

THREE
EXPANSION OF THE GUJARATI PRESS
AND
CHANGE IN ITS NATURE

AFTER seeing the emergence of the Gujarati press in relation to certain factors and having indicated the potentialities of these factors to facilitate the expansion of the former, we shall now see how these potentialities -- materialised and alongside the expansion of the Gujarati press took place. We shall consider in this connection,-- besides, two more factors related to the Gujarati press. One of them was the introduction and spread of education, that is, increase of literacy. The other factor was the emergence in Western India of a group of persons which was the exponent of certain views. We propose to consider the change that this group brought about in the nature of Gujarati press as also the extent of such a change.

As we saw before, trade and commerce in Western India in general and Bombay city in particular were increasing towards the earlier decades of the nineteenth century. The total amount of exported commodities from the 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 The --

¹ Gazetteers, Material towards a statistical account of the town and island of Bombay, Vol. II, (1894), pp. 514-518.

details of this trade and more particularly the price current and information about the cargo of the ships passing through the harbour were published in the lone Gujarati newspaper, the Bombay Samachar, since its beginning in 1822. Within a decade from that, 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. 2,35,85,494.² -- The overall increase in trade and commerce 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.⁴ According to the same authority, 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.⁵ These Gujaratis were importing commodities like grains, cotton, wool, tobacco, opium and precious

² Ibid.,

³ Ibid.,

⁴ Ibid.,

⁵ Ibid.,

stones worth lakhs of rupees from different commercial centres in Western India, such as Surat, Broach, Kheda, Kapadwanj, Khambhat, Ahmedabad and Ghogha.⁶ The annual exports from Ahmedabad alone, for instance, would amount to rupees seven lakhs by that time.⁷ Consequently, more commercial information needed to be communicated and the space allotted to the publication of that information in the Bombay Samachar had increased from a column or two in the beginning to one full page by 1830-31.⁸ 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 elaborately in the Bombay Samachar, the circulation of the latter had increased by -- that time. It had increased locally as well as in commercial places outside Bombay.⁹ With increased circulation the popularity of the Bombay Samachar had also grown. This is indicated by the number of letters received by the -- editor¹⁰ and by the satisfaction expressed by Fardunji -- Marzban for 'the kindness of the patrons who were subscribing to the journal.'¹¹ Along with its increasing circulation and

⁶ Dave Narmadashanker, Gujarat Sarva Sangraha, a compilation from Campbell's Gazetteers, (1878), pp. 241-43. (*Bombay*)

⁷ Ibid., p. 248.

⁸ Bombay Samachar weekly, dated, 3-1-1831.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., 29-11-1830 to 17-1-1831.

¹¹ Ibid.

growing popularity, the number advertisements appearing in the Bombay Samachar had also increased. At times it contained four pages full of advertisements out of a total of sixteen pages per issue.¹²

That prompted Fardunji Marzban, the editor of the -- Bombay Samachar, to convert that weekly into a daily. He -- made an announcement in that regard in the weekly issue dated 2-1-1832.¹³ It said, 'We shall now publish a single page every day except Sunday, so that information can be communicated urgently and without delay'.¹⁴ Fardunji was aware of the difficulties in procuring information for a daily newspaper because even the practice of appointing correspondents had not been adopted, not to talk of a news-agency. He -- addressed 'a request to his subscribers, patrons and well-wishers to communicate to him any matter worthy of publication'.¹⁵ 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'.¹⁶ 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'.¹⁷

¹² Ibid.,

¹³ Ibid., dated, 2-1-1832.

¹⁴ Ibid.,

¹⁵ Ibid.,

¹⁶ Ibid.,

¹⁷ Ibid.,

The first issue of the daily Bombay Samachar, the -- first daily newspaper in the Gujarati language, was out on January 3, 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 with acknowledgements 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 a column was devoted to advertisements, sundry announcements and the 'lucky numbers securing prizes in a lottery'.¹⁸ The matter received for communication -- through the new daily increased and the second issue of the Bombay Samachar dated 4-1-1832 contained four pages.¹⁹ As the former went on increasing, the issue dated 6-8-1832 contained six pages full of price current, details of the 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 printed closely with the newly imported types.²⁰

By the time the technique of printing had been utilised thus for communication purposes in the form of a daily --

¹⁸ Ibid., dated 3-1-1832,

¹⁹ Ibid., dated 4-1-1832.

²⁰ Ibid., dated 6-8-1832.

newspaper in Western India, that technique had already been put to use for publication of books as well. According to the Catalogue of Native Publications in the Bombay Presidency, the number of Gujarati books published since 1822 was increasing every year and by 1832 there were about seventynine -- publications -- religious books, story books and educational books -- in circulation in Western India.²¹ Along with -- this increase in the number of Gujarati printed works, the -- number of Gujarati printing presses was also increasing in Western India.²² By 1832, there were ten printing presses, one in Surat and nine in Bombay. Some of them were lithographic ones, some were doing printing work with movable -- types. Again, out of the ten 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 Parsi gentlemen.²³ The Company presses were used for official publications,²⁴ the mission press for religious ones.²⁵ Four of the printing presses were used for publication of newspapers as well as books -- and sundry job-work.²⁶ The remaining three printing presses

21 Grant Sir A., Catalogue of Native Publications in the Bombay Presidency upto 1864, (Second ed.1867), pp.41-129. (Bombay.)

