

EARLY HISTORY AND GROWTH OF THE PRESS IN SOUTH AFRICA

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

The first printing Press arrived at Capetown in 1800.

It was not until more than a quarter of a century had elapsed, however, before the freedom of the Press in South Africa was obtained, as the crowning glory of a stern fight on the part of a handful of Press pioneers against the despotism of officialdom. The events which took place during the unsettled years of 1800-1828 constitute a romance in the history of South African journalism, a romance which was echoed in the Transvaal more than half a century later when the Press in that Northern Republic had frequently to seek the protection of the Courts of Law against the iron rule of President Kruger. These two periods-- 1800-1828 in the Cape and 1893-1898 in the Transvaal-- are epics in the history of South African journalism which stand out as landmarks deserving of greater recognition and attention than has so far been accorded them. Historians have, it is true, recorded the story of the struggle for the freedom of the Press in the Cape, but, as far as can be ascertained, the story of the fight for liberty in the Transvaal Republic has not yet been told. An endeavour will be made in the following pages to right that wrong.

I

Since four independent investigators have covered the field of the early history of the Press at the Cape, and since this has later<sup>2</sup> been amplified the writer has relied largely upon secondary sources

---

I  
L.J. Meurant, "Sixty Years Ago"; A.C.G. Lloyd, "Birth of Printing in South Africa"; Professor J. du Plessis, articles in the "Cape Times", May 9, 10, 11, and 13th, 1929, and Gustav Preller, "De Volkstem" October 1st, 1924.

2.  
"The Introduction of Printing into South Africa", by Douglas McMurtie, Director of Typography, Ludlow typograph Co., Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A. issued in brochure form.

sources for information in this regard. As far as the Transvaal is concerned, he has had to explore virgin fields and research in this connection has been among original documents, statutes and publications. The Press in the Orange Free State and Natal, less spectacular both in its origin and in its subsequent growth, has been the subject of further research, mostly among secondary sources, the fruits of which are included for the sake of completeness, while due attention has also been given to the country press, and to the weekly and monthly Press catering for sectional and specialised interests, and papers published outside the Union devoted to South African affairs. Owing to the magnitude of the task, however, the survey cannot claim to be exhaustive, but rather to reflect the nature and development of representative journals falling within the last mentioned categories. A complete list of newspapers, of whatever kind, in existence in South Africa, on September 1st, 1932, has been included as an appendix.

---

#### EARLY PRINTING IN SOUTH AFRICA

The arrival of the first printing Press in Capetown in 1800 was the outcome of prolonged representations made from the Cape to Holland under whose control the Cape then was. The Press was required for the use of the Colonial Government for the printing of Government notices, proclamations, and other State documents.

<sup>3</sup>McMurtie states that an appeal for this printing equipment had been refused by the authorities at Amsterdam in 1785, and another such request three years later proved equally futile. In 1793, however, the Council of Policy at the Cape decided to establish a printing plant and promised to Johan Christian Ritter the appointment of Superintendent. Before these plans could be put into effect, however, the Cape was surrendered to the English and Ritter's high hopes were dashed to the ground. The privilege of being the first man to do printing in South Africa was nevertheless not denied him.

Ritter had obtained a small press from some source and, opportunist that he was, memorialised Sir George Yonge, then Governor at the Cape, to the effect that he had practised "such trifles" as his small apparatus would allow.<sup>4</sup> By this time, however, Ritter was no longer alone in the printing field, for in 1795 H.H. Smith, a master printer,<sup>5</sup> emigrated to the Cape. These two, though rivals, realised that in unity lay strength and combined in their efforts to obtain appointment as Government Printers. Smith likewise memorialised the Governor stating that he had already received the greater part of his printing plant and that he was daily expecting the arrival of the remainder of his equipment. He proposed, in the event of his appointment, to confine himself to the printing of such papers as were required by the Departments of the Government, together with notices of sales, catalogues, and other mercantile matters. The Governor promised to consider the application but enjoined Smith to print nothing in the meantime except in the services of the Government.

In spite of this promise, Sir George Yonge issued a proclamation on July 15, 1800, announcing the appointment as sole printers to the Government of Messrs. Walker and Robertson, an influential and well-established firm of merchants, which had imported press and types, three printers, and a Dutch translator. Ritter and Smith made common cause against the competition of this firm but their protests were in vain. On February 1, 1800, the printing plant had been established at 35 Plein Street and work was commenced.

---

4

These consisted of almanacs "calculated after the meridian of the place", handbills, and advertisements. The almanacs were mentioned by Lady Anne Barnard in a letter to Henry Dundas, dated June 1, 1800.

5

Professor du Plessis, "Cape Times", May 9, 1929.

The Governor's proclamation provided a heavy fine, together with the confiscation of all printing equipment, if anyone else presumed to do any printing whatsoever. Messrs. Walker and Robertson were further given permission to start a weekly paper.

6

Foiled in their object, Ritter and Smith appealed to the Government for recognition or compensation. The Governor promised to purchase a Press which Ritter was expecting from Europe and, on September 20th, Smith was enjoined to deposit with the Government all printing materials he had procured. Messrs, Walker and Robertson were by no means safe in their position as monopolists, for complaints from other sources regarding the high printing charges, coupled with the Government's uneasiness about the printing by private persons of what was in effect an official Gazette led the authorities to bring the monopoly to an end by the purchase of the plant. A Government proclamation of October 10, 1800 announced this decision and set forth a reduced schedule of prices for subscription to the newspaper, for advertisements and for commercial printing. A monopoly in the printing trade still existed only it had changed. The sole right of printing was now vested in the Government of the Colony. Prior to the Government's proclamation, Messrs. Walker and Robertson had commenced publication<sup>7</sup> of the "Capetown Gazette" and "African Advertiser", regarded by some historians as South Africa's first newspaper.

---

6.

Lady Anne Barnard made the following interesting comment on this paper in the letter to Henry Dundas already referred to:- "This page is like a newspaper. The Government is resolved to have one here. If it answers as the printing of the almanac did in the Dutch time, it will be droll. The printer Ritter made a fortune of 2/- on this; each of the four districts took one at 6d-- all the inhabitants read or copied out of that one".

7.

August 16, 1800.



When the Government assumed control of the printing press it continued the publication of this paper. Smith was offered a position in the Government Printer's Office, but there is no further record of Ritter. The plant was not immediately transferred from 35 Plein Street to the Castle. A fourteen-page pamphlet on "Troostelyk Gesprek tuschen den Heere Jesus en de Moedeloose Ziel", published in 1801, shows that the "Drukkery van het Gouvernement" was not at the Castle at the time of its publication.

Much of the foregoing information has been extracted from Lloyd's "Birth of Printing in South Africa"<sup>8.</sup>

During the Dutch occupation of the Cape from 1802 to 1806 the printing plant was transferred to the Castle where the weekly newspaper was given the name of "Kaapsche Courant" and was printed and published every Saturday "ter Gouvernement Drukkey in Het Kasteel", which was daily open for business from 8-12 and 3-6.<sup>9.</sup> This was "Deel II. No. I. January, 1804 with the following inscription as a heading: "Die ondergetekende direkteur van 'Kaapsche Courant' is op Hooge autoriteit gelast, hier mede bekend te maken dat alle publicatien, proclamatie, notificatien, Keuren, wetten, Akten of Orders-- van welken aard of benaming die ook zyn mogen, welke in dit weekblad

---

8.

