the urban markets to obtain cash for that purpose. Some other interests and sections associated

with the Gujarati press, dwelling in places like Bombay, Surat, Broach and Ahmedabad were ill at ease with local administrations, both municipal and Governmental, due to their taxation levies.¹⁰ These conditions coupled with the political upheaval after the uprising of 1857 had changed the perception of the people—some of whom were connected with the Gujarati press directly or indirectly. They started making suggestions through letters to the editors that the task of ventilating people's grievances should be taken up by the press. They wrote to the editors that the press should express the needs of the people.¹¹ Subsequently comments began to appear in some journals suggesting the task the press should perform. Typical among them was a comment appearing in a monthly magazine *Sher-e-Delha*, published from Surat. The editor of that magazine, Mr. Dinshah Ardeishar Taleyarkhan wrote in that journal,

'It is regrettable indeed that there is no popular newspaper in a city like Surat to express people's needs and grievances. Though it is not so easy a task to launch and run such a newspaper for attending to the conditions of the people, it is equally necessary, however, to do so The grievances of the people must reach the ears of the authorities. The people have not got courage to fight for that. They badly need a vehicle like the newspaper to help them in that regard Indeed, there are very few guides like the newspapers to lead the people through darkness to light; undoubtedly such a true and honest guide like the newspaper will prove as a boon to the people'.¹²

Mr. Taleyarkhan subsequently started a weekly, the *Surat Mitra* (later renamed *Gujarat Mitra*, now published as *Gujarat Mitra ane Gujarat Darpan*) from Surat in September 1863. In it he began to deal with the local problems. His comments were directed against the local municipal committee, whose 'inefficiency' led him to express dissatisfaction.

The *Bombay Samachar* also was publishing comments and *Charchapatra* on the local municipality.¹³ So was the *Jame Jamshed*. It complained frequently that 'the local body was not discharging its duties properly',¹⁴ while, the *Bombay Samachar* criticized the civic body for 'neglecting sanitation in the city'.¹⁵ Such criticisms of the municipal administration became more frequent in these two journals as well as in the *Rast Gofdar* and the *Dandiyo* in Bombay; in the *Surat Mitra* in Surat; in the *Broach Varatman* in Broach; in the *Kheda Varatman* in Kheda and in the *Samsheer Bahadur* in Ahmedabad. These dealt with the local sanitary conditions, local taxes and levies and at times they contained criticism of the members of the local municipal committees.¹⁶

Next to municipal affairs, the Gujarati press had started publishing popular complaints about the newly started railways and the postal arrangements. To take a few typical examples, the *Samsheer Bahadur* of Ahmedabad said, 'It is lamentable indeed that the railway authorities do not deem it fit to give sufficient publicity to the opening of new railway stations. They should publicise such openings through announcements in the Gujarati press. The public at large remains in the dark as regards the starting of new railway tracts'.¹⁷ The same newspaper said again, 'The railway authorities must pay heed to the popular grievances expressed in the Gujarati press; if they do not listen to what we say through these columns regarding their administration, whom else will they listen to?'¹⁸ The *Bombay Samachar* wrote, 'We are voicing the common man's grievances that it is high time the railways did something to lessen the hardships of the railway passengers'.¹⁹ While the *Jame Jamshed* complained against the 'rush and congestion in the third class compartments'.²⁰ It was written, again, that there was no lighting arrangement inside the railway carriages, and that 'the people had to keep waiting at the Grant Road station till the booking clerk arrived there'²¹ and so on.

Similar comments were made regarding the postal administration. It was complained that 'the post was much

delayed though the postal charges were very high'.²² It was suggested that 'a new post office should be started at Surat' or that 'a letter-box should be placed at the Grant Road station'²³ or that 'the postal charges should be reduced'. Again, it was a grievance that 'the postal charges for posting newspapers in India were very high'. It was asked, 'when they were being reduced in England, why not so in India too? Are the newspapers not essential for educating the masses? Why levy such high charges on them, then?'²⁴

The present discussion deals with that phase of the Gujarati press in which the latter had started expressing the popular needs and grievances as regards the local municipalities, the railway facilities and the postal arrangements. It is neither possible nor necessary to reproduce all of them verbatim here. Yet on a perusal of the contents of these journals published since the middle of the 1860's and onwards, it appears that the subjects of comment went on increasing: the space devoted to the comments was enlarged (comments began to appear separately in some of the journals such as the *Rast Goftar* and the *Bombay Samachar*) and the frequency of these comments also increased. Gradually, the comments began to verge on criticism of the Governmental administration in general and of some officials in particular. For instance, Kavi Narmad's *Dandiyo* or '*Exposer*' had made one Mr. Somers, the then deputy collector of Surat, its target of attack for, 'his inhuman and obstinate attitude'.²⁵ The *Dandiyo* contained comments against that official in three successive issues. It wrote against, what it termed as, the '*Jhulum*' (high-handedness) of the (revenue) magistrate of Broach. It declared,

'A great chaos is prevailing in that district. It is the duty of those who are conducting the press to keep the Government and the people aware of this. It has become essential for the press to keep itself well informed about the affairs of the different districts'.²⁶

The *Dandiyo* continued to write against the 'doings' of the

district officials posted in Surat, Broach and Kheda. Many times it named the officials as a 'scourge' to the people.²⁷ Similarly, the *Samsher Bahadur* asked, 'why should the Government officials make use of the *Dharamshalas* (inns) which have been erected out of the charities received from the people?' Some newspapers made occasional allegations against the Government servants. For instance, the *Gujarat Mitra* of Surat accused the local police of accepting bribes from the vegetable vendors,²⁸ while one newspaper criticised the police for 'not attending to their lawful duties simply because they were not getting bribes'.²⁹ Similar was the tone of the *Sunday Review and Dandiyo*.³⁰ Again, the *Samsher Bahadur* declared that 'the visits of the European officials were regarded by the people as those of powerful plunderers'.³¹ The Gujarati press as a whole wrote against the European community and the officials, criticising the latter 'for their callous behaviour' at the time of the opening of an exhibition held in Broach in September, 1868. In that exhibition, organised by Mr. Greaves and Sir T. C. Hope, some newly manufactured articles were displayed. There was some rush at the exhibition gates when it was thrown open for the first time. Commotion ensued. Some persons sustained injuries during the hubbub. Commenting upon the incident, almost all the Gujarati journals criticised the organisers as well as the Government. The most typical of these comments is the following one that appeared in the *Rast Goftar* dated 3rd January, 1869. It said,

'Who shall be condemned for the gross insult done to the native visitors at the opening ceremony of the Broach Exhibition? The native visitors did nothing whatsoever to deserve such outrageous treatment at the hands of the managing committee of the exhibition The exhibition has produced a widespread and intense discontent and indignation in the country. We must humbly call on the Government of Sir Seymour Fitzgerald to make a full and searching inquiry into this grave matter and to mete out full justice to

all concerned Not only we but the whole of the native population are eagerly awaiting to see what measures the Government mean to take in this regard'.³²

In addition to such topical issues, the Gujarati press took up the issue of taxation. It criticised the Government for their taxation policy. For example, the *Rast Goftar* commented upon the imposition of new taxes and recalled what 'Dadabhai Naoroji was telling regarding the plight of the people due to the tax-burden'.³³ The *Sunday Review* of Bombay called upon the native merchants 'to fight for their just cause'.³⁴ The *Prajabhilash* of Ahmedabad said, 'If a man wishes, he may sell any article he possesses to any one at any price that suits him. Why should he be compelled to sell it at a price against his wishes?'³⁵ When the export duty on opium was enhanced, the Gujarati press took up that issue too. The *Prajabhilash* said, 'this duty is calculated to add to our growing misery'. The *Jame Jamshed* criticised the duty and the *Bombay Samachar* advised the Government to 'cut down their expenses rather than enhance the tax-burden on the people'.³⁶ Similarly, on the proposed enhancement of the income-tax almost the whole of the Gujarati press commented. The *Jame Jamshed* said, 'the proposed imposition of an additional income-tax is not only improper, it is also detrimental. It will add to the distress of our people in these days of soaring prices'. The *Kheda Varatman* said, 'the income-tax is thoroughly improper. It robs the *ryots*. What is more, people in this district (Kheda) have to walk a distance of more than ten miles just to pay off their income-tax dues to the Government coffers. We request the Collector of this district to make arrangements in Kheda town itself for collecting these dues'. The *Rast Goftar* criticised the tax in similar words. The *Jame Jamshed* advised the Government to go slow in their taxation policies. The *Rast Goftar* enumerated several reasons why the taxation policy needed a change. It declared, 'the natives would not endure any more such a burden of heavy taxation'. The *Bombay*

Chabuk voicing similar views asked, 'why should the native mercantile community remain so silent over the issue of the propriety of the taxation policies of the Government? We notice that the Government has come forward now with a new measure, namely the income-tax. The people have been clamouring against that levy. They expect the public associations not to remain indifferent to such issues which affect us so closely. If they remain inactive, what would the Government and the European community think about our public spirit? What impression will they carry about our interest in public issues?'³⁷ Again, the introduction of the stamp fees (under the Stamp Act) had evoked similar comments. The *Gujarat Mitra* of Surat asked, 'Does the Government want us to be slaves to their wishes?' So said the *Rast Goftar*, the *Bombay Samachar*, the *Jame Jamshed*, the *Sansher Bahadur* and the *Kheda Varatman*.³⁸ And by the year 1878 almost all the Gujarati journals wrote against the Government successively allocating more and more space to several issues.

Meanwhile, the Bombay Legislature passed the Traders' Licence Tax Bill in February 1878. The tax was to be operative from the first week of April of that year. Under the new levy every trader had to obtain a licence for his trade and had to pay from Rs. 21 to 200 according to categories graded from one to fifteen. The Gujarati press with one voice pitched itself against the proposed tax. The *Rast Goftar* wrote, 'Many a retail trader will be heavily burdened due to this tax. We question the very propriety of such a tax — when people have been tormented economically how are they going to bear such levies?'³⁹ When Bombay's Gujarati press was writing against the licence tax, the people of Bombay called for a protest meeting through the city's sheriff. The Gujarati press exhorted people to attend the protest meeting. Meanwhile, the authorities refused permission to hold the meeting in the Town-Hall. It had to be shifted to a big tent of some American circus company which was then camping in Bombay. The meeting passed resolutions protesting against the licence tax. It also demanded withdrawal of the duty

on salt.⁴⁰ Similar resolutions were passed by protest meetings held in Ahmedabad and Kheda. Giving details of the meeting the *Prajabhilash* said, 'It is gratifying indeed that the people have realised their plight resulting from such taxes—it is gratifying still more that they are meeting in such large numbers to protest against them'.⁴¹

In Surat the local municipality had introduced the house-tax and the shop-tax. Then came the enhancement of duty on salt and the proposal to introduce the licence tax. It is reported that rumours were afloat that every shop-keeper, even a vegetable vendor, would have to pay the licence tax. The local people went in a procession to the secretary of the local *Praja Samaj*. They told him, 'We have already been starving: how are we to bear the burden of heavy taxes any more?' The people prevailed upon him to forward their petition opposing the tax to the Government. They called for a protest meeting through the *Nagar Sheth* (the Chief Citizen who is generally the leading member of the city's traders' organization). The *Nagar Sheth* issued in his name a pamphlet on 27th February, 1878, in which it was said,

'There are numerous levies and taxes imposed upon us by the Government. Still more, the Government deem it fit to burden us with a licence tax which is as punitive as the income-tax is'.⁴²

Calling upon the people to attend a public meeting to be held 'to consider a memorandum to be presented to the Government in England', the pamphlet continued,

'Such a memorandum has been sent by the *Mahajan* (traders' guild) of Poona. The people of Bombay also have made a representation. They have virtually closed down their business. Even a small mofussil town like Kheda has not lagged behind in this matter. In Ahmedabad too, more than 11,000 persons have closed down their business. They have also forwarded a memorandum'.⁴³

A public meeting was held in Surat, attended, it is reported, by more than 15,000 people. It adopted resolutions opposing the proposed licence tax. The local press gave lengthy accounts of the meeting. The *Gujarat Mitra* asked, 'Is the Government not going to pay any heed to the popular wishes?'⁴⁴

The *Swatantrata* wrote,

'The highhandedness that the Government have been practising is much agonising to the independent persons The people have no alternative but to do whatever the Government wish. It is gratifying that the people of Bombay have been attempting to prevent such encroachments. Should the Government not pay due respect to the views of the people in this regard? The licence tax has alarmed the people; people have realised where they stand now.'⁴⁵

The licence tax came into effect as scheduled. In Surat, the local municipality was entrusted with the task of getting the proforma for the tax purposes filled in. Meanwhile people called for a protest strike. Some clashes ensued between the municipal clerks and the people when the former went round with the proforma. It is reported that crowds surged onto the main streets and in a scuffle the clerks received some injuries. The police opened fire on the crowds. That evoked wide-spread comments from the Gujarati press. Some newspapers said, 'The Government should not have taken such stringent measures; why should they force the shop-keepers to open their shops?'⁴⁶ Some newspapers asked, ' but why should the Government impose such taxes after all?' The *Rast Goftar* said, 'Firing had been resorted to without duly proclaiming the Riot Act'. Similar comments appeared in the other newspapers from Bombay, Surat, Kheda and Ahmedabad.

When these controversies were being raised, the Surat police arrested on 11th May, 1878, Mr. Gulabdas Bhaidas,

Mr. Manchharam Ghelabhai, editor of the weekly *Deshi Mitra*, Mr. Kikabhai Prabhudas of the weekly *Gujarat Mitra*, Mr. Ganpatram Ambaram, Mr. Harijivandas Khushaldas and Mr. Narayanchandra Chandrashanker for alleged incitement of the people to indulge in violence. The police quoted in support of their action, articles which had appeared in the *Gujarat Mitra*, the *Deshi Mitra* and the *Swatantrata*. It was the contention of the police that 'the arrested persons were the ring-leaders who had excited the people through inflammatory writings to observe the strike and to harass the clerks'. The arrests caused a wide-spread protest. The press began to write against the police action. It made out an issue that 'the arrested persons included two journalists' and that 'the Government was determined to retaliate against the vernacular press because it was voicing the people's grievances'. The *Rast Gofar* in its issue dated 23rd May, 1878, hinted at this. So did the *Bombay Samachar*, the *Jame Jamshed* and the *Kheda Varatman*.

The trial of the arrested persons was conducted in Surat for about four months. The Gujarati press gave extensive reports of the day-to-day proceedings of the case which became known as the 'Surat Riot Case'. Finally, the accused were acquitted on 23rd September, 1878, by Mr. Pollin, the Sessions Judge. He observed in the course of his judgment that he 'did not find anything inflammatory or seditious in the alleged articles'. This was given a wide publicity by the Gujarati press. The English language press also joined the latter and went a step further in suggesting that 'the accused being journalists, they had been incriminated wrongfully. Their suffering was for a public cause. As a token thereof the people should raise a fund and should render monetary assistance to them'. Thus the 'Surat Riot Case' incident brought the Gujarati press in closer connections with the Indian press as a whole.

III

The change in the nature of the Gujarati press depicted in the foregoing account is evidenced, also, by the titles

adopted by the newly emerging Gujarati journals. To take a few among them, there were the *Satya Mitra*, *Lok Mitra*, *Deshi Mitra*, *Gujarat Mitra* and *Arya Mitra*, that is, Friend (*Mitra*) of Truth, of the people, of the natives, of Gujarat and of *Aryavart* (India); there were the *Swadesh Vatsal* and *Swadesh Mangal*, the Lover and Benefactor of one's country; one comes across the *Datardun* (Sickle) which stood as a symbol of cutting off useless things and the *Tikakara*—Critic; then there was the *Prajabhilash*—Aspirations of the people; the *Hitechhu*—the Well-wisher (of the people); the *Nyaya Prakash*—the Light of Justice and finally the *Swatantrata* that is Liberty (according to its patrons). The process of transformation in the nature of the Gujarati press was continuous and speedy. From begging small concessions and facilities for the people, the press grew bold enough to cast aspersions on some Government officials. From implied and indirect references to the local authorities, it began to inflict harangues on the Governmental machinery as a whole. The finale of this changed nature of the Gujarati press is indicated by the 'Surat Riot Case' episode. What is particularly noteworthy in this respect is that the Gujarati press was conscious of its changed nature; was aware of what it was doing. It seized opportunities to proclaim this. The *Dandiyo*, for instance, said when the *sadra amin* of Broach was transferred to some other district that, 'it was as a result of its writings'.⁴⁷ Similarly, the *Bombay Samachar* said,

'The criticisms that we have been levelling should not be construed amiss. As we have been voicing the popular feelings, our popularity is also increasing. Our popularity is amply indicative of the justification of our attacks'.

And again, the *Chandrodaya* wrote, 'it is really a matter of great rejoicing that an independent native press which takes up public issues is growing in this country'. While, similar observations were made by the *Gujarat Mitra*. It said,

'When the Gujarati press makes statements or criticisms which are found to be unpalatable by the Government officials, the criticisms should not be supposed to have been made from any personal ill-feeling towards the officials. The criticisms are made with a sincere desire to serve the public; with the best intentions to serve *truth* indeed'.⁴⁸

Apart from the claims of these journals, the Government had already been watchful of the Indian press in general and of the vernacular press in particular since the uprising of 1857. It had prohibited publication of the *Jame Jamshed* and the *Bombay Chabuk* for some time during March and May 1858, when it found that these two newspapers could incite the public. The Government became still more restrictive when in 1867 it passed the Act for the Regulation of Printing Presses and Newspapers (Act XXV of 1867). According to part II of that Act, the printer and publisher of a newspaper had to print their names etc. on the newspaper. The printer had to make a 'declaration' regarding the publication. So too had the editor to 'declare'. Within a year from that, that is in 1868, the post of a 'Reporter on Native Press and Registrar of Native Publications' was created in the Bombay Presidency. It was the task of this official to prepare weekly abstracts of the vernacular journals and to keep Government informed of their nature. To supplement this arrangement, it was decided by the Government since 1870, to include in the Reports on the Administration of the Bombay Presidency, an assessment of the contents and trends of the vernacular (Gujarati and Marathi) press.