22 Ibid.,

23 Ibid.,

24 Priyolkar A.K., op.cit.,

25 Ibid.,

26 Grant Sir A., op.cit.

were exclusively carrying out book printing although they undertook such job-work printing as they got.²⁷

The elaborate reference to the expansion of the printing technique made here suggests one probability. It is very likely that printing presses depending upon job-work merely would be on a look-out to secure the printing work of some periodical so as to derive a steady income.* Or else, they would themselves contemplate publication of some periodical journal. That they would do so as to fill in the 'vacant' time they would be otherwise forced to pass for want of -- enough printing jobs which, despite the progress of book -- printing would still be insufficient and irregular to make the running of a printing press a worthwhile proposition. In either eventuality, more printing presses would imply the probability of the publication of more periodical journals. This is suggested by some instances. The Bombay Samachar came into being in 1822 after the Samachar printing press was set up in 1812.²⁸ Again, one weekly called the Mumbaina Varatman came into being in 1830 after Naoroji Fardunji -- Chandaru alias Halkaru, its editor, had set up the Chabuk Printing Press in 1828. The same was true in case of the Jame Jamshed. That weekly came into being in 1832 after -- Pestonji M. Motiwala had set up the Jame Jamshed (lithographic) printing press in 1828.²⁹

* 'Darpan', a Marathi journal, was printed in 1832 for its editor by Cowasjee Cursetti in the Parsi Messenger Press: Lele and Kale, op.cit., p.287.

²⁸ Ref. page 19.

²⁹ Grant Sir A., op.cit.

It is very likely, again, that publication of a -- periodical from a printing press would help fetching more job-work to the latter. We have seen earlier that the -- editor of the Bombay Samachar used to invite job-work through that journal. Similarly, the editor of the Varatman used to insert the following notice in that 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 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'.³⁰

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

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

³⁰ Mumabaina Hurkaru ane Varatman, dated 30-8-1832. This notice was printed in English as well as in Gujarati.

To revert to the press—the above weekly was renamed, once again, as the Mumabaina Chabuk.³¹ In its first issue it was declared that 'the new journal, Chabuk (i.e. Lash), will not indulge in any favouritism, nor will it be brow-beaten by anybody. It will not hesitate to call a spade a spade. The Chabuk, the second Gujarati newspaper in Western India, was converted into a bi-weekly since then i.e. in -- 1833.³² It was well-received by the local readers. It was priced at Rs.24 per annum with a concession to those who paid the whole amount outright.³³ It contained usually six pages. One of them was consumed by advertisements, one by commercial information and one full page was allocated to letters to the editor. In the remaining three pages were published news and sometimes articles pertaining to the Parsi community.³⁴ The practice of publishing such articles was adopted by Naoroji Dorabji Chandaru alias 'Halkaru' since he launched his -- Varatman — the earlier version of Chabuk.³⁵ The annals of the Parsi Panchayat of Bombay during that period mention, -- 'some of these articles were intended for creating controversies among the Parsis while some of them were meant for casting aspersions on the Parsi Panchayat, much to the chagrin of

³¹ Mumabaina Chabuk, dated 5-11-1828.

³² Ibid.,

³³ Ibid.,

³⁴ Ibid., subsequent issues,

³⁵ Mumabaina Hurkaru and Varatman, op.cit.

the leaders of that organisation'.³⁶ Following the new -- practice, the Bombay Samachar joined Naoroji 'Halkaru' in -- the controversy and began to attack the Panchayat leaders. It is on record that when the attacks of both these journals were found to be 'unberable', the Parsi leaders launched -- from 12-3-1832, a weekly, 'Jame Jamshed'.³⁷ That journal contained four pages of fool'scap size with four columns -- each.³⁸ That is, the Jame Jamshed, the third Gujarati -- journal, was bigger in size with more columns than the two existing ones. Under the editorship of 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 two other controverting journals.³⁹ It is reported that the controversies between them led to -- acrimonious attacks on one another. It is also reported that all the papers contained allegations that the controversies -- were raised to augment circulations.⁴⁰ Be that as it may, since these newspapers started engaging each other in contro- versies affecting different groups (as the Parsis in this -- instance), public discussion of community issues became one

³⁶ Modi J.J., op.cit.

³⁷ Jame Jamshed, dated 12-3-1832.

³⁸ Ibid.,

³⁹ Jame Jamshed, op.cit., and Jame Jamshed Centenary Volume (1932), p.100.

⁴⁰ Ibid.,

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 the Gujarati press.

II

As suggested earlier, the introduction and spread of education, particularly the increase in literacy in Western India, have some relation — both direct and indirect — with the Gujarati press. We shall consider, therefore how the latter stood vis a vis education during the period -- under reference. We shall trace, first, a brief history of the introduction and spread of education in this region.

In 1793, when the East India Company's Charter came before the British House of Commons, 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.⁴¹ In 1813, 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'.⁴² During all these

⁴¹ Vakil K.S., Education in India, (Kolhapur, 1937), p.5.

⁴² Sharp H., Selections from Educational Records, Part I, 1785-1839, (1932), p.22. (Calcutta)

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 -- 1807.⁴³ 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.⁴⁴ This school was to be conducted on the Monitorial system of Bell.⁴⁵

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 of promoting the moral and intellectual progress of the Indian people by disseminating among them knowledge of European Arts and -- Sciences'.⁴⁶ 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.⁴⁷ The --

⁴³ Vakil K.S., op.cit.,

⁴⁴ Syed Nurullah and Naik, History of Education in India.

⁴⁵ Vakil K.S., op.cit.