Mr Lloyd is Librarian of the South African Public Library at Capetown, which possesses 25,000 volumes (bound) of South African newspapers, including all the original correspondence, bail bonds, and documents in connection with the first issues of all the early newspapers from 1800. He is therefore in an admirable position to give an authentic and reliable account of the events of the period reviewed.

9.

The first page of the earliest issue preserved in the British Museum is re-produced in McMurtie's "Introduction of Printing into South Africa.

weekblad zullen geplaatst worden, en die bekrachtigd zyn door de onderteekening van enig wettige, behoorlyke, en voldoende kennis aan de ingezetenen dezer Colonie, even als die onmiddelyke gericht waren tot hun, wien dezetye in 't algemeen, of in 't byzonder zouden mogen aangaan."R. De Klerk Dibbetz."

During the period of Dutch control, there was issued on February 9th, 1804, a proclamation by Jan  
IO  
Willem Janssens, Governor, which is interesting not only as an early product of the South African Press, but also because of the place in which it was found. A Library in Massachusetts, in the United States, is surely one of the last places in which one would expect to find evidences of early printing in South Africa. But it was while searching in the Library of the American Antiquarian Society at Worcester, Massachusetts, for some early American imprints, that I was astonished and delighted to discover this broadside from Capetown. It was probably brought from the Cape by some New England ship Captain, it finally found its way into the incomparable collection in the Library of Society at Worcester, there to remind us more than a quarter of a century later, of a thread of connection between the people of South Africa and the people of North America in  
II  
the very early days of their history!"

---

IO.

Proclamatie: Jan Willem Janssens, Gouverneur en Generaal en Chef, benevens die Raad van Politie over de Kaap de Goede Hoop, en den Resoforte van dien in Zuid Afrika, etc., etc., and etc., aan elk en een iegelyk die deze zullen zien of hooren leezen, SALUT! doen te weeten:

II.

McMurtie's "Introduction of Printing into South Africa". Four hundred copies of this brochure were reprinted from "Output", the House organ of Messrs. Seligson and Clare Ltd. Vol. II. No. 7, 1932. The writer obtained the copy from which this information is culled, from the Medical Library of the University of the Witwatersrand.

THE FIGHT FOR THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS

So far no independent Press had appeared on the scene. This fact greatly puzzled a Capetown youth, Norris Henri Meurant, the only son of a Capetown citizen.<sup>12</sup> According to his book he frequently wondered why it was taking so long for a newspaper to be established at the Cape. The settlers, he argued, had come from one of the most freedom-loving countries in the world- Holland - and the Huguenots were also people who cherished freedom. He came to the conclusion that the settlers were being systematically deterred from giving expression to their opinions. In this he was right as subsequent events go to show.

The Gazette reigned with undisputed sway for 24 years.<sup>13</sup> It confined itself to the publication of Government ordinances, proclamations and notices generally and such mercantile or domestic advertisements as might offer. Politics were strictly barred, but a few paragraphs of news were offered for occasional consumption, as well as constructive articles from the pen of Mr John Barrow and other Government officials. Many years afterwards when the battle for the freedom of the Press was raging in South Africa the Editor of the 'Gazette' so far forgot his allegiance to the powers that be to enlarge upon the "full influence of free publication on the minds, manners, actions, and habits of men in social life". It was an offence that could not be condoned especially at a juncture when the Government had seen fit to interdict the free Press of the country.

---

12.

Sixty Years Ago", or "Reminiscences of the struggle for the Freedom of the Press in South Africa and the Establishment of the First Newspaper", published in 1885 by the firm Messrs. Saul Solomon in Capetown.

13.

Professor du Plessis, "Cape Times", May 9, 1929.

The consequence was as a writer in 1832 puts it, "all light was immediately flung out of the "Gazette" and advertisements" as at the present time, only tolerated. It was now printed by Mr. Bridekirk, and enjoyed, as it ever did, the patronage of many town and country readers. Indeed, it was quite the oracle of some people, and the country farmer would, of all men, be most miserable, were he to lose the delight of luxuriating over the market prices of "koorn", dry goods and "tabak", and of pondering well all that follows under the heads "Getrouwd" and "gedoopt" and the Gravesend news under that of "Overleden".<sup>14</sup>

Clouds were gathering on the horizon, as far as the "Gazette" was concerned, and its position as the only purveyor of news in the country was soon to be challenged. On January 5, 1822, it published a notice to the effect that "His Excellency, the Governor and Commander-in-Chief, has thought proper to direct that all public communications which may appear in this paper, signed with any official signature, cease to be considered as official communications to those persons to whom they may relate."

On December 23, 1823, George Greig, a printer who had recently arrived from London, discovered that there was no law prohibiting the publication of a newspaper. He accordingly addressed a letter to Lord Charles Somerset, the Governor, together with the prospectus of a news-sheet which he intended styling "The South African Commercial Advertiser", the object of which was to be "to exclude most rigorously all personal controversy, however disguised, or the remotest discussion of subjects relating to the policy or administration of the Colonial Government."<sup>15</sup>

---

14

Cape of Good Hope Literary Gazette, January 2, 1832.

15

See following page.



The first issue of the "Commercial Advertiser" which appeared on January 7th, 1824, stated :

"That this, the first attempt to establish a Medium of general Communication at the CAPE OF GOOD HOPE should take place at the opening of a new season-- at a time when the mind is naturally disposed to look forward with hope that the events of the succeeding year may atone for the disappointment of the last--we cannot but think an auspicious circumstance, and, as the gradual influence of the genial seasons rears and protects the rising blossom until the fruit is matured-- so we cannot but hope that the patronage of our fellow subjects will attend our progress and finally crown our efforts with that reward which alone ...

He rallied to his support the poet Thomas Pringle who had arrived with the 1830 Settlers and had been unsuccessful in his farming activities at Baviaansrivier, Dr. Abraham Faure, a prominent clergyman at the Cape, and Fairbairn, who had come to the Cape from England at the express invitation of Pringle.

The benevolent governorship of Sir Rufane Donkin had raised the hopes of these Press pioneers, but Sir Rufane was succeeded by Sir Charles Somerset, who, on his return for the second period of his administration

displayed /

- 
15. Meurant's "Sixty Years Ago" which has the following dedication: "To the Chairman and Members of the Newspaper Press Union of South Africa!- The reminiscences which the following pages contain are respectfully dedicated, by a brother pressman the Senior in the Colony, and the only person, he believes, now living, who has a personal knowledge of many of the facts. No fine writing has been attempted, the aim of the author having been to place on record as succinct and consecutive a history of the great and successful struggle for the liberty of THE PRESS IN SOUTH AFRICA as is obtainable from published records and other sources of information as well as of the subsequent spread of colonial newspaper literature, especially in the Eastern Province. In the hope that what he has compiled and written may clear up several controversial questions, and afford useful information, he submits the following pages to his brother pressmen and the public".  
Capetown, May 30th, 1885.

16. New Glen Lynden



displayed his autocratic temperament by issuing a proclamation prohibiting the holding of public meetings. Not only the convenors but also the audience were threatened with severe punishment. Sir Charles was determined that there was to be no liberty of thought and freedom of expression at the Cape during his term of office. In the words of Fairbairn "he treated the Colonists as though they were an inferior and backward people".