Arrangements to prepare these abstracts and reports might not have produced immediate effects on the Gujarati press. They are indicative, however, of the perception of the Government. The report for 1870-71 mentions the 'attacks' which the Gujarati press levelled against some officials but characterises the press as 'on the whole realising the benefits of the British rule'. The report for 1875-76 mentioned that 'the press continued to voice

grievances on some local matters; it generally criticised the Salt Act, the Toll's Act, the Bombay Revenue Jurisdiction Act, the new Tariff Act and the Factory Act. The report mentioned further, 'the press was particularly critical of the alleged attempt of Manchester to procure the repeal of the import duty on cotton goods'. The reports for 1878-79 and '80 said, 'The general tone of the native press is fault-finding it should be held to be useful in occasionally pointing out local grievances, however'.

While these reports have an air of nonchalance, it was significant that these and similar reports from other parts of the country were reaching the Government of India. Lord Lytton was the Governor-General at that time. As narrated by his daughter, Lady Betty Balfour,⁴ Lord Lytton was persuaded to do something about the vernacular press. He got a bill drafted, therefore, with the Irish Act as a possible guide, and telegraphed to the Secretary of State for permission to introduce it. The introductory part of the telegram said, 'the increasing seditious violence of the native press now directly provocative to rebellion has been for some time pressed on our attention by the local Governments, who except Madras, which has no vernacular press of any importance, all concur as to the necessity of early and stringent legislation It is thus essentially necessary for Government in the interest of public safety to take early steps for checking the spread of seditious writings'.

Accordingly a bill was introduced in the Council to deal with the vernacular press. It became Law as Act number IX of 1878 in March that year, 'an Act for the better control of publications in the Oriental languages'. It empowered any magistrate of a district or a commissioner of police in a presidency town, to call upon the printer and publisher of a newspaper to enter into a bond undertaking not to publish certain kinds of material, to demand security and to forfeit it if it was thought fit, to confiscate any printed matter if it was found objectionable and so on. It was provided in the Act that no printer or publisher against

whom such action had been taken could have recourse to a court of law.

The Vernacular Press Act created wide-spread dissatisfaction in the Indian press circles. Representations were made to the Government and articles were written requesting the latter to repeal the Act. Even more, some of the journals named it the 'Gagging Act'. Among the Gujarati journals, the *Rast Gofar*, the *Bombay Samachar*, the *Hitecchu*, the *Swatantrata* and many others criticised the measure as an obstacle to the further growth of the native press. The *Swatantrata* wrote,

'The Government have snatched away the freedom of the vernacular press by alleging that the latter spreads dissatisfaction among the populace. A precarious situation has been created by enacting restrictions and by destroying the element of freedom of the press which is the life and blood of its growth'.

IV

In concluding this chapter, increase in trade and commerce and in literacy should be recognised as significant for the Gujarati press during the period under review. As these created a potential readership of the press, circumstances were sufficient in themselves to materialize this readership after the improvement in the technique of printing. As more copies could be printed speedily and at a cheaper cost, similar transport facilities were needed to carry them far and wide. These facilities were provided by the railways and the postal arrangements.

The growth of the press resulting from several of these circumstances together put the press in direct as well as indirect relationship with a varied clientele. This clientele was comprised of groups which were growing rather uneasy with the general condition of things and particularly with the policies of the Government. They wanted the press to voice their feelings. And the press being susceptible to the popular expectations then, it had

to meet these expectations by giving prominence to the needs and grievances of the people despite Government's attitude.

The next chapter will show how popular grievances turned into political demands and how thereby a further change in the nature of the Gujarati press took place.

CHAPTER FOUR

POLITICS AND THE PRESS

A SECTION OF PERSONS who had the opportunity to receive the newly introduced 'modern' education and who had imbibed through that some Western notions have been referred to earlier. These persons were aspiring to get due recognition by seeking employment in the Government by virtue both of their social status and of their educational achievements. The Company Government had formally acknowledged this when the Charter Act of 1832 was passed. This Charter given to the East India Company by the British Parliament for the government of India, had specifically laid down that 'there should be no bar against any person in obtaining any place of power or position in the administration on account of his race or place of birth.'¹ But as some of the leading personalities during that period say,² that provision remained inoperative for about two decades. To remedy this some of the intelligentsia in the country as a whole united among themselves 'to ventilate their particular grievance' by forming associations such as the British Indian Association in Bengal and the Bombay Association in Western India.

The Bombay Association was started 'with the object of ascertaining the wants of the natives of India living under the Government of this (Bombay) Presidency and for representing from time to time to the authorities the measures calculated to advance the welfare and improvement of the country'.³ It presented in early 1853 a petition to the British Parliament when the Company's Charter was about to be renewed. In that petition it was contended, among other things that, 'respectable and trustworthy natives should be absorbed in the Governmental services'.

and that, 'such measures would act as a great stimulus to the improvement in the country'. The Company's Government faced a crisis on account of the uprising of 1857. That had subsequently subsided but soon after that the Company's rule in India was terminated and India came directly under the British Crown and Parliament. The Royal Proclamation issued in the name of Queen Victoria at the time of transfer re-affirmed the proviso stipulated in the Charter Act of 1832 as regards the employment of Indians in the Government. That was followed by the Indian Councils Act of 1861, providing for the enlargement of the Governor-General's Council to form a Legislative Council and for the enlargement of the Legislative Councils of Madras and Bombay by prescribing the inclusion therein of at least half the new or additional members from outside the ranks of the civil service.

The newly constituted Legislative Council of Bombay which met for the first time on 22nd January, 1862, included five Indian members. These were nominated and were the Nawab of Savnoor, Sheth Premabhai Himabhai, Mr. Madhav Vitthal Chinchurkar, Mr. Rustomji Jamshedji Jijeebhai and Mr. Jagannath Shankarsheth—the last two being active members of the Bombay Association.

When the Bombay Association was formed in 1852 the *Bombay Samachar*, the *Jame Jamshed* and the *Rast Goftar* had given publicity to the foundation of that body.⁴ When it forwarded a petition to the British Parliament and particularly when some of the Anglo-Indian journals such as the *Telegraph* and *Courier* had been writing against the activities of the Bombay Association, the Gujarati journals had published the petition and had countered the criticisms of the Anglo-Indian press.⁵ When in 1862 the Bombay Council was constituted, the Gujarati journals reiterated these arguments and quoting the 'promise given by Her Gracious Majesty, the Queen Victoria', published reports about the Council proceedings. As mentioned in the last chapter, it was during this period that the Gujarati press was becoming a vehicle for expressing the popular discontent and was being critical of the local municipal

and governmental administrations. The Gujarati journals wrote in favour of the Bombay Association and in support of the Indian members of the Bombay Council just during this period. Some of the Gujarati journals at that time also called upon the people to take an interest in current politics. For instance, the *Dandiyo* edited by Kavi Narmad said once, 'People in this presidency have been devoting themselves to reforms in religious, moral, educational, and familial matters . . . , but they have not been attending to the contemporary political issues'.⁶ The *Sunday Review* said, 'While generous minded foreigners stand up in the British Parliament and other public assemblies and strenuously advocate the cause of India, should her own children remain idle spectators of their efforts? . . . We will not cease to sound a warning until they begin to perform the duty that they owe to the country'.⁷ The *Rast Goftar* wrote commending the decision of the East India Association to move the British Parliament to appoint a Select Committee to enquire into the administration of India; it characterised the conditions in India as 'rather precarious'. Commenting upon the policy of the Bombay Government, the same paper said, 'The moral atmosphere around the Government of Bombay has been bad . . . because of the vices that it has incorporated from the counsels that it has been getting since 1864', while the *Hitecchhu* said, 'The policy of the British Indian Government has changed for the worse . . . it is to put every possible obstacle in the way of the natives in their advancement to higher posts: to use every possible contrivance to draw as much money from India as possible: to give every possible encouragement to British industries and trade'.⁸ It complained against 'the present selfishness of Englishmen as compared with their former generosity'. The *Jame Jamshed* contended that people were losing faith in the Government,⁹ while the *Bombay Samachar* called upon people to 'do something to remedy the ills perpetrated by the administration'.¹⁰

During all this period the Government had been watching the writings in the press. As has been seen earlier, the Reporter on the Native press who was submitting excerpts

to the Government had been continuously writing in his despatches about 'the changes betrayed by the native press'. It was as a result of such intelligence supplied to the Government that the latter was prompted to adopt a measure in regard to the vernacular press. Meanwhile, the Government had decided to name Queen Victoria as the Empress of India and to create a new title of '*Kaiser-e-Hind*' for the British Sovereign. Lord Lytton, the Viceroy, had convened a big assemblage in 1876 at Delhi (the *Delhi Durbar* as it was called) to mark the occasion and to make a formal announcement to that effect. The *Delhi Durbar* had two implications as viewed through the press. First, it marked a formal change in the status of the British Sovereign and consequently in that of the Governor-General. Second, it was timed just when some parts of the country were faced with famine conditions. The *Durbar* provided the press with a point to comment upon. The *Rast Goftar* said, 'It is rather difficult to say that this change in the title of the British Queen will bring with it any benefits to Her Indian subjects It is a befitting time (however) for Her Gracious Majesty to concede to Her Indian subjects some of the constitutional rights which are being enjoyed by Her English subjects at home'.¹¹ Similarly, the *Gujarat Mitra* commented upon the change of the title and voiced 'a fear that confusion would ensue'. The *Bombay Samachar* contended that the change would make the Indian administration arbitrary. It referred to the Government in Britain as a 'Republican' one and said, 'this form of rule is still obtaining in England The same type of government was given to India: promises were also given that it would be continued in the future too. It is regrettable that this form (of government) is being altered to an arbitrary one Sir George Campbell, the late Lt. Governor of Bengal, had told the British Parliament to consider the Viceroy of the same dignity as the Great Moghul Emperors of India The statement made by Sir George Campbell exposes the conduct of the Indian authorities; it explains what type of government they want to set up now (in India)'.¹²

The popular image of the political situation in Western India is reflected, further, by the comments which appeared in the *Rast Goftar*. It was said, "The fraud perpetrated upon us in the name of the Legislative Council must stop now. This Council professes to associate 'Independent Indians' in the Government but in fact it is a big hoax (*Dhong*) including as it does a majority of members who are 'nominated' and who simply nod in acquiescence to whatever policies the Government adopts."¹³

To these comments* were added similar ones on the proposed press legislation. The *Bombay Samachar* wrote, "The public press of the country possesses liberty to make comments on the acts of the Government which must produce some, even if only a small effect, but there are indications to show that even that much liberty is to be snatched away. When this is the state of affairs, is not the Viceroy of India a Moghul Emperor?" When things were shaping thus, some of the leading personalities such as Sir (then Mr.) Surendranath Banerji, Mr. Naoroji Fardunji, Sir Jamshedji Jijibhai and Sir Mangaldas Nathubhai who attended the *Delhi Durbar* conferred among themselves and agreed to organise public opinion against the proposed Vernacular Press Act. Their efforts and the comments in the newspapers continued while the Government passed the measure which, as observed earlier, was nicknamed the 'Gagging Act'. Pursuant to their efforts to get the Act repealed, the editors of the newspapers of the different Indian languages formed an association to make representations to the Government about this matter, and some of the Gujarati editors joined this. Again, a conference of the native press had been convened for similar purposes in Bombay. That too was joined by some of the Gujarati editors.

* The '*Swatantrata*', a Gujarati monthly, edited on behalf of the '*Shree Sharda Pujak Mandali*' by Mr. Iechharam Suryaram Desai from Surat, had published a series of articles in its issues for January, February, March and April, 1878 in which it was repeatedly said, 'Indians should strive for their liberty from the foreign domination'.

In such an atmosphere Mr. Surendra Nath Banerji who was a member of the Indian Association, the editor of a Bengali journal and who had joined public life after being removed from the Indian Civil Service, undertook a lecture tour of the country. He completed his tour of Northern India in November 1877. He visited Ahmedabad on 19th December, 1877, and delivered a speech under the auspices of the Ahmedabad Association at the Himabhai Institute.¹⁴ He then went to Surat. On the 23rd of that month he spoke at a meeting held in the central hall of the local municipality.¹⁵ Thence he proceeded to Bombay and Poona. Throughout his lecture tour Mr. Surendra Nath Banerji spoke on 'recruitment of Indians in the Governmental services', 'constitutional changes in the Indian Government' and on the press legislation. His lecture tour provided a stimulus to the growing political awareness in Western India at that time.

That awareness is indicated by two more instances. One of them was an editorial note appearing in a Gujarati monthly and the other was the publication of a Gujarati journal which claimed to be 'devoted to politics'. The editorial note in the Gujarati monthly *Swatantrata* in its combined issue of March-April 1879 declared,

'We find presently in our country an increasing interest being evinced in political events and the situation created thereby. It is worth noting that within a decade's time we have turned out to be better than our forefathers (and) that is shown by the increasing number and the superior quality of our journals, and also by the gradual strengthening of public opinion among our countrymen'.¹⁶

The other instance was the launching of the weekly *Gujarati* by Sir Mangaldas Nathubhai, who had patronised earlier the reformist weekly *Satya Prakash* and who was a member for some time of the Bombay Association and the Bombay Legislative Council. It is reported that Sir Mangaldas Nathubhai was thinking 'to launch a Gujarati

journal devoted to politics', and that he invited Mr. Icchharām Suryaram Desai, whose political notes in the monthly *Swatantrata* had been very popular, to edit the new journal. This journal was named as the *Gujarati* by Mr. Narmadashanker Kavi, the erstwhile social reformist. The *Gujarati* in its inaugural issue dated 6th June, 1880, declared,

'When the demand for political views is made from all sides, we shall not undermine the importance of politics We shall express our feeble voice, if need be, to show how an able government can prove beneficial to the people'.¹⁷

II

The attacks against the administration which were persisting in the Gujarati press (Ref. last chapter) were occasional, stray and random. They were not organized systematically against the *foreign Government* as such. They were turned in that direction only after the emergence in Western India of a group of persons who were interested in the politics of the times. These persons, who started an organization for that purpose, crystallized the unformulated popular grievances into simple propositions and arguments. They formulated the people's dissatisfactions into symbols and slogans and focused them all onto the prevalent political situation.

This brought about a change in the nature of the Gujarati press. From being just a 'publisher' of the popular discomfitures, it became an adviser to the people, exhorting them to take interest in politics. And thence it turned out to be a carrier of the political idiom : distinguishing 'Nomination' from 'Independent Representation in the Government' : comparing the 'Republican Government in Britain' with an 'Arbitrary one in India', and, explaining the meanings of 'Liberty from Foreign Rule' and so on.

This change in the nature of the Gujarati press was reinforced, further, along with the emergence of a bigger—

all-India—organization devoted to politics, as will now be seen.

A country-wide controversy had been created over a particular piece of legislation. Under the law as it existed then (1883), Indians were held as not competent in their magisterial capacity of hearing charges against the Europeans within their jurisdiction. This had made the position of those Indians who held judicial positions at different levels from time to time awkward and anomalous. With a view to pointing out this anomaly a note was prepared by Mr. B. L. Gupta of the Bengal Civil Service, and Sir Courtney Ilbert, the Law Member, introduced a bill to confer upon the Indian District Judges the same powers as were enjoyed by their British counterparts. The introduction of that bill (known as the Ilbert Bill) evoked opposition from the British living in India. The English language press which was owned and controlled by some of them wrote articles opposing the bill. The Indian owned English and vernacular press refuted the criticism; arguments continued to be exchanged through the columns of the press. Some of the Gujarati journals gave detailed reports of the meetings held in support of the bill. Some even attacked the British community and found fault with the Indian Government. For instance the *Gujarati* said,

‘The agitated temper in which some of the Europeans are manoeuvring to prevent this measure is deplorable indeed. If they succeed in their efforts, the Indian people must realise that the distinctions between the natives and the foreigners—between the white and the coloured—between the victors and the vanquished—are not going to disappear during the British regime In such an eventuality the suppressed feelings of the Indian people must be made overt as have become those of the Europeans’.¹⁸

Lord Ripon decided to drop the enactment. That led to widespread comment in the Indian press. No sooner did the criticism of the Government in this matter subside than

an event took place in which Mr. Surendra Nath Banerji was involved in his journalistic capacity. Mr. Banerji had written an article in his *Bengali* in which some comments were made on the proceedings in the High Court involving the exposure of a Hindu idol in public. He was charged with contempt of court and was sentenced to two months imprisonment. Depicting the political climate of opinion Mr. Banerji records in his autobiography that, 'Most of the Indians who were dissatisfied with the policy of the Government and who were shocked at some of the contemporary happenings, felt the need for a more comprehensive organization than the existing ones to ventilate their grievances and to cultivate public opinion on the current issues'. He adds that, 'they convened the first all-India conference at Calcutta in December 1883, under the auspices of the Indian Association'.¹⁹ After that Mr. Allen Octavian Hume, an Englishman who had retired from the Indian Civil Service, appealed for 'fifty good men' for founding, what he called, the 'Indian National Union'. It was Mr. Hume's intention that discussions should be confined to social problems and that the opportunity should be taken for bringing men interested in politics together once a year. But Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy, viewed the situation rather differently. He is reported to have told Mr. Hume that the discussion on social problems alone would not be adequate as it was his view that a body of persons should be created which should perform the functions of an opposition.²⁰ Then an all-India conference was convened in December 1885. Attended by leading personalities from different parts of India, it met in Bombay under the presidentship of Mr. W. C. Bonerji and founded the 'Indian National Congress'. It adopted nine resolutions including those pertaining to the expansion of the existing supreme and local legislative councils, to the need for simultaneous examinations in India and Britain for the Indian Civil Service and to the Governmental expenditure, which was characterised as 'excessive'.²¹

As regards the press, the founders and editors of some of the Indian newspapers were also prominent among the

founders of the national organization. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji's *Rast Goftar* was still with him . . . , Mr. Mahadev Govind Ranade (although he did not attend as a representative) was associated with the *Indu Prakash* of which he was the founder-editor. From Bengal came Mr. Narendra Nath Sen, editor of the *Indian Mirror*. Mr. G. Subramania Iyer, the editor of the *Hindu* of Madras, was the mover of the first resolution approving the appointment of a commission of enquiry into the working of the Indian administration. Mr. W. S. Apte and Mr. G. G. Agarkar represented the *Maratha* and the *Kesari* of Poona. Mr. Krishnaji Laxman Nulkar and Mr. Sitaram Hari Chip-lunkar were the president and the secretary respectively of the Sarvajanik Sabha which published a quarterly journal. Mr. Beramji Malbari was the editor of the weekly *Spectator* published from Bombay. Other papers represented by their editors were the *Navvibhakar*, the *Tribune*, the *Naseem*, the *Hindustan*, the *Indian Union*, the *Crescent*²² and the *Gujarati* of Bombay.