⁴⁶ Priyolkar A.K., Shala Paddhati, in the Journal of the University of Bombay, Vol.XXII, part 2, September 1953, p.104.

⁴⁷ Ibid.,

resolutions passed at the above meeting indicated that the primary responsibility of the Committee was to prepare textbooks on modern lines for use in schools.⁴⁸ In 1822 an independent organisation called the Native School Book and School Society was set up.⁴⁹ Of the twelve members of this Society, six were Gujarati speaking (three Parsis and three Gujarati Hindus), two were Maharashtrians and four members were Hindustani speaking. The 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'.⁵⁰ Realising that the paucity of books

⁴⁸ Ibid., p.105.

⁴⁹ Ibid., pp.105-106. In this connection it may be noted here that similar organisations were formed in Madras and -- Calcutta. All the three organisations were keeping in touch with one another. At the General Meeting of the Calcutta School Books Society held on March 5, 1828, it was resolved '---- a copy of the Report now read be forwarded to the Bombay 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 Selections from Calcutta Gazette, edited by A.C. Dasgupta (1958), p. 304.

⁵⁰ The Bombay Secretariate Records, G.D. (General Department) Vol. 8(63), 1824, Report on the state and system of Education in India, pp. 449-455, quoted in Ibid., p. 108.

in the vernaculars was created on account of lack of printing facilities in the presidency, Captain George Jervis, the -- secretary of the Society, addressed a petition to the Government on 4-10-1823. He requested the Government, 'to help -- procuring Gujarati and Marathi types and a lithographic -- press'.⁵¹ 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.⁵² As a result of these efforts, several books were printed and were put into circulation to meet the requirements of the newly introduced -- education. The Native School Book and School Society (renamed as the Bombay Native Education Society)⁵³ mentioned in its Report for the year 1825-26 that nearly 6400 copies of Gujarati school-books on different subjects were in circulation,⁵⁴ while, efforts to increase the number of schools continued.⁵⁵

Literacy went on increasing in Gujarat since then.⁵⁶ Such an increase in literacy created a need for more and more books---text-books and other general works. As more books

⁵¹ Ibid., pp.93-94, quoted in Priyolkar A.K., Printing Press in India (1958), p. 90.

⁵² Quoted in original Gujarati in H.T.Parekh, Arvachin Gujaratnu Rekha Darshan, Part I, (1935), p. 236. (Ahmedabad)

⁵³ Priyolkar, A.K., Printing Press in India, p.95.

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 95-98.

⁵⁵ Ibid.,

⁵⁶ Gujarat Shala Patra, Vols.I, II, III --- 1861, 1862, 1863.

were in demand, the printing activity got a fillip. Gradually the number of printing presses began to increase and by 1850 more printing presses were established, not only in -- Bombay but also in Surat and Ahmedabad.⁵⁷ As these cities got printing facilities, the number of books published from each of them began to increase. That helped augmenting -- literacy as also fostering reading habits. Not only that but the availability of a printing press facilitated also, the emergence of newspapers from each of these cities.⁵⁸

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'.⁵⁹ It was believed by most of them that ⁶⁰ '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'.⁶¹ Mountstuart Elphinstone, the then

⁵⁷ Grant Sir A., op.cit.,

⁵⁸ Ibid.,

⁵⁹ Sharp H., op.cit.,

⁶⁰ Ibid.,

⁶¹ Ibid.,

Governor of Bombay, who held such views, was making efforts to set up educational institutions in Western India. It was mainly through his efforts that the Bombay Native Education Society came into being in January, 1827.⁶² 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.⁶³

Contributions were collected for the purpose and a fund of Rs.3 lakhs was created.⁶⁴ The money was to be spent 'for the spread of English education and for teaching European -- Literature and Physical Sciences to aspiring students'.⁶⁵

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 Orlier and Harkness were invited in 1833 under this scheme on an honorarium of Rs.1,000 per mens^eam.⁶⁶

A controversy had ensued by that time as regards the nature of education to be imparted to the natives of India.

⁶² Ibid.,

⁶³ Kulkarni P.B., Na. Nana Shankersheth Yanchen Charitra, Kal Va Kamgiri, pp. 47-49. (Bombay 1961)

⁶⁴ Ibid.,

⁶⁵ Ibid.,

⁶⁶ Ibid.,

It reached its peak after Macaulay's minute on 2-2-1835 in which he had emphasised the need for English education.⁶⁷ That controversy was put an end to by a resolution declared in the name of the Governor-General on 7-3-1835. 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'.⁶⁸

Under these circumstances the Elphinstone Institution was functioning in Bombay and an English school was started in 1842 in Surat under the headmastership of Dadoba Pandurang, a product of the Elphinstone Institution, and one was started in Ahmedabad too.⁶⁹ Those who could avail of the -- opportunity joined these institutions. As gleaned from the life-accounts of those who studied in and/or taught in these institutions, it appears that almost all the teachers were Englishmen, some were Parsis, Maharashtrian (Prabhu) and Gujarati Hindus.⁷⁰ From the same sources it appears that

⁶⁷ Sharp, H., op.cit., pp.107.f.

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 130-31.

⁶⁹ Priyolkar A.K.(ed.), R.B. Dadaboa Pandurang, Charitra va Atma Charitra.

