

CHAPTER 3

GROWTH OF THE PRESS AND THE SPREAD OF ENLIGHTENMENT

The growth of journalism in 19th century India was influenced by many social currents. The growth of modern education brought with it new ideas from the West. The English education resulted in the emergence of a new section of educated middle classes in the society. The press developed as a representative of these educated sections. Coupled with the growth of education the socio-religious reform movements of 19th century influenced the press as the educated sections were involved in both of these activities. Moreover, the intense missionary propaganda and its criticism of indigenous religious practices provided a motivation to Indians who began counteracting the missionary activities through the columns of press. Above all the healthy growth of Bengali vernacular journalism had its influence spread over other parts of the country. All these pervasive influences had a direct bearing on the growth of the press. The early journals established by the educated sections of Indian society in the three Presidencies of British India reflect this. These early efforts in the field of

¹ Sambad Kaumudi of Raja Rammohan Roy in Bengal was established to spread new knowledge in society and in due course of time it began to propagate reform ideas and oppose the missionary activities. See for a detailed account of early Bengali journals Smarajit Chakraborti, The Bengali Press (1818-1868) - A Study in the Growth of Public Opinion. Calcutta, 1976, pp.10-13 and p.29ff. So also the Marathi journal, Durpan, established by Balshastrri Jambhekar concentrated on issues of reform. See Vasant D.Rao, "The Beginning and Growth of the Marathi Press" in S.P.Sen(ed.), The Indian Press, Calcutta, 1966, pp.53-55. The press in Madras Presidency was slow in its growth. However, it also was reflecting the same concerns as in the other parts of

journalism broadly reflected two significant trends. First, in the light of new Western knowledge and liberal values the early journals initiated a discussion on Hindu society, its religious practices, age old traditions and the evils inherent in them. Some of the journals further advocated the reform of the old traditional values. These new ideas invited immediate protest from orthodox sections in society and they began to counter the reform efforts initiated by the emerging middle classes who were imbued with Western liberal values. However, the vigorous reform campaign attracted more attention from the press. Secondly, the uncontrolled missionary activities and their criticism of Hindu traditional observances deeply hurt the feelings of indigenous people. On their part they unleashed a long process of severe antagonism to Christian missionary efforts in the realm of religion. This religious controversy and theological tussle between these two groups often found an expression in the columns of press during the nineteenth century.²

These two broad strands influenced the growth of press in Madras Presidency also. The development of press in Madras Presidency is significant in some aspects. The beginning of English press owned by Indians was witnessed as early as 1844. Also, the initiation of the Indian - owned English press was

the country. For an estimate of the 19th century press in the Presidency see C.J.Nirmal, "Nineteenth Century Press and the Development of Indian Nationalism" in the Journal of the Madras University. Vol.XLII, Nos.1 and 2, January - July 1970.

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For example see Purusharthapradayini (Telugu), March 1876, p.36. The journal published a series of articles criticising the missionaries. See Ibid., September 1876, pp.133-34.

necessiated by unhindered missionary criticism of Hindu religious practices in the journals published by Christian missionaries. Further it sowed the early seeds of protest and tried to build up public opinion against the colonial rule and generate anti-British feeling by resorting to a criticism of missionary activities.

The three earliest English journals in the Presidency viz., The Native Circulator (1844), Crescent (1844) and The Rising Sun (1857) were owned by Telugus in the Presidential capital of Madras the details of which are discussed in the following pages. Apart from the English press, the vernacular press made its beginnings around the same time. When compared to the Bengali,

4

5

Marathi and Gujarati press, the development of Telugu press was rather slow. The differential and late impact of colonial rule in the Presidency was mainly responsible for this. It is further viewed that the highly complex Telugu script was also a major

³ As early as 1818 Vernacular journalism emerged in Bengal with the establishment of journals like Bengal Gazette, Digdarsan and Samachar Darpan. See Smarajit Chakraborti, Op. Cit., pp.18-19. Persian journals also started around the same time in Bengal. Rammohan Roy's Mirat-ul-Akbhar of 1821 may be cited as an example. For details see S.B.Singh, "Growth of Public Opinion in India, 1835-1861" in Nitish Ranjan Ray(ed.), Op. Cit., pp.9-10. On the early activities of Bengalees in the field of vernacular journalism see Hemendra Prasad Ghose, The Newspaper in India. Calcutta, 1952, pp.24-25; M.Chalapathi Rau, The Press. New Delhi, 1974, pp.25-34 and Sushila Agrawal, Press. Public Opinion and Government in India. Jaipur, 1970, pp.32-35.

⁴ Vasant D.Rao, Op. Cit., pp.54-55.

⁵ The first Gujarati journal was published in 1822 under the name Shree Mumabaina Samachar by Fardunji Marazban. It was devoted to cover routine news of the day. For details see R.D.Parikh, The Press and Society - A Sociological Study. Bombay, 1965 (Saka 1887), pp.10-15.

factor in the late beginnings of cutting and preparing Telugu print types.⁶ However, The School Book Society, Madras, established in 1820 was already successful in preparing Teluguprint and the same method was used in printing Telugu journals a little later.⁷ The early efforts in bringing out a Telugu journal were made by Christian missionaries in the Presidency. Indian - owned Telugu press was to develop later as a counter to these missionary efforts.

The efforts of Telugu people in English journalism established high standards even by mid 19th century. Crescent was the first popular English journal owned by Indians. The journal was intended to counter the religious propaganda of the missionary journals. The period between 1840 and 1860 was characterised by the state support to missionary activities in the Presidency. During this period of powerful missionary influence Christian preachers in the metropolis realised the importance of journalism. One such missionary, Anderson, began to publish an English journal Record and it was intended to criticise Hindu beliefs and propagate the Christian faith. By

⁶ Sarogini Regani, "The Growth of the Telugu Press" in S.P.Sen (ed.), Op. Cit., p.93. However, newspaper in Kannada language, the script of which resembles Telugu, was published by 1812 by the German Missionaries at Bellary under the name Kannada Samachar. See B.Muddachari, "The Role of the Press in Mysore" in Ibid., pp.104-05. Before print letters were cut separately for each language the Christian Missionaries used to publish regional dialects like Tamil and Telugu in Roman script. For details see J.Mangamma, Op. Cit., pp.4-11.

⁷ This has been already mentioned in the preceding chapter. The Society used to publish books for use in schools in major languages of the Presidency viz., Telugu, Tamil and Kannada.

1845 the Record had a sufficient number of copies circulated throughout the Presidency.⁸ The intense propagation of Christian faith sent alarming signals in the society and counter propaganda began.

In order to counteract the religious onslaughts on Hinduism and the propagation of Christian faith by Anderson, the well known Telugu merchant of Madras, Gajula Lakshminarasu Chetty,⁹ founded the English journal Crescent. He bought this journal from a resident of Madras, Narayana Swamy Naidoo, who was the proprietor of the English journal, Native Circulator and the name was changed to Crescent.¹⁰

The first copy of Crescent was issued on 2nd October 1844.¹¹ It was published from the Hindoo Press owned by G.Lakshminarasu Chetty.¹² The press was looked after by his relative, G.Saravappa Chetty.¹³ The journal was known also by the name Madras Crescent.¹⁴

⁸ By 1845 the journal had a circulation of 7,396 copies and it was subscribed from various parts of the Presidency. See Pub. Dept., No.58, dt.17.4.1846, TNA.

⁹ His activities along with Madras Native Association are discussed in the succeeding chapters.

¹⁰ The exact date of establishment of Native Circulator is not yet known. But it is significant to note that an English journal owned and run by a Telugu gentleman was already in existence by the time Crescent began its publication in 1844.

¹¹ D.V.Siva Rao, "Telugu Journalism : Past and Present" in K.R.Seshagiri Rao (ed.), Op. Cit., p.24.

¹² Pub. Dept., Nos.25 and 26, dt.18.5.1858, TNA. This press also published another journal (bi-weekly), Carnatic Telegraph.

¹³ Ibid. The press was located in Armenian street of Black Town, Madras.

¹⁴ Pub. Dept., Nos.62 and 63, dt.7.2.1861, TNA.