To turn to the Gujarati press now. There were 33 Gujarati journals in circulation by the beginning of the year 1880. The aggregate circulation of these journals was about 22,000 copies per issue. Moreover, these journals were being published from six different places in Western India. The growth of the Gujarati press continued, and by the year 1885 some 53 Gujarati journals were being published. It is to be noted that these 53 journals included three dailies, 25 weeklies (including one tri-weekly) and 25 monthlies. The aggregate circulation of the dailies was 2825 copies, of the weeklies together with the tri-weekly 11640 copies and that of the monthlies had reached a total of 12950 copies per issue bringing the total circulation of the Gujarati press to 27,415 copies per issue and the number of places of publication to 11. By the middle of the year 1886 the number of these journals reached the total of 57* with an aggregate circulation of 30,352 copies per issue.

Among these there were four Gujarati monthlies as organs of caste-associations. These were the *Nagar Udaya*, the *Audichya Hittechhu*, the *Shreemali Shubhecchhak* and the *Kapol Hitavardhak*.

At the time of the first session of the Indian National Congress in Bombay, all the Gujarati journals in that city and elsewhere wrote on the founding of this organization and said that they 'welcomed' it. The weekly *Gujarati* brought out a whole issue giving full details of the session. It declared that, 'The ideology of the Indian National Congress shall be adopted as the creed of the *Gujarati* in political matters'.²³ It said, as did the other Gujarati journals that, 'the Congress Session was a mammoth assemblage (*Mahabharat Milavdo*)' and, that, 'political events have become the life and blood of India'.²⁴

Since then (that is, since December 1885), the reports of the preparations made for holding the sessions of the Indian National Congress at different places and the issues proposed to be dealt with at such sessions were featured by the Gujarati press during December every year. These reports coupled with comments continued to appear till about the middle of the following January. These reports were procured by the different journals both through the post (*Tapalma aveli Khabaro*) and the telegraph (*Tarthi aveli Khabaro*) since combined post and telegraph offices had been set up in the leading cities and towns in India by that time.

Along with the publication of news and views pertaining to the current politics, the Gujarati press by the middle of the 1880's had adopted two more practices. One of them was the publication of a *Panchang* (*Hindu Vikram* era calendar), a Special Number (*Khas Ank*) or some such thing and the other was the publication of a serialized novel. These (the serialized novel in a book form) were

These journals contained news about marriages, deaths, and obsequies in the respective castes and information about the activities of their caste-associations. They also contained articles of a reformist nature. Such caste-journals will be referred to, again, in the 6th chapter.

Meanwhile it is to be noted here that caste-news of the above type pertaining to the different castes living in cities and towns in Gujarat was occasionally published in all the Gujarati dailies and weeklies—a practice that continues till today.

presented by the different journals to their respective subscribers as an annual gift (*Bhet*).

A Special Number was brought out by the weekly *Gujarati* to mark the foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1885, and was presented to its registered subscribers. A similar special issue full of photographs and articles was published by that weekly as a mark of respect to Lord Ripon when he relinquished the Viceroyalty of India in 1884. The *Rast Gofdar* used to present its subscribers with a *Panchang* and the weekly *Kaisare Hind* presented to its subscribers an album of some 43 photographs in 1886.

Similarly, the weekly *Gujarati* had published in instalments a Gujarati novel HIND ANE BRITANIA* during 1885-86 and had presented it to its subscribers as an annual gift (*Bhet Pustak*).

All the Gujarati journals which had adopted these practices used to boast of such special gifts that their subscribers received. They claimed these to be the attractive features of their journals. For instance, it was advertised in the *Gujarati* dated 19th December, 1886, that its subscribers got the benefit of receiving a novel RASELAS the previous year and were to be given a novel GANGA GOVINDSINGH the following year — 'both in addition to the annual gift of a *Panchang* covered within the annual subscription'.

* The novel HIND ANE BRITANNIA (by Mr. Icchharam S. Desai, editor of the *Gujarati*) had evoked international comments as it was alleged to contain criticism of the British rule in India. The novel was commented upon by journals in Britain such as the Times, the Saturday Review, the St. James's Gazette, the Pall Mall Gazette and the Leeds Mercury. It was reviewed in America by the North American Review and by journals in Russia. There was a demand from some quarters to try Icchharam for writing such a novel containing 'seditious passages'. Two Englishmen advised the Government, however, after perusing the novel, not to pursue the matter any further. Consequently Icchharam, the writer-publisher of that novel, was absolved of all charges by Lord Dufferin-in-Council. Mr. Natwarlal Icchharam Desai who gave this information added that the circulation of the weekly *Gujarati* shot up to 1500 copies from 800 a week immediately after this incident.

What is noteworthy here is that so early in the course of its development the Gujarati press had recognized the need and utility of such devices of attracting readers and maintaining the clientele once acquired. No wonder that despite the passage of time the practice of presenting Special Numbers to the registered subscribers is being followed even to this day by most of the Gujarati journals.

These features, it may be noted, went a long way in augmenting the circulation of the different Gujarati journals and were contributive to the growth of the Gujarati press.

But the main factor so contributive was the publication of political matter. And at that, the practice of publishing news about the Indian National Congress had also changed by the year 1890. Instead of giving news about its session during December and the following January every year, the Gujarati journals started writing about the preliminaries being completed prior to the session, on the business transacted at such sessions and on the activities as well as utterances of the different political leaders throughout the year. By this time, there were 59 Gujarati journals with an aggregate circulation of 35,913 copies per issue.

III

Western India became still more active politically on account of the provincial conferences which were held annually at different places as appendages to the Indian National Congress. The Gujarati press which was giving regular and wider coverage of these conferences also suggested ways for cultivating political consciousness in Gujarat. For instance, the *Gujarati Punch* of Ahmedabad wrote that one of the sessions of the Indian National Congress should be held in some town of Gujarat when the 17th session of that body meeting at Calcutta resolved to hold the next, 18th, session in the Bombay Presidency. The *Gujarati Punch* wrote a series of articles for about eight months during 1902, requesting the leaders of the Congress to hold the session in Ahmedabad so as 'to foster political

awareness in Gujarat' as it put it. To make these articles effective, the editor of the *Gujarati Punch* had made arrangements through Mr. B. G. Tilak to publish them in Marathi and in other vernacular journals. The Congress leaders' attention was drawn to these articles and it was decided to hold the 18th session of the Indian National Congress at Ahmedabad.

The session met under the presidentship of Sir Surendra Nath Banerji* during the last week of December 1902. Along with that an industrial exhibition was also held and inaugurated by Sir Sayajirao Gaekwad of Baroda. Prior to the Congress session preliminary elections were held in different parts of Gujarat to elect delegates to the all-India body. According to the official records of the Congress, out of 4471 delegates attending the Ahmedabad session 378 were from Gujarat.

Once the decision to hold the Congress session and the industrial exhibition in Gujarat was announced, the Gujarati press wrote a series of articles welcoming and also explaining the implications of both. It gave extensive coverage of the news about the delegates' elections and of the other preparations being made for the occasion, and finally, quoting Sir Surendra Nath Banerji, Sir Sayajirao Gaekwad and Mr. Ambalal Sakarlal Desai, the chairman of the local reception committee, all the Gujarati journals wrote about,

(i) The revival of India's old industries; (ii) a reassessment of the taxes; (iii) the remission of some of the taxes characterised as pressing heavily upon the poor; (iv) the stoppage of the 'drain' (of India's wealth by 'foreigners')

* Eye-witness accounts say that Banerji who was named as the president of that session had a stentorian voice and was audible to the last man at any meeting where loud-speakers were not in vogue. The absence of loud-speakers would have necessitated more detailed and elaborate coverage of the speeches etc. at such sessions so as to cater to the needs of those who could not catch the words of the speakers due to poor audibility. Again, the business at such sessions would be transacted in English. That too would necessitate elaborate reportings in Gujarati.

and the adoption of necessary administrative measures to counteract it.

They wrote also on the Salt-Tax, Public Services, Cotton Excise Duty and the Currency Legislation.

By the beginning of the year 1903, the number of the Gujarati journals (monthlies not included) had reached the figure of 41 with seven dailies plus 34 other periodicals such as tri- and bi-weeklies, weeklies and fortnightlies together. The further growth of the Gujarati press is indicated by comparing press-figures for the year 1900, 1903 and 1905. In the year 1903 there were 41 Gujarati journals with an aggregate circulation of 42,620 copies as against 36 journals with a total number of 37,242 copies per issue in circulation in 1900. Again, the press-figures for 1905 indicate that there were 40 Gujarati journals with a total number of 47,300 copies per issue in circulation.

The Viceroyalty of India was held by Lord Curzon at that time. When he had assumed that office in 1898, the Congress session meeting at Madras had welcomed that appointment. The press also welcomed Lord Curzon by expressing the hope that 'the best traditions of British rule in this country would be followed during His Lordship's tenure of office in India'. But, after a *Durbar* was held at Delhi to mark the accession of King Edward VII, the perceptions of the Indian leaders as well as of press were changing.²⁵ The newspapers wrote on the 'extravagance of the *Durbar* at a time when some parts of the country were experiencing a dire famine'. Quoting Mr. Lal Mohan Ghosh, the Congress president, the press said, 'Lord Curzon saw the hand of Providence in the extension of the British rule in India. He said that everyone would admit it to be for its good. But Providence was too often appealed to, both by the governing classes and by the leaders of the masses'. Subsequently Lord Curzon made some remarks on the character of the Indian people while speaking at the Calcutta University Convocation.* These remarks evoked

* Lord Curzon had said, "I hope I am making no false or arrogant claim when I say that the highest ideal of *truth* is to a large extent a Western conception In your epics *truth* is often extolled

widespread comments both from the Indian leaders and the press. The *Kaisare Hind* of Bombay writing in its issue dated 2nd February, 1905, said,

'The Viceroy is ill-advised and intemperate He forgets who he is His utterances have left no doubt that His Lordship by temperament and hereditary proclivities is incapable of becoming a ruler of men either in this country or in any other. He is everything else except what a Viceroy should be'.²⁶

The *Rast Goftar* commented that 'His Excellency has displayed a singular lack of statesmanship', and the *Prajabandhu* said that 'Lord Curzon is one of the most powerful enemies of the real progress of this country'. While such a climate of opinion prevailed, Lord Curzon's Government issued a notification announcing a partition of the province of Bengal from October 1905. This led to a wave of indignation in Bengal and in the country as a whole. Meetings were held throughout the country opposing the partition. The 20th Congress session meeting at Bombay during December 1904 had already adopted a resolution protesting against the proposed partition of the province of Bengal. Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale speaking as the president of the Congress session held in Banaras said, 'I think even the most devoted admirer of Lord Curzon cannot claim that he has strengthened the foundations of British rule in India'. Mr. Gokhale called the partition of Bengal as a 'cruel wrong' and paid tributes to Bengal and to the country as a whole 'whose national consciousness was growing' he said.

The agitation against the partition of Bengal was called the '*Bang Bhang Chalwal*'. It had spread to almost all parts of India, including Gujarat. Eye-witness accounts

as a virtue; but quite as often it is attended with some qualification and very often praise is given to successful deception practised with honest aim". Quoted by the Rt. Hon. Earl of Ronaldshay in *The Life of Lord Curzon*, Vol. II, p. 363; and also in *Speeches of Lord Curzon of Kedleston*, Vol. II, pp. 271 ff.

of the agitation say that meetings were held in some of the cities of Gujarat, where resolutions were adopted condemning the partition. The Gujarati press which had already criticised Lord Curzon's rule echoed the views of the leaders and commented upon the partition. The main points of these comments were: Self-Government has become inevitable for India now; the Home Government (Government in Britain) should not hesitate now to grant self-government to India; the Home Government should keep a closer watch on Governmental actions in India; Lord Curzon has injured Indian feelings several times.

Along with the movement against the partition of Bengal had emerged certain other ones. These were (i) A call for *Swaraj*—Self-Government, (ii) a call for National Education, (iii) a call for boycotting foreign goods and (iv) a call for *Swadeshi* (i.e. use of indigenous products only). The different movements were associated with the cry of '*Vande Mataram*' (Hail Motherland). The Congress leaders who were organizing these movements justified them as 'a political weapon' against foreign rule. Commenting upon these movements the weekly *Gujarati* wrote, 'The *Swadeshi* movement is gathering greater strength every day The authorities in England should put an end now to the policy of reaction and repression which has been inaugurated by Lord Curzon and which has done much to widen the gulf between the rulers and the ruled'. Other journals commenting in similar terms devoted space to the news about (i) bonfires of foreign goods at different places and (ii) vows taken by people at different places 'to use exclusively *Swadeshi* products'. The *Gujarati Punch* and the *Jame Jamshed* assessed the *Swadeshi* movement in these words, 'It is less than two years since the roar of *Swadeshim* rent the sky. It is in such a short time that we have been able to cripple the Lancashire cotton trade Indeed the *Swadeshi* movement will enthuse the people even as it will wake up the Government from its deep slumbers'.²⁷

The press which was preoccupied with these topics had expanded still further by the year 1906 and its readership

had grown still more than the number of copies in circulation at that time. This was so because of a new movement for starting libraries and reading-rooms (called the *Mitra Mandal Libraries*) which was launched in Gujarat by the late Mr. Motibhai N. Amin in 1906. The exact figure of such libraries or even of the total number of libraries and reading-rooms in existence in Gujarat at that time is not available, but there is evidence indicating an overall increase.²⁸

Now again to the nature of the Gujarati press.

The 23rd session of the Indian National Congress was scheduled to meet at Surat in December 1907. This was the second occasion (in fact very shortly after the Ahmedabad session) when the national body was holding its session in a town in Gujarat. The Gujarati press welcoming the session said, 'The forthcoming Congress meeting at Surat indicates the national spirit reverberating in Gujarat'. The *Gujarati* said, 'None can deny that our national consciousness is being augmented progressively'. It added, 'Is that not indicated by the fact that the circulation of the weekly *Gujarati* has surpassed the total of seven thousand copies per week from a mere 145 when it was started? We should not be surprised if the rising political consciousness of the Gujarati people takes that total even to 27,000 copies a week'. Similar views were expressed by the *Jame Jamshed*, the *Deshi Mitra*, the *Prajabandhu* and the *Gujarati Punch*.²⁹ It is very significant that the growth of the Gujarati press was linked in the minds of the men who ran this institution of public opinion with the rising tempo of national consciousness. This consciousness was characteristic of the awakening Indian middle class which realised its own importance as the vanguard of a movement 'to restore the greatness of the motherland' and 'to bring about an improvement in her material and spiritual existence'. What is to be stressed is that the editors put the national cause first and looked upon the circulation of their journals as secondary.

But the Gujarati middle class vanguards were expressing 'an apprehension about the controversy that had been creat-

ed between the moderate and the extremist sections in the Congress organization'. The *Gujarati*, for instance, referred to this in several issues. So did the *Vasant* edited by Mr. A. B. Dhruva, a leading figure in Gujarat. The *Vasant* wrote on the 'triumph of the moderates in the 22nd session of the Indian National Congress previous year in which Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji was specially summoned to preside'. It wrote again on the two sections in the Congress, coining two Gujarati words '*Vineet*' and '*Uddam*', for the moderates and the extremists respectively.³⁰

The Congress session met at Surat as scheduled during the last week of December 1907. It ended in a commotion due to differences of opinions between the extremists including Mr. Tilak, Mr. B. C. Pal, Mr. Arvind Ghosh, Mr. Lajpatrai and Mr. Khaparde, and, the moderates including Sir Pherozshah Mehta, Sir Surendra Nath Banerji, Mr. Ambalal Sakarlal Desai and other Gujaratis who supported them. The news about the factions and confusion in the Congress *pandal* was reported by the press with comments. The *Gujarati* featured the news with dark black borders and with the caption 'a lamentable death'. It said that extremism was anti-national. The *Vasant* wrote, 'Extremism is a disruptive policy. We advise our Gujarati brethren to depend entirely upon the moderates. We advise them to exert themselves to have the moderates emerge victorious wherever and whenever the Congress meets next.'³¹ A similar magazine, the *Samalochak* said, 'Balwantrao Tilak has brought blemish to the Congress by advocating extremism'.³²

But this moderate tone of the Gujarati press soon changed after one incident. A country bomb was hurled at Muzaffarpur on 30th April, 1908. That resulted in the death of a woman and a child. Mr. Khudiram Bose was arrested. Mr. Tilak commented upon the incident in an editorial in the Marathi journal *Kesari* dated 12th May, 1908. The Bombay Government arrested Mr. Tilak on 24th June, 1908, and launched prosecution against him under secs. 124-A and 153-A of the Indian Penal Code for his writings. The news of the arrest, trial and subsequent

sentence passed on Mr. Tilak on 22nd July, 1908, was featured by all the Gujarati newspapers extensively. All quoted these words of Mr. Tilak,

'All I wish to say is that, inspite of the verdict of the jury, I maintain that I am innocent. There are higher powers that rule the destiny of things and it may be the will of Providence that the cause I represent may prosper more by my suffering than by my remaining free'.³³

The sentence passed on Mr. Tilak and his remarks in the court created quite a stir in the country. They had repercussions in Gujarat too, and eye-witness accounts say that when Mr. Tilak was removed to the Sabarmati jail in Ahmedabad, a *hartal* was observed and processions were taken out protesting against the sentence. The same accounts indicate that the Tilak-trial episode had changed the perception of many a Gujarati journal as regards the tie between the moderates and the extremists.³⁴ A Gujarati journal, the *Shakti*, was started to propagate the extremists' views. It wrote against the moderates and said, 'the split between the moderates and the extremists is nothing else but one between those who do not want to suffer for the motherland and those who want to suffer for her.'³⁵

But the Government viewed this change in tone rather differently. Ever since 1897 Government had been watchful of the press. It had amended the Indian Penal Code to make the sections on sedition more comprehensive. Again, it amended in December 1903, the Official Secrets Act of 1889, placing civil matters on a level with naval and military matters. In June 1908 was passed the Newspapers (Incitements to Offences) Act, 1908. This empowered the authorities to take judicial action against any editor of any paper which published any matter which in their view was an incitement to an offence. Early in 1910, Act No. 1 of 1910 (An Act to provide for the Better Control of the Press) was placed before the reformed Council by Lord Minto and was passed by that body. Under the new Act

Government was empowered to instruct its solicitor to go before the Presidency Magistrate to demand security from any newspaper publishing matter considered 'offensive'. Subsequently, proceedings were started against many journals under one section or the other of the new Act. The press in the country criticised the proceedings and wrote continuously against the 'press restrictions'. The *Gujarati Punch* and the *Gujarati*, among the Gujarati journals, made frequent attacks against the Government. Hence the Government of Bombay demanded a security of Rs. 2500 from the editor of the latter for writing allegedly inflammatory articles.*

IV

When hostilities broke out in August 1914 between Britain and Germany and India was made a party to the war all the journals in India were subjected to a dearth of supplies of printing equipment on account of war-time import restrictions. Almost all the Gujarati journals were referring to the scarcity of printing material and were saying, 'we are handicapped on account of a lack of supplies of paper, ink etc., yet we are making every effort to maintain the size and standard of our journals, though many a smaller journal has been closed down'. The existing journals were reporting the war-news very extensively under different headings. The contents included elaborate details about the belligerent countries, such as *Austriuni chadti padtino itihās* (an account of the rise and fall of Austria) or *German Shahenshahat* (the great German Empire). These reports also contained information about those places which figured in the war-news from time to

* Desai Manilal I. in the biographical note on his father p. 37. Ichharam's son Natwarlal says that the Government was watching his father's activities since Ichharam migrated to Bombay in 1880. When Ichharam presented a purse of rupees four thousand that he had collected to Sir Henry Cotton, the president of the Congress which met during December 1904 at Bombay, the Government became more watchful of Ichharam and of the *Gujarati*.

time. The tone of writings on the war in the Gujarati press is indicated by the following quotations:

- (i) *Fateh mate Bandagi*
(Prayers being offered for the British victory),
- (ii) *German Sudharo ke Jangali Kudharo ?*
(German reforms or barbarism?),
- (iii) *Germanyini Har-jeetno Sarvalo*
(An assessment of the victories and defeats of the Germans).