⁷⁰ Ibid., and, Dave Narmadashanker, Mari Hakikat, part I, -Mehta Vinayak, Nandshankernu Jeevan Charitra, -Masani R.P. Dadobhai Naoroji, -Ramlal Navnitlal (ed.), Arvachin Gujaratman Kelavanina Savaso Varsha. -Kulkarni P.B., op.cit.

the subjects taught included Mathematics (Algebra, Geometry and Trigonometry), Physics, Chemistry, English literature, History—mainly Western, Geography and Philosophy of Morals.⁷¹

The number of students studying in the Elphinstone -- Institution was gradually increasing.⁷² 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.⁷³ Within three months of the foundation of the parent society, two Vernacular branches were organised under the appellation of 'Marathi Gnan -- Prasarak Sabha' for Marathi speaking Hindus and 'Gujarati -- Gnan Prasarak Mandali' for the Parsis. The object of these organisations 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'.⁷⁴ To those two vernacular branches was added, in April 1851, the 'Buddhi Vardhak Sabha' for Gujarati Hindus.⁷⁵ All these --

⁷¹ Ibid.,

⁷² Ibid.,

⁷³ Students' Literary & Scientific Society, 1848 to 1947-48, (1950), p.2. (Bombay)

⁷⁴ Ibid.,

⁷⁵ Ibid.,

organisations came into being mainly due to the efforts of -- the Western teachers working in the different institutions.-- These Westerners not only founded these organisations but -- also guided their deliberations and frequently expressed their views on the Indian social conditions.⁷⁶

III

Among the leading Gujaratis of the time were Dadabhai Naoroji, Jamshedji Jijibhai, Naoroji Fardunji, Mangaldas Nathubhai, Karsandas Mulji, Pranlal Mathurdas, Mohanlal Ranchhoddas, Durgaram Mehtaji, Mahipatram Roopram and Narmadashanker Kavi who were living in Bombay and other urban places in Western India. Some of them belonged to the traditionally superior castes; some came from relatively well-to-do families. They had joined the newly started educational institutions. -- There they came to know about the Westerners' views directly as also through their friends such as Bal Shastri Jambhekar, Dadoba Pandurang, Dr Bhau Daji, Gopal Hari Deshmukh and -- Jagannath Shankersheth. It appears from the life-accounts of these 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

⁷⁶ Ibid., and biographies quoted above.

of criticism and pity of 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.⁷⁷ They began to take keener interest in the aliens' culture.⁷⁸ When friendly British administrators like Sir T.C. Hope and A.K. Forbes,⁷⁹ zealous teachers like Professors Patton,⁸⁰ Green and Harkness and the --

⁷⁷ Ref. Biographies and autobiographies of the above -- personalities, op.cit.

⁷⁸ Ibid.,

⁷⁹ 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.

⁸⁰ Prof. Green was the headmaster in the first English School started in Surat. He was the teacher of Nandshanker T. Mehta. He taught his pupils 'the crux of English literature' said Nandshanker once. He had written a book in 1857 in support of the Indian Mutiny of 1857. He was boycotted by Englishmen residing in Bombay for that (Ref. Nandshanker Charitra -- Biography of Nandshanker by, 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 1847, the Students' Literary and Scientific Society and its vernacular branches. (Ref. Students' Literary & Scientific Society, 1848 to 1947-48), op.cit.

Christian Missionaries⁸¹ in some places expounded the ideas and ideals characteristic of the Western culture, 'a dilemma was created in their mind' according to Narmadashanker Kavi.⁸² He adds, 'the more we immersed ourselves into 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'.⁸³

Judging from that point of view, these Gujaratis began to question, as did their Western contemporaries, the worthwhileness of many indigenous beliefs, practices etc. They agreed with the Westerners in criticising them. They called some of their own beliefs and practices, 'unwanted, harmful,

⁸¹ 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 possessions) 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. K. Ingham : 'Reformers in India : 1793-1833 : An account of the work of Christian Missionaries on behalf of Social Reform'.

⁸² Dave Narmadashanker, Mari Hakikat (Part I), Mahipatram Roopram (ed.), Narma Gadya or the Prosworks of Narmadashanker L.Dave, (1877), p. 64.

⁸³ Ibid.,

evil and barbarous'. Many of them began to declare such views through lectures and papers read before the Gujarati Gnan -- Prasarak Mandli and the Buddhi Vardhak Hindu Sabha⁸⁴ --- organisations which had come into being at the instance of some -- Westerners as we saw earlier. They declared that 'their fellow-men should change their way of life : should aspire for a --- better one, similar to that of the Westerners'.⁸⁵

These Gujaratis who held such 'views' and who wanted accordingly their fellowmen to change their life-pattern were popularly known as the 'Sudharawala',⁸⁶ 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'.⁸⁷ 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

⁸⁴ Students' Literary & Scientific Society, 1848 to 1947-48, pp. 41-61.

⁸⁵ Ganean Parasarak --- embodying papers read at the -- Ganean Parasarak Mandali, (1852) and Dave Narmadashanker, op.cit.,

⁸⁶ Masani R.P., Dadabhai Naoroji (1939), p.58. Those who aspired to effect 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'.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p.60.

'devoted mainly to spreading views'.⁸⁸ They therefore launched the Rast Goftar, Gnan Sagar, Gnan Prasarak, Buddhi Prakash and similar journals. Some of them were started from Bombay, some from Surat and Ahmedabad.