To start with, the journal was bi-weekly published on Wednesdays and Saturdays with a special half-sheet edition on the evening of every Monday.¹⁵ Each copy of the journal was priced at four annas or a monthly subscription rate of two rupees.¹⁶ Lakshminarasu Chetty appointed a European, Harley, as the editor of the journal and the latter was known for his utilitarian ideas and powerful writings.¹⁷ In no time Harley became most controversial in the eyes of the colonial government. The government was immediately cautioned that Harley was wilfully misrepresenting the measures of government and took every opportunity to excite discontent and promote agitation by inflammatory paragraphs addressed to the natives.¹⁸ The authorities were warned that he was disseminating 'articles of most seditious tendency' through the columns of Crescent.¹⁹

The object of the journal was stated to be the amelioration of the conditions of the people.²⁰ The copies of the journal are not available today. Though they are not preserved the details

15 Madras Almanac. 1853, p.393.

16 Ibid., 1850, p.160.

17 Sec. Dept., No.1, dt.17.8.1847, TNA.

18 For example, in the issue of Crescent dated 4.8.1847, Harley wrote in the editorial that the natives may consider the European judges in the Sadr and Mofussil courts as "specimens of what they have to expect from irresponsible magistrates and judges; especially from those imbued with evangelicalism, when under a Missionary patronising Government. We repeat the advice (to the people) to stand by their own interest, and help themselves——— for due protection against the ignorance, the wilfulness, and the religious prejudices of the Company's dispensers of Mofussil Law". Sec. Dept., No.1, dt.17.8.1847, TNA.

19 Ibid.

20 G. Parameswaran Pillai, Op. Cit., p.196.

regarding the contents of the journal can be obtained from other sources.²¹ On the basis of these sources it may be stated that the journal focussed its attention on the missionary activities, the unjust judgements in the courts, the anti-Hindu nature of Madras Government and preaching of Western religious ethics in the educational institutions.²²

The journal became highly popular within a few years of its establishment. Lakshminarasu Chetty could win over a few British

21 For example see Sec. Dept., No.1, dt.17.8.1847, No.3, dt.12.10.1847, Nos.2 and 4, dt.11.1.1848, Pub. Dept., Nos.25 and 26, dt.18.5.1858, Sec. Dept., No.6 (Anonymous Letter), dt.11.1.1848, No.11 (Anonymous Letter), dt.11.1.1848 and Pol.Dept., No.2, dt.21.3.1848, TNA.

22 Ibid. It may be mentioned here that the educated Indians and employees of the Company used to contribute articles to Crescent on various social aspects. Madhava Rao, Seshia Sastri, Sadasiva Pillai and Rama Iyengar were some among them who wrote articles in the journal. For details see C.Karunakara menon, A Critical Essay on Sir A. Seshia Sastri. Madras, 1903, pp.7-8. Some of these people mentioned above advocated ideas of reform even during their studenthood. In an essay "On the necessity of Educating the Hindu Females" written during the high school days in the Madras High School, Sadasiva Pillai asserted that every opportunity should be taken to persuade orthodox Hindus that female education was of the highest importance. For more details see Third Annual Report From the Governors of the Madras University. Madras, 1844, pp.20-21. So also Madhava Rao in the "Essay on Native Education" said that "among the uneducated Indians there prevails an opinion that males alone are entitled to enjoy the benefits of education. This prejudice, we will hope, may soon be eradicated by the progress of liberal opinions. Already there is an advance and many Hindoos send their female children to school. So, all that is left to us now is to follow up what has been already commenced. And it must be the united efforts of all natives of whatever rank and caste to make a great push in favour of liberal opinions". See The Fifth Annual Report from the Governors of the Madras University. 1845-46, Madras, 1847, p.42. These people used to propagate these advanced ideas through their writings in the columns of Crescent. It shows that the journal apart from being anti-missionary in nature, also encouraged ideas of reform by providing space in its columns for writings on the same.

civil servants to his side. Malcolm Lewin, a civil servant and a judge, joined hands with Lakshminarasu Chetty as he believed in principles of religious neutrality.²³ The Madras government, under the Governorship of Tweeddale became highly controversial as it extended open support to the activities of Christian missionaries. Malcolm Lewin was opposed to any kind of religious interference by the government. When Tweeddale proposed the diversion of Hindu pagoda (temple) funds towards the maintenance of the Provincial schools Lewin took a strong objection. Tweeddale further proposed to introduce Bible as a text book in the government schools. These two measures alerted the Hindu community. Though Tweeddale tried to disown responsibility in this matter, Lewin believed that these measures would be implemented.²⁴ Added to these efforts, the judgements in judicial courts were increasingly becoming favourable to missionaries and converts. At the height of conversion controversy at Tinnevely, in 1845, the judges in the Sadr court delivered judgements in favour of missionaries.²⁵ Lewin could perceive a blatant bias in these judicial proceedings and opposed them as injudicious. When the local inhabitants of Madras approached him with regard to this undesirable part of the colonial authorities he came heavily

²³ Sec. Dept., No.2, dt.13.7.1847, TNA.

²⁴ Lewin was of the opinion that "although the Marquis of Tweeddale has disclaimed these views, experience has abundantly proved that there are parties connected with the government who had the will and means to carry them out". See Ibid.

²⁵ R.E.Frykenberg, *Crises*. Op. Cit., pp.52-54. Earlier Lewin served as a collector of Bellary and Canara districts. Later he was transferred to the Sadr Court at Tinnevely as the second judge in the court. Of the three judges two were in favour of the missionaries and the Chief Judge, Dickinson, also was a party to this.

upon the government. He warned them that 'had the government met with no resistance in their attempt to coerce the judges of the Sadr court into measures fatal to impartial justice, it is probable the next attempt would have been an open and undisguised one to force Christianity upon Hindus'.²⁶ Lewin was vexed with the policies of the government as he was a 'vehement and vocal Unitarian' and began to voice his dissent openly.²⁷ Since he came to the Presidency he began privately contributing radical writings to Crescent.²⁸ It was reported that he had an unbreakable connection with the journal and for such an act of violation of civil code he should be punished by the government.²⁹ Finally the Governor, Tweeddale dismissed Lewin along with two other judges from civil service.³⁰

The activities of these public spirited people strengthened the hands of Lakshminarasu Chetty. The journal was growing in its popularity and soon it became a popular journal throughout the Presidency which is vouched by the circulation figures as shown below.³¹ It was the only journal owned by Indians that

26 Sec. Dept., No.2, Op. Cit.

27 R.E.Frykenberg, Crises. Op. Cit., p.54.

28 Ibid.

29 It was reported that "he was long known to be a great supporter of Crescent, and in fact his connection with and influence over that paper is notorious at the Presidency". For details see Sec. Dept., No.1, dt.17.8.1847, TNA.

30 R.E.Frykenberg, Crises, Op. Cit., F.N.No.77 on p.56.

31 It may be noted that the list excludes the number of copies circulated in Madras town. The tables gives us the details about the number of copies despatched through the Madras General Post-Office. The table is based on the reports of Post-master General for the corresponding years. The are as follows:

appeared in the reports of the government. Out of more than ten journals, that were in circulation during this time in Madras Presidency, Crescent was the only journal in English run by Indians.³²

YEAR	No. of Copies Despatched Through the Madras General Post-Office
1845	8,457
1846	10,809
1847	10,704
1848	9,738
1849	7,869
1850	5,395
1852	4,910
1853	4,794

The method by which news items were obtained by the journal forms an interesting chapter in the study of early journalism. Lakshminarasu Chetty successfully obtained the favour of a few public employees in order to supply him news from government files. In other words they were employed by the proprietor of the journal as secret agents. For the first time, M.Vencataroylu Naidoo was employed as an agent.³³ He was working as a Telugu

Pub. Dept., No.58, dt.17.4.1846
 Pub. Dept., No.35, dt.27.4.1847
 Pub. Dept., No.23, dt.28.3.1848
 Pub. Dept., No.10, dt.8.5.1849
 Pub. Dept., Nos. 30 and 31, dt.8.4.1850
 Pub. Dept., No.21, dt.14.10.1851
 Pub. Dept., No.11, dt.15.2.1853
 Pub. Dept., No.43, dt.14.3.1854, TNA.

32 The English journals which were in circulation during this period were Fort St. George Gazette. United Service Gazette, Athenaeum, Spectator. Record. Crescent. Circulator. Christian Herald. Advertiser. Monthly Times. London Mail. Native Herald. Western Mail. Church Man and Madras Examiner. For details see the sources mentioned in Ibid.

33 Sec. Dept., No.4, dt.11.1.1848 and No.8, dt.11.1.1848, TNA.

translater in the petition department in 1842 and later he was transferred to Chingleput's Collectorate in the same capacity.³⁴ Vencataroylu Naidoo was handsomely paid by Lakshminarasu Chetty for supplying the necessary information from the public records. Vencataroylu inturn employed a few others for the purpose of obtaining information from other public departments. Iyaswamy Modely, Vencataramaiah, Varadarajulu Naidoo and Lakshmipathi Naidoo³⁵ were connected with the supply of news to Crescent in a secret manner.