In these unfavourable circumstances, therefore, it was not surprising that the Governor replied to the petitioners that he could not see his way clear to grant the request. Greig thereupon petitioned on his own behalf to which Lord Charles replied that "so many requests were being made for permission to publish newspapers that the matter would have to be considered before any decision could be arrived at"<sup>17</sup>. In the meantime the pioneers proceeded with their preliminary arrangements. Mr. Meurant, Senr., had interested himself in the matter and when a ship arrived at the Cape with a case of type ordered by a firm in India which had gone bankrupt, he purchased this case and presented it to Greig on condition that young Meurant was taken into the business for a training with prospects of rising to a higher position later.

These preliminary negotiations were not in vain, for in December 1822, although it went greatly against the grain, Lord Charles granted the necessary permission for the establishment of a newspaper.<sup>18</sup> The immediate triumph

of /

17. Dr. Preller, "De Volkstem", October 1st, 1924.

18. Writing to a friend in England, Lord Charles said :  
 I foresee so much evil from an independent Press that I have shelved the matter so as to give time but ... it is one of those subjects which a person in office finds it difficult to word a refusal the public eye".

of the pioneers proved to be short lived. The paper, a bilingual monthly, was printed by the Government printer and the first issue appeared in March, 1833. The following issue was the last, for the Governor found it so offensive that he ordered the Fiscal to maintain a censor over it. Under these conditions some mild and subdued journalists might have been prepared to continue with the venture, but not so Pringle and Fairbairn. They dropped the project of a monthly magazine in favour of the more ambitious and powerful idea of a newspaper. A prospectus of the new venture was sent to the Governor but was ignored. On January 7th, 1834, the first issue of "The Commercial Advertiser" was issued from the Commercial Printing Office, 1 Longmarket Street.

The little group of pioneers had been increased by the addition of Louis Henri Meurant, Michael Kearns, and John Mackley. The first issue of the newspaper contained a bit of versification on "The Paper". The following three verses may be regarded as typical, both as regards tone and standard:

"What is 't informs the country round  
 What's stolen or strayed, what's lost or found  
 Who's born, and who's put underground.  
 The paper.

"Abroad, at home, infirm, or stout,  
 In health, or raving with the gout,  
 Who possibly can do without  
 The paper.

"Its worth and merits then reverse,  
 And since it now begins the Year,  
 Forget not midst your Christmas cheer,  
 Nor think you e'en can buy too dear.  
 The paper".

While this struggle had been going on, Messrs Faure and Pringle had been granted permission to publish

two journals in the English and Dutch languages and these duly appeared in 1824 as "The South African Journal" and "Nederduitsch Zuid-Afrikaans Tijdschrift". The second number of the former referred to the "Arbitrary system of government and its consequences". Pringle was brought before the Governor and browbeaten. He left the country and thereafter wrote: "The Governor's will is law. His disapproval means ruination"<sup>19</sup>. "The South Africa Journal" did not survive its second issue. Its Dutch counterpart, under the moderate guidance of the Rev. A. Faure continued for nearly 30 years. The contents of his paper, being concerned mostly with ecclesiastical and religious affairs, gave no offence in official quarters.

In the words of Professor du Plessis ("Cape Times", May 10th) "The star of democracy had risen and that of autocracy was hastening to its setting". Papers were beginning to spring up in various quarters and for various purposes. On August 18th, 1824, the "Chronicle" appeared. Its full title was "The South African Chronicle and Mercantile Advertiser" This was under the direction of Bradekirk, and was tantamount to a Government organ reflecting the views of Lord Charles Somerset and countenancing neither criticism nor complaint directed against the ruling powers. The "Chronicle"<sup>20</sup> languished on until 1826.

Mr. J. C. Gubbins, of Otterhoop, has in his possession the first half-yearly files of the "Commercial

Advertiser"

- 
19. Pringle referred to Somerset's rule as a "Reign of Terror" - Meurant's "Sixty Years Ago", page 24.
20. Shortly afterwards Sir Richard Plaskett, the Colonial Secretary, wrote: "Mr. Bradekirk has given up his paper as a losing concern. I did everything to keep him up, by giving him information, advertisements and even writing for his paper. But he had no editor and his cause had few friends".



21.

Advertiser" according to Mr (now Dr.) Gustav Freller. This is probably the only one in the Transvaal. It was purchased by the present owner from Mr. Maskov, of Seapoint, at a sale in 1911. The prospectus sets out that the paper will, in the first place, supply trade and commerce news and will serve as an advertising medium, altho' the interests of the ordinary reader will not be overlooked, and "it will also be our aim to publish literary matter". We are now providing an opportunity for those who have in the past had no scope for their talents in this direction. We hope thereby to advance literature in the Cape by kindling an interest in literary works. We appeal to all patriotically-inclined persons to support us in this endeavour and we earnestly hope that we shall receive sufficient support to justify us proceeding with our enterprise."

The subscription was four rix dollars a quarter. A single issue cost three shillings. The prospectus is dated 1823 and is unsigned. The name of the publisher is given as "G. Greig, Printer, 1 Longmarket Street". The first issue dealt with political affairs in England. Freller remarks that the paper was strictly fair in its policy of bilingualism but adds-- that this was not necessarily due to the sense of fairplay or knowledge of human nature on the part of Fairbairn or Pringle. Each succeeding issue contained articles dealing with the liberty of the Press and the slogan of Johnson that "A people without a Press cannot be regarded as civilised" was freely bandied about. Also sentiments favouring harmonious race relations. "Let us not quibble about words. It does not matter who or what we are -- whether we are English, or German, or Hollanders -- so long as we live here, have our homes here, and as the interest of the country in which we live is our

interest /

interest, we can call ourselves Africans".<sup>22</sup> The "Advertiser" met with instant success. The second number published on January 14th, described the experiences of the proprietor with the first issue. "We were gratefully surprised to see so many of the native (by native Greig means Dutch) inhabitants of this Colony among our supporters, and the numerous inquiries which were made as to our intention in future of translating into the Dutch language the most interesting parts of our miscellaneous intelligence convinces us of the expediency of making arrangements for that purpose".<sup>23</sup> The suppression of the "Advertiser" was ultimately due to the Government's inveterate aversion to free speech and a free press. Under the editorial guidance of Fairbairn and Pringle, the "Advertiser" grew bolder and bolder until, in the sixth edition a reference to the "Liberty of the Press" was made. The following number began to report judicial proceedings and in particular that cause celebre the trial of Cooke, Edwards, and Hoffman. In the twelfth number the testimony of Cowper was cited as to the benefits of a free Press. Matters came to a head over the reports of Cooke-Edwards trial. This was a sort of test case to challenge the despotism of the Government who, instead of forwarding a memorial by Lancelot Cooke regarding alleged malpractices in the disposal of negro slaves by Charles Blair, the Collector of Customs, and a friend of the Governor's, indicted Cooke on a charge of publishing a libel, together with William Edwards, the Attorney who drafted it, and J.B.Hoffman who copied it out. The reports of the sensational trial went a long way towards increasing the sales of the "Advertiser".

The /

- 
22. "Afrikaners" is the word which has since sprung into more common usage.  
 23. Professor du Plessis, "Cape Times", May, 1929.