The Rast Goftar was published as a fortnightly from Bombay in 1851. 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.⁸⁹ He was to work without remuneration while the journal was financed by Khurshedji Nasarwanjee Cama.⁹⁰ The first issue of the Rast Goftar was out on November 15, 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 bring about reforms. As such, about a thousand copies thereof will be distributed gratis'.⁹¹ 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

⁸⁸ Ibid.,

⁸⁹ The Rast Goftar, Vol.I, No.1, dated 15-11-1851.

⁹⁰ Masani R.P., op.cit.

⁹¹ Rast Goftar (fortnightly), dated 15-11-1851.

requested the editors, besides, to increase the size of the journal.⁹² Accordingly, the Rast Goftar was issued twice a week from January 15, 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 to pay more and thereby help us in running this journal'.⁹³ It is reported that this request was well responded to and donations were received by the editors. They enabled them to keep the journal running.⁹⁴ The editors were aware of the -- value of advertisements which provided a regular revenue. -- Accordingly, they invited advertisements and fixed their rates at eight lines per rupee.⁹⁵ Gradually, the Rast Goftar began to include matter pertaining to reformism among the Hindus.⁹⁶ Its main campaign was for widow-remarriage. It said in its issue dated March 27, 1853, 'the nerves of the Hindus, it -- seems, are made of iron. Ah, what a torture they inflict upon a widow !'⁹⁷ Again it wrote under the caption, 'liberate us (widows)',⁹⁸ and again, it said, 'in the present British regime

⁹² Rast Goftar, dated 1-1-1852 and 15-1-1852.

⁹³ Ibid.,

⁹⁴ Ibid.,

⁹⁵ Ibid., dated 18-4-1852.

⁹⁶ Ibid., dated 20-3-1853.

⁹⁷ Ibid., dated 27-3-1853.

⁹⁸ Ibid., dated 8-5-1853.

one's life is taken, if at all to be taken, at a stretch by hanging, while we (widows) are tortured to death'.⁹⁹ From then onwards, the Rast Goftar went on writing on reformism among all — the Parsis as well as the Hindus and gave the utmost prominence to the 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 ninety-seven articles under 'reformism',¹⁰⁰ while the news content formed about sixtyeight pages out of a total of three hundred and sixtyfour pages per year and -- the advertisement revenue on the basis of the rates it fixed would not go beyond five hundred rupees per year.¹⁰¹ Though about eleven hundred copies of the journal were issued every week, The Rast Goftar had sustained a loss of rupees eight thousand during the ten years of its existence. It had to make good that loss from donations.¹⁰² Ultimately it was -- merged in 1861 with Satya Prakash which was edited by Karsandas Mulji — a Hindu social reformist.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ Ibid., dated 15-8-1853.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., annual list of items, 1-1-1861.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.,

¹⁰² Ibid.,

¹⁰³ Ibid., dated 9-12-1861.

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 --- 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 -----" etc.¹⁰⁴

This journal which was run by the 'Buddhi Prakash ---r Mandali' became defunct, however, within a year or so of its publication. It was restarted under the same banner by the 'Vidyabhyasak Mandali' in 1854.¹⁰⁵ This organisation like

¹⁰⁴ Buddhi Prakash, Vol.I, No.1, dated 15-5-1850.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., Vol.I, No.1, 1854, dated, April 1854.

the 'Buddhi Prakash Mandali' was devoted to the 'cause of enlightenment among the people.'¹⁰⁶ Its organisers approached a similar bigger organisation, 'The Gujarat Vernacular -- Society' for financial help in running the journal.¹⁰⁷

A brief reference to this association becomes necessary here.

The Gujarat Vernacular Society was founded on December 26, 1848, mainly through the initiative of Alexander Killnock Forbes. Mr Forbes was posted in 1846 as an Assistant Judge at Ahmedabad. He learnt the Gujarati language. 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'.¹⁰⁸ 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' etc. etc.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Parekh Hiralal T., Gujarat Vernacular Society no Itihas (1936), Part I, p.146. (Ahmedabad.)

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.,

¹⁰⁸ Tripathi Mansukhram Suryaram, A.K. Forbes, op.cit.

¹⁰⁹ Parekh H.T., Gujarat Vernacular Society no Itihas, Part I, op.cit.

When the organisers 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 financial assistance sought by the Vidyabhyasak Mandali for running the periodical Buddhi Prakash be granted subject to the condition that matter pertaining to political controversies shall not be published therein---',¹¹⁰

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 not cultivated still, enough liking for 'reading'... they hesitate to spend money after reading books etc. It is proposed to publish this magazine so that people may get greater benefit verily, at cheaper costs".¹¹¹ 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 which would 'enlighten' our people : which would help them to benefit thereby" etc.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Ibid.,

¹¹¹ Buddhi Prakash, April 1854, p.1.

¹¹² Ibid.,

Some time later, when the 'Vidyabhyasak Mandali' was not in a position to run the journal, the 'Gujarat Vernacular Society' itself took over the publication of the *Buddhi Prakash*. 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 Dalpatram Kavi, the well-known Gujarati poet, as its editor.¹¹³ The *Buddhi Prakash* (which is still being published), had a circulation of more than a thousand copies by that time. It was read in most of the cities and towns of Gujarat. However, -- from the subscribers' list it seems that it was read by a particular section of the Gujarati people.¹¹⁴ It contained matter pertaining to 'social reformism' only. It proudly declared once, " This magazine aspires to disseminate 'knowledge' among the people : it aspires to banish superstitions, to bring about 'reformism'. It is not interested, hence, in wasting space after publishing 'news' anymore".¹¹⁵

Reviewing the contents of the *Buddhi Prakash* which was devoted mainly to reformism, the following poem was published in its issue dated January, 1860:

¹¹³ Parekh Hiralal T., *op.cit.*

¹¹⁴ It had agencies in Surat, Broach, Junagadh, Dhandhuka, Kheda, Mahudha, Nadiad, Jambusar, Kapadwanj, Dholka, Sadra, Petlad, Mehmudabad, Rajkot, Bombay and Baroda. School teachers in most of the places acted as collectors of subscriptions etc., *Buddhi Prakash*, dated, May, 1857, p.9.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Issue dated May 1857, p.173.