The way in which Vencataroylu prepared news items for favour of publication in Crescent is significant.³⁶ He was in the habit of bringing home papers from public records in his pockets and used to take down copies of the same. Likewise he secured papers from other departments through the people who were inturn employed by Vencataroylu for this purpose.³⁷ Vencataroylu, his brother and Lakshmipathi Naidoo used to prepare copies of all

34 Ibid., No.3, dt.12.10.1847. Earlier he failed in obtaining the position of Inspector in the Court of Commissioners for the recovery of small debts. Even before he was employed Vencataryoulu was in good relations with a few contemporary editors of English journals. He infact was recommended to the above post by the editors of Athenaeum and Spectator. For details see Sec. Dept., No.4, dt.11.1.1848, TNA.

35 See for details sec. Dept., Anonymous Letter, dt.3.10.1847; Nos.2,7 and 11, dt.11.1.1848 and No.1, dt.8.2.1848.

36 Vencataroylu was already contributing to various English journals. His pen came down on all those who were either corrupt or not to the liking of people. One Ranganada Sastry lodged a complaint with Police Superintendent of Madras that remaining incognito, Vencataroylu was publishing scurrilous letters against him. See for details Ibid., No.4, dt.11.1.1848.

37 Ibid., Anonymous Letter, dt.3.10.1847. He obtained, for example, important public papers from political department through Iyaswamy Modely.

these papers in a secret manner during nights. All the original papers were to be restored to their respective departments by the 3next morning.³⁸ It is needless to state that this involved great risk under the colonial rule.

This process went on for a long time unnoticed. But when Crescent published the confidential remarks and decisions made by the Governor, Tweeddale, the authorities were shocked. Decisions regarding the diversion of Hindu temple funds and the introduction of Bible in the schools were published in the columns of Crescent even before these decisions were ratified by the Governor's Council and the Court of Directors.³⁹ Tweeddale himself took notice of the publication of these items in Crescent and agreed that the papers connected with his decisions were "purloined from the office, and_____appeared in a grabbed form in the public papers".⁴⁰

The Madras government initiated an immediate enquiry into the whole incident. In the course of investigation an employee of Crescent. Samuel Bowie gave a few clues and the whole affair came to light.⁴¹ The report by the Police Superintendent,

38 Ibid.

39 For details see Minute by Tweeddale in Sec. Dept., No.2, dt.13.7.1847, TNA.

40 Ibid. This view was endorsed by H.Chamier, a member of Governor's Council. For details see Ibid., No.1, dt.13.7.1847.

41 Sec. Dept., No.4, dt.11.1.1848. Bowie was an employee in the Spectator press and later he was engaged in the Hindoo Press by Lakshminarasu Chetty. As a result he was aware of the activities of the Crescent as well as the secret agents employed by its propretor.

E.J.Elliot, stated that Vencataroylu was found guilty along with others mentioned above.⁴² The evidence of Samuel Bowie revealed that Vencataroylu used to publish letters containing information from public records under the titles Vindex and Plain Speaking Man.⁴³ Elliot expressed his inability in finding out further details about the present case from any of the local members. He reasoned out that the "feelings of the natives attached to the Public Office and the restrictions imposed on them by their respective castes didnot allow them" to come forward to give evidence against the activities of those who were involved in the present affair.⁴⁴ It was further made known to the government that the person who would produce evidence against Vencataroylu would be excommunicated from his caste.⁴⁵

Once this affair came under serious consideration of the Madras government the people began to react on it. They addressed a series of anonymous letters to the government. Some of them pointed their accusing finger at Vencataroylu and advanced further evidence to his activities.⁴⁶ However, most of these letters argued that Varadarajulu Naidoo was innocent and he

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid. Bowie deposed before the Governor himself that Vencataroylu was a writer in the Government Office and was seen constantly at the Press. He further added that Vencataroylu used to bring letters for publication under the signature of Vindex and Plain Speaking Man. For details see Ibid., No.3, dt.12.10.1847.

44 Sec. Dept., No.4, Op. Cit.

45 Sec. Dept., Anonymous Letter, dt.3.10.1847. Because of restrictions like the present one the Police Superintendent couldnot obtain evidence against others like Vencataramaiah involved in this affair.

46 Ibid., No.7, dt.11.1.1848 and No.8, dt.11.1.1848.

should not be taken to task. A few letters strongly supported Vencataroylu.⁴⁸

On receipt of the investigation report, the Chief Secretary, I.J. Thomas, summarily dismissed all those people connected with this affair.⁴⁹ Vencataroylu Naidoo was further declared disqualified from holding any office under the government for a period of seven years till 1855.⁵⁰ Dismissing Varadarajulu Naidoo, the Chief Secretary opined that being aware of the systematic misconduct and of the malpractices of his relative, Vencataroylu Naidoo, the former did not inform the government of the same.⁵¹ He said that unless such stringent action was initiated the public documents would not be safe.

47 Ibid., No.4, dt.11.1.1848. These letters also pleaded that Iyaswamy Modely too was innocent and that he should not be punished in this regard.

48 In one such letter it was claimed that Vencataroylu consciously supplied public documents to the press out of 'Patriotic Zeal'. Ibid., No.5, dt.11.1.1848. Another letter stated that if punishment was to be accorded for this the Marquis of Tweeddale should be brought to the book first since he was also expressing scornful ideas about Hindu society in the columns of Athenaeum. Ibid., No.6, dt.11.1.1848.

49 Ibid., No.11, dt.11.1.1848.

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid. This was decided by the Chief Secretary after he personally conducted the investigation and questioned Varadarajulu Naidoo in the police station of Chief Police Superintendent of Madras. Varadarajulu was cornered from many sides and he answered all the questions about his role, his acquaintance with Lakshminarasu Chetty and his father Sidhulu Chetty and about the activities of Vencataroylu. The suspicion of I.J.Thomas was confirmed beyond doubt when Varadarajulu, replying a question why he did not inform him the activities of Vencataroylu, said that "you didnot ask me and I didnot tell you". For details see Pol. Dept., Nos.15 and 16, dt.9.5.1948.

The government now turned its attention to Crescent and Lakshminarasu Chetty. The journal was put under immediate watch of the police. The Government started muzzling the Crescent. All the privileges which the government willingly accorded to other newspapers of the day were denied to Crescent.⁵² Moreover, strict and secret police watch was ordered on Lakshminarasu Chetty and his activities.⁵³ It may be noted here that Thomas Munro, the Governor of Madras, stated that a "free press and the domination of strangers" were two opposing things.⁵⁴ Believing that the first duty of the press was to deliver the country from a foreign yoke, Munro suggested that 'the press must be restrained by a censor or by the power of sending home at once the publisher of any libellous or inflamatory paper'.⁵⁵ Munro was obviously referring to the Anglo-Indian Press run by Europeans and he never expected that a challenge would emanate from the Indian-owned English Press.

The strict measures adopted by the government checked the growth of Crescent. As indicated by the declining circulation figures from 1849 onwards shown in the preceeding Table the

52 G.Parameswaran Pillai, Op. Cit., p.196. The privileges were such as the supply of newsprint at concessional rates, supply of official data and giving official advertisements to the journal.

53 D.V.Sivarao, Poorva Ranqamulu, Op. Cit., p.165.

54 Extract from Munro's Minute is cited in Merrill Tilghman Boyce, British Policy and the Evolution of the Vernacular Press in India. 1835-1878. Delhi, 1988, pp.31-33.

55 Ibid. Munro, infact, was reiterating the imperial notions of a free press. Even by the beginnings of 19th century Lord Wellesley suggested effective checks on the *whole tribe of editors'. His suggestions, made in 1799 were immediately put into action. For details see Mrinal Kanti Bose, The Press and Its Problems, Calcutta, 1945, pp.47-48.

journal began to show signs of clear decline. By 1861 the journal almost lost its prominence and the contemporary sources reveal that the Crescent was confined only to Madras and its circulation capacity touched an all time low figure of 150 copies in the town.⁵⁶ Added to this the losses incurred in the business due to Lakshminarasu Chetty's total involvement in public activities resulted in the closure of the journal. Crescent. after two decades of active existence became defunct in 1863.⁵⁷

Crescent was a pioneer in the history of South Indian journalism which symbolised the beginnings of Indian-owned English Press. The contributions of the journal are very significant. It was the first journal to initiate modern techniques of investigative journalism as seen by the employment of secret agents. Given the hostile atmosphere under the colonial government, it was a daring step made by Lakshminarasu Chetty during the early 19th century. Amidst conflicting interests and the dichotomous relations between the state and indigenous people such methods were constructively used with a strong conviction for societal welfare. In this manner Lakshminarasu Chetty can be considered as the first strategist in political journalism and an initiator of a new tendency in the history of English press which was to continue for a long time to come. These pioneering efforts paved the way for nationalist journals like The Hindu by late 19th century.