The judgment was given in March when the Court "decreed all further investigation to be at an end, released the defendants from all further personal appearance, and wholly acquitted them of the charges made in the indictment". This was a setback for the Government and on May 4th the Fiscal demanded of Greig that he should submit the proof sheets of the next number of the "Advertiser", which was to appear on the following morning, for his approval. This Greig did <sup>24</sup> and accordingly the famous eighteenth number was duly issued,

accompanied /

24. The correspondence between the Fiscal and Greig reproduced in Meurant's "Sixty Years Ago" page 56, is illuminating. On May 4th, 1824, a Messenger from the Fiscal arrived at the Commercial Printing Office with the following note:

No. 11, Strand Street,  
May 4th, 1824.

To Mr. George Greig,  
Commercial Printing Office,

Sir,

I hope that you will have no objection to sending me a proof sheet of your eighteenth number of the "South African Commercial Advertiser" previous to its being struck off.

Your immediate reply will such oblige me.

I have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) D. Denyssen. (Fiscal)

To this Greig sent the following reply:

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge your note to-night as follows — Here Greig reproduced in full the Fiscal's letter.— To this note I have the honour to state in answer that I am ready to reply, with promptitude, to every "official order".

(Signed) George Greig.

Proofs were accordingly sent and the Fiscal later wrote:

"I have no objection to your going on in printing the pages of your eighteenth number now in my possession, which, however, I hope will not be construed as an approval of that part thereof which bears upon the administration of this colony".

In forwarding further proofs, Greig wrote:

"I accompany them with this note in order to have an opportunity of stating that my sending you proofs previous to publication is not a voluntary act on my part but an act of obedience to authority".

accompanied, however, by this notification :

"His Majesty's fiscal, having assumed the censorship of the S.A. Commercial Advertiser, by an official order sent to the printing office a messenger late in the evening before publication. We find it our duty, as British subjects, under these circumstances, to discontinue the publication of this paper for the present in this Colony, until we have applied for redress and directions to His Excellency the Governor and the British Government."

Three days later the Government ordered that Greig's press should be sealed up and that he should leave the Colony within a month. <sup>25</sup> The Press was sealed up but not the type and Greig was able on May 10th to issue "Facts connected with the stoppage of the S. A. "Commercial Advertiser". Greig sailed for England and submitted his case before Earl Bathurst, the then Secretary of State for the Colonies, who sanctioned his return to the Cape with liberty to publish his paper. Accordingly, on August 31st, 1825, the "S. A. Commercial Advertiser" resumed publication, the issue being styled No. 13, though nearly 30 months had elapsed since the appearance of No.18. Fairbairn was now sole editor, Pringle having returned to Europe. The "Advertiser" ran an unchequered course until the 135th issue on March 10th, 1827, when, by order of Earl Bathurst, it was again suppressed for having published an extract from the London "Times" reflecting upon the character

of /

25. The official order read as follows :

..... and whereas the personal conduct of the said George Greig has proved subversive to the due submission to the lawful commands of the constituted authorities in this Colony, and without which peace and tranquillity cannot remain undisturbed, you are further authorised and directed to notify him that he is to leave the colony within one month of the date hereof and that in default of so doing he shall be arrested and sent out of it by the first possible opportunity".

(Signed) Charles H. Somerset.

Mourant's "Sixty Years Ago". Mourant adds: "How much do Editors and the public of the present day owe to the brave men who so manfully and uncompromisingly battled for and eventually gained the incalculable victory for the freedom of the Press in South Africa".

of a Cape official. Governor Bourke supported the movement for a free Press and an ordinance was eventually sanctioned in April, 1829 -- the Magna Charta of the Press in South Africa, permitting the publication of any newspaper which conformed to certain not very stringent regulations, and undertook to observe the local libel laws. The "Advertiser" set out for the third time on October 3rd, 1828 and continued thereafter to exercise a widespread influence. <sup>36</sup>

The ball had now been set rolling and the beginning of 1828 saw the inauguration of "De Verzamelaar" and "The New Organ". This was before the Magna Charta of the Press had been obtained and the year which saw the establishment of these two newspapers was the same year in which Lord Charles Somerset levied a stamp duty on printed newspapers and certain other periodical works. As the number of newspapers was still extremely small, the imposition of this duty cannot have been a revenue-raising measure and must be regarded as an attempt to stifle the Press by economic pressure. The Press survived, however, and the duties were repealed in 1848. <sup>37</sup> Fairbairn and Greig owned and edited the "New Organ", while J. Duasse de Lima, LL.D. edited "De Verzamelaar", which was published by Bridekirk.

<sup>38</sup>

Dr. F.C.L. Bosman has described de Lima, a converted Hollando-Portuguese Jew, as the father of Hollands journalism in South Africa. Out of the ashes of "De Verzamelaar" arose "De Zuidafrikaan", and de Lima was succeeded as Editor by C.E. Boniface, a Hollanderised Frenchman, who later

edited /

- 
36. Professor du Plessis in the "Cape Times", May, 1929, and L. J. Keurant's "Sixty Years Ago".
37. This matter is dealt with more fully in Chapter III.
38. "Drama en Toneel in Suidafrika".



edited Natal's first newspaper.

The history of these two papers was almost identical with that of "The South African Journal" and the "Nederduitsche Zuid-afrikaanse Tydschrift". The former died almost at birth while the latter continued intermittently over a long period. Both the "New Organ" and "De Verzamelaar" started off without the necessary licence, and, while de Lima later complied with the requirements of the Governor, Fairbairn determined to offer active resistance and to state his case before the Colonial Office. The paper in the meantime lay dormant and was not revived. "De Verzamelaar", which is referred to by Meurant as a kind of "Dutch Punch" indulged in personalities and Society gossip.

Only one other paper appeared before the Liberty of the Press was secured. This was "The Colonist", a weekly paper published in English. Bridekirk was the publisher while the editorial responsibility fell upon the shoulders of William Paddy, a Trinity College, Dublin, graduate. Its life was short, from November 22nd, 1827 to September 30th in the following year, when Paddy left for Grahamstown to assist in the editorship of the "Grahamstown Journal". "The South African Quarterly Journal" appeared spasmodically from October 1829 to October 1831, and during 1833-34. It was not a newspaper, however, but a scientific journal which served as the organ of the South African Institution

---

THE MAGNA CHARTA OBTAINED.

The Year 1839-- the year of liberation of  
 the

the South African Press--by an ordinance issued under the  
 30  
 Governorship of Bourke was followed by a decade of intense  
 activity in the newspaper world. Some of the more important  
 of these publications, which sprang up in Capetown and Grahams-  
 town were :

April, 1830. "De Zuidafrikaan".  
 June, 1830. "The Cape of Good Hope Literary Gazette".  
 December, 1831. "The Grahamstown Journal".  
 February, 1833. "De Kaapsche Cyclopedie, published  
 also in an English edition, the Cape Encyclopedia--  
 a purely religious four-page weekly  
 1835, the "South African Christian Recorder", a mission-  
 ary monthly with a good deal of local intelligence.  
 1837, the "Moderator and Meditator", bilingual journals,  
 with Dutch as the predominant language.  
 1837, "Leesvrugten", with religious interests solely  
 and not a single item of contemporary information.  
 1838, the "Eastern Province Government Gazette" pub-  
 lished at Grahamstown every Thursday (from June 13th).  
 1838, the "Price Current" every fortnight by G. W.  
 Silberbauer for the benefit of the Capetown mercantile  
 community.  
 1838, "De Ware Afrikaan", a Dutch weekly from Oct.4th.  
 October, 1838, "De Koningbij", a monthly of religious  
 scope but with some news of general intelligence  
 In 1840 three journals made their debut on the first  
 days of the year:  
 The "Colonial Times" at Grahamstown.  
 The "Cape Times" at Capetown<sup>31</sup>(not the present Cape Times  
 which first appeared in 1876)and the "Cape of Good Hope  
 Shipping List", also at Capetown.

