

**T H E S I S**

**on**

**“The history and growth  
of the South African Press  
from the time of the arrival of the first Press  
until the present day;  
a survey of the Bantu Press,  
of legislation affecting the Press,  
of the relationship between the Press  
and certain institutions  
and a prophecy  
as to the probable lines  
of development in the future.”**

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II.

C O N T E N T S.

CHAPTER I

- I. THE HISTORY AND GROWTH OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRESS.
- II. THE BANTU PRESS IN SOUTH AFRICA.
- III. LEGISLATION AFFECTING THE PRESS.
- IV. THE PRESS AND THE PULPIT.
- V THE PRESS AND POLITICS.
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- VII. THE PRESS AND THE POLICE.
- VIII CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE PRESS TOWARDS PUBLIC WELFARE.
- IX LAPSES FROM GRACE.
- X A GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE.

III.

"Here shall the Press the People's Right maintain.

Unaw'd by influence and unbrib'd by gain.

Here patriot truth her glorious precepts draw,

Pledged to Religion, Liberty, and Law."

Motto of the "Salem Register".

IV.

"So here's to the gallant reporters,  
Those boys with the pencil and pads;  
Those calm, imerturbable, cool, undisturbable,  
Nervy, inquisitive lads.  
Each time that we pick up a paper  
Their marvelous deeds we should bless;  
Those bold, reprehensible, brave, indispensable,  
Sensible lads of the press".

Anonymous.

## PREFACE

The Press is an organic body. Like the State, it is composed of many parts, and like the Government of the State, it is much maligned and, occasionally, faintly praised. It is almost universal in its ramifications, and wherever a small body possessing a certain degree of civilisation has sprung into being with the object of establishing permanent residence, efforts have been made to establish some sort of news service. The lines along which this news service has developed, the origin from which it has sprung, and the relations which certain of the resultant organisations bear towards the community as a whole, will be examined in the following pages, due regard being given to the Nantu Press of South Africa.

It is not uncommon nowadays to hear references to the "Yellow Press", or the "Gutter Press", and it will form part of the object of this work to see in how far these uncomplimentary adjectives are justified. No attempt will be made to defend the Press, or to attack it, but an impartial and dispassionate examination will be attempted, and, after a number of instances have been quoted of "lapses from grace", an attempt will be made to visualise the newspapers of the future, and to prophesy the nature of future developments in the newspaper world, having regard to the incursions of wireless, the improved means of communications, and the vast improvements in technique which have come about during the last few decades.

Speculation will be hazarded in regard to the development of the Press in the International sphere where, from the very nature of things, it has been slowest to develop. The need for an International Press

is not questioned by political writers of the day, and it is felt that, just as the daily papers within the State serve in some measure as a co-ordinating factor, so in the international world the Press would form a cementing force binding the nations of the world together, and fulfilling an important complementary role to the League of Nations which is still only half way up the steep hill to success.

The scrutiny to which the Press will be subjected in this thesis will not be based solely upon its position as it has been observed in this country alone. The South African Press is of too recent growth to be said to have reached maturity. It is now enjoying a vigorous youth, and additions in the form of new newspapers are still being made, as witness the advent of "Die Vaderland", the Afrikaans National Party organ, which superseded "Ons Vaderland" early in 1931, and "The Bantu World", the latest venture in Bantu journalism, which appeared for the first time in April, 1931. The field of research in this country, wide as it is, does not provide the sole basis of discussion, for, believing that "he little knows of England who only England knows", the writer has sought to make a comparison - to serve as a background - between the newspapers of this country and those overseas, especially in Great Britain. Except where otherwise specifically stated, however, the references to the Press in this work will mean the South African Press.

The vast interest taken by mankind in the Press since its inception is apparent from the large number of books, that have been published dealing with this subject from one aspect or another. There is apparently a big demand for informative literature dealing

with the Press, and it is right and proper that the newspaper reader should know and understand the circumstances under which a newspaper is produced each day, the difficulties which have had to be overcome, the conflicting interests which have had to be reconciled, the methods of news-gathering and display, in order that he may read his newspaper more intelligently. From the many publications above referred to, from newspaper files in this country and abroad, and from five years' personal experience in the office of the leading morning newspaper of the Transvaal, and a shorter period on an Afrikaans daily newspaper, the writer has drawn his material for the compilation of this work. Wherever possible, sources are acknowledged and full references are given, but where this has not been possible such information as the writer is able to give is appended.