'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'.¹¹⁶

V

We have seen earlier that public discussion of issues

¹¹⁶ Ibid., Vol.VII, No.1, January, 1860.

affecting the community had become one of the tasks of the Gujarati press since the Chabuk and the 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 --- may be with reference to the Parsis, may be with reference to the Gujarati Hindus --- was not spared by the Chabuk.¹¹⁷ These harangues continued for quite a few years. The editorial brunt of the Rast Goftar was borne by Dadabhai Naoroji. He was assisted in that by his friends including Karsandas Mulji who actively helped him by contributing articles on reformism in the Rast Goftar and who later became a member of the 'Rast Goftar -- Syndicate' to run that journal when Dadabhai left for Britain in 1855.¹¹⁸

Meanwhile, a controversy ensued between the Brahmins and the Maharajs (religious heads) of the Vallabhite Sect of Hinduism. The Brahmins living in the Bhuleshwar (Locality of Bombay) made 'grand offerings' of food-stuffs ('Chhapan Bhog') to God Shiva and later partook of them.¹¹⁹ This was

¹¹⁷ Masani R.P., Dadabhai Naoroji, p.61 and Mahipatram Roopram, Karsandas Mulji nu Jeevan Charitra, p. 7. (Bombay 1887)

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p.61 and p.8.

¹¹⁹ Mahipatram Roopram, op.cit., p.8 and p.51.

objected to by the Vallabhite Maharajs. They censured the -- Brahmins. 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.'¹²⁰ The Maharajs went a step further. They made use of the columns of the weekly 'Chabuk' to lash out against the Brahmins. Even more. The Vallabhite Maharajs began to cast insinuations against all -- including the reformists -- who had been ignoring their superiority.¹²¹

To combat against such 'anti-reformist views' and even to flout the authority of the Vallabhite Maharajs, the reformist camp launched a weekly 'Satya Prakash' (Light of -- Truth) in 1855 under the editorship of Karsandas Mulji who had already cultivated his pen by writing in the Rast Goftar. 'Karsandas undertook to edit this weekly gratis and Mangaldas Nathubhai (Sir Mangaldas Nathubhai) consented to make up for a certain period any pecuniary deficiency that might occur in its management'.¹²² 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' (learned man) was shown standing with a balance in his hand.

¹²⁰ Ibid.,

¹²¹ Ibid.,

¹²² Ibid., p.3.

The righthand scale thereof was shown rather lowered and the lefthand one rather lifted up. In each scale a man was shown. The man in the right (lowered) scale was shown engrossed in writing. An inkpot, a pen and a few books were shown lying beside him. The man in the left scale — lifted up and hence not as weighty as the right one — was shown sitting on a couch in the midst of a garden. A moneybox was shown near him, besides.¹²³ In the first issue of the Satya Prakash the following note appeared :

"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. Oh God ! Thy help is needed in all undertakings at all places. May Thou grant us proper sense and be of help to us".¹²⁴

¹²³ Satya Prakash weekly, dated 29-9-1855.

¹²⁴ Ibid.,

Karsandas wrote in the Satya Prakash against the -- 'orthodox' beliefs and practices. He wrote against, what he called the 'Kudharawala -- custodians of the traditional practices'.¹²⁵ He wrote even against the Vallabhite Maharajs. He declared once, 'The Maharajs are no less full of sins and pollutions, how dare they name the Brahmins of Bhuleshwar as sinners ?'¹²⁶

The 'orthodox' camp was eager to retort to the attacks of the 'reformists' and of the Satya Prakash. But, that camp had no journal under its control. The Chabuk, it was rumoured at that time, was privately bribed by the 'orthodox' camp under the leadership of the Maharajs. Through its columns the 'orthodox' camp made direct attacks on the reformists in a series of articles.¹²⁷ Karsandas retorted to all of them. He wrote in the Rast Goftar and in his Satya Prakash.

The Vallabhite Maharajs as well realised the power of the press. They too launched a periodical, 'Swadharma Wardhak ane Sanshaya Chhedak' (The stabiliser of one's religious -- faith and the averter of religions dilemmas), specially to meet the attacks of the reformists.¹²⁸ They and their -- supporters wrote articles in that : they wrote even in the

¹²⁵ Ibid.,

¹²⁶ Ibid.,

¹²⁷ Mumabaina Chabuk, dated 17-3-1858.

¹²⁸ Maharaj Libel case pp.764. (Bombay. 1909.)

Chabuk against the reformists.¹²⁹ Karsandas retorted them by writing in the Satya Prakash dated October 20, 1860, an article entitled, 'The True Religion of the Hindus and the contemporary Fake Sects'.¹³⁰ In that article it was contended that 'The Maharajs 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 Maharajs) in the name of so-called Samarpanan --- dedication'. The Maharajs were advised further in that article, 'to give up such practices of exploiting the devotees' etc.¹³¹

One Jadunathji Maharaj who held Gadis (Seats of Worship) at Surat and 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 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 Maharaj Libel case) in the then Supreme Court at Bombay.¹³²

¹²⁹ Ibid.,

¹³⁰ Satya Prakash dated 21-10-1860.