But the Gujarati journals writing on the Indian political situation reiterated the demands of the nationalist organization.*

Mrs. Annie Besant was prominent among the Indian political leaders at that time. She had come in contact with many persons in Gujarat on account of her political activities and due to the Theosophical movement that she headed. She was propagating her views on the 'Home Rule Movement' which, she claimed, 'would secure for India a legitimate place in the British Commonwealth'. She was editing the *New India* and was campaigning through it for 'Home Rule for India'. She had set up for the conduct of that movement a 'Home Rule League' with branches at different places. The organizers of that movement in Gujarat had started a library movement for subsidising new libraries and reading-rooms which were being set up in some of the towns of Gujarat. These libraries and reading-rooms were to be known as the *Gokhale Vanchanaluja* (Gokhale Libraries) and under the proposed scheme monetary assistance was to be provided for subscribing to the different journals.

Mr. Indulal Yagnik and Mr. Shankerlal Banker who were organizing the Gokhale Libraries movement together with 'Home Rule Movement' in Gujarat, and who were associated with the Gujarati press said that they had provided such assistance to about 49 libraries and that every library

* Press-headings emphasized *Swaraj* (Independence) for India.

so helped could procure about eight journals and could create thus a vaster readership of the Gujarati press.

Such a readership was being built up slowly but surely. Of course, increase in literacy in Gujarat provided the press with more persons who *could* read the journals. But that they *would* be interested in reading them was ensured by the emergence of a political organization which created political consciousness in India since the middle of the 1880's. It was this consciousness which fostered the Ilbert Bill controversy and which led the people of Gujarat to support the *Bang Bhang* (anti-Partition of Bengal), Boycott, *Swadeshi* and the 'Home Rule' movements. This in turn changed the nature of press comment and particularly helped its growth. The holding of the Congress sessions in Bombay, Ahmedabad and Surat spurred the press to move further in those directions so much so that the Gujarati press became, not only a carrier of political news and views but also a supporter of nationalist movements.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS

MASS MOVEMENTS launched against the Government by the nationalist organization, the Indian National Congress, under the leadership of Gandhiji characterize the political occurrences in India from the year 1919 onwards. The Gujarati press was associated with these movements and this led to a further change in its nature—a phase that continued upto 1947 as will be seen in this chapter.

Gandhiji returned to India from South Africa on 9th January, 1915. He decided to stay permanently at Ahmedabad and set up an *Ashram* at Kocharab, a suburb of Ahmedabad, on 25th May, 1915. From there he used to move about all over in the country, and during the course of his travels he went to Bihar. There he learned of the working conditions in the indigo plantations. He took up the issue on behalf of the plantation labourers.

Meanwhile his acquaintance with the Gujarati leaders and organizations was increasing and he was invited to preside over the second Gujarat Educational Conference held at Broach during October that year. Again, in November he was invited to preside over the Gujarat Political Conference held at Godhra. By that time he had been elected as the president of the Gujarat Sabha, a political organization, functioning in Ahmedabad since the 1880's. Soon after that he was called upon to intervene in a dispute between the mill-agents and the textile workers in Ahmedabad. The workers had been advised to go on a strike and subsequently Gandhiji had undertaken a symbolic fast in March 1918, to resolve the deadlock. Immediately after this he was invited to attend to the grievances of the peasants in the Kheda District. The peasants there

were reluctant to pay their revenue dues as famine-like conditions were prevailing in that area. Gandhiji took up the matter by organizing the peasants and secured relief for them from the Government.

In February 1919, the Government intended to pass two bills known as the Rowlatt Bills. One of them, meant to be introduced in the Council, provided for a change in the penal law by stipulating a court of three High Court Judges to try cases which were characterized as of a revolutionary nature. The other one was a temporary measure intended to deal with the situation arising from the expiry of the Defence of India Act which was in operation as a war-time measure. Under this the possession of a document deemed to be seditious in nature and the intention to publish or to circulate such a document was made punishable with imprisonment. These measures intended to be passed by the Government had created widespread comments in the press. Meetings were held as a mark of protest against the bills. Gandhiji declared his opposition to the Rowlatt Bills by calling them 'an unmistakable symptom of a deep-seated disease in the governing body'. Pursuant to his stand in opposing the bills, he started collecting signatures for a pledge which he called the *Satyagraha Pledge* the purpose of which was to show resentment against the Rowlatt Bills. He also constituted a *Satyagraha Sabha* in Bombay and created a band of persons to break the existing prohibitory orders by selling proscribed literature and by publishing an unregistered newspaper called the *Satyagraha*. Gandhiji intended to proceed to the Punjab for attending protest meetings. He was prevented from doing so on 10th April, 1919, and was removed to Bombay on 11th April. On the 13th firing was resorted to on crowds which had gathered at the place called the Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar in the Punjab. It is reported that several hundred persons lost their lives as a result of this firing. The news of Gandhiji's internment led to disturbances and Government declared martial law in Ahmedabad on 12th April.¹ Disturbances were reported from other places in Gujarat such as Nadiad, Anand and

Viramgam where loss of life and property took place." Gandhiji declared his disapproval of the disturbances. He also declared his resentment at the Government actions and called upon the latter to set up an inquiry.

Gandhiji persisted in his demand for an inquiry into, what he termed as the 'Punjab wrongs'. He made an issue out of this and joined it with a movement known as the *Khilafat* Movement.

A special session of the Indian National Congress was convened at Calcutta in the first week of September 1920. Gandhiji moved a resolution on Non-co-operation as a means to 'remedy the *Khilafat* and the Punjab wrongs and to attain *Swaraj*'. That resolution was passed by a majority of 1855 votes against 873. In December that year at the 35th session of the Congress held at Nagpur, Gandhiji moved for an alteration in the creed of that organization. It became then, 'the attainment of *Swaraj* by peaceful means'. When the 36th session of the Congress met at Ahmedabad during December 1921, Gandhiji was declared to be the 'executive authority' of the movement that was contemplated by this organization in a resolution adopted unanimously.

Gandhiji used to write sometimes for the English daily, the *Bombay Chronicle* which was started by Sir Pherozshah Mehta and was edited by Mr. B. G. Horniman. He also occasionally contributed to the English monthly *Young India* with which Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Mr. Umar Shobhani and Mr. Shankerlal Banker were associated. Articles by Gandhiji were published in the *Hindustan* of Mr. Ranchhoddas Bhavan Lotwala as well as in the Gujarati monthly *Navajivan ane Satya* edited by Mr. Indulal Yagnik. After Gandhiji had settled in Gujarat and after his participation in different public activities, he felt the need of a Gujarati journal to publish his views elaborately and extensively." He put the proposal before Mr. Shankerlal Banker and Mr. Indulal Yagnik. Both were associated with the *Navajivan ane Satya*. They took up Gandhiji's proposal and decided to convert their monthly into a weekly. It was decided to publish the proposed

weekly under a new name *Navajivan* from Ahmedabad under the editorship of Gandhiji.

The first issue of the *Navajivan* came out on 9th September, 1919. Gandhiji as the editor said, 'There is no dearth of journals in Gujarat at present But, being a Gujarati by birth and a Gujarati in deed, I aspire to be absorbed into the life of Gujarat, for I can serve the country only by doing so This will be the first occasion when I shall be known publicly in Gujarat as an editor I wish that the *Navajivan* should reach the huts of the farmers and the weavers (because) I am going to write in their language; I am going to pray that the *Navajivan* be read by the women folk as well'. Gandhiji had announced in the same issue that it was the solemn resolve of all associated with the *Navajivan* to say whatever they felt, no matter what restrictions Government had enacted for the press. He also declared that the *Navajivan* would not contain any advertisement.

The *Navajivan* in its issues during December that year took up the *Khilafat* and the Punjab issues in view of the 34th session of the Indian National Congress due to meet at Amritsar (Punjab), and after the session concluded gave details in its issues during January 1920 about the resolutions adopted with the text of the speeches made thereon. Gandhiji wrote in successive issues about the demands made by the Congress organization and explained their implications.

The weekly frequently gave information about the tours undertaken by Gandhiji, and published in detail the speeches made by him from place to place. In addition to that the weekly used to include articles on *Swadeshi*, *Khadi*, Spinning, *Satyagraha*, and cow-protection. Gandhiji used to request those who were literate to read the *Navajivan* aloud before those who were not capable of reading; he also expressed his satisfaction that the *Navajivan* was read so extensively by the people of Gujarat.

Again, in November and December 1920 the weekly contained articles written by Gandhiji, each one of them explaining the Non-co-operation movement that was con-

templated. These aimed at clarifying Gandhiji's stand on the movement and the programmes suggested by him. Its issue dated 22nd December, 1920, was full of information about the 35th session of the Indian National Congress due to meet at Nagpur that year. When the Congress was in session, arrangements were made to procure telegraphically the news about the business transacted at Nagpur. The *Navajivan* during January 1921 was full of details about the resolutions made and the speeches delivered at the Nagpur session. When that body held its 36th session at Ahmedabad during December 1921, a whole issue of the *Navajivan* was devoted to news about it with full texts of the speeches of the participants in the discussions of the resolutions moved and adopted. It appears from some notices appearing in the *Navajivan* during those days that arrangements were made to sell single copies of the weekly through hawkers in the city of Ahmedabad and that as these copies were soon exhausted reprints had to be issued to meet the demand.

Gandhiji was running an English weekly the *Young India* at that time. Some articles written for that journal were published in Gujarati in the weekly *Navajivan*. Gandhiji had written an article, 'Tampering with Loyalty' in September 1921. That article was published in the Gujarati weekly *Navajivan* dated 2nd October, 1921, under the caption '*Rajdroha*' (*Rajdroha* means sedition in Gujarati). Again, Gandhiji had written an English article, 'The Puzzle and its Solution' in the *Young India* in December 1921. That was published in Gujarati in the *Navajivan* dated 15th December, 1921, under the heading '*Viceroy ni Munzvan*' (The Dilemma before the Viceroy). A third article appeared in the *Young India* during February, 1922, under the title 'Shaking of the Manes'. It appeared in the *Navajivan* dated 26th February, 1922, as '*Hoonkar*' (Roaring of the Lion). The Government which was watching these writings of Gandhiji decided to launch prosecutions against him as the editor, and against Mr. Shankerlal Banker, the publisher of the *Young India*, for what the Government termed 'seditious' writings. Subsequently,

Gandhiji and Banker were arrested in the second week of March 1922. They were charged with contravening section 124-A of the Indian Penal Code, were convicted and sentenced. Gandhiji was released in 1924 on health grounds.

II

Since the Nagpur Session of the Indian National Congress in December 1920, news had been current in the country that a Civil Disobedience movement would be launched as a mark of protest against the policies of the Government. Gandhiji himself had declared this in July of that year and had been suggesting it by saying, 'We are approaching a crisis'. He visited Bombay towards the end of October 1921. While speaking before some members of the Congress there, Gandhiji declared that he would shortly launch such a movement in the Bardoli area of the Surat District. He declared further that the movement would be guided by him. When preparations for the movement were being made, the Prince of Wales landed in Bombay. The Prince's reception was officially boycotted by the Congress and people had been advised to observe a *hartal* as a mark of protest against the Prince's arrival. During the organization of the *hartal*, clashes ensued between some Congress volunteers and Parsi and Christian shopkeepers who refused to join the anti-Prince demonstrations.⁴ In such an atmosphere Gandhiji declared a postponement of his proposed Civil Disobedience movement. At the end of 1921, however, widespread arrests were made in the country. Those arrested included Mr. C. R. Das, the president-elect of the Indian National Congress to be held in December that year at Ahmedabad, Mr. Motilal Nehru, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari and Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru. The Gujarati press which had been giving news about these arrests was dropping hints that Gandhiji might be arrested at any moment. Meanwhile the 36th session of the Indian National Congress met at Ahmedabad. The session adopted a resolution approving the launching of a Non-co-

operation movement and vesting Gandhiji with the 'exclusive authority' for the conduct of that movement. The Gujarati press published elaborate accounts of the whole session. The *Navajivan* wrote welcoming the movement. The *Gujarati* said, 'The Congress session at Ahmedabad was unique—was indicative indeed of a personal triumph for Gandhiji'.⁵ It added 'we can say that now the Indian National Congress and Gandhi have become interchangeable terms; the Congress means Gandhi and Gandhi means the aim of independence of the Congress'. Some papers termed Gandhiji, the sole authority to conduct the movement, the '*Betaj Badshah*'—an uncrowned king.

Meanwhile, the revenue authorities of Surat District published what they termed an 'Explanation' on 18th January, 1922, addressed to the people of Bardoli and 'advised' them not to join any campaign for non-payment of revenue dues. This was published in full and criticised by Gandhiji in the *Navajivan* dated 29th January, 1922. Soon after that the conference of the peasants and local workers met at Bardoli and decided to launch a Civil Disobedience movement. Gandhiji addressed an 'open letter' to the Viceroy on 1st February, 1922, explaining his stand on the Bardoli issues and declaring what he termed the 'inevitability of the movement'. The Gujarati press started giving the day-to-day happenings on the front page in big type. Gandhiji's letter especially was featured by the press very prominently. Almost all the dailies picked up one sentence or the other of the letter and quoted it in the head-lines. The *Gujarati*, featuring the letter said, 'the Gujarati press has plunged itself headlong into this *jung* (fight)'.⁶ The *Bombay Samachar* pledged its support to the movement;⁷ the *Hindustan*, exhorting the people 'to support the movement', found fault with the Government for 'their policy'.⁸ The *Bombay Samachar*, publishing the news about the progress of the movement, commended the 'firmness of the people'. Comments were published by the *Sanj Vartman*, the *Prajabandhu*, the *Prajamitra* and *Parsi*, the *Gujarat Mitra* etc.⁹

The Viceroy sent his reply to Gandhiji's letter and Gandhiji sent his rejoinder on 7th February, 1922. Hardly had that reached the Viceroy when the morning papers the next day gave news about disturbances at Chauri Chora village in Gorakhpur District of the United Provinces (the present Uttar Pradesh). It was reported that some 22 police constables seeking refuge in a police *chowky* had been burnt alive by crowds on 5th February, 1922. Gandhiji declared that he could not allow violence to be associated with his movement and hence he ordered suspension of the Civil Disobedience movement. Gandhiji clarified his contentions in the *Navajivan* dated 19th and 26th February, 1922. He said, 'It was not possible to continue the movement in view of the shock that I had sustained on account of what had happened at Chauri Chora'. It appears from the biographies of some of the Congress leaders that Gandhiji's decision caused widespr'ead criticism both from the people and the press in different parts of India. However, the reactions of the Gujarati press as a whole were favourable to Gandhiji's stand and were, 'Gandhiji deserves congratulations on his bold action in calling off the movement', 'Gandhiji's step is indicative of the righteousness of the struggle of the Indian people : of the backing that we get from our religious teachings'.¹⁰ Similar comments continued to appear till the end of February that year. At times these comments included elaborate refutation of the arguments advanced in some sections of the Indian press which did not agree with Gandhiji's act.

No sooner did these controversies subside than Gandhiji was convicted for writing allegedly seditious articles. The trial was reported verbatim by almost all the dailies and weeklies in Gujarati. The *Bombay Samachar* devoted a full page to the statement made by Gandhiji during the trial. Other journals which reported the judgment said that the section on sedition (section 124-A, I.P.C.) had been misused by the Bombay Government and that with Gandhiji in jail, the Government had exposed itself to violence.

III

The press, which was keeping pace with the rapid succession of events, was expanding rapidly. From 74,900 copies per issue in circulation in 1918 it reached a total of 1,23,690 copies per issue in circulation by 1922.

As regards its contents at that time, the dailies contained news, among other things, about the political happenings in the country. When the leaders of the Indian National Congress were arrested during October-December, 1921, the dailies published prominently the news about the arrests from every part of the country and commented in their editorials on the policy of the Government. The weeklies used to publish the weekly round-up of the news under different headings such as '*Deshman thai raheli dharpakdo* (the arrests being made in the country)' or '*Kon kon pakadayun* (who has been arrested)'. In some instances the weeklies published the latest information about some arrests or the latest statement of some political leader, if such information or statements were procured just in time. The dailies used to procure the news through the news agency and through their respective reporters or correspondents. The weeklies included the speeches or statements of the political leaders, but in greater detail than the dailies. The weeklies contained, again, exhaustive comments on the political happenings in the country.

One more feature of the weeklies in this respect was the publication of special articles pertaining to political issues in the country. From the monthlies that are available it appears that some of them which were devoted exclusively to politics, contained a monthly review of the political scene as well as special articles on current topics. Some of the monthlies which were 'general interest magazines' (as they put it), or which were literary journals, also gave the month's news and comments on the political events in the country. They all referred to the views of Gandhiji in their comments. So did the caste periodicals, their special feature being the publication of poems eulogizing Gandhiji and the national cause. But, though the main

preoccupation of the Gujarati press was politics, the dailies, weeklies and the monthlies all contained stories, poems, tit-bits, literary criticism and above all advertisements in varying amounts. Also, almost the whole of the Gujarati press followed the practice of bringing out special numbers on certain occasions, and most of the journals also continued the practice of gifting away novels to their subscribers. Indeed an overdose of the political pill has to be coated with other palatable matter too !

IV

Gandhiji was released from detention on 5th February, 1924, after he had undergone a surgical operation. He assumed the editorial responsibility of the *Navajivan* and the *Young India* in the first week of April that year. He continued to review the political situation in the country and to spread his views through these journals. The Gujarati press was coming more and more under his influence. This is evidenced not only by the increasing space devoted by it to Gandhiji's views and activities, but also by the reports of the two conferences that Gujarati Journalists held (December 1925 and December 1927—both in Ahmedabad) where it was declared that the 'press corps in Gujarat were under the total influence of Gandhiji' and that, 'the call of the nation has become the life and blood of the Gujarati press'.¹¹

At the beginning of the year 1928, the Government of Bombay proposed to raise the land revenue assessment in the Bardoli area of the Surat District by 22 per cent. The landholders of that area disapproved of this increase; they approached Gandhiji and told him their grievances. Gandhiji agreed to help organize a no-tax campaign in that area. He addressed an appeal to the peasants of Bardoli on 5th February, 1928, in which he said that the name of Bardoli connotes *Swaraj* and vice versa. He advised the peasants 'to show their strength in the civil resistance movement' and named Vallabhbhai Patel as their '*Sardar*' (leader) for the conduct of the movement. The *Navajivan*

had been reporting the progress of the movement, and Gandhiji devoted one whole issue of his weekly to Bardoli matters. He published in it the full text of the letters exchanged between Vallabhbhai Patel and the Governor of Bombay. The Gujarati press had already started reporting news about the activities in Bardoli. The *Bombay Samachar*, commenting upon the issue, blamed the Bombay Government for what it termed as 'an unjust levy'.¹² The *Sanj Vartaman* quoted the arguments of Vallabhbhai;¹³ the *Gujarat Mitra* said that 'Bardoli was agog with activities'.¹⁴ The *Jame Jamshed* exhorted the people of Bardoli to 'keep up their pledge'.¹⁵ The *Sanj Vartman* reiterated Gandhiji's advice to the *Satyagrahis* of Bardoli.¹⁶ The *Gujarat* said that the demand of the people of Bardoli was just and hence 'victory will undoubtedly come to the people'.¹⁷ Some papers advised the Bombay Government to act judiciously and wisely; some emphasised the demand of the *Satyagrahis* to set up an inquiry into the matter.

The Government made arrangements to confiscate the properties of those who did not pay their revenue dues. They had deployed a special police force for the purpose. Government had also set up a publicity bureau to publish hand-outs from time to time. In these hand-outs Government gave its own version of the revenue assessment issue. The Congress workers had also set up their information office from which they issued daily *Patrikas* (leaflets). These they distributed all over the District and sent some to the newspapers in Surat, Broach, Bombay, and Ahmedabad. It is reported that more than 10,000 leaflets were distributed every day.¹⁸

The Government started taking action against those who did not pay up their revenue as per the Government assessment. By May 1928, the number of confiscations of property had increased and many peasants' properties were taken over by the Government. Vallabhbhai then addressed an appeal to the people to raise funds for rendering monetary assistance to the Bardoli *Satyagrahis*. Gandhiji reiterated that appeal through the *Navajivan*. He said, 'The present *Satyagraha* is a *Yagna*—a sacrifice—which

needs offerings'. He called upon the people to donate to what he termed the 'Satyagraha Fund'.¹⁹ This appeal was published and supported by journals throughout Gujarat. The *Prajabandhu* and the *Navajivan* opened a 'Bardoli Satyagraha Fund' and started collecting contributions. They also devoted special columns to the publication of the periodical collections received for the fund. It was reported by these journals that Rs. 1,99,857 had been collected by June 1928 and that the figure surpassed four lakhs of rupees by August that year.²⁰

After some negotiations the Government agreed to set up an inquiry into the revenue assessments and the *Satyagraha* was called off in August 1928. The announcement was carried by all the Gujarati dailies and weeklies and was praised profusely with comments. The *Pratap* said, 'The victory is great as well as memorable'.²¹ Other journals such as the *Deshbhakta*, the *Nootan Gujarat*, the *Sanj Vartman* and the *Gujarati* paid tributes to the *Satyagrahis*, the Government and to Vallabhbhai, who, they all said, 'emerged as a true *Sardar* (leader) of the people of Gujarat'.²² Gandhiji had brought out one whole issue of the *Navajivan* called the 'Bardoli *Ank*—the Bardoli Special Number' in which he paid tributes to the people of Gujarat for the support that they had given to the movement.²³ The *Sanj Vartman*, the *Bombay Samachar* and the *Gujarati* published photographs depicting the different stages during the Bardoli *Satyagraha* movement.²⁴

V

The 44th session of the Indian National Congress which met at Lahore during the last week of December 1929, resolved to change the creed of the Congress organization by construing the word '*Swaraj*' in article one of that body's constitution to mean 'complete independence—*Purna Swaraj*'. That resolution had authorized the All India Congress Committee to 'launch upon a programme of Civil Disobedience including non-payment of taxes'. This became a starting point of a series of events culminating in a mass-movement against the Government.

When the Congress session met at Lahore the Gujarati dailies and weeklies were full of reports about it. Then followed comments on the resolutions and speeches made there. The number of editorials on the main, Independence, resolution of the Congress was more than that pertaining to any other subject. The main topic of discussion was the interpretation of the term *Swaraj* with reference to dominion status. Commenting upon this in the *Narajivan* dated 5th January, 1930, Gandhiji had explained that the word *Swaraj* meant 'absence of dependence of India on anyone in any matter'. The *Bombay Samachar* thereupon published the following words in bold type on its front page in its issue dated 9th January, 1930, '*Congressna tharavthi bhadki uthelu Britain*' (Britain has been alarmed due to the Independence resolution of the Congress).

Gandhiji wrote again on the Independence resolution in the *Narajivan* dated 12th January. In that issue he also reported his speech before students of the *Ashram* in which he had said,

'I do not know what form the Civil Disobedience movement will take I am 'desperately in search of some effective formula however'.

The subsequent issues of some of the dailies were full of hints that Gandhiji might be arrested at any time. Some of the press headings were : 'Gandhijini dharpakadna vagata bhankara', 'Gandhijini dharpakad thavani vaki', (both meaning that Gandhiji's arrest was imminent).

Gandhiji then wrote to the Government and put out a list of 'demands' (these were eleven including repeal of the salt tax) which, in an article, he characterised as the 'soul of independence' and a 'test of true *Swaraj*'.²⁵ Quoting these words the *Bombay Samachar* and the *Gujarati* wrote editorials on 16th February, 1930, and the *Gujarat-mitra ane Darpan* on the 18th while the *Prajabandhu* had been writing similarly since the 13th of that month. The gist of all these comments can be summarised in the following words picked from the weekly *Gujarati* dated 16th February, 1930 :

'The responsibility for the current unrest lies entirely with the British Government . . . (But) people would not put off their contemplated movement in spite of the steel frame of the bureaucracy'.

Gandhiji then wrote in the *Navajivan* dated 23rd of that month saying, 'If I am arrested, people must continue the programme of Civil Disobedience'. He wrote again on 2nd March in the same journal saying that he proposed to break the salt law in contravention of the Governmental restrictions. He then sent a letter to the Viceroy explaining his stand on the current issues and published the full text of his communication in the *Navajivan* dated 9th March. He also announced that on the 12th March he would begin to track on foot a distance of 241 miles from Ahmedabad to Dandi in the Surat District where he proposed to collect natural salt in contravention of the prohibitory regulations with a view to putting Civil Disobedience into action.

Gandhiji's letter was published by the Gujarati dailies and weeklies with big headings along with editorial comments. Some of the headings were: '*Gandhijini Viceroyne hradaydravak appeal*' (A heart-moving appeal by Gandhiji to the Viceroy); '*Gandhijinu sarkarne akhrinamu*' (Gandhiji's ultimatum to the Government). While the editorial comments were, 'still there is time for the Government to act judiciously': 'the present movement is a *Mukti Sangram* for Bharat (freedom fight for India) in which Gujarat must make its offerings': 'Gujarat will not lag behind this time'.²⁶

Gandhiji started as scheduled on the 12th March with a batch of 78 *Satyagrahis*. The *Bombay Samachar* splashed the news on the front page in bigger type, '*Tapasvi Rama Panchavati chhodi Lanka leva vicharechhe*—The ascetic Rama abandoning his hermit abode in Panchavati sets out to take Lanka'. So did all the Gujarati journals. Describing the situation the late Mr. Nandalal Bodiwala, founder-editor of the Ahmedabad daily *Sandesh*, and other newspapermen said that ever since the news was in the air that a Civil Disobedience movement was going to be

launched people had been, as it were, addicted to reading the day-to-day political happenings and press comments. Hence, almost all the Gujarati dailies had sent their correspondents to cover the news about Gandhiji's march, as did some English dailies and foreign journals. Bodiwala said that he had brought out special supplements in a bigger size to publish the news about the distance traversed by the marchers, about the manner in which people received the marchers in their respective villages and especially about the utterances made by Gandhiji from time to time. He said that the demand for news had increased so much in Gujarat that not only dailies but weeklies and fortnightlies even had to issue special supplements. He himself had to bring out four and at times six supplements a day. So had the *Khedavartman* (Kheda District) and the *Pratap* (Surat District) to do. Popular identification with the movement and their expectations from the press were such that any journal not supporting the movement would meet with public condemnation. For instance, of all the Gujarati journals in Bombay. Mr. Ranchhoddas Bhavan Lotwala's journals were writing against the Civil Disobedience movement and were characterising it as a 'mild' step. It is reported that some people in Bombay had called a meeting to express their disapproval of Lotwala's journals and subsequently the latter suffered a loss.²⁷

Gandhiji reached Dandi on 5th April, 1930. He went to the seashore the next day and picked up natural salt declaring that 'everyone was free to prepare and sell salt no matter what the Government did', and that 'people throughout the country should break the salt law and should be willing to court arrest if that be the consequence'. The newspapers which gave news of Gandhiji's defiance of the salt law also published news about similar acts of defiance from almost all parts of the country. The *Navajivan* which had been publishing the news about Gandhiji's march and the reports of his speeches since he set out on 12th March, gave information in greater detail about the arrests and lathi charges throughout the country. It was issuing supplements for this purpose. In one of them was

published on the front page in bold type a message from Gandhiji saying: 'I congratulate Gujarat: I want still more from the people'.²⁸

Gandhiji then proceeded to Dharasana where the Government salt depot was situated. But he was interrupted and was arrested on 4th May, 1930. That led to a number of demonstrations and arrests in the country. The comments in the Gujarati press from 5th May, 1930, onwards can be summarised as: 'Mahatmaji has contributed his mite: it is up to the people now to show their strength: a fund should be raised to help continue the *Satyagraha*; people should stick to their pledge; non-violence as preached by Gandhiji should not be abandoned'.

While the nature of the news and comment appearing in the Gujarati press regarding the nationalist movement was as has been described, the growth that it had attained by the middle of 1930 was as indicated below.

There were 91 Gujarati journals—11 dailies, 71 weeklies and 9 fortnightlies with an aggregate of 2,08125 copies per issue in circulation by that time. Data about the monthlies in circulation during 1930 are not available as in previous years. The dailies had reached a circulation figure of 36,500 copies per issue, while the weeklies had touched a total of 1,62,875 and the fortnightlies that of 8,750 copies per issue in circulation by that time. The Gujarati dailies were published now not only from Bombay, but in addition from Surat, Nadiad and Ahmedabad and were very critical of the Government.

When the press comments and reports reached such a stage, the Government promulgated an ordinance, Ordinance II of 1930, under Section 72 of the Government of India Act of 1919. That ordinance revived the Indian Press Act of 1910 which had been repealed in 1922. Under the ordinance, which according to the Government was meant to 'Provide for the better control of the Press', magistrates were empowered at their discretion to demand securities of not less than Rs. 500 from any person keeping a printing press. It may be recalled that keepers of printing presses were required to make a declaration under

Section 4 of the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867. From the publishers, who were required to make a declaration under section 5 of the 1867 Press Act, magistrates were also empowered under the ordinance to demand securities. Powers to declare such securities forfeited were conferred upon the magistrates when it appeared to the local Governments that any matter published was likely to have a tendency, directly or indirectly, whether by inference, suggestion, allusion, metaphor, implication or otherwise, to do certain things which would bring the Government into hatred or contempt. When the ordinance became operative the *Prajabandhu* of Ahmedabad suspended publication, as the editors put it, 'before securities were demanded'.²⁹ The *Navajivan* also closed down officially but efforts were made to continue publication of a sheet or two of cyclostyled copies of the journal.

During this period, a Round Table Conference had been convened in London by the British Government to discuss Indian problems. Subsequently, negotiations took place between Gandhiji and the Government, and the Government issued orders to release Gandhiji and the other Congress leaders by the last week of January 1931. The *Prajabandhu* had recommenced publication from 16th November, 1930, and so too had the *Navajivan* by the middle of March next year. Gandhiji went to London to attend the Round Table Conference on 29th August, 1931. The news about the proceedings at that conference was supplied to the press by Reuter's news agency, and the *Sanj Vartman* sent its own correspondent to cover the news from London. The press during those days was full of news about the conference proceedings and of comments which exceeded in space which was allotted to the news from London. Gandhiji returned to India by the end of December 1931. He was arrested again on 4th January, 1932. By now the Indian Press Emergency Powers Act of 1931 was already in operation. The police raided the office of the *Navajivan* on 14th January, 1932. The *Prajabandhu* which had started publication from 16th November, 1930, closed down again on 10th January, 1932. However,

the management of that weekly made arrangements to issue a single-sheet daily newspaper called the *Gujarat Samachar* from 16th January, 1932. The then editor, Mr. Indravadan Thakore states that the management did so to supply the reading public with the latest news about current politics, hence, the daily contained only news and no editorials. It may be noted here that the circulation of the new dailies in Ahmedabad (the *Sandesh* and the *Gujarat Samachar*) increased rapidly as did that of the *Bombay Samachar* in Bombay. To cope up with the demand, the *Bombay Samachar* had to be published on a newly purchased rotary printing machine.

The mass-movement culminated in the release of Gandhiji and the other Congress leaders. Before these events be recorded a reference to the Gujarati press as it stood by the end of the year 1932 should be made here.

There were in all 207 Gujarati journals of varied periodicity including 11 dailies, one bi-weekly, 68 weeklies, four fortnightlies, 102 monthlies, six bi-monthlies, 13 quarterlies, one half-yearly and an annual in circulation at that time. These were published from 26 different places. Taking the contents of the Gujarati journals at that time, it seems that they contained mostly political news. But next to that they also contained articles of literary, commercial, and religious interest. By this time, besides, a more clearcut specialization of the interests had been effected in the Gujarati press. There were 57 periodicals which published mainly news and other matters referred to above. Besides this there were 36 Gujarati journals addressed to different sectarian interests (Hindu — 12, Jain — 8, Muslim — 5, Parsi — 10 and one journal meant exclusively for the Indian Christians). There were 22 Gujarati journals meant for different castes. Again, there were four journals meant for labourers, two for the *Harijan*-uplift movement, five for women, eight for children, eight concerned with education, six with health and hygiene, five with the cinema, two propagating the cause of *Khadi*, 23 publishing stories, poems and literary matter, two meant exclusively for trade and commerce, five pertain-

ing to the problems of the native states, eight pertaining to agriculture, one giving information about the library movement and one publishing random miscellaneous matter. Though addressed to the special interests, almost all these journals published matter pertaining to current political issues in varying amount. Especially their annual and special numbers were full of articles on these issues and pictures of the Congress leaders.

To sum up now the events succeeding the movement, Gandhiji had undertaken a fast for 21 days during his detention to get some 'injustices' done to the *Harijans* (untouchables) redressed. Subsequently he was released. All other Congress leaders were also released and the British Parliament passed the Government of India Act of 1935 which came into operation in 1937 and under which a Congress ministry started functioning in the Bombay Province. The Congress Government restored the securities of the different papers and lifted various bans put on the press by its predecessor in office.

VI

To the different mass-movements launched by the Indian National Congress under the leadership of Gandhiji against the Government, one more was added with the passing of a resolution by that organization in August 1942, asking the British to withdraw from India. It is proposed now to examine the nature of the Gujarati press with reference to this mass-movement known as the 'Quit India' movement and to give a picture of its further growth.

Hostilities were declared on 3rd September, 1939, between Britain and Germany, involving India once again. Those who were running the Gujarati press knew from the past experience the interest that the reading public showed in news about the war. They were aware of the fact that information about the war was in greater demand than before, because of the effect that the war had on Indian economic and more particularly political conditions. Now that war news was supplied by the news agency (the Asso-

ciated Press of India in collaboration with the Reuter's news agency which was working on a global level) more rapidly than before, and also because the bigger printing machines (mostly cylinder and in some cases rotary machines) could print their copies more speedily, with the latest information and in bigger type, some of the Gujarati newspapers brought out special supplements. These supplements announced in big head-lines the outbreak of the war. The newspaper head-lines and comments pertaining to the war during September 1939 were, 'Poland has been a sufferer at the hands of the Nazis; German action is blind and brutal; *Herr Hitalare chhadechok kareli vachan-bhangni parampara par prakash* (A searchlight on the series of open breaches of promises by Herr Hitler); *German jahajo par British vimani fojoè karelo hallo* (The British Air Force attacks the German ships); *Lokshahi Juthono Germanono Samno Karvano Nirdhar* (Determination of the democratic forces to meet the challenge of the Germans). The Gujarati press thus evinced a support of Britain against the Nazis in the initial stages, as in the case of World War I.

But the nationalist sections in the country viewed the situation in a rather different vein and wanted the people also to view it similarly. Hence the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress meeting at Wardha during September 1939 passed a resolution saying, among other things, that the British Government should declare its war aims in regard to 'Democracy and Imperialism' in clearer terms. The resolution asked the British Government to indicate the place of India in any order envisaged. The resolution was commented upon by Gandhiji in the English weekly, the *Harijan*, dated 15th September, 1939, and its Gujarati version was published in the *Harijanbandhu** next week.