⁵⁶ Pub. Dept., Nos.62 and 63, dt.7.2.1861, TNA

⁵⁷ By 1863 the Hindu press which was publishing Crescent stopped the publication of the journal. It was using the press only for job work. See Pub. Dept., No.176, dt.28.11.1863, TNA.

On being dismissed from the service, Vencataroylu Naidoo began practising law in the Sadr court of Madras.⁵⁸ His fascination for journalism didnot disappear and he established his own press under the name of Rising Sun and began publishing the journal Rising Sun.⁵⁹ It was a bi-weekly. By the year 1861 six hundred copies of the journal were circulated.⁶⁰ The aim of the journal was to focus discussion on the social problems affecting Hindu community. Vencataroylu soon joined hands with Srinivasa Pillai who was a close associate and former colleague of Lakshminarasu Chetty. But Vencataroylu Naidoo didnot live long. He passed away in 1863. By that time the journal also on the wane and only eighty copies were circulated.⁶¹ With his death its publication came to a close.

II

The printing process in vernaculars began much before the publication of vernacular journals. The Telugu script was introduced to the West by European travellers.⁶² In the initial stages Telugu was printed in Europe in Roman script as there was

58 Pub. Dept., Nos.62 and 63, dt.7.2.1861, TNA.

59 Ibid.

60 Ibid.

61 Pub. Dept., No.176, dt.28.11.1863, TNA.

62 John Fryer was the first man to introduce Indian language to the West. Later on missionaries like Benjamin Schultze got acquainted with these languages even before they set their foot on Indian soil. For details see J.Mangamma, Book Printing. Op.Cit., pp.7-8.

no print type in Telugu during 18th century.⁶³ Even in India the use of Roman script was suggested in printing vernaculars as early as the first decade of 19th century.⁶⁴ However, the earliest efforts in printing Telugu were made by Serampore missionaries in Bengal.⁶⁵ Apart from Christian missionaries print work in Telugu was undertaken by Fort St.George College and the Madras School Book Society.⁶⁶

Religious tract societies like the Madras Bible Society and the Vernacular Tract Society of Bellary brought out a number of tracts in the local languages of the Madras Presidency during the

63 Ibid., pp.7-8. The first dictionary in Telugu was printed in Roman script in 1747. Ibid., p.125.

64 Ibid., pp.9-11.

65 Ibid., p.75. Telugu translation of New Testament and a grammar book in Telugu were brought out by Serampore missionaries like William Carey, William Ward and Marshman.

66 Fort St.George College was established in 1812 to encourage civil servants to learn vernacular languages. Accordingly various scholars were appointed to teach Telugu language. Venkatanarayana, Ravipati Gurumurthi Sastry and Juluri Appayya were some of the earliest scholars in Telugu who taught in the college. The College Board used to publish books in vernacular languages and advertise the same in the Gazette. For details see Kottapalli Veerabhadra Rao, Telugu Sahityamu Pai Englishu Prabhavamu (Telugu), Secunderabad, 2nd Edition, 1986 (first edition, 1960), p.156ff and Vizagapatam District Records, Vol.4751, pp.229-33, APA. Depending on the need the teachers in the collectorate schools placed orders for these books. See Cuddapah District Records, Vol.4604, pp.28-31, APA. Around the same time Telugu grammar works were printed by William Carey, William Brown and A.D. Campbell in 1814, 1816 and 1817 respectively. Another grammar work by Mamidi Venkayya of Masulipatam was procured by Madras Government. However it was not printed. See J.Mangamma, Book Printing. Op. Cit., p.179 and Masulipatam District Records, Vol.2983, p.29 and pp.79-80, APA. The Madras School Book Society also brought out various Telugu primers, stories, prosodies and vocabularies after the Society was established in 1820.

first half of 19th century.⁶⁷ Around the same time British civil servants like C.P.Brown began compiling, writing and publishing Telugu works.⁶⁸ These efforts were followed by the publication of books on medicinal herbs, philosophy, geography and general administration.⁶⁹ Along with these books the Sataka literature (books containing hundred verses) was published in easy Telugu.

The Madras Upayukta Grandhakarana Sabha,⁷¹ established by the students passed out of the college at Madras, began publishing Telugu books from 1847 onwards. The proliferation of these printing works was greatly facilitated by the growth in the number of printing presses and printing technology at Madras. For example, by 1857 twenty English presses, thirty six native presses, twelve English lithographic presses, Ten native lithographic presses and one copper plate printing press were located at Madras only.⁷² The establishment of district presses

67 For a detailed account of their activities see J.Mangamma, Book Printing. Op. Cit., pp.67-75.

68 Brown brought out the first verses of Vemana, a poet-philosopher of Medieval Andhra, in print by 1829. Ibid., p.202.

69 Ibid., pp.205-17.

70 Ibid. Though only a few Satakams were published, many more Satakams were already in use in the schools. For example Krishna Satakam, Sumati Satakam, Janaki Satakam, Prasanna Raqhava Satakam, Ramataraka Satakam, Bhaskara Satakam, Bhushanavikasa Satakam, Bhumalingeswara Satakam, Suryanaravana Satakam and Narayana Satakam were use in the schools and Hindu theological colleges in Rajahmundry region. See GDR, Vol.4637, p.221, APA. Also See VDR, Vol.4757, p.34, APA.

71 For more details see J.Mangamma, Book Printing. Op. Cit., p.113.

72 This Sabha prominently appeared as a literary society in the contemporary public records. See for example Indexes to the Public Department, 1854, 1855 and 1856, TNA. Also see Pub. Dept., Nos.25 and 26, dt.18.5.1858, TNA. Various details

also coincided with this period. The Nursapore press established by G.N.Taylor may be cited as an example here.⁷³

All these early activities in printing Telugu works provided a congenial background to the evolution of vernaculars journals in Telugu. A bilingual journal in Tamil and Telugu was contemplated in 1832 and Rev. J.Long mentioned that the first newspaper in Telugu and Tamil was published in 1833 at Madras.⁷⁴ However, details about this journal are not available. Around the same time Fort St.George Gazette was published in 1832 from the Madras government press.⁷⁵ This Gazette used to insert notices in regional languages from 1834 and since 1835 Telugu and Tamil items became a regular feature in the Gazette.⁷⁶ But most of the insertions in regional languages related to various Acts, tender notices and translations of other important official items.

There is no unanimity about the next journal in Telugu. It was a journal by name Satvadoota and believed to have been

regarding the propeitor, address and publications from different presses are given. For more details on the working of various presses located at district towns see Manual For District Presses in the Madras Presidency. Madras, 1901. This provides us details regarding the working, work force and matters related to printing at the district press establishments in the Presidency.

73 J.Mangamma, Book Printing. Op. Cit., pp.115-16.

74 It was known as Madras Chronicle. For details see Ibid., pp.278-79.

75 Ibid. By 1856-57 District Gazettes also were printed and local languages were used in them depending on the district from where they were issued.

76 Ibid.

published by the Bellary missionaries.⁷⁷ But there has been no specific evidence to ascertain the fact about the existence of the journal. The next journal in Telugu was published in 1838 from Madras and it was called Vrittantini.⁷⁸ The journal was edited by Mandigala Venkataraya Sastry and in the present case also copies of it are not available.⁷⁹ From other sources it is known that it published letters which were highly critical of social evils like nautch programmes.⁸⁰ Though the journal was published for only three or four years it was popular during the time of its publication and the Madras Government asked its translator in Telugu wing to prepare and send reports on the journal.⁸¹ The journal came to an end by 1841.