¹³¹ Ibid.,

¹³² Maharaj Libel Case.

After protracted hearings the suit of the Maharajs was dismissed. Karsandas was to receive, on the contrary Rs.11,000 as costs that he had to incur for meeting the challenge of the Maharajs.¹³³ 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^{al} 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'.¹³⁴

These views were reflected in almost the whole of the Gujarati press. The Rast Goftar (which had merged with the

133 Ibid.,

134 Ibid.,

Satya Prakash and which was renamed as the Rast Goftar and -
Satya Prakash)* contained a series of articles. Some of --
them explained the purpose of the social reformist move- --
ments.¹³⁵ In some articles people were exhorted to take up
the cause of reformism and to cooperate with the Sudharawala
(Reformists) in their campaigns.¹³⁶ The Bombay Samachar
(daily) was publishing the day to day proceedings of the --
Maharaj Libel case since it commenced on January 25, 1862.
Commenting upon the whole incident it expressed 'a satisfac-
tion that Sudharo (Reform) was victorious, after all'. It
'felt happy that Sudharo was well on its way to progress in
Gujarat'.¹³⁷ In a subsequent article it eulogised 're-
formism and the untiring reformists'. It advised the re-
formists to continue their campaignings and delineated 'many
a belief and practice which needed to be reformed'.¹³⁸ 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'.¹³⁹ The Buddhi Prakash --
commenting upon the incident advised the Vaishnavite Maharajs

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

¹³⁵ Rast Goftar and Satya Prakash dated 28-4-1862.

¹³⁶ Ibid.,

¹³⁷ Bombay Samachar (daily), dated 24-4-1862.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 27-4-1862.

¹³⁹ Jame Jamshed (daily), 25-4-1862.

to 'devote their time to do good to the people'.¹⁴⁰ It exhorted people to take to reformism and to advancement of knowledge for that purpose.¹⁴¹

By 1861-62 the Gujarati press had become thus a whole-hearted exponent of the reformist views in addition to being a vehicle for communication of information. The process of that 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 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, reformist views and information about reformist movements 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 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 reformists. They published news about reformist activities and wrote articles to that effect. The Samachar Darpan, for instance, in its issue dated November 29, 1855, had said, 'we have been watching with distress the activities of the Vaishnavite Maharajs---- we have been --

¹⁴⁰ Buddhi Prakash, Vol.9, June, 1862.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.,

receiving many letters in that regards---we feel confident that the orthodox practices will disappear because, as -- knowledge spreads among the people, they would not tolerate such misdeeds of the Maharajs'.¹⁴² Similar comments appeared in the Bombay Samachar, dated, December 21, 1855,¹⁴³ and the Jame Jamshed, dated, December 25, 1855.¹⁴⁴ As the reformists began to increase in number and as their activities began to attract public attention, by 1860-61, the campaigning 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 which were championing the cause of reformism during that period. Prominant among them were : 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. It was 'a monthly periodical issued under the auspices of the 'Gujarat Book and Tract Society' with a view of forwarding the moral, mental and spiritual improvement of Gujarat'; the Satya Deepak or the Lamp of Truth published from Bombay by Karsandas Mulji

¹⁴² Samachar Darpan, dated, 29-11-1855.

¹⁴³ Bombay Samachar, dated, 21-12-1855.

¹⁴⁴ Jame Jamshed, dated, 25-12-1855.

* It was a practice in those days to print the English version of a newspaper's title.

and edited by Nanabhai Rustomji Ranina, and the Gnan Sagar published from Surat by the 'Swadesh Hitecchhu Mandal'.¹⁴⁵

Along with the increase in the number of reformist journals and the expanding space devoted to reformist views in the different Gujarati newspapers, the scope of the press campaigns was widened to encompass not individual issues but the entire social fabric. Instead of confining itself to widow-remarriage or the doings of the Maharajs, 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 among women to beat bosoms in public and collectively to mourn deaths, 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 1960's, reformist writings in the Gujarati press became less frequent. The different journals which were writing at length on several aspects of the Gujarati Hindus' life and practices began to write occasionally on some topic such as female education or foreign travel. The space devoted to reformist views had been shrinking. In the annual table of contents of the Rast Goftar for 1865, the editors have included forty-nine items pertaining to social reformism.¹⁴⁵ In the subsequent year

¹⁴⁵ Rast Goftar ane Satya Prakash, Vol.XIV.

they have included thirtyseven items under that head.¹⁴⁶ On a similar perusal of the contents of the Buddhi Prakash we find that emphasis was given more to spread of learning, to scientific inventions and to industries.¹⁴⁷ On the title page of that journal appeared a picture of 'some new machine that the Westerners had invented'.¹⁴⁸ 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 devoted to news. They published occasionally news about the activities of the Sudharawala. 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 contents of the Gujarati press during the middle of the 1860's.

Several reasons must have been operative in bringing about this change in the Gujarati press. Here we shall take up some of them for consideration.