The Congress resolution was published by the Gujarati newspapers with big headings some of which read: '*Tamari necti saaf saaf shabdoman janavo*' (Declare your policy in

* Instead of the *Navajivan* Gandhiji started the *Harijanbandhu* in Gujarati from Poona.

categorical terms); '*Britainne Gandhijini chetavni*' (Gandhiji's warning to Britain), '*Ahimsano antim vijay nishchit chhe*' (The ultimate triumph of non-violence is certain); '*Congresse kareli spashtha raato*' (The Congress talks plainly).

Thus the views of the Gujarati press on the Indian political situation tallied with those of the nationalist sections in the country. On 22nd October, 1939, the Congress called upon all ministries run by that party in the provinces to resign their offices by the 31st of that month. It also called upon the legislatures in such provinces to adopt a resolution asking Britain to declare her 'war-aims'. While all the Gujarati newspapers published this news with big headlines, some of the dailies and weeklies wrote editorials in which they expressed 'concern'. Gandhiji commenting in the *Harijanbandhu* had said, 'The resignation of the Congress ministries was a necessity, but the next step is by no means clear . . . Congressmen seem to be expecting some big move'. Soon after this the Congress decided to launch *Satyagraha* by individuals who were to make propaganda against the war efforts of the Government and were to court arrest as a consequence. It started with the arrest of Vinoba Bhave on 31st October, 1939, following the arrest of almost all Congress leaders in the country. Vallabhbhai Patel was arrested in Ahmedabad on 17th November, 1940, followed by many congressmen in Gujarat who offered *Satyagraha* and courted arrest. The Gujarati newspapers had made arrangements to publish the names of the individual *Satyagrahis*, the details about their background, the notices that they had served on the Government and the manner in which they courted arrest. By December 1941 about 20,000 Congressmen throughout the country were held in detention, but they were all released by the beginning of 1942.

By this time there were 22 Gujarati dailies, two bi-weeklies, 94 weeklies, 48 fortnightlies and 77 monthlies. The dailies included nine from Bombay, the *Bombay Samachar*, the *Jame Jamshed*, the *Sanj Vartman*, the *Jannubhoomi*, the *Vande Matram*, the *Matrubhoomi*, the *Muslim*

Patrika, the *Rozname* and the *Bharat Samachar*; six from Surat, the *Gujarat Mitra* and *Gujarat Darpan*, the *Deshi Mitra*, the *Gujarat*, the *Pratap*, the *Jaybharat* and the *Vafaadar*; two from Baroda, the *Raj Huns* and the *Jay Gujarat*; five from Ahmedabad, the *Gujarat Samachar*, the *Sandesh*, the *Prabhat*, the *Sevak* and the *Rozgar*. The two bi-weeklies were the *Kathiawad Times* and the *Sayaji Vijay* from Rajkot and Baroda respectively. Among the 94 weeklies registered, 45 including the *Gujarati*, the *Hindustan* and *Praja Mitra*, the *Kaisare Hind* and the *Khilafat* were published from Bombay; 11 including the *Deshbandhu* and the *Dandiyo* were from Surat; five including the *Nav Gujarat*, and the *Praja Mandal Patrika* from Baroda; the *Arya Prakash* from Anand; the *Kheda Vartman* from Kheda; the *Gujarat Times* and the *Karmabhoomi* from Nadiad; 16 including the *Gujarati Punch*, the *Praja-bandhu* and the *Nav Saurashtra* from Ahmedabad; the *Jain* from Bhavnagar; the *Phoolchhab* and the *Bahurupi* from Ranpur and one each from Wadhawan and Bhuj. Among these, 23 were found to be devoted exclusively to cinema matters while 24 were addressed to different castes, sects or religious minorities. These religious minorities included the Muslims who had by this time put up their claim for Pakistan—a separate Muslim state. The *Muslim Patrika*, the *Muslim Gujarat* and later the *Vatan* were the exponents of this claim. As such they countered the demands of the Congress organization and emphasized the Muslim demands as an ethnic necessity. The rest of the Gujarati journals decrying the Muslim claim supported the Congress. There was thus a marked polarization in the Gujarati press even as there was in the country at that time.

Three weeklies were devoted to crossword puzzles which were run by some Gujarati dailies;* one was devoted ex-

* Gujarati dailies like the *Janmabhoomi* had started crossword puzzle competitions. The puzzle, its probable clue and the final results were published in that daily. That attracted the attention of many readers; more so because the newspaper used to announce that the winners would get quite a large sum as a prize and the

clusively to detective stories and one to market quotations. The 18 fortnightlies included the *Bhageeni Samaj Patrika*, the *Sirohi Sandesh* and six others from Bombay; the *Jyotirdhar* and one more from Ahmedabad, and, one each from Bulsar, Surat, Kheda, Bhavnagar, Jetpur, Songadh, Dhoraji and Anjar (Kuchh). Of these 18 fortnightlies, one, the *Jyotirdhar*, was the organ of some social reformists in Ahmedabad, two were trade-bulletins, one was a cinema magazine and the rest were meant for different castes or sects. The monthlies included the *Navrachana* and 13 others from Bombay; the *Yuvak*, the *Stree-Jeevan*, the *Kumar*, the *Rekha* and six others from Ahmedabad; two from Surat; the *Patidar* from Anand, the *Sharda*, the *Gunsundari*, the *Pustakalaya*, the *Gramjeevan* and 14 others from Baroda; the *Samaj Sheekshak* and two others from Navsari; the *Jyoti*, the *Gharshala* and 15 others from Bhavnagar; three from Rajkot and one each from Mehsana, Visnagar, Patan, Jamnagar, Wadhwan, Jetpur, Gondal, Limbdi and Junagadh.

The dailies were of a uniform size — 22 inches long and 17 inches broad with seven columns each, printed on bigger-size cylinder or rotary machines. They contained mainly news procured through the news agencies and through accredited correspondents. In some cases the dailies published weekly sections addressed to women or children, or devoted to health and hygiene and to religious matters. The weeklies and the bi-weeklies such as the *Gujarati*, the *Prajubandhu*, the *Gujarati Punch* and the *Sayaji-Vijaya* used to give weekly round-ups of the news, comments and literary articles. The monthlies like the *Rekha* were devoted to political and literary comment while others were full of diverse matter. Generally the weeklies were 17 inches in length and 11 inches in breadth while the monthlies were nine by six inches length and breadthwise. All these Gujarati journals — dailies, bi-weeklies, weeklies,

weekly edition 'Pravasi' complimentary for six months in addition to that. That must have helped augmenting circulation of the newspaper. It may be noted that such practices were being followed till recently and they did help to boost the circulation of some journals.

fortnightlies and monthlies — contained advertisements which occupied considerable space. These advertisements, both display and classified, had increased on account of the war-time fillip that the economy received. It is to be noted here that the industrialists who spent profusely on advertisements were indirectly strengthening the press which was supporting the nationalist movement against the Government.

By the beginning of 1942 the war situation was becoming unfavourable to Britain. The British possessions in South East Asia were going over to the Axis. The war-news at that time was reported by the Gujarati press in a way which indicates a change after the nationalist sections in the country had become more active. The reporting provides, besides, a contrast to that of World War I when the nationalist sections had not grown so influential. The headings were: '*Britainne boom padavvani German yojna*' (German plans to gag Britain); '*Japani sainyoni aage kuch*' (Advances made by the Japanese troops); '*Sathi sainyoni lagaataar pichhe hath*' (successive retreats of the Allied forces).

Under these circumstances, the war-cabinet in Britain announced their decision on 11th March, 1942, to send Sir Stafford Cripps to India 'for consultations with the Indian leaders and for finding out some solution to meet the emergencies created by the war situation'. The announcement was made by the British Premier in the British Parliament and was reported in India by the Reuter's news agency. It was reported and commented upon by the *Bombay Samachar* by saying, 'The arrival of Cripps is a *Davpetch* (a manoeuvre)': 'Cripps was coming to India to mislead the leaders (*vidha pata bhanavava*)' and that 'the proposals must be devoid of any substance (*Damvagarni*)'. Similar comments were made by the *Gujarat Samachar* and the *Vande Matram*.

The negotiations lasted from 22nd March to 11th April, 1942, when Sir Stafford Cripps left India after an announcement of the failure of the negotiations was made. But some of the Gujarati newspapers which had made

special arrangements to procure intelligence about the negotiations between Sir Stafford Cripps and the Congress leaders had started writing since March 30, in the following words : '*Crippsji bhens laya ke bada paap*'? (Cripps had defined expectations) ; *Cripps yojana swikarashe nahin* (the Cripps proposals will not be acceptable).

Gandhiji had been writing on all these issues in his weeklies. On 11th May, 1942, he wrote an article captioned, 'To Every Briton'. Gandhiji had requested (as had the Congress organization in a resolution adopted earlier) Britons to support him in his demand for a withdrawal of British rule from India. That article appeared in the Gujarati Weekly *Harijanbandhu* dated 18th May under the heading, *Angrejo Jar* (Britishers Quit). The Gujarati press which had been quoting Gandhiji's articles took up this phrase in subsequent writings. It exhorted the people to 'respond to the call of the nation' and to 'be ready for a fight till the finish'. Their reporting of the war-news was, as it were, providing a vicarious pleasure to the common man who liked to read about British reverses in the war. The war-news was captioned: '*Dhari deshoni aage kuch*' (forward march of the Axis) ; '*Britainni haroni parampara*'; (a series of defeats for Britain) ; '*Al Alamin sudhi pahunchela Germano*'; (the Germans have reached upto Al Alamin).

In view of the situation the Congress organization resolved on 14th July, 1942, to request the withdrawal of the British rule from India and to launch a struggle under the leadership of Gandhiji, should negotiations between the Congress and the Government fail. This resolution was published by all the Gujarati dailies under big headlines and was commented upon from that day onwards. The *Bombay Samachar* said, 'Delhi had been shaken due to this resolution', and the *Janmabhoomi* and the *Vande Mataram* said, 'still there is time for Britain to enter into a compromise with India'. Then these papers published the following words of Gandhiji, '*Bhale mari ane bijaoni dhar-pakad thay*' (what of that if I and others be arrested !), and added that Gujarat would not 'lag behind in such an

eventuality'. Then followed a series of addresses by Vallabh-bhai Patel in Ahmedabad and Bombay from 25th July to 3rd August. These addresses were given the front page treatment and were published under different headings which read as : '*Koipan bhog apava taiyar raho : agniparec kshano samaya aavipahonchyochhe* (The moment for an ordeal by fire has come: be prepared to give any sacrifice).*

Along with this the *Janmabhoomi*, the *Vande Matram* and the *Bombay Samachar* published the photographs of the different Congress leaders reaching Bombay during the first week of August and this practice of the press made the news more lively and the situation more tense.

The All India Congress Committee met as scheduled on 7th and 8th August. It adopted a resolution asking the British to quit and to declare India free. The meeting concluded late at night on the 8th and soon afterwards the Government declared the Congress organization as an unlawful association and arrested Gandhiji and Congressmen throughout the country in the early hours of the 9th. This led to a series of disturbances involving lathi-charges, tear-gas shelling and firing by the police throughout the country. The Gujarati newspapers gave that news on the afternoon of the 9th in special supplements, and from the 10th onwards there were other reports of the disturbances from all parts of the country.

The Government's attitude towards the press in this respect took the form of a series of restrictive orders affecting the nature of comment and reports. Ever since hostilities were declared early in September 1939, the Government had passed the Defence of India Act and the rules *inter alia* which provided for 'a pre-censorship of material published in the press relating to certain matters'. When the Congress organization launched the 'Individual

* It may be mentioned here that these Gujarati captions were picked up verbatim from the leaders' speeches by the correspondents who were travelling with the leaders. These correspondents conveyed the reports telephonically to their respective newspapers. That preserved the import and innuendo of the Gujarati words spoken by the leaders.

Satyagraha movement in 1940, the Government had issued a notification according to which, 'the publication of any matter calculated directly or indirectly to foment opposition to the prosecution of the war and publish accounts of speeches, meetings etc. calculated to that effect' were prohibited. When the Indian National Congress adopted its August resolution asking the British to withdraw from India, the Government of India issued a fresh notification on 8th August, 1942. In that it was said, 'the printing or publishing of any factual news (which expression shall be deemed to include reports of speeches or statements made by the members of the public) relating to the mass-movement sanctioned by the All India Congress Committee or relating to the measures taken by the Government against that movement, except news derived from official sources or from the Associated Press of India or the United Press of India or the Orient Press of India or from a correspondent regularly employed by the newspaper concerned and whose name stands registered with the District Magistrate of the district in which he carries on his work, shall be prohibited'. The Government issued a press note too, which said:

'The declaration of various Congress committees to be unlawful associations renders liable to prosecution under the Criminal Law Amendment Act any one who assists their operations. It follows therefore, that the editor of any newspaper who supports or encourages the mass movement sponsored by the bodies referred to above, or who opposes the measures taken by Government to avert or suppress that movement, will be guilty of an offence against the law. Moreover, the publication of factual news, both by the selection of events reported and by the manner in which they are displayed, can do even more to advertise and thus support the movement than editorial comment thereon The responsibility of the press is, however, as great as its undoubted influence, and in order to ensure that, that responsibility may be exercised in a manner that will not bring the press into conflict with authority, Government consider it necessary, (a) to exer-

cise a measure of control over the origins of factual news relating to the movement so as to secure that what is published is derived only from recognized and responsible sources, and (b) while imposing no direct control over the expression of editorial views, to leave editors themselves in no doubt as to the limits beyond which it will not be in their own interests to go. (But) Government wish it to be clearly understood that they do not propose to allow any newspaper to continue to publish matter, whether it takes the form of news or views, which in their opinion, will encourage the movement or incite people to take part in it or which will excite popular feelings in favour of the movement or against the measures that Government will be compelled to take to combat it'.³⁰

The notification and the press-note have been quoted here at length to indicate the nature of the news and comments the press could publish about the mass-movement that had begun after the arrest of Gandhiji and other Congressmen in the country. Many a Gujarati journal had to close down and many more were called to book by the Government.

Subsequent events were the cessation of war in Europe and the release of the Congress leaders followed by a series of negotiations culminating in the transfer of power to India on 15th August, 1947.

VII

This chapter has brought out that phase of the Gujarati press when it was associated with the mass-movements launched by the nationalist organization under Gandhiji's leadership. It has been seen that the nature of content in the journals changed as a consequence and particularly because Gandhiji, during his stay in Gujarat, provided the Gujarati press with specific guidance and elaborate arguments—the latter through his weekly *Navajivan*.

With increasing mass-awareness and popular participation in the movements, the nature of the news-coverage and press-comment became such that the Government issued prohibitory orders restricting not only editorial comment but also the publication of factual news.

However, preoccupied with the news and views of the nationalists as the Gujarati press was, it secured a vaster readership throughout Gujarat. It kept up the popular interest in the mass-movements and received in turn a further fillip, functioning thus as an initiator and sustainer of the nationalist agitation till the British withdrew from India in 1947.

This chapter has also brought out the diversification of interests and the consequent specialization of different journals—a specialization which will be referred to in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

RECENT TRENDS

IT IS PROPOSED to give a picture of the recent trends in the contemporary Gujarati press in this chapter. This will have to be rather broad and general since the events taking place in a fast moving situation are too close to lend themselves to deeper analysis. Though this picture will be broad and general, certain factors providing a background to it will, however, be mentioned.

Systematic collection of data regarding the press began from the year 1956, when the office of the Registrar of Newspapers for India (also known as the Press Registrar) was set up in Delhi under the Registration of Newspapers (Central) Rules promulgated after the Press and Registration of Books (Amendment) Act, 1955 was brought into force in July 1956.

According to the first Annual Report of the Press Registrar, there were 41 dailies, 121 weeklies, 80 fortnightlies, 155 monthlies and 13 quarterlies and other periodicals making a total of 410 Gujarati journals in circulation in 1956. The report mentions the circulation figures of *some* of the Gujarati journals, as the figures for the whole of the Gujarati press were not supplied to the Press Registrar by all the Gujarati journals. The circulation of the 203 Gujarati journals for which information is available (including 26 dailies, 48 weeklies, 29 fortnightlies, 94 monthlies and six quarterlies etc.) was 8,27,000 copies per issue, the 26 dailies having between them reached a circulation of 2,65,000 copies per issue by that time.

During 1960 there were 513 Gujarati journals (366 in the Gujarat State and 147 published from Bombay, now in the Maharashtra State) including 38 dailies, 111 weeklies,

64 fortnightlies, 268 monthlies and 32 quarterlies and other periodicals. Of them 293 Gujarati journals (26 dailies, 70 weeklies, 31 fortnightlies, 150 monthlies and 16 quarterlies) are reported to have attained a circulation figure of 12,01,000 copies with the 26 dailies reaching a figure of 3,54,000 copies per issue.

From the above figures the growth of the contemporary Gujarati press in terms of increase, both in the number of journals as well as in their circulation, is evident. And their changing nature is indicated by their contents as shown in Tables 1 and 2 in Appendix II wherein the journals have been classified into 29 types.

The first 27 types in this list have been adopted from the subjectwise classification of Indian journals as a whole as mentioned in the Annual Report of the Registrar of Newspapers for India for 1956 and onwards, while the type number 28, 'Prize Competitions' and type number 29, 'Caste and Community' have been mentioned separately although in the Press Registrar's Reports they come under the type number 27, 'Miscellaneous'. The classification of the Gujarati journals into 29 types has been done on a factual perusal of the contents of the different Gujarati journals as per Appendix I.

Even this classification into 29 types is not intended as a watertight grouping. Overlapping is possible in several cases. A journal put into one type does contain other matter to a greater or lesser extent. For instance, the daily *Bombay Samachar* or the *Gujarat Samachar* or the *Jannabhoomi* which have been placed under type number 1, 'News and Current Affairs', includes variegated matter covering the range of almost all the other 28 subjects in the classification. Similarly, the monthly *Akhand Anand* which has been put under type number 2, 'Literary and Cultural', does not exclude other matter, while the monthly *Kumar* which has been grouped under type number 5, 'Children', contains occasionally matter which is interesting or informative to adolescents and even grown-ups. The *Bhatia Stree Mandal Patrika* which has been put under

type 4, 'Women', is a magazine addressed to women of the *Bhatia Jati* exclusively.