The next well known journal in Telugu, Vartamanatarangini was published in 1842 from Madras.⁸² It was a weekly in the early days of existence and printed by K.Sitayya Naidu at Vartamanatarangini Press.⁸³ It was published after some time by Syed Rahmatullah of Madras.⁸⁴ The journal was edited by Puvvada Venkata Rao and used to contain articles by contemporary Telugu Pandits like Ravipati Gurumurthy and Chinnaya Suri.⁸⁵ This

77 Ibid.

78 K.R.Seshagiri Rao (ed.)/ Op. Cit., pp.10-11.

79 Ibid.

80 For a detailed account on this see Bangorey, Op. Cit., pp.22-27.

81 Ibid.

82 Ibid., pp.12-14.

83 J.Mangamma, Book Printing, Op.Cit., p.180. It was later published thrice in a month.

84 Ibid.

85 V.Lakshmana Reddy, Op. Cit., pp.62-67.

journal was a land mark in the history of vernacular journalism. A few extracts were collected and preserved by C.P.Brown.⁸⁶ They throw light on the nature and critical tone of the articles, letters and other correspondence published in the columns of the journal. It was circulated in various parts of the Madras presidency inhabited by Telugu-speaking people. Circulation figures of this journal are available in the despatches of the Madras General Post-Office. The Government of India asked the Post-master General at Madras to send reports on the copies of various journals received and despatched through the general post-office.⁸⁷ Pursuant to the Government Order in 1843 the Post-master General used to send the total number of copies for various journals received and despatched at his office on monthly basis. This was followed for two years during 1843 and 1844.⁸⁸

86 C.P.Brown was the Post-master General at Madras General Post-Office between 1848 and 1853. In this capacity he had access to various journals despatched through the Post-Office. Being a Telugu scholar himself he could collect and preserve a few extracts from this journal. His health broke down in 1853 and hence he was replaced in the post by R.H.Williamson. See Pub. Dept., No.11, dt.15.2.1853 and No.43, dt.14.3.1854, TNA.

87 Sending the report on the circulation figures of various journals to the Chief Secretary to Madras Government the then Post-master General, A.J.bruce mentioned that following the "directions contained in a letter (30th September 1843) from the officiating secretary to the Government of India, to your address, I have the honour to transmit, herewith, for submission to the Government of India, a statement exhibiting the number of Newspapers, of all descriptions, which were, daily despatched from this office, distinguishing the Native from the English language, and to observe that pamphlets and periodicals, though forwarded at the Newspaper rate of postage, are not included in the statement". See Pub. Dept., No.33, dt.23.1.1844, TNA.

88 Ibid. Also see Pub. Dept., No.19, dt.21.1.1844, TNA. During 1843 the total number of English papers received and despatched was 1,88,372 and for vernacular papers it was 9,453 the grand total of which was 1,97,825. For 1844 the

From 1845 onwards these figures are available for each and every journal. The following table shows the figures for vartamanatarangini for eight years with a gap in between.⁸⁹

YEAR	No. of Copies Despatched Through the Madras General Post-office
1845	1,279
1846	1,331
1847	1,554
1848	1,563
1849	1,197
1850	1,007
1852	1,026
1853	1,661

Vartamanatarangini touched upon a number of aspects of the society, customs, traditions and political affairs of the country. It used to publish letters from readers and one such a letter in February 1841 critically viewed the unnecessary and

numbers were 1,95,590, 8,377 and 2,03,967 respectively. But this method was objected to by the Government as there was no scope to assess journals and hence circulation figures for each individual journal began to be reported by the Post-master General from 1845 onwards.

89

The table is based on the sources mentioned in f.n.30 of the present chapter. During this period one Persian journal (Auckbar) and three Tamil journals (Desabhimani, Rajathany and Dravida Deepika) were in circulation. while Auckbar continued till 1853, the Tamil journals ceased their publication at different periods of time. Desabhimani did so in 1850, Raiathany in 1848 and Dravida Deepika in 1852 respectively. However, Desabhimani was highly popular during its early years of existence as shown by its circulation figures. They numbered at 3027, 2407 and 2280 for the years 1845, 1846 and 1847 respectively. But, the number declined to 756 by 1849 and the publication ceased in 1850. Dravida Deepika showed a uniform circulation figures till it disappeared in 1852. Auckbar was very popular and its circulation figures exceeded all other vernacular journals. Never during this period its circulation figure was less than 1734, the number for the year 1850. Above all, it is to be noted that all these circulation figures excluded the number of copies distributed in Madras town.

extravagant expenditure during the time of Hindu marriages.⁹⁰ The journal in course of time published highly critical articles about the role of the British in India. It protested against the missionary activities. One of the issues stated that the missionaries were trying to subvert Hindu religion in an unscrupulous manner.⁹¹ It felt that it was the duty of the journalists to express their views in a frank and candid manner and make people conscious of these attitudes of the Britishers.⁹² Another issue during 1851 took strong objection to the attempts by colonial authorities to Christianise the country and asked the people to abstain themselves from the missionary activities and their institutions.⁹³

It is interesting to note that during the same period the Madras Native Association launched a struggle against the activities of Christian missionary societies in the Presidency and attacked the Madras Government for its support to their proselytising activities.⁹⁴ Moreover, the Association was endeavouring to organise public agitation. All these activities and the consequent public awareness were reflected in the columns of Vartamanatarangini.

For the first time, in the history of Telugu journalism,

90 The letter is cited in Bangorey, Op. Cit., pp.22-27.

91 Ibid.

92 Ibid.

93 Ibid., pp.91-93. These are discussed in the issue dated 11.7.1851.

94 There is a detailed account of these activities in Chapter IV.

Vartamanatarangini initiated a discussion on social evils, social reform and political affairs. The Madras Government became cautious of these tendencies and used to obtain information about the journal.⁹⁵ Another significant aspect is that the circulation figures of the journal exceeded even those Telugu journals brought out between 1860 and 1885 published from various parts of Andhra. Not even a single Telugu journal except Messenger of Truth equalled its circulation figures.⁹⁶

Vartamanatarangini introduced spoken dialect in its columns. It was first issued as a weekly and later on three issues were released in a month. By 1858, its circulation slightly declined and only six hundred copies were issued.⁹⁷ However, the existing evidence shows that the journal was still active by 1879 and had a long lease of life for more than three decades.⁹⁸

Before 1860 two more journals came into being viz., Hitavadi (1848) and Dinavartamani (Bilingual in Tamil and Telugu with a separate edition of Telugu started in 1856).⁹⁹ Hitavadi was edited by Edmund Sharkey and propagated Christian faith.¹⁰⁰ It was

95 Bangorey, Op. Cit., pp.9-14.

96 A comparison between the circulation figures makes this clear. For example see NNPR. 1874-1885, TNA.

97 V.Lakshmana Reddy, Op. Cit., pp.68-7 2.

98 See Asylum Press Almanac and Compendium of Intelligence For 1879. Vol.11, No.lxx, p.459, TNA. For a brief period after 1879 the journal ceased its publication in 1882 and was revived again in 1887. See NNPR, 1882 and 1887, TNA. However, some scholars suggested that the journal became defunct by 1858 and ceased its publication. See J.Mangamma, Book Printing, Op. Cit., p.280.

99 V.Lakshmana Reddy. Op. Cit., pp.72-82.

100 Ibid.

issued every month from the American Press at Madras, Dinavartamani was a weekly edited by Peter Percival and issued from Madras.¹⁰¹ Its Telugu edition was issued in 1856 and it had a circulation of 700 copies.¹⁰² The journal covered routine news, science, tales and a few essays on topics of general interest.¹⁰³

In the post 1860 period the number of Telugu journals grew in number and they were increasingly published from mofussil areas of the Presidency. It testifies and strengthens our assumption further that the spread of enlightenment in the society by educated middle classes gained a satisfactory momentum after the mid 19th century. The rapidly spreading enlightenment joined the main national stream by 1885. The establishment of the first political journal in Telugu, Andhra Prakasika in 1885 symbolises this. Another journal, Hindujanasamskarini that came into being in the same year also voiced its protest against colonial policies in clear political terms. Incidentally they coincide with the establishment of Indian National Congress in 1885 and, moreover, these two journals were most popular which had the highest circulation figures when compared to other Telugu journals except Vivekavardhani of Veeresalingam.¹⁰⁴ On the other hand Vivekavardhani, a premier social reform journal, established by Veeresalingam was still very active and carried on its programme of social reform effectively through its columns. This journal also was equally popular along with the two others

101 Ibid.

102 Ibid.

103 Ibid.

104 This is revealed by NNPR, 1874-1890.

mentioned above.¹⁰⁵ Viewed from this angle it is desirable that our discussion of the contribution of Telugu journalism to 19th century society is confined to the aforesaid period.

The following table gives us various details pertaining to Telugu journals published in the Madras Presidency between 1860 and 1885.¹⁰⁶

Name of the Journal	Place of Publication	Year of publication	Average Circulation	Remarks
1. Sri Yakshini	Bellary	1863	N.A.	Fortnightly
2. Sujanaranjani	Madras	1864	N.A.	
3. Tatwa Bodhini	Madras	1864	N.A.	Influenced Veeresalingam
4. Godavari Vidya Prabodhini	Rajahmundry	1870	N.A.	Veeresalingam wrote articles
5. Andhrabhasha Sanjivani	Madras	1871	150	Organ of Orthodox people
6. Purushartha-pradayini	Machilipatnam	1872	500	Monthly
7. Vyavahara Tarangini	Madras	1872	N.A.	
8. Swadharma Prakasini	Machilipatnam.	1872	300	Monthly
9. Lokaranjani	Madras	1874	N.A.	Bi-monthly
10. Brahmanda Ranjani	Madras	1874	N.A.	