Of these, perhaps the first-named, "De Zuid-  
 afrikaan" is the most interesting. Started on April 9th by  
 Messrs. F.A.Brand and O.N.Neethling with the avowed object of  
 awakening their fellow countrymen from their widespread apathy,  
 it set itself out to expose "humbugs", among the first of  
 these being, the Free Press, the Independent newspaper, the  
 Missionary, and the Phillipine Party.

32

It is claimed that "De Zuidafrikaan" was the  
 first paper to reflect South African sentiment. Its policy

can /

30. See Chapter III.

31. Professor du Plessis in the "Cape Times" (May 11th, 1929).

32. By Dr. F.C.I. Bosman in "Drama en Toneel".



can best be described in its own words: "In assuming the title of "De Zuidafrikaan", we hoist a banner which shall serve as a rallying point to all Colonists, both old and new. In fact, all who inhabit this country and derive nourishment from her bosom, are Africans and are bound, both by duty and by interest, to further the well-being and guard the reputation of our country". It was first a weekly and later a bi-weekly paper.

The paper continued under its original name until 1894 when it was incorporated with "Ons Land". This latter title was the one by which the paper was popularly known until its demise on April 8th, 1932, 100 years after the foundation of "De Zuidafrikaan". The full title of the amalgamated organ was "De ZuidAfrikaan verenigd met Ons Land". "Die Burger"<sup>33</sup> in commenting on the death of this venerated and venerable paper said: "History shows that Holland-Afrikaans papers have flourished or succumbed in proportion as they have correctly interpreted the voice of the people. "Ons Land" is being buried to-day. As a pioneer in Afrikaans nationalism and leader of the Hollands-Afrikaans kultuur, "Ons Land" played a big part in the awakening of the Hollands-Afrikaans people in the Cape to a full realisation of their national consciousness! After tracing its history throughout the hundred years, "Die Burger" continued "When General Hertzog broke away from the conciliation sickness in 1912 "Ons Land" decided to follow the beaten track rather than to break with the Party. That decision sealed its fate. As certainly as General Hertzog triumphed, so surely has "Ons Land" perished. It stayed with the Government but broke with the people. The people had no

time /

time for a newspaper which preferred to be a Government organ rather than a mouthpiece of the people... It fell a victim to the policy which recognised the sacrificing of individual rights in the cause of co-operation."

The "Cape of Good Hope Literary Gazette", too, was of interest. It was printed and published by Bridekirk and claimed to be "devoted exclusively to Literature, criticism, science, and the advancement of useful knowledge". The "Gazette" degenerated rapidly. Under which of the above Heads, for instance, could the following extracts <sup>34</sup> be placed?:

"Let us glance at the advertising notices of the good old times of Interdiction and exclusive privilege!

We just dip into the State Papers of the "Cape Gazette", beginning 1808:-

"Wanted - a good breast of milk"

"To let, two wholesome breasts of milk", while

An advertiser acknowledges his gratitude to the good Earl of Clarendon for "Having been graciously pleased to grant the undersigned permission to leave the Colony".

"Mr. Stramban, not having any more use for his slaves or horses, intimates that they are to be had at the following fixed prices:

His best cock	R. ds ...	2,000
Two -do-	do.	1,200
Two house servants, each	do	1,500
A female woman(sic) with two children ...	...	3,000

The following two extracts from the "Gazette" are given, not as an indication of degeneration, but as being of interest:

"The people /

34. "The Gazette", March 1834, page 46.

"The people of Calcutta have resolved to celebrate the emancipation of the Independent Press in a style worthy of their intelligence and good sense... They have determined to raise an elegant building for the reception of a library". 35.

"The newspaper is the seizer upon your button hole. You can neither eat your breakfast, smoke, take snuff, indulge in a full-faced, non-medicinal tumbler of half-and-half without a newspaper". 36

"The Grahamstown Journal", the first paper to be published outside of Capetown, was due to the inspiration and enterprise of Mourant, who, having left Capetown in 1838, overcame tremendous difficulties in establishing and maintaining the "Journal" (1831). Three years later Perry, who had been unsuccessful with the "Colonist" in Capetown, migrated to Grahamstown, where he became associated with the "Journal" which had in the meantime passed into the hands of Godlonton, a former clerk in Government employ. The writer has in his possession a miniature reproduction of the first issue of the "Journal". It was a four-page pamphlet with advertisements on the front page, while the greater part of the remaining pages were taken up with a very full report of a public meeting of the Albany Temperance Society, an account of an outbreak of smallpox, and a leading article in which it was stated that: "The importance of Graham's Town as a Commercial Station alone seems sufficient to entitle it to a Local Newspaper; or, in other words, appears to insure adequate remuneration to the Proprietor. The Editor does not propose to inflict invariably on his readers what is usually called a LEADING ARTICLE Perhaps he has not yet chosen a political /

35. "The Gazette", November 1835, page 173.

36. "The Gazette", July 1835, page 113.



political hobby-horse and he is not prepared to witch the world with didactic essays." The standard of the paper may be judged from the following paragraph; "We regret that we are unable, from want of space, to present our readers with the Report, which we have prepared, of the proceedings of the Graham's Town Infant School Society, which took place in the Wesleyan Chapel on Monday last. Next week we shall not fail to lay it before our readers".

The paper bears the date of December 30th, 1831, and the miniature reproduction was issued as a supplement to "Crocott's Daily Mail" on December 15th, 1831

For nearly a decade the "Journal" held undisputed sway in Grahamstown. It was the oracle of the Eastern Province and the only paper which, without vituperation, could expose the policy of Dr. Phillip and the "Commercial Advertiser".<sup>37</sup> "On New Year's Day, 1840, however, a rival appeared on the scene under the name of "The Colonial Times" and the Editorship of Dr. Ambrose George Campbell. Like the "Commercial Advertiser" it was anti-colonial and negrophilist". Professor du Plessis found that the sentiments which appeared in it every Wednesday were anathema to the Grahamstown public and the eighteenth number, published on April 29th, 1840, was the last. John George Franklin took over the plant and issued a paper called the "Cape Frontier Times" which met with greater success than the "Colonist". Dr. Campbell, not yet having learnt his lesson, announced anonymously in the "Cape Frontier Times" that "on the first Monday in June at 4.0.p.m. will appear a literary magazine or review, "The Echo", conducted by members of the

Fudge /

---

37. Professor du Plessis in the "Cape Times", May 11th, 1929.

38

Fudge Society. "Sir George Cory regards this paper as a "scurrilous" publication".