There is an overall increase in the number of journals in almost all types, more particularly in the journals falling under type 1, 'News and Current Affairs', as also in those coming under type 2, 'Literary and Cultural' (Tables 1 and 2 in Appendix II). Increase is noticeable in types 3, 22 and 29, that is, 'Religion and Philosophy', 'Market Reports and Bulletins' and 'Caste and Community' respectively. Especially in the last, type 29, 'Caste and Community', journals have shot up from 31 in 1956 to 99 in 1960. All of them publish, as they did in the past, news about marriages and deaths with obituary, supplemented now by information about different university examination-results of students in their castes. They also contain laudatory notes about persons securing prizes, scholarships or other distinctions at such examinations and about persons going abroad for further studies or business purposes. The contemporary caste-journals give news about successful candidates at different elective bodies ranging from the *Village-Panchayat* to the State Legislatures, accompanied at times by pictures and flattering notes. News about caste-associations, of which these periodicals are the organs, is a standing feature of the caste-journals. What is particularly noteworthy about them is that some of the sub-castes and the so-called lower castes also have their own journals and they, like the other caste-journals, contain articles advocating reforms in their respective groups.

II

For elucidating the nature of the present day Gujarati press the common features of the following 26* dailies which come under type 1, 'News and Current Affairs' and

* Out of 38 Gujarati dailies in circulation only 26 have been taken for this purpose as the remaining 12 were publishing only the New York Cotton market figures which are used in Gujarat for gambling purposes. This has been referred to again in a subsequent footnote.

which cover almost all the subjects referred to under the remaining 28 types will be described.

*PARTICULARS REGARDING GUJARATI DAILIES
PUBLISHED DURING 1960*

Num-ber	Name	Place of Publication	Year of starting publication	Circulation per issue
1.	<i>Bombay Samachar</i>	Bombay	1822	36,970
2.	<i>Gujarat Kesari</i>	Baroda	1958	5,939
3.	<i>Gujarat Mitra and Gujarat Darpan</i>	Surat	1937	13,390
4.	<i>Gujarati Samachar</i>	Ahmedabad	1932	39,191
5.	<i>Jai Hind</i>	Rajkot	1948	25,639
6.	<i>Jagrut Kucchh</i>	Bhuj (Kutch)	—	—
7.	<i>Jame Jamshed</i>	Bombay	1832	8,142
8.	<i>Jansatta</i>	Ahmedabad	1953	37,135
9.	<i>Janshakti</i>	Bombay	1950	10,454
10.	<i>Janmabhoomi</i>	Bombay	1934	21,436
11.	<i>Jan-Tantra</i>	Bombay	1958	—
12.	<i>Jay Kucchh</i>	Bhuj	—	323
13.	<i>Kucchh Mitra</i>	Bhuj	1952	2,170
14.	<i>Loksatta</i>	Baroda	1951	11,760
15.	<i>Loktantra</i>	Bombay	1957	10,650
16.	<i>Lokwani</i>	Surat	1958	4,117
17.	<i>Nagrik Pokar</i>	Surat	1958	—
18.	<i>Navbharat</i>	Baroda	1956	8,423
19.	<i>Nav Gujarat</i>	Ahmedabad	1958	—
20.	<i>Nutan Saurashtra</i>	Rajkot	1948	10,960
21.	<i>Phulchhab</i>	Rajkot	1950	13,384
22.	<i>Prabhat</i>	Ahmedabad	1938	13,513
23.	<i>Prajatantra</i>	Bombay	1953	25,786
24.	<i>Pratap</i>	Surat	1926	12,016
25.	<i>Sandesh</i>	Ahmedabad	1923	33,248
26.	<i>Sevak</i>	Ahmedabad	1941	4,734

These dailies are almost of a uniform size, that is, approximately 20" in length and 16" in breadth of printed space. This is divided into 8 columns of 2" each. The number of pages in each of the dailies varies: some of the dailies bring out 4 pages while some publish 8 to 12 pages a day. An average Gujarati daily contains, however, 8

pages. Its average price varies from 10 to 13 nP. per copy. These dailies are printed mostly on big rotary machines which can throw out more than 25,000 copies an hour. Some of them have monotype composing devices so that the time normally consumed in manual composing is minimised and the latest news can be included in the day's copy which can go for print at 2-0 a.m.

The front page of the Gujarati dailies contains the main news of the day, which is given under very big and compelling banner headings—a practice which the Gujarati press has adopted since 1930 and which is still followed often irrespective of the importance of the news. The front page news concerns events or utterances of some personality, national or international, mostly of a political nature. This is received on the teleprinter through the news agency or, in some instances, from the correspondents posted in the metropolis, telegraphically and sometimes over the telephone. As the news-agency supplies news in English to all the Gujarati dailies, there is uniformity in the types of information printed.* But variety is shown by all the dailies due to the fragmentation of the first page into various irregularly shaped new-items, head-lines and pictures (a cartoon in some cases) interspersed with 'box items'. This robs the front page of quite a number of other news-items because the variety of type, pictures, 'boxes' and advertisements consume much of the printed space and often the main page news story has to be carried over to some other page where it is accommodated in some corner as best it may.

The news content of these dailies has facilitated their expansion. It was said in the previous chapter that the dailies during the early 1930's and 1940's had increased their circulation as they were giving the latest news, and

* Variety, if it can be so called, is visible in the Gujarati translations done by the staff of the newspapers which views each word in its own way and renders the story sometimes mutilated in Gujarati in a manner and style not always calculated to enhance intelligibility. In fact, Gujarati journalese calls for a special study from the point of view of style, purity of language and presentation.

the weeklies had to bring out special supplements every day in addition to their scheduled weekly editions. The growing popular demand for the latest news about current happenings has resulted in quite a large clientele for the Gujarati dailies. People no longer want to wait for the news and hence weeklies containing 'News and Current Affairs' have lost their appeal.** The dailies are pushing them out and one cannot find a single Gujarati weekly giving 'News and Current Affairs' having a circulation of more than 5000 copies per issue during recent years.

The second page in the Gujarati dailies is full of commercial information. This page gives details about the fluctuations in the stock, bullion and commodity exchanges, and in oil, oil-seed and grain markets in Gujarat and elsewhere. This is a special and widely read feature of the Gujarati press and quite a considerable amount is spent by some newspapers to procure telephonically the closing market rates from different commercial centres. It is significant that the commercial interests which presided over the birth of the Gujarati press remain characteristically strong.

The third page of the popular Gujarati daily is again a mosaic of news-items. The news on this page is invariably of a political nature and has generally an international bias. It is 'set' a little earlier than the first and the last pages with the news received before mid-day. As it is 'locked up' earlier, what the reader gets is one story on the inside page and sometimes a different version on the front or the last page.

The fourth page in the Gujarati dailies is the 'page of pride' for the newspapermen. It contains the editorial (*Tantri Lekh*), special features (sections) and usually 'letters to the editor' columns. These 'letters to the editor' (known earlier as *Charchapatra* now called *Vanchakona*

The old weeklies *Gujarati* and *Prajabandhu* which were giving mainly 'News and Current Affairs' have become defunct now. Similarly, the weeklies like the *Kheda Vartman*, the *Kathiawad Times* and the *Broach Samachar* have a limited circulation now, and have undergone changes in content.

Vicharo that is, 'the readers' views') which are published irregularly on this page appear now under an editorial notice that 'the editors of this newspaper do not necessarily subscribe to the views expressed by the readers'. It may be recalled here that these columns were very popular in the past when controversies used to be raised through such letters or when public grievances used to be redressed because of these letters. It seems now that they are published as a routine matter.

The editorial deals with any subject, but here again politics takes the lion's share. It is written in an elegant style. There is no data to judge either the popularity or the effect of the editorials. One cannot say definitely whether people always read editorials with the same interest with which they go through the news columns. After long discussions with newspapermen on this point it was found that the editorial, which was the most keenly read part of a newspaper in the past, has lost its special appeal. Moreover, some Gujarati dailies have shortened the space allotted to editorials and some have adopted the practice of accommodating in this straitened space editorials on 2 or even 3 subjects at a time. In addition to the decreasing popular interest in editorials some journalists suggested one more factor contributing to the decline of this column. It was said that the dailies are owned and run mostly by persons who are not journalists by profession and training: they are no longer the 'writer-editors' as they were in the past. Hence they do not, even as they cannot, bother much about the editorial, unless it runs against their policy of not antagonising the Government, big advertisers, or some such 'useful' personality or body.

On this same, that is on the fourth, page appear the special features which are named '*Vibhag*', that is, sections. On the basis of all the current Gujarati dailies these features can be enumerated as :

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Women's Section, | 2. Children's Section, |
| 3. Literary Section, | 4. Astrology Section. |

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 5. Religion and Philosophy Section, | 6. Science Section, |
| 7. Education Section, | 8. Section dealing with Social Problems, |
| 9. Health and <i>Ayurved</i> Section, | 10. Farmers' Section, |
| 11. Legal Section, | 12. Miscellaneous. |

In addition to these special features (which do not exhaust the wide range of subjects dealt with) some newspapers publish political (national and international) and economic notes, caricatures, humorous verses and such light matter. Some of them publish two and at times four features in a single issue.

The features are looked after by persons who are not necessarily on the regular staff of the newspapers. They are mostly litterateurs and are fairly famous to provide an attractive label to their features and consequently to the newspapers which have retained them. They come from the urban élite and the matter they contribute is mainly urban-oriented. That and the sophistication betrayed by the language of these features indicate that the Gujarati press which had an urban origin has still retained an urban bias.

As these feature-writers are not in the full-time employment of the newspapers concerned, the matter that goes in their respective sections is often not in keeping with the general policy of their retaining newspapers.

The fifth page in the popular Gujarati daily is devoted to news obtained from the different districts of Gujarat. It has thus a regional bias and is variegated. It is received by the newspapers from their district correspondents a day or two in advance. It was found on inquiry that a single individual works as the district correspondent for two, three or even five Gujarati newspapers on a part-time basis. This leads to a uniformity of news coverage in several newspapers because the district correspondents despatch carbon copies of the same news to different journals. The news thus sent is invariably biased; it either

praises or decries something in the area; expresses opinions one way or the other.

The sixth page in the Gujarati daily is a jumble of matter. Mostly it is filled up with advertisements, those of the local cinema theatres predominating. Next to that, this page is the rendezvous of the left over of the matter published on the fourth page. It contains besides the day's radio-programme and occasionally the local train-timings.

The seventh and the eighth pages contain local information—each newspaper giving predominance to the news about its centre of publication. The news is variegated; reporting at times the speech of some minister; giving details about the day's engagements and reporting local deaths etc., many times accompanied by topical pictures. Lastly, mention must be made of the New York Cotton market opening and closing figures* published in the dailies on the eighth or the first, second or the seventh page which goes to the print-room immediately after the figures have been received through the news agency after 1-30 a.m. I.S.T.

A word about advertisements now. It was observed in the previous chapters that the Gujarati press has been publishing advertisements since its emergence (with the well-known exception of the Gandhian journals), and the space occupied by advertisements in the Gujarati press has been increasing since then. But the quantum of advertisements in the Gujarati press as a whole and the revenue accruing therefrom at present must remain undetermined. There are specialised advertising agencies which distribute advertisements to the different journals now. They select their media for advertisement on the basis of the standing, cir-

* There is a large section of people in the urban areas of Gujarat who stake money on the last figure of the opening and the closing rates of cotton in the New York Cotton market every day. This gambling continues mainly because the figures are published invariably by all the dailies which cannot afford to drop them.

There are 12 dailies publishing exclusively the day to day and the past figures with tips for the future. These are given under the shadow of some stray and stale news only to come within the postal and other concession rules.

ulation* and area† of circulation of a journal. The quantum of advertisements and their rates vary from journal to journal according to these three criteria. Hence authentic data about advertisements appearing in the Gujarati journals cannot be obtained, more so because all the advertisements published in these journals are not received through the specialised advertising agencies. On the basis of information given by the Indian Press Commission, however, the average amount of advertisement revenue per copy per annum of the Gujarati daily worked out at Rs. 26 which was the highest for any other Indian-language newspaper in 1951.‡ The types of advertisements that appear in the Gujarati press at present have been given in Appendix III.

III

Several factors provide a background to these trends in the contemporary Gujarati press. The first one among them is the change of Government in the country. That has altered the nature of the press which is no longer a 'colonial press' but is one in a free democratic republic.

With the advent of democracy and the democratic institutions including elections based on adult franchise, the importance of the regional papers has increased. Journals devoting more space to the news and issues of the areas of their publication and circulation are becoming more popular than before.

The second factor is the formation of a separate state of

* The circulation figures of a journal can be checked up by the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) if a journal accepts its membership. The ABC issues circulation certificates from time to time. But all the Gujarati journals are not members of that organization. That makes it rather difficult to obtain authentic circulation data and consequently advertisement yields for the Gujarati Press.

† Advertisements of cosmetics, patent medicines and textiles are addressed mainly to urban areas which provide potential consumers of these items.

‡ Government of India, (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting), Report of the Press Commission, Part I, (New Delhi, 1954), p. 57.

Gujarat since May 1960.* This has contributed to the growing importance of the Gujarati language and also of the Gujarati press in the Gujarati speech-community. Again, formation of a separate state of Gujarat has now shifted the political and to some extent economic foci of interest of the different sections in Gujarat from the city of Bombay (which is now in the Maharashtra State) to the other cities of Gujarat. Hence, Gujarati dailies published from centres in Gujarat have left behind in circulation those published from Bombay, which had, in the past, the highest number of Gujarati journals with large circulation.

As the third factor should be recognized the developmental changes taking place in the country at present. The Government launched developmental programmes under the First and the Second Five-Year Plans and Government is going ahead with targets for the Third Plan. These have increased the speed of economic activity and have accelerated the tempo of enterprise in Gujarat as elsewhere. Apart from providing more persons who would be willing to spend on a journal, these have fetched in more advertisements and more advertisement revenue to the press. Besides, the scope of Governmental advertisements, both display and classified, has also increased and this provides not only more revenue but also a prestige and hence more advertisements to the different journals.

Again, there has been a marked increase in literacy in Gujarat. The literates in this area were 23.2 per cent of the total population in 1951. Literacy is estimated to be 30.3 per cent of the population in 1961. But that is not all. Gujarat has three universities with several institutions attached to them producing thousands of trained persons in various subjects every year. This has a two-fold effect on the Gujarati press. First, the increase in higher

* Though the event is quite recent popular opinion for a separate state of Gujarat is of a fairly long standing. It can be contended here that the nature of the Gujarati press had been fluctuating during a formal agitation for such a state—*Maha Gujarat* movement as it was called. However, it is too early to locate at this stage all the elements contributive to such a fluctuation in its nature.

education creates an awareness in people who are eager to keep themselves in touch with contemporary happenings and prevalent views. It is common knowledge that such people start their day with the newspapers and provide a stable clientele to the press. The second effect that higher education is making on the Gujarati press is shown by the increase in the number of specialised journals catering to the needs of certain sections. As the number of persons who have received higher education increases, and as the number of literates increases (the Social Education drive is helping that) the Gujarati press will grow still further.

Among the means of transport, the railways come first. Though there has not been any spectacular increase in route mileage of the railways during the past decade, their main contribution to the growth of the Gujarati press is by way of increased frequency of trains running between different centres. This has now made possible the transmission of newspapers containing the latest information more speedily and to longer distances than was possible earlier.

The State (Road) Transport buses are running on 1,557 different roads covering 34,814 miles with an average daily movement of 1,29,943 miles. These buses connect many places situated at long distances and help the movement of passengers and freight including newspaper bundles to remote villages situated miles away from newspaper publication centres and railway stations.

This is possible now as there are 5,950 miles of metalled (*pucca*) roads and 9,050 miles of non-metalled (*kuccha*) roads spread throughout Gujarat which was not well-served in this respect before. The former include highways connecting Bombay, Surat, Broach, Baroda, Kheda, Nadiad and Ahmedabad: Ahmedabad, Rajkot, Bhavnagar: Ahmedabad, Godhra and Dohad etc. These roads in particular are motorable throughout the year. This facilitates transmission of newspapers, not only through the State Transport buses but also through smaller vehicles that the newspaper managements have engaged for the purpose.

Next to these transport facilities, mention must be made of the means of communication. The postal services have been extended now to almost all the villages in Gujarat.

Formerly it took seven days for a letter to reach some of them, now the post is distributed once in two days at the latest. That has removed one obstacle in the way of the expansion of the Gujarati journals of different periodicities. Telephone and telegraph lines have also increased, and the plan targets are to increase them still more. These help in the speedier transmission of messages between different centres far and near.* Again, due to the increase in the number of telegraph lines, separate teleprinter channels have been provided to different places as also to the newspaper offices. Formerly, teleprinter receivers were not available. The news agency used to send telegrams to the subscriber newspapers several times a day by hand-delivery. That delayed news considerably. Then came the teleprinter receivers, but, with a handicap that they did not work with separate channels. Now it is not so. The news agency can 'flash' news simultaneously through specially installed teleprinter receivers in almost all the Gujarati newspaper offices, within minutes of an event. That is one of the factors in increasing the circulation of the dailies, because people select the newspapers giving last minute information.

Such information can be included now since most of the journals are printed on big rotary machines which throw out more than 25,000 copies per hour, and also because of automatisation in composing. But the bigger printing machines entailing large capital investment fulfil their main task within an hour or two and remain unoccupied for the rest of the day. Hence the owners of such establishments are tempted to devise means to get the maximum out of them; more so because side-journals can consume the surplus advertisements received for their main newspapers and can be useful also in getting the maximum of tax-concessions. They would make their establishments economically profitable in this way, incidentally increasing the number of Gujarati journals too. But, would they not decide the nature of content in such journals?

* The telegraph department gives special facilities to newspaper correspondents who can send their press-telegrams at special concessional rates, charges for the telegrams being collected annually from the newspapers concerned.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RÈSUMÈ

IT IS APPROPRIATE now that the threads of the discussion pursued so far should be drawn together.

This study, as said earlier, attempted to show the close relation between the press and the different social institutions and groups all existing in the larger society. In particular, it attempted to locate these institutions and groups and to show the manner in which they were connected with the press. They were tentatively decided upon and their distribution in Gujarat society was depicted. As that depiction proceeded their association with the nature and growth of the Gujarati press was demonstrated. And from that their significance for the functioning of the press has been discovered.

Take education for instance. Its importance for the very existence and in augmenting the growth of the press hardly needs to be reiterated here. But particularly with respect to the change in the nature of the Gujarati press it should be noted that it was the newly introduced 'modern education', that created a group of persons with some 'views'. The social consciousness of these persons was aroused after they received the 'new education'. They could not remain just unreflective recipients of norms. Their foremost urge was renovation and reinterpretation. Hence, they questioned in order to understand, and aimed to transform, some of the prevailing beliefs and practices through reflection and inquiry. They styled *Buddhi* (Intellect), *Gnan* (Knowledge) as their credo. As they aspired to spread their views, they associated themselves with the modern medium of wider communication, the press. They utilised it for disseminating their views and published

journals with *Gnan*, *Buddhi*, *Satya* (Truth) as their mottos, changing, though for a brief period, the main pre-occupation of the Gujarati press.