105 Ibid.

106 This table is based on Lakshmana Reddy, Op. Cit.; Reports on the Administration of Madras Presidency between 1870 and 1885; N.S.Krishnamurthy, Vyasarachanala Suchi : 1875 - 1972 (Telugu Patrikala Nundi). Hyderabad, 1977; Ongolu Venkatarangaiah, Op. Cit.; Bharati (Telugu), January 1930; Grandhalaya Sarvaswamu (Telugu), July - September 1916; K.R.Seshagiri Rao (ed.), Op. Cit.; Edhardhavadi (Telugu), 1874 and the Native Newspaper Reports between 1874-1890, TNA. The table excludes the English journals published by Telugu people before 1885. For example the collectorate servant at Nellore, Dampuru Narasaiah, published three journals in English viz., Native Advocate (Madras), Nellore Pioneer (Nellore, 1869) and Peoples' Friend (Madras, 1881). Of these three the last one lived for 17 years and it was unhesitating in its criticism of colonial policies. After Crescent this can be said to be a political journal in English published by Telugu people. For details see Ongolu Venkatarangaiah, Op. Cit., pp.138-39. So also mention may be made to the publication of another English journal, The Observer around 1883. See NNPR, 1883, TNA.

Name of the Journal	Place of Publication	Year of publication	Average Circulation	Remarks
11. Vivekavardhani	Rajahmundry	1874	500	Weekly - Fortnightly
12. Sudheeranjani	Kakinada	1874	N.A.	Monthly
13. Vidwanmanoharini	Narasapuram	1874	N.A.	
14. Bharati	Bellary	1874	N.A.	
15. Janavinodini	Madras	1875	N.A.	Monthly
16. Budhipradayini	Gudiwada	1875	N.A.	
17. Sakalavidyabhi- vardhani	Visakhapat- nam	1875	120	Monthly
18. Swadesi	Berhampore	1875	N.A.	
19. Hasyavardhani	Madras	1875	N.A.	
20. Jnanavinodini	Madras	1875	N.A.	Monthly
21. Telugu Baptist	Bezawada	1875	N.A.	Monthly
22. Hasyasanjivani	Rajahmundry	1876	N.A.	
23. Jnanabhanu	Madras	1876	100	Weekly
24. Viswakarma Kula Sampradaya Prabodhini	Visakhapatnam	1876	40	Monthly
25. Rayabari	Butlavagallu	1877	N.A.	
26. Janmabhumi	N.A.	1878	N.A.	
27. Vartalahari	Berhampore	1878	175.	Bi-monthly
28. Mandara Manjari	Kakinada	1879	N.A.	Bi-monthly
29. Phoenix Srimut Amrutavalli	Visakhapatnam	1879	N.A.	Bi-monthly
30. Vartamanaratna- karamu	Madras	1878	206.	Weekly
31. Analpajalpita Kalpavalli	Machilipatnam	1880	N.A.	Monthly
32. Janavinodini	Madras	1880	200.	Monthly
33. Prabandha Kalpavalli	Peddapuram	1880	170	Monthly
34. Sri Sujana Pramodini	Merangi	1881	180	Monthly
35. Chintamani	Rajahmundry	1881	400-500	Monthly
36. Nyayadarsini	Visakhapatnam	1882	125	Bi-monthly
37. Kalanidhi	Kakinada	1882	N.A.	
38. Vidyarthi Kalpabhujamu	Nellore	1882	N.A.	
39. Hindudesabhimani	Machilipatnam	1882	400-700	Weekly
40. Edhardhavadi	Visakhapatnam	1883	200	Monthly
41. Satihita Bodhini	Rajahmundry	1883	250	Monthly
42. Srimanmanoranjani	Tuni	1883	200	Irregular
43. Sri Gayatri	Chicacole	1883	100	
44. Sri Sanmargadarsini	Pithapuram	1883	200	Monthly
45. Sujanamanoranjani	Jaggayyapeta	1884	N.A.	Fortnightly
46. Vrittantini	Madras	1884	N.A.	
47. Sri Prakasika	Vizianagaram	1884	400	
48. Vinoda Chandrika	Visakhapatnam	1884	N.A.	Fortnightly
49. Amudrita Grandha Chintamani	Nellore	1885	N.A.	Monthly

Name of the Journal	Place of Publication	Year of publication	Average Circulation	Remarks
50. Neeti Darpanamu	Julumuru	1885	N.A.	Monthly
51. Sujana Manollasini	Madras	1885	Around 70	weekly
52. Neeli Prakasika	Madras	1885	N.A.	Monthly
53. Hindujana Samskarini	Madras	1885	500-600	Monthly
54. Andhra Prakasika	Madras	1885	500	Weekly

As the table indicates there was a wide publication of Telugu journals during this period. It is observed that out of a total of fifty four journals seventeen were published from Madras and the rest from mofussil towns of Andhra including some small places like Chicacole, Tuni, Pithapuram, Peddapuram, Jaggayyapeta and Merangi. It is also observed that twelve journals out of thirty seven published from mofussil places were from Godavari region. The intense social reform campaign of Veeresalingam was a major contributory factor for this. Godavari region was followed by Visakhapatnam and Krishna district areas with eight journals each. Twenty journals were published from Godavari and Krishna regions alone which fact suggests that the rapid development of these two areas in the post Godavari and Krishna anicut period, resulted in the speedy progress of enlightenment and the consequent growth of Telugu journals. The rest of the Telugu journals were scattered throughout the state.

Majority of the journals published during this period didnot live long. Though the rapid proliferation of these journals symbolise the bubbling enthusiasm of the educated middle classes, they suffered from the lack of patronage. Most of them didnot go

beyond the reaches of educated sections.¹⁰⁷ Apart from the educated people, a few enlightened Zamindars extended their patronage to these journals.¹⁰⁸ However, this patronage, limited to a few sections, was not adequate to run the journals for a long time. Moreover, some of the journals regretted that Vaisyas, the rich trading community in the society, didnot patronise them despite the fact that they could afford to do so. Sri Sakala Vidyabhivardhani was unsparing in its criticism of Vaisyas and said that business was their sole concern and they did not bother about any other social concern.¹⁰⁹ It further stated that even the educated people among Vaisyas were indifferent toward journals.¹¹⁰ While the English merchants were displaying keen interest in getting more commercial news through journals, the Indian commercial class didnot realise this and they were behaving in an ignorant manner.¹¹¹ This argument was most logically explained by Purusharthpradavini. It declared that the foreign merchants equipped themselves with all aspects of other countries before they embarked upon an ambitious promotion of their commercial interests.¹¹² Analysing this complimentary and productive relationship between acquisition of knowledge and commercial prosperity, the journal advised the

L07 For example see the subscribers' lists published in the journals during this period. Prabhandha Kalpavalli. September - November, 1881, Edhardhavadi, November, 1884 and Hinduianasamskarini, March, 1887.

108 Ibid. Most of these lists show that educated Brahmins, local Zamindars and a few others from other castes were contributing to these journals.

109 Sakalavidyabhivardhani. January 1876, pp.1-4.

110 Ibid.

111 Ibid.

112 Purusharthpradayini, March 1872, pp.5-9.

Vaisyas to come forward and patronise vernacular periodicals.¹¹³

It lamented that, though the journal was established with public welfare as its aim, people were evincing only lukewarm interest. Being irritated over such an attitude, it informed the people that "if you cannot help at all to send us aid either from your pen or purse, we have no reason to remain your persuaders or petitioners any longer".¹¹⁴ However, such a cry didnot yield much needed help from the people and this is proved by the fact that these appeals for subscription were echoed even by late 19th century.¹¹⁵ It was paradoxical that the immense enthusiasm in establishing a number of Telugu journals was mismatched by discouraging social response. It was but natural that the sphere of influence of educated middle classes was limited in scope and hence their specific concerns didnot immediately draw the required response from the entire society. As a result many of the journals were compelled to close down within a short span of time.¹¹⁶ Only a few journals with a broad canvas of social and

113 Ibid.

114 Ibid., p.9.

115 For details on this see Sri Sarada, May-June 1896, pp.59-60, Sarada (Godavari Journal of Education), April 1897, p.1 and Prabhavati. 18 June, 1897, pp.46-49. Despite the fact that some of the journals offered lowest possible subscription rates to different classes in society the response was not encouraging. For example Sri Sarada offered the following rates for different categories - For students, teachers, poor people and women Rs.1 p.a., for general subscribers Rs.2 p.a. and for patrons Rs.8 p.a.