The first reason was that the social reformist movement was itself losing its momentum. The movement was confined to cities like Bombay, Surat and Ahmedabad. The urban

146 Ibid., Vol.XV.

147 Buddhi Prakash, Vol.XII onwards.

148 Ibid.,

intelligentia who were guiding the movement, and periodically contributing to the different journals were fast losing the leading lights. Some of them, like Dadabhai Naoroji had left India. Some like Mahipatram Roopram and Karsandas Mulji kept away from it intermittently. Some others were absorbed by the government in the educational service. That kept them away from the centres of reformism. Especially, the task of preparing Gujarati school books they were entrusted with, demanded their full-time devotion.¹⁴⁹ As a result of this, many reformists could not participate in the reformists' -- meetings etc. 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 twentytwo that it had held during 1855-1856.¹⁵⁰ Besides, the receding trend of the social reformist movement is indicated by the contents of the reformist journal Buddhi Prakash. It contained mostly matter pertaining to advancement of knowledge and that pertaining to new inventions etc. during 1864, 1865 and onwards.¹⁵¹

Mention needs to be made in this connection of one more factor which had repercussions on the reformist movement.

¹⁴⁹ Parekh H.T., Gujarat Vernacular Society no Itihas (History of the Gujarat Vernacular Society) Part I (1848-1878), pp. 93-102.

¹⁵⁰ Students' Literary and Scientific Society (1848 to 1947-48) appendix J(d), pp.59-63.

¹⁵¹ Buddhi Prakash, Vols.11, 12,13 and consolidated contents published in Parekh H.T., op.cit., pp.157-197.

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 observed, '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 to the full crop of a good season'.¹⁵²

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 fifty 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'.¹⁵³

'But', he and the Gazetteers add, 'the year 1865 resulted in a severe fall of cotton prices and a consequent economic depression. Many a Gujarati businessman was caught in the crisis'.¹⁵⁴ Most of them were either the 'Sudharawala'

¹⁵² Gadgil D.R., Industrial Evolution of India, p. 96. (*Bombay Re print : 1956.*)

¹⁵³ ~~Eyk~~ Parsi, Mamabaina Share-sattani Tawarikh (1867), pp. 5 ff. (*Bombay*)

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.,

— reformists — or the patrons of the reformist camp.¹⁵⁵
The people who were not happy with the latter's reformist activities did not advance them any loans to meet the crisis. Even more. They seized the opportunity to show their disapproval of reformism and even withdrew their private deposits from the reformists so that the latter were rendered insolvent.¹⁵⁶
It may be noted here that Kavi Narmad wrote continuously -- against the 'speculations in shares and cotton' in his 'Dandiyo'.¹⁵⁷ He had warned particularly the reformists to be away from the 'lure of Moloch'.¹⁵⁷ So did the poet Dalpatram. Both of them, one in Bombay and the other in Ahmedabad, expressed regret -- that the cause of reformism had to suffer so much on account of, what they termed 'Sharemania'.¹⁵⁸

Now to the other 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 subscription yields. Even at that, their subscription rates ranged from one and a half to two rupees per annum. That is, their single copies were sold at two to four paise each. While, the cost of production of these

¹⁵⁵ Ek Parsi, op.cit., p.285 ff. These included Jhaverilal Umiyashanker, Mathurandas Vasanji, Karsandas Madhavdas Dr Bhau Daji and eightytwo others.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., and Dandiyo edited by Narmadashanker Dave.

¹⁵⁷ Dandiyo, 1865.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. and Buddhi Prakash, Vol.13, p.192.

or they had to overhaul their contents to be in line with other journals (dailies etc.).

The other journals — dailies, weeklies etc. — had joined the reformist campaigns when their circulation was limited and was confined to certain sections. As these expanded, such journals had to cater to the tastes of a variegated readership. They had to publish matter pertaining to the day to day 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 reformism into the background. Now, if the reformist journals wanted to be in line with the other journals (for continuing their existence) they too had to abandon highly controversial issues and had to give a wider coverage to other matter -- satisfying the tastes of a wider and variegated clientele. That is, they too had to change, as did their other contemporaries, to keep pace with times.

This concludes consideration of the expansion as well as of the change in nature of the Gujarati press. We have found that the Gujarati press had a direct connection with trade and commerce in Western India. As the latter grew, the Gujarati press also expanded — it began to publish more matter, it contained more pages, its frequency of -- publication increased — from a weekly it was converted into a daily — an important step in the growth of the Gujarati

press, and, its circulation increased locally and otherwise. We have found, moreover, that the introduction of a system of formal education had far-reaching effects on the Gujarati press. Education affected the circulation of the latter by providing more persons to read the newspapers. Education created a need for more printing presses and indirectly facilitated publication of more newspapers from different places. That is, education assisted the expansion of the Gujarati press.

Again, it was the newly introduced 'modern education' that created a section of persons with some 'views'. The social consciousness of these 'educated persons' was aroused. They could not remain just unreflective recipients of norms. Their foremost urge was renovation and reinterpretation. Hence, they questioned 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. They aspired to spread their 'views'. They associated themselves with the modern medium of wider communication viz., the Gujarati press. They utilised it for disseminating their 'views' and created journals with Gnan, Buddhi, Satya, as their motto. The nature of the Gujarati press thus changed. Along with being a communicator of information, it became, also, a campaigner for the social reformist views. But, this change in the nature of the Gujarati press proved to be a brief interlude as we saw above,

We have however, already suggested that a further change in the nature of the Gujarati press was imminent by the middle of the 1860's. We shall examine that in the next chapter. We propose to see, moreover, how the Gujarati press went on expanding. We shall try to see whether such an expansion of the Gujarati press had any relation to a further change in its nature and whether it had to face any handicaps in that regard.