The decade 1840-50 was as productive of newspapers, journals, and magazines as the previous decade. Among the productions of this period were "The Cape Times Mail and Mirror of Court and Council", established on March 6th, 1841, by William Buchanan, and described as "a new and valuable publication, reporting with great care and fidelity law court cases, proceedings of Council, Municipality, and other meetings"; "Het Kaapsche Handelsblad" and "The South African Advocate and Capetown Spectator", both established in January 1843, and neither lasting for very long; "The African Journal" (June, 1843); "A Register of Facts, Fiction, News, Literature, Commerce, and Amusement", which lasted about three years; the bilingual "Suidafrikaansche Kronijk" ("South African Chronicle") on January 5th; "The Cape of Good Hope and Port Natal Shipping and Mercantile Gazette", both in 1844, while in the same year, "Het Kaapsche Grensblad" was issued at Grahamstown by the versatile and energetic Meurant.

In January of the following year "The Cape of Good Hope Christian Magazine" was established as the official organ of the Church of England Evangelicals. It lasted until December 1846.

Among the many other publications which were at this time being brought into existence at the Cape, - some of them with very doubtful claims to the style and status of a newspaper - were the "Cape of Good Hope Penny Magazine", published in Capetown in 1843, the "South African Christian Watchmen"/

---

38. Who has the only approximately complete copy of the "Echo" in his possession.

39. Index to the Grey Collection.



"Watchman", a monthly magazine printed at the Wesley Mission at Kingwilliamstown in January 1845; the "Free Church Witness for the Truth in South Africa", a religious monthly started at Capetown in January 1847; "The South African or Cape of Good Hope Consolator", first published in October 1843, and supplanted by the "Cape of Good Hope Examiner and General Intelligence"; "The Shopkeepers and Tradesmen's Journal", a bilingual sheet set up in April, 1847; "The Cape of Good Hope Observer", a 16-page quarto published weekly as from 1849; "Het Volksblad", inaugurated on July 6th, 1849. In January 1850, "The South African Church Magazine and Ecclesiastical Review", a monthly paper made its first appearance. It was enlarged eight years later and appeared as the "South African Church Magazine and Educational Register". The last newspaper to see the light before the close of the first half of the Nineteenth Century was the "Cape Monitor" which was started in October 1850 at Capetown, during the days of the anti-convict agitation. It was founded by a syndicate of merchants whose advertisements were refused by the other newspapers because the advertisers were suspected of truckling with the Government.<sup>40</sup> "The Monitor" became a popular and influential journal, partly through the "Pen and Ink Sketches" of members of the first Cape Parliament.

In 1849 "Het Volksblad" made its appearance founded by B.J. Van der Sandt, together with "Onse Jan" Hofmeyr, the pioneer of Hollands journalism in the 19th Century. He aimed at the preservation of race identity in the co-operation of the two races at the Cape. It ceased for a while but reappeared in 1856 as champion of the Liberal direction of the Ned. Geref. Kerk and flourished. To combat this /

---

40 Professor du Plessis, in the "Cape Times", May 13th).

this influence the orthodox churchmen founded "De Volksvriend" in 1832, a biweekly. The first two editors, B.J.H. Ruistenbeeck and the Rev. W.R. Thompson did not make a success of the venture and were succeeded by "Onse Jan". In 1869 "De Volksvriend" overshadowed "De Zuidafrikaan" which had maintained an impartial attitude in regard to the Church question, and two years later "De Zuidafrikaan" and "De Volksvriend" became amalgamated under the name of "De Zuidafrikaan".

"Het Volksblad" brought about its own downfall by an exaggerated conciliation policy and with the death of Van der Sandt it ceased publication. Its place was taken by a paper actuated by purely Afrikaans ideals, "Die Patriot"<sup>41</sup> of the Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners, 1878.

Towards the end of the century, "De Volksbode" appeared for a short while, a semi-eccelesiastical organ, which warned the country against Rhodes even while he co-operated with "Onse Jan".

It will be seen that thus far Cape publications of any importance had been confined to Capetown and Grahamstown. This position could not long endure. Mr. J. S. Christophers, London Editor of Chase's Guidebook, gave a practical hint to the inhabitants of Elizabeth Town to start a newspaper by printing as a specimen the "Algoa Bay Gazette and Elizabethan Chronicle". The hint was taken and on May 5th, 1845, John Ross Phillip founded the "Eastern Province Herald" which is still flourishing to-day. The "Herald" was taken over three years later by John Paterson, who, in September, 1850, started the "Eastern Province News" and achieved the feat of editing two journals simultaneously. These

pioneers /

---

41. This paper and its successors are fully dealt with later in this chapter.

pioneers in the Eastern Province were not alone in the field of journalism there. "The Port Elizabeth Telegraph and Mercantile Gazette" (September 6th, 1848) and the "Port Elizabeth Mercury or Register or Passing Events", March 5th 1850. Both of these were outpaced by the more substantial and permanent "Herald", of which the Hon. Sir E.H. Walton, K.C., ex-High Commissioner for the Union of South Africa in London is now Proprietor, while Mr. E.B. Walton is Editor, and Mr. J.L. Walton, Managing Director. Port Elizabeth's newspaper service has since been enlarged by the advent of the "Advertiser", in conjunction with which is run a country edition called the "Weekly Telegraph".

This brings to a close the review of the first half of the Nineteenth Century. While the progress in newspaper production in the northern areas in South Africa will be considered in detail later in this chapter, it is instructive to call a halt at this stage and compare briefly the position existing in the Cape, The Free State, Natal, and the Transvaal. More than thirty papers had appeared in the Cape (although not all of these were still in existence at the close of the half-century); four newspapers had appeared in Natal; one in the Free State; and none in the Transvaal. This position was only to be expected. Early newspaper development was confined to the coastal regions. Lack of transport facilities and of rapid means of communication militated against early development in the Northern territories.

The second half of the Nineteenth Century is notable from many points of view. It was during this period that the Press made considerable strides in the more northern parts /



parts of South Africa, that most of the large and important newspapers now in existence were established, that newspapers became to be actively associated with the building up of a new language, that country newspapers came into being on a large scale, that the freedom of the Press was fought for and won in the Transvaal, that the Bantu Press came into prominence, that transport and communication facilities were developed to an extent which greatly facilitated the work entailed in newspaper production, that overseas newspapers and other publications began to find a profitable market, thus greatly adding to their own scope, influence and prestige, and that missionary enterprise awoke to the realisation of what a powerful benefactor the printed page could be to them in their slow and patient work of evangelisation.

It would serve no purpose to enumerate each and every newspaper that came into being after 1850. These are so numerous that this investigation would be swelled to an intolerable magnitude if this were to be undertaken. Many of the newspapers, especially those of the country "dorps" are of such minor importance as not to justify any detailed study. There are certain aspects of these newspapers, however, to which attention must be directed. They have certain characteristics which are not encountered in the larger newspapers of the country. In the first place, the majority of the country newspapers are either issued weekly or bi-weekly. They are furthermore usually bilingual, a characteristic which is not found in a single newspaper in any of the large towns of the Union. Many of the earlier country newspapers were also endowed with double-barrelled names, as, for instance, the "Adelaide Free Press and Farmer's Friend", the "Farmers' Chronicle /

Chronicle and Stutterheim Times", or "The Middelberg Hoeveld en Belfast Nuus". This tendency is on which is rapidly being supplanted by a desire for short pithy titles, such as the "Karoo Nuus", the "Ladybrand Courant", or the Bethal "Echo".