Education is helping the growth of the Gujarati press at present as well. The number of literates in Gujarat has now reached about 30 per cent of the total population and along with that the number of copies per issue of all the Gujarati journals together is more than 12 lakhs. The establishment of three universities with several institutions attached to them in Gujarat increases still more the number of persons trained and interested in a variety of subjects, and that leads to an increase in the number of journals catering to the various interests. As such persons, both literate and the highly educated increase, the Gujarati press will grow still more, and a further change in its nature will be possible.

Trade and commerce have equally close relations with the Gujarati press. It was noted that the first Gujarati weekly emerged mainly for communicating commercial intelligence. And since then the growing economic activity in Gujarat has been creating a need for more commercial information—commodity price and share-market fluctuations as well as advertisements—increasing consequently the number of pages in the journals, leading also to an increase in the number of journals meant exclusively for trade and commerce. As commerce increases in Gujarat the number of advertisements in the journals will also increase, yielding more revenue to the press for spending on expansion of the existing journals and for starting new ones, thus attracting more advertisement revenue, and so on. Over and above this the fact worth noting is that commercial information has become such an essential part of the Gujarati dailies that one full page is devoted to the market quotations procured at great cost from the business centres all over Gujarat.

Though not very useful strictly for commerce, the New York Cotton market figures have a special significance for the press in Gujarat because as many as 12 dailies giving exclusively these figures are published and any other daily

not publishing the figures would certainly suffer in circulation.

The relation between the Government and the press is also very significant. When the first Gujarati newspaper came out, the Government had granted permission for its publication. The Government also sanctioned financial aid to it directly as well as indirectly by giving advertisements, and permitted the use of its coat of arms on the front page, lending thereby a prestige to the first Gujarati newspaper. But, Government can as well control the nature of the press and can similarly check its growth. When the Gujarati press began to express the needs and grievances of the people, or when it began to spread the political views of the Congress leaders, or again, when it started publishing news pertaining to the nationalist movement with bold type headings, the Government put restrictions on it. Moreover, Government was controlling the nature of writings in the press through laws such as the Vernacular Press Act, 1878, the Newspapers (Incitement to Offences) Act, 1908, the Indian Press Act, 1910, the Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act, 1931, the Defence of India Acts of 1914 and 1939, and through rules and ordinances promulgated from time to time. The Government can control the nature of the press through various sections of the Indian Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code, though many an older restriction is obsolete now since the adoption of the republican constitution guaranteeing a limited freedom of expression. Again, with respect to Government and the growth of the press it was shown that the former can check the latter by imposing restrictions on the import of newsprint and other printing equipment. But these are direct and open methods Government can adopt to control the nature or to check the growth of the press. Government has a still more commanding position over the press, indirect and subtle though it is. As the Government is the largest single advertiser in the press, the latter is very cautious in writing anything pertaining to Government policies.

It has been shown that the emergence of the Gujarati press was possible after the introduction of the technique of printing in India by the Westerners. Prior to that the different sections of society in this part of the country, as in India as a whole, carried on their activities with the indigenous methods of communication which were oral, and in some instances, hand-written. After the technique of printing was known it was harnessed for the publication of a newspaper.

The growth of the Gujarati press has been shown to be related to the improvement in the technique of printing. As the latter changed from hand-cut type to machine-made ones, and that again from manual to automatic setting, the growth of the press was constantly facilitated. Moreover, changes in the technique of printing affected the nature of news-reporting too. When, in the earlier stages, the journals were printed with manually operated smaller-sized printing equipment, it was not possible to use bigger type for giving headings to the news. After the bigger machines (operated manually and later power-driven) were used for printing, bold type could be set for giving crisp and attractive headings to the news which the newspaper reader is tempted to go through in further detail. Again, the employment of bold type created a wider popular appeal of the news during the nationalist movement, and that helped in keeping up the tempo of the mass awakening.

But the recent developments in the technique of printing have augmented enormously the cost of running the press. This prevents those sections of society which could launch journals during the 19th century from running the press now. That means, certain smaller sections of society which can own and run the press (the Gujarati press having been a proprietary concern throughout its existence) can influence larger areas and a vaster population. Larger machinery and consequently greater investments have thus changed the nature of the Gujarati Press. It has been converted into an industry owned by fewer individuals. Again, larger machinery etc. lead to the emergence of side-journals from the same establishments as their

owners aspire to 'feed' that machinery which would be economically unviable otherwise. That affects the growth of the Gujarati press as more journals are published—particularly as specialised journals (cinema magazines, women's journals, children's journals etc.) are put into circulation.

Next to the printing technique are the mechanised means of getting and transmitting news and other matter used for publication purposes. They include auxiliary media of communication such as the post, telegraph, telephone and teleprinter. In the initial stages the Gujarati newspapers published matter gleaned from English journals. Later they procured news through the post and the sea-mail. That proved sufficient enough to cover the space in smaller-sized weeklies or fortnightlies. But, when the frequency of the Gujarati journals increased, they needed more news, more speedily and continuously than before. That could be provided after telegraph lines were opened in India in 1855 for general use, and after the completion of the submarine telegraph lines between India and England in 1860, and the trans-continental land telegraph lines in 1865. When the postal services in India were rationalized and after uniform postal rates were introduced in 1854, an increase in the number of places of circulation of the Gujarati journals and an increase in the quantum of news and other matter was also effected.

After telegraph lines had spread more extensively in India, the daily newspapers got variegated news from all parts of the country more speedily than before. After the introduction of the telephone the dailies were helped still more in this respect. And the introduction of the teleprinter has facilitated a still speedier and more constant supply of news on a global level to the press. But here again the Gujarati dailies have to experience one limitation. The news that they get over the teleprinter or even telegraphically is in English, there being no arrangements for transmitting news in the Gujarati language through these channels. The news so received has to be translated and recast into Gujarati for publication purposes in the different newspaper-offices. During this process the news

stands chances of being misinterpreted or misconstrued. The fact that news conveyed by correspondents over the telephone (obviously in Gujarati) is not subjected to the above limitation is sufficient to show that the nature of news-reporting in the Gujarati newspapers would change if teleprinters or at least telegraphs operating in Gujarati should ever come into use.

The railways and motor vehicles as means of speedy transport are equally significant. After the potential readership of the Gujarati press was created by the increase in literacy, the railways contributed to actualize it by carrying the journals far and wide through the railway-mail and the parcel services. Or again, when more copies of the journals could be printed after the improvement in the technique of printing, these copies could be carried to and distributed at distant places after the provision for adequate transport was made. It has been shown in this connection that the recent expansion of the Gujarati press has been possible, also, due to road transport facilities. The State (Road) Transport buses and the fleets of motor cars specially engaged by establishments carry journals into areas inaccessible to the railways. If, in future, the bus routes increase, when newer roads are constructed for vehicular traffic, the further growth of the Gujarati press can be possible.

And finally the nationalist group should be referred to. It has been seen that a change in the nature of the Gujarati press was brought about since the emergence in Western India of a group of persons which crystallized the unformulated popular grievances against the Government into well-worded slogans and tidy arguments and provided the press with the modern political idiom. As that group was enlarged and as it became more and more vocal, the nature of the Gujarati press also changed. The press became not only a carrier of political views but also a campaigner for the nationalist movement.

But this phase continued till India became independent, and soon after that the Gujarati press started changing. It has now become, neither a campaigner for the needs and

grievances of the people nor a crusader for social reform. It has struck a convenient balance in these respects, maybe because its survival no longer depends upon the readers alone; maybe because being an industry it is run more for profits than for anything else.

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APPENDIX I

TABLE INDICATING DIFFERENT TYPES OF
GUJARATI JOURNALS

No.	Type.	PREDOMINANT CONTENTS
1.	News and Current Affairs.	Daily news about occurrences, events, editorial comments, features.
2.	Literary and Cultural.	Literary columns, short stories, serialised novels, dramas, poems, comments about : social institutions, habits, customs, fashions and contemporary happenings.
3.	Religion and Philosophy.	Articles on religious matters, moral preachings, scriptural quotations, Bhajans, ethical discussions.
4.	Women.	Discussions on domestic questions, mother-craft, recipes, fashions in dress, hair-style; and short stories, poems etc.
5.	Children.	Fables, anecdotes from biographies of 'great men', quizzes, tit-bits, believe it-or-not.
6.	Films.	News about films in the making, about films released, biographies and personal idiosyncracies of film stars, film reviews, questions and answers on variegated subjects.
7.	Sports.	News about sport events, tips about in-door and out-door games.
8.	Radio and Music.	Schedules of fortnightly radio-programmes, excerpts from radio broadcasts, musical notations of popular songs.

No.	Type.	PREDOMINANT CONTENTS
9.	Education.	Instructions to students taking different examinations, instructions to teachers.
10.	Science.	Articles on scientific subjects.
11.	Medicine and Health.	Articles on health and hygiene, seasonal hints on keeping fit, hints about food habits and well-being.
12.	Art.	Articles on dramatics, music, dance, photography, one-act plays and hints on producing them.
13.	Social Welfare.	Articles on social institutions exhorting people to re-orient their outlook, Sarvodaya, Bhoodan.
14.	Commerce and Industry.	Commercial tips, rates.
15.	Finance and Economics.	Financial implications of old and new industries, shares etc.
16.	Insurance, Banking, Co-operation.	Articles on these subjects : mainly on the Co-operative movement.
17.	Labour.	Articles on Workers' problems : on their trade-unions mainly.
18.	Law and Public Administration.	Articles on Tenancy Legislation, on Money Lenders' Act, on House Rent Control Orders, particularly on Tenant's rights, etc., <i>Panchayat Raj</i> .
19.	Agriculture and Animal husbandry.	Articles on agriculturists' problems, poultry farming.
20.	Engineering and Technology.	Articles on Engineering and Technology.
21.	Transport and Communication.	Articles on Transport rules and freight schedules.
22.	Market Reports and Bulletins.	Quotations from : New York Cotton market, grain dealers' association, timber merchants' association.
23.	School/College Magazines.	Annual magazines of schools and colleges.

No.	Type.	PREDOMINANT CONTENTS
24.	Publicity journals and House Organs.	Bulletins of certain mercantile concerns.
25.	Astrology.	Weekly/monthly forecasts of astrologers, discussions on planetary positions and the fate of men.
26.	Fiction.	Short stories, serialised novels written by amateurs and well-known litterateurs.
27.	Miscellaneous.	—
28.	Prize Competitions.	Discussions about cross-word puzzles, hints and results.
29.	Caste and Community.	News about respective caste-associations, caste-gatherings, marriages, deaths, donations; eulogizing notes about achievements of caste members in different spheres; articles on caste-reforms, stories, poems etc.

APPENDIX II – TABLE I

*TYPES OF DIFFERENT GUJARATI JOURNALS
PERIODICITY-WISE 1956*

Types	Dailies	Weeklies	Fort- nightlies	Monthlies	Quarterlies & Annuals	Totals
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. News and Current Affairs	30	53	24	37	4	148
2. Literary and Cultural	0	19	11	27	4	61
3. Religion and Philosophy	0	3	7	9	0	19
4. Women	0	0	1	4	0	5
5. Children	0	2	1	9	0	12
6. Films	0	8	0	3	0	11
7. Sports	0	0	0	1	0	1
8. Radio and Music	0	0	1	0	0	1
9. Education	0	1	3	4	0	8
10. Science	0	1	0	0	0	1
11. Medicine and Health	0	1	0	4	0	5
12. Art	0	0	0	1	0	1
13. Social Welfare	0	0	4	4	0	8
14. Commerce and Industry	1	0	0	1	0	2

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Finance and Economics	0	1	0	1	0	2	
16. Insurance, Banking and Co-operation	0	2	1	8	0	11	
17. Labour	0	1	1	1	0	3	
18. Law and Public Administration	0	1	2	1	0	4	
19. Agriculture and Animal Husbandry	0	2	1	2	0	5	
20. Engineering and Technology	0	0	0	0	0	0*	
21. Transport and Communications	0	0	0	0	0	0*	
22. Market Reports and Bulletins	10	0	3	3	0	16	
23. School/College Magazines	0	0	0	0	0	0*	
24. Publicity Journals and House Organs	0	0	0	0	0	0*	
25. Astrology	0	0	0	2	0	2	
26. Fiction	0	4	0	5	0	9	
27. Miscellaneous	0	17	17	6	0	40	
28. Prize Competitions	0	2	0	0	2	4	
29. Caste and Community	0	3	3	22	3	31	
Total :	41	121	80	155	13	410	

* Stray journals of these types were searched out but on perusal they were found to be 'irregulars' and to contain matter in more than one languages. Their contents have been mentioned, however, in the table in Appendix I.

APPENDIX II —
TYPES OF DIFFERENT GUJARATI

Types	Dailies			Weeklies		
	Guj.	Mht.	Total	Guj.	Mht.	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. News and Current Affairs	21	6	27	44+	6	50
2. Literary and Cultural	0			4+	3	7
3. Religion and Philosophy	0			3+	2	5
4. Women	0			0+	0	0
5. Children	0			2+	1	3
6. Films	0			3+	7	10
7. Sports	0		0	0	0	0
8. Radio and Music	0			0	0	0
9. Education	0			0	0	0
10. Science	0			0	0	0
11. Medicine and Health	0			1+	0	1
12. Art	0			0	0	0
13. Social Welfare	0			0	0	0
14. Commerce and Industry	0			1+	0	1
15. Finance and Economics	0			0	0	0
16. Insurance, Banking and Cooperation	0			3+	0	3
17. Labour	0			1+	0	1
18. Law & Public Administration	0			0	0	0
19. Agriculture and Animal Husbandry	0			2+	0	2
20. Engineering and Technology	0		0	0	0	0
21. Transport and Communications	0		0	0	0	0
22. Market Reports and Bulletins	8+	3	11	9+	2	11
23. School/College Magazines	0		0	0	0	0
24. Publicity Journals and House Organs	0		0	0	0	0
25. Astrology	0		0	0	0	0
26. Fiction	0			2+	3	5
27. Miscellaneous	0			1+	0	1
28. Prize Competitions	0			2+	0	2
29. Caste and Community	0			3+	6	9
Total :	29+	9	38	81+	30	111

Guj. = Gujrat

Mht. = Maharashtra.

TABLE II

JOURNALS PERIODICITY-WISE 1960

Fortnightlies			Monthlies			Quarterlies and Annuals			Totals		
Guj.	Mht.	Total	Guj.	Mht.	Total.	Guj.	Mht.	Total	Guj.	Mat.	Total.
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
13+	2	15	13+	6	19	0+	1	1	91+	21	112
2+	2	4	30+	7	37	1+	5	6	37+	17	54
3+	0	3	31+	9	40	1+	0	1	38+	11	49
0	0	0	1+	3	4	0+	1	1	1+	4	5
1+	0	1	8+	5	13	1+	1	2	12+	7	19
0	0	0	0+	2	2	0	0	0	3+	9	12
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0*
1+	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1+	0	1
5+	0	5	13+	1	14	0+	1	1	18+	2	20
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0*
0	0	0	4+	2	6	0	0	0	5+	2	7
0	0	0	0	0	0	0+	2	2	0+	2	2
3+	1	4	14+	5	19	0	0	0	17+	6	23
0	0	0	0+	2	2	0	0	0	1+	2	3
0	0	0	1+	0	1	0	0	0	1+	0	1
2+	0	2	2+	1	3	0	0	0	7+	1	8
3+	0	3	3+	1	4	0+	1	1	7+	2	9
3+	0	3	3+	0	3	0	0	0	6+	0	6
1+	0	1	1+	2	3	1+	0	1	5+	2	7*
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0*
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0*
3+	1	4	5+	1	6	0	0	0	25+	7	32
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0*
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0*
0	0	0	2+	1	3	0	0	0	2+	1	3
1+	0	1	8+	5	13	0	0	0	11+	8	19
2+	1	3	7+	4	11	4+	1	5	14+	6	20
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2+	0	2
11	3	14	41+	24	65	7+	4	11	62+	37	99
54+	10	64	187+	81	268	15+	17	32	366+	147	513

* See Table 1 in this Appendix.

APPENDIX III

CLASSIFICATION OF ADVERTISEMENTS APPEARING IN THE GUJARATI PRESS

TYPE NUMBER 1

General Consumer Advertisements

1. Cosmetics, soap, shaving accessories, hair-oils etc.,
2. Drugs, proprietary medicines, medical appliances etc.,
3. Motor tyres and accessories, petroleum products, automobiles, batteries etc.,
4. Food products, biscuits, chocolate, drinks, preserves etc.,
5. Fans, radio-sets, cameras, photo films, electric bulbs and batteries etc.,
6. Transport, airlines, resorts, travel etc.,
7. Watches and clocks, jewellery, typewriters, duplicators, furniture, floor coverings, carpets etc.,
8. Insurance and Banking,
9. Cigarettes, tobacco etc.,
10. Textiles, ready-made clothing, dress auxiliaries, footwear etc.,
11. Entertainments, films, theatre, sports, playing cards etc.,
12. Books, stationery, pens etc.,
13. Insecticides and sundry household articles,
14. Hotels, restaurants, photographers etc.

TYPE NUMBER 2

Specialised Advertisements

1. Industrial machinery and equipment, trucks, trailers contractors' equipment etc.,
2. Agricultural machinery, tractors, oil-engines, pumps and implements,
3. Electrical machinery, building material, cement, paints etc.,
4. Industrial stores and materials,
5. Repairs to machinery etc.,
6. Agricultural fertilizers and agricultural seeds and products,
7. Stores and railway equipment.

TYPE NUMBER 3

Classified Advertisements

1. Advertisements about accommodation to let or sought,
2. Situations vacant or sought,
3. Personal effects available for sale or loans,
4. Cinema-house advertisements,
5. Advertisements about 'lost' or 'misaid',
6. Legal notices.

TYPE NUMBER 4

Governmental and Institutional Advertisements

1. Governmental and semi-Governmental notices inviting,
 - (a) Tenders,
 - (b) Applications for jobs,
2. Governmental advertisements (display) about,
 - (a) Five-Year plans,
 - (b) Family planning, small savings and similar campaigns,
3. Institutional notices.

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