116 For example Sri Yakshini. established in 1863 ceased its publication in 1868. Weekly Messenger from Visakhapatnam was published for only one month between August and September 1876 and Visvakarmakula Sampradava Prabodhini existed only for six months from July to September 1876. See for details on the last two journals Report on the Administration of Madras Presidency. 1876-77, Appendix, pp.ccxlviii - ccxlix.

popular concerns had a long lease of life.¹¹⁷ Before the discussion is closed it may be mentioned that the problem of subscribers was acutely faced by those journals published from mofussil areas of the Presidency. Apart from the limited number of educated middle classes, the geographical location of these Telugu journals hindered a healthy growth of the same. Our estimate of these journals, hence, should take this factor into consideration. Whereas journals like Hindujanamasmarini and Andhra Prakasika published from Madras didnot face such a problem as is revealed by the figures of their circulation noted earlier. The metropolitan - mofussil divide was one of the major factors behind the running and the life span of the journals. The only mofussil journal that could withstand the problem of subscriptions is Purusharthapradayini and it almost equalled the metropolitan Telugu journals in circulation figures.

Though the subscription phobia could act as a check on the life of many of the Telugu journals, it did not come in the way of propagation of their views during the period of their existence. These numerous periodicals concentrated on various issues affecting social life. Only a few journals had specific and exclusive aims and objectives like Andhrabhasha Sanijivani.¹¹⁸

117 See NNPR. 1874-1885. Purusharthapradayini (despite its initial problems with subscribers), Vivekavardhani, Hindujanamasmarini and Andhra Prakasika were a few journals that belong to this category.

118 For example the Andhrabhasha Sanjivani, published from Madras and edited by Kokkonda Venkataratnam Pantulu, remained very orthodox in nature. His argument in favour of Sanskrit education may be cited to support the statement. People like Vedam Venkataraya Sastri, a well known Telugu pandit supported the orthodox tendencies. A few other 19th century intellectuals from Andhra were favourably inclined

The fight against the missionary activities and their educational programmes were carried forward without a break from the past.¹¹⁹ At the same time the orthodox tendencies in the contemporary Hindu society also came under attack. It was criticised that in India "Custom has superseded nature and reason. When nature tells to eat punctually, it (custom) advises some fasts on certain days——-. We must abandon such pernicious customs and begin reformation at once by educating females first ——-. Instead of inventing a new Religion, let us revise and reform our existing Vedantic religion".¹²⁰ It was further said that "the bonds of custom still tie down many——-. Some of our brethren are sleeping with closed doors. Let the brightness of the dawn reach them".¹²¹ Apart from condemning the blind beliefs and customs all such fundamentalist activities were criticised. Taking objection to Hindu Tract Society and its publications, one of the journals advised the Hindus that they should shed narrow Hindu attitude and try to initiate the process of internal reform of their society.¹²²

towards this. For example C.Karaeswara Dikshitulu of Machilipatnam even met the Prince of Wales during his visit to Madras and requested him to suggest to British Parliament and the Queen to take "legal measures to suppress the prevailing atheistic lore and to give an impetus to the cultivation of Sanscrit literature——-". For more details see Purusharthapradayini, May 1876. p.79. So also Amudritra Grandha Chintamani, published from Nellore was exclusively devoted to classical literature.

119 This aspect has been discussed in detail in both the preceeding as well as succeeding chapters.

120 Purusharthapradayini, May 1872, pp.11-12.

121 Ibid., April 1872, p.8.

122 Hinduianasamskarini, May 1888, p.242.

The condemnation of blind beliefs and age old customs was followed by a cordial support by various journals to the issues of reform. It is to be remembered that the later part of 19th century was characterised by an intense social reform campaign by Veeresalingam. He even published a journal, Vivekavardhani in 1874 to propagate his views in the society. Such a vigorous campaign received immediate support from other journals. Along with Vivekavardhani, they too were campaigning for reform issues. The central concerns of this reform programme were widow marriage and women's education. Articles and ideas forcibly arguing in favour of these two issues were fairly propagated through the columns of the vernacular press.¹²³ It may not be an exaggeration to note that almost all journals barring a few supported the social reform campaign.

The widow marriage campaign became one of the prime concerns of Vivekavardhani. Right from the inception of the journal it published views which strongly supported the cause of women.¹²⁴ These views were supported by some of the contemporary journals including a few orthodox ones.¹²⁵ Apart from fighting for the cause of women these journals tried to offer a few solutions to

123 For example see Edhardhavadi. January 1884, pp.7-8.

124 Vivekavardhani, February 1878, pp.27-32.

125 For example see Andhrabhasha Sanijivani, September 1883 in NNPR. TNA. Adducing the reason for child marriages to acute poverty, it was said that the Hindu traditional sections were selling their daughters in a shameful and immoral manner which was leading to the growth of both child and infant widowhood. See Hindujanasamskarini, September 1887, p.30; May 1888, p.239 and Sri Sarada, May-June 1896, pp.49-53.

the problems faced by women in society.¹²⁶ Some of them even requested the government to interfere in the problems of women and grapple with the evils like widow and child marriages by legislation.¹²⁷ The fight for the cause of women culminated in the establishment of women's journals in Andhra. The lead was taken by Veeresalingam and he published the first women's journal in Andhra in 1883, Satihitabodhini.¹²⁸ This was followed by the publication of a few other women journals during late 19th century and early 20th century.¹²⁹ The unique contribution of these journals lies in the fact that they took reform ideas to women and were responsible for the spread of enlightenment among them.

126 In case of Widow marriage problem Vivekavardhani offered two solutions. First, limiting a time after which married men shouldnot appear for entrance examination of Madras University and disallowing scholarships to married students. Secondly, preferring unmarried candidates for public employment. It pleaded with the government to give effect to these two measures. Vivekavardhani, November 1884, NNPR, TNA. Some journals suggested that choice should be given to the girls of specific age in selecting their husbands. Budhavidheyi April 1888, NNPR, TNA. A few others opined that education would solve all the problems for women and suggested that girl children also should be initiated into the process of education at young age along with boys. See Vivekavardhani, May 1883, NNPR, TNA and Upadhyavopavogini. February 1893, pp.65-67.

127 Sanmargadarsini, January 1885, NNPR, TNA. Some journals made passionate appeals through their columns to strengthen the hands of Veeresalingam and contribute generously towards the widow marriages being organised by him. Hindujanasamskarini, January 1889, p.72 and March 1889, p.95.

128 See for details Vivekavardhani. January 1883, NNPR, TNA.

129 Some of these journals are Telugu zenana (1893), Hindusundari (1902), Savitri (1904), Vivekavati (1908), Stree Dharroa (1917) and Soundarya Valli (1917). For more details see V.Ramakrishna, "Women's Journals in Andhra during the late 19th Century : A Study of the Reflection of Reform issues" in the PIHC. Goa, 1987, pp.524-31. Also see D.Padmavati, Op. Cit.

It is interesting to note that when a vigorous campaign for social reform and a rigorous attack on social evils were being carried out in a meticulous manner the evil of dowry was rising its head slowly. Though the problem didnot pose any serious threat during this time, but the first dowry death was reported around 1865 from Nellore district of Andhra.¹³⁰ It was not noticed by any journal of the period as there were no local journals in the district during this time. But the incident of dowry death was lately protested by the local people and it was brought to the notice of the Madras Government through an anonymous petition which sought stringent action against the culprits.¹³¹ This indicates two important aspects. First, it reveals that the growth of modern education, though slow, was beginning to throw another social problem.¹³² Secondly, the protest by the local people would indirectly indicate the future course of social action programme against this evil.

¹³⁰ See Petition Register, 1874, TNA, No.2090, dt. 22.7.1874. Since this incident escaped the searching eye of contemporary journals the whole petition is given (verbatim) in the Appendix at the end of the thesis.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² A few contemporary vernacular writings reveal that the dowry was gradually becoming a serious problem for middle class people. It is reasoned out that the new employment opportunities created by the English education displaced many people from traditional occupations. When the educated people could secure a job with a fixed amount of salary they began to feel that they were relatively safe in the discouraging economic conditions under the colonial rule. Precisely these people began to demand dowry at the time of marriage and this problem was acute in case of Brahmins among whom there were more educated and employed people. For details see Sripada Subrahmanya Sastry, Op. Cit., Vol.1, pp.37-41.

Apart from social issues the Telugu journals concentrated on matters of public importance. The mismanagement of administration at local levels,¹³³ the taxation policy of the colonial government and the consequent drain of wealth from the country,¹³⁴ the partial pronouncements of the government on the Unconvenanted Civil Service¹³⁵ and the repressive policies of the colonial authorities towards vernacular press¹³⁶ came under severe

133 For example see Purusharthpradayini. January 1872, p.15, February 1872, P-25, April 1872, pp.4-5 and Dinavartamani, July 1874, Swadesi. May 1876, Vivekavardhani. January 1878, September 1883 and, Andhraprakasika, July 1885 in NNPR.

134 Of all the taxes salt tax was seen as highly repressive by the journals. See Andhraprakasika. July 1886, NNPR, TNA. The land tax on ryots also attracted the attention of the journals. See Lokaranjani, May-June 1875, NNPR. TNA. The immoral Abkari Policy was protested tooth and nail by the press. See Andhraprakasika, December 1885, NNPR, TNA. The journals took a strong objection to the resultant drain of wealth from the repressive taxation system. It was estimated by one of the Telugu journals that the amount of annual drain to England around 1881 was Rs.20 crore rupees per annum. See Vivekavardhani, January 1881, NNPR, TNA.

As early as 1874 local people began protesting against the recruitment policy of the government. In an anonymous petition addressed to the Governor of Madras in that year it was complained that the Government of India cheated the candidates for civil service and other examinations. See Pet. Reg., No.2111, dt.20.7.1874, TNA. For a comment and criticism on this see Vivekavardhani, February 1878, p.23 and Purusharthpradayini, March 1876, pp.1-2. When the age question in civil service examination became highly controversial the press voiced its protest against the unmending attitude of the government. One of the journals stated, "it was ruled in 1854 that natives may be admitted to the civil service examination, the age being limited to 22. In 1866 the age was reduced to 21, and to 19 in 1876. It was evidently not the intention of the authorities to admit natives, like europeans, to high offices, and the age was in consequence restricted to 19. It seems that the admission of natives to the civil service examination was only intended as a 'nominal measure'". See Sri Prakasika, April 1884 in NNPR, TNA.

The attitude of the government towards vernacular press became a topic of discussion even before the 1878 Act. The press regulations of the 1878 Vernacular Press Act were strongly objected and the same tone was to continue later.

attack in the columns of the journals. These issues suggest the fact that the vernacular press too was, in course of time, taking active part in discussions on public affairs and the issues affecting common people. Our assumption is further strengthened by the fact that the vernacular press also joined the national stream as revealed by the repeated appeals made to the people asking them to support Indian National Congress.¹³⁷ Such appeals were made right from the inception of this national body. Furthermore, the immediate support extended to the issue of Local Self-Government scheme of Ripon is a conclusive proof that the Telugu journals were beginning to take more interest in issues affecting public life.¹³⁸

One of the singular contributions of Telugu journals was a growing realisation of the importance of vernacular languages. Such a realisation was preceded by an acute criticism of some of the misleading and sensually provocative Sanskrit texts. It was criticised that under the influence of these texts, erotic themes were adopted into literary genres of Telugu.¹³⁹ Hence, a few

For example see Sakalavidyabhivardhani, January 1876, pp.4-6.

137 For details on this aspect see Hindujanamasmarini. March 1887, p.183, April 1887, p.236, April 1888, p.232 and March 1889, p.93. The other journal of the period, Andhraprakasika went a step ahead in demanding the introduction of panchayat system to assure democracy at grass-root level. See the issue dated 5.10.1889 in NNPR. TNA. Support to Indian National Congress was gradually growing over a period of time. Within a decade of its establishment appeals in support of the organisation were repeatedly made in the columns of vernacular press. For example see Raiavogi. 20.8.1884; Vartadarsani, 15.9.1884 and Gnanodayamu, 15.9.1884 in NNPR. TNA.

138 This aspect is discussed in detail in Chapters V and VI.

139 Vivekavardhani. February 1878, pp.24-25.

contemporary Telugu journals advocated the need for original books in Telugu.¹⁴⁰

Another aspect of the demand for publishing works in Telugu is that spoken dialect (Vyavaharika) should be encouraged in the place of traditional style (Grandhika).¹⁴¹ Furthermore, the journals favoured translations from other language works into simple Telugu. It was argued that the transmission of knowledge of science and society through translations would sufficiently strengthen the awareness of Indian people.¹⁴² An appeal was made to rich people in society to come forward, encourage translations and print the same in Telugu which would immensely benefit the new learners.¹⁴³ The second aspect of the demand for translations

140 Hindujanasamskarini. September 1887, pp.32-33.

141 Ibid., November 1887, p.89.

142 Isolated demands for printing books in vernaculars can be dated back to still earlier period. One such demand asked the Madras Government to print Almanacs in vernacular languages. The request to bring out Almanacs in regional languages of the Madras Presidency is significant because they are a compendium of knowledge on all affairs of society. For details see Pet. Reg., Vol.20, NO.90, TNA. This demand received further support by 1850. The newly educated youth persistently demanded that diffusion of knowledge of science from the West should be conducted "through unlimited number of translations" into vernaculars. See The Fifth Annual Report_____Madras University. Op. Cit., p.43.

143 Hindujanasamskarini. November 1887, p.90. It may be noted that from mid 19th century onwards there were published a number of translations into Telugu. Vedam Venkataraya Sastri, Op. Cit., Introduction p.1. The efforts of Veeresalingam and Lingam Lakshmajji Pantulu are noteworthy in this respect. Veeresalingam, for the first time began translating Rigveda into Telugu. His work was given much publicity in the contemporary journals. See Hindujanasamskarini. August 1887, p.20. Translation of Vedas into Telugu was never attempted before for the fear of backlashes from orthodox sections. Moreover, Veeresalingam's initiative could be seen as a counter effort to nullify the impact of Atmuri Lakshminarasimham who was

is more significant and helps us in the assessment of contemporary Telugu Press. It was argued that the translation of books from Indian languages into English provided ample scope for the Britishers to understand the religion and society in India. With this knowledge they easily identified some of the shortcomings in Indian society. Taking advantage of this "they were successful in proselytising large sections of Indian society and consequently instituting their (political) power."¹⁴⁴ The press asked the people to be conscious of this and find remedies to counteract the influence of the British rule.¹⁴⁵ It may be averred that the contemporary Telugu press could successfully probe into some of the intricate and difficult aspects of the colonial rule as shown in the foregoing analysis. Aspects such as this played a contributory role in the rapid spread of

then rigorously campaigning for an access to Vedas to all sections in the society. Another intellectual in Andhra during the same period, Lingam Lakshmajji Pantulu published a book entitled A Dissertation On the Method of Rightly Using Reason and Investigating Truth in Sciences. This work in English was a direct adaptation of Decarte's method. See Selections From the Records of the Government of India. Home Department : Report on Publications Issued and Registered in the Several Provinces of British India during the year 1892. Calcutta, 1893, p.7. This work was intended to serve as a practical guide to young Hindus in their dealings of every day life. Lakshmajji Pantulu was well known in contemporary society and his public activities were spread over three coastal towns viz., Machilipatnam, Visakhapatnam and Vizianagaram. His increasing popularity sent caution signals to the government and consequently he was implicated in a fabricated forgery case in Machilipatnam which was severely protested by the press as a 'public calamity'. See Purusharthapradayini. June 1878, NNPR. TNA. In spite of appeals from the people the government did not concede their request and Lakshmajji Pantulu was imprisoned for a period of nine years. For more details on his activities see A.V. Dattatreya Sarma, Op. Cit., pp.65-67 and S.V.Joga Rao (ed.), Op.Cit., pp.225-26.

144 Sri Prabandha Kalpavalli, September - November, 1881, n.p.

145 Ibid.

enlightenment in the 19th century society.

The foregoing account suggests that the press served as an effective instrument of public opinion. The English Press as represented by Crescent was highly vocal in generating political awareness among the people. The activities of the journal make it clear that it heralded, for the first time, an era of investigative journalism in the Madras Presidency. This is an important contribution to the development of the South Indian Press. The vernacular press in Telugu was reflecting middle class concerns in the initial stages. Nevertheless, it did not remain so throughout the 19th century. While in the initial stages, spread of general enlightenment was its major concern, it increasingly concentrated on issues of public importance by late 19th century. The realisation among the vernacular press that there was an intimate and inextricable relation between the acquisition of knowledge and the retention of political power is the unique contribution of Telugu press. Added to this the repeated calls and appeals of the press to the people in invoking their support to National Congress reveals the growing nationalist consciousness among the Telugu journals. All these strands of isolated evidences help us assume that the role of press and the contribution of Andhra intellectuals, drawn from middle classes, in the field of journalism are highly contributory to the spread of political awareness among the people.