The most significant feature of these characteristics peculiar to the country newspapers is the principle of bilingualism, a principle which the writer would like to see extended to the more influential newspapers in this country. The necessity for bilingualism in the country districts arises from the fact that, owing to the limited population of the districts catered for, every endeavour must be made to appeal to all sections of the scattered community. Thus newsprint is provided in both official languages. This necessity does not arise in the large towns, where satisfactory circulations are obtained without having to resort to this device. The principle, necessitated though it is by economic considerations, is a sound one. Both English and Afrikaans-speaking people in the country are provided with an opportunity of learning whichever of the languages is not spoken in their own homes. The language, furthermore, is that which is in every day use and which is most likely to be of assistance to either section in their daily dealings with the other. It is, of course, not possible to estimate to what extent advantage is taken of this opportunity, but the vital fact remains that the country newspapers, through this principle, are a potential source of greater understanding, mutual respect, and tolerance, by one section of this country towards the other.

Country newspapers are less sensational than those of the towns; they are devoted largely to local interests,

and /



and are little concerned with international affairs. They provide much reading matter of an instructive nature for the farming communities and provide a link between scattered areas in the same district and contribute in a small measure towards brightening up the dull moments of farm life. They also provide an educational factor of great importance in areas where schools do not exist or where the standard of education is of an elementary nature.

In order to give some indication of the growth of country newspapers in the Cape, the following examples have been taken from a total of approximately 100. <sup>42</sup> In 1860 "The Colesburg Advertiser and Boerenvriend" was established as a bilingual weekly newspaper; "The Uitenhage Times and Farmers' Journal", a bi-weekly (1864); "The Albert-Times and Moltens News" was set up 1868 and is published every Friday; "The Fort Beaufort Advocate and Adelaide Opinion" first saw the light of day in 1869, as did "The Albert Times and Moltens News" with which are incorporated "The Burghersdorp Gazette" and "Stensberg Courier"; these were followed by the "Beaufort West Courier", a bilingual weekly founded in the same year; "The Frontier Guardian and Dordrecht Advocate", a bilingual weekly (1873); "The Somerset Budget" published twice a week in English (1872); "The Oudtshoorn Courant and South Western Chronicle", a bilingual tri-weekly newspaper (1872); "The Kokstad Advertiser and East Griqualand Gazette", a weekly (1873); "The Worcester Standard and Western Province News", a bilingual weekly (1894).

Other newspapers falling under this category include "The George and Kanyana Herald", published on

Wednesdays /

---

42. The information here given has been abstracted from The Newspaper Press Directory.

Wednesdays; "The Graaff Reinet Advertiser", a bilingual paper published three times a week, South African and Imperialist in tone; "The North Western Press" at Prieska, which circulates in an area larger than Natal; "The Northern News" at Vryburg, which circulates throughout Bechuanaland and the adjoining territories; and the "Humansdorp Re-Zoho", a bilingual weekly newspaper.

Among the more important newspapers which were established in the Cape during the second half of the Nineteenth Century were "The Cape Argus" (1857), the oldest existing English newspaper in the Western Province, which brings out a week-end edition frequently running to 48 pages containing special features and a review of week-end sport; "The Diamond Fields Advertiser" established in 1875 at Kimberley, the only daily paper published in Griqualand West, an area of 15,000 square miles, which has a daily and a weekly edition, the circulation of the latter approximating 35,000, in 1899 it became a unit in the Argus group of newspapers; the "Cape Times", conservative in Imperial politics but progressive in South African matters, enjoying a large and influential circulation, not only in the Western Province, but in South Africa as a whole (1876). The "Cape Times" was founded by Frederick York St. Lager and R.W.Murray and was edited from 1895-1900 by Fydell Edmund Garrett whose work greatly enhanced the reputation and influence of the paper.<sup>43</sup> It was later edited until 1921 by sir Maitland Park, who died in that year. The present editor is Mr. B.E.Long. Its intaglio process is unique not only in South Africa but also among the London Press. Its leading articles are widely read and respected while /

---

43. Harmsworth's Universal Encyclopedia, Vol.2., page 1670.

while one of its features is the clever daily cartoon of Mr. Wyndham Robinson.

In January, 1837, "The South African Magazine" came into being at Capetown and in 1838 the "Queenstown Daily Representative and Free Press" was established, circulating in the North Eastern Cape Province and the Transkei. It is still in existence to-day. The first issue of "The South African News" was published at Capetown on May 20, 1893. It was moderate and conciliatory in tone.

#### THE BIRTH OF A LANGUAGE.

It is of interest to note that one who was closely associated with the growth of the Press at the Cape was also credited with being the first person to write any work of merit in Afrikaans as distinct from Hollandic which was until 1860 the generally accepted counterpart of English at the Cape. This was L.J. Meurant. His Press activities have already been referred to in this chapter, while his book constitutes the first authentic account of the early struggles for the freedom of the Press at the Cape and of the development of the Press in the Eastern Province. In 1861 Meurant published a brochure entitled "Die Zamenespraak tusschen Klaas Waarnegger en Jan Twyfelaar over het onderwerp van Afscheiding tusschen de Oostelyke en Westelyke Provincie". The title is sufficient to indicate that the language was not Afrikaans proper but it represented the sowing of the seeds, the harvest of which was to be reaped during the first and second

Taalbewegings. /

44. "Sixty Years Ago".

### Taalbewegings.

The desire on the part of the South African born inhabitants of the Cape for a language of their own led to great activity in the world of letters.<sup>45</sup> Although many of the publications issued under the aegis of the Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners and other such bodies cannot strictly be regarded as newspapers, they may be considered here for their historic interest and to make this investigation into the history and growth of the South African Press complete.

In order to do this most satisfactorily, it will be necessary to deviate from the chronological order which has so far been preserved as far as possible so that the various publications connected with the Taalbewegings may be treated together, rather than scattered about in the consideration of other papers of their period. This latter method of treatment would have taken the propagandist papers out of their context, thereby robbing them of much of their significance.

The object of the "Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners" was "Om te staan vir ons Taal, ons Nasie, en ons Volk". One of the means whereby this end was to be achieved was the issue of a monthly paper, "Die Afrikaanse Patriot", the first number of which appeared on January 15th

1876./

---

45. For a complete history of the "Taalstryd" see articles in "Die Huisgenoot" by J.H.H. de Waal, February to April, 1932.



1876. It had scarcely fifty subscribers, and was the subject of much adverse criticism. The Cape Synod of the Dutch Church discussed the matter and criticised the pamphlet. Children were forbidden to read it and teachers to act as contributors or agents. The "Cradocksche-Afrikaner" said of it: "Semi-educated Griquas will surely be delighted with this paper". "Die Patriot" was further attacked by the "Cape Times", "The Argus", "De Zuidafrikaan" and other papers. In spite of this unfavourable reception, "Die Patriot" struggled on until in 1877 it became a weekly. Three years later it had 3,000 subscribers, having partially regained favour by its expressions of sympathy with the Boers in the South African Republic, in their protests against British Annexation in 1877. This encouragement resulted in the Suidafrikaanse Taalbond Congress at Paarl deciding in 1898 to issue a monthly organ, "Ons Klyntji", the first Afrikaans non-political organ. Both papers were under the editorship of the Rev. S.J. du Toit, the father of the first Afrikaanse Taalbeweging.

A cloud appeared on the horizon when he criticised President Kruger and supported Rhodes' policy, even after the Jameson Raid. Influential members of the Genootskap resigned and demanded the refund of their capital in an attempt to change the policy of the paper. In this attempt they were unsuccessful. Both papers carried on until in 1904 the struggle became too great for "Die Patriot", while "Ons

"Klyntji" gave up the ghost in the following year. Further dissension had been caused among subscribers and supporters by the publication of the photographs of English army officers alongside those of the Boer leaders. The papers fell into disfavour and when they died there were few people who regarded their discontinuance as a loss. Other papers arose to fill the breach. "De Goede Hoop" appeared in July, 1903, under the editorship of Advocate J.H.H. de Waal and is still in existence at the present time.

"Ons Taal" was established in 1907 and continued until 1909. It appeared in 1914 as "Ons Moedertaal", the official organ of the Stellenbosch Afrikaanse Taal Vereeniging, and later recognized as being the organ of similar movements in the Western Province. It was under the editorship of Professor J.J. Smith, of Stellenbosch University, and others. It ceased in August 1915, and in May of the following year was incorporated in "Die Huisgenoot", of which Professor Smith assumed editorship. In November 1923 it became an illustrated weekly under the guidance of Dr. H.G. Viljoen, who resigned his position in 1932. It is a powerful cultural factor in the national life of the Afrikaans speaking people of the Union. On the first Union Day "Die Brandwag" appeared as a supplement to "Die Volkstem". It appeared bi-monthly under the joint editorship of Gustav Preller and Dr. W. M. R. Malherbe.

During the Great War "Die Brandwag" was reduced to a monthly. In 1920 the paper ceased publication, even the support of "Die Banier", forthcoming in 1920, the organ of the Afrikaanse Studentebond, being unable to keep it going. "Die Banier" appeared for a brief period from August 1922

until /

until the same month in the following year. Round about this time the "Tydskrif vir Wetenskap en Kuns", a scientific quarterly under the editorship of Dr. D. F. Malherbe, made its appearance, while in recent years "Die Brandwag" has been resurrected<sup>46</sup> under the style of "Die Nuwe Brandwag".

---

#### NATAL NEWSPAPERS

The first newspaper published in Natal, "De Natalier", was offered to the public on March 15th, 1844. It was edited by C. E. Boniface, who had previously been associated with "De Zuidafrikaan" in the Cape. It was a Hollands paper, published in Maritzburg by Cornelis Moll, Sr. formerly of the "Moderator and Meditator". It was a small four-page weekly in which fragments of English were included after it had been in existence for about a year. Its life was not long lived. In 1846 the proprietor unsuccessfully contested a libel action and the publication ceased. Graham Mackeurtan ("Cradle Days of Natal, page 291) wrote: "Major Smith, Commandant of Natal, was much incensed by the tone of a newspaper called "De Natalier". He sent one to the Governor to show "the seditious spirit in which it was written" and described the Editor as "an unprincipled Frenchman of the name of Boniface". Boniface, with Mr. Moll, may conceivably have deserved the strictures of the intransigent Major Smith, but he did prosperity a service by his weekly publication. The full title of the paper was "De Natalier en Pietermaritzburgsche Trouwe Aanteekenaar". It published advertisements on the front page, including that of a certain Mr. Winder who sold "Punjums and Baftas, sugar candy, gunpowder, and resin". Mr. Winder's advertisement

read /

---

46. For the information regarding the part played by the papers mentioned in the Kerste en Tweede Taalbeweging the writer has relied upon the introduction to Bot en Kritringer's "Letterkundige Leesboek".



read as follows :

"T O L I A R S"

G. Winder informs all L I A R S that he has returned to Maritzburg, 13th June, 1845".

Mr. Mackeurtan emphasises the fact -- as the writer has done in the following chapter-- of the great assistance newspapers are in giving an insight into the social life, habits and customs of a people at any time. Several instances are given in "Cradle Days of Natal". When a farewell dinner to Lieutenant Nourse of H.M.S. Fawn was suggested, "De Natalier" published the following message :

"Maritzburg expects that in spite of the preachers of temperance every one on that occasion will do his duty".

In spite of Major Smith's dislike of the paper, the following eulogy of his services was published in "De Natalier" on his departure :

"He was always ready to support our tottering administration and notwithstanding the relation in which he stood towards the immigrants, we believe he is their friend. We express the public feeling in wishing him a hearty farewell and that it may go well with him to the end of his life".

The place of "De Natalier" was taken by "The Natal Witness", which, established in 1846, was originally a bilingual paper but later published its news only in the English Language. It was a weekly newspaper edited and published by David Dale Buchanan. <sup>47.</sup> When the "Natal Witness Ltd"., was registered as a company it had a capital of £2,500. This has been built up until in September 1919 it was increased to £75,000. The present Editor of the "Witness" is Mr. <sup>S. F. POTTER,</sup> ~~W. H. Mackenzie~~. In November, 1846, "The Patriot"

---

47. Described by Professor du Plessis as "That stormy petrel of the Press", "Cape Times", May 13th, 1939.



"Patriot" was published by Mr. Vull with Arthur Walker as Editor. This was largely in English with fragments in Hollands. After it had been in existence for one year its name was changed to "The Natal Patriot".

The next few years were prolific in newspaper production in Natal. In January, 1850, "The Natal Independent" was issued under the editorship of James Archibell, the Wesleyan Missionary, on August 22nd, 1851; "The Durban Observer", August 29th, 1851; "The Natal Times", of which Mr. Frank <sup>48</sup> Trott said:

"Not long ago I glanced through the first copy of the "Natal Times and Durban Mercantile and Agricultural Gazette", published on August 29th, 1851. It was a quaint production consisting of four small pages and to-day might provoke a smile";

"Natal Bode" , March 2, 1853; "The Natal Standard and Farmers Courant"; November 25th, 1853; "The Natal Mercury and Commercial Shipping Gazette" founded by Sir John Robinson the father of Responsible Government in Natal and the first Prime Minister thereafter, printed at Port Natal, as Durban was then called; "De Natal en Zuid-Oost-Afrikaan", May 6th, 1854; "The Natal Commercial Advertiser", November 3rd, 1854; "The Natal Advertiser", August 22nd, 1855; "The Natal Star", September 13th of the same year; "The Natal Chronicle", January 6th, 1856; "The Natal Guardian", November 20th of the same year; "De Ware Patriot", on January 9th, 1859 "The Natal Courier". Few of these papers caught the imagination of the people of Natal and most of them were defunct by the year 1860. For much of the foregoing information the writer is indebted to Dr. Gustav <sup>49.</sup> Preller.

From research undertaken in the Shepstone  
papers /

48 Assistant Editor of the "Rand Daily Mail" and President of the South African Society of Journalists 1931, remarked: In his presidential address at the Journalists' Society Annual Congress, Johannesburg, January, 1933

49. "Die Volkstem", October 1st, 1924.

papers, the writer found that the authorities in Natal, though not actively antagonistic towards those papers which could not see eye to eye with them, were apprehensive of the result of this opposition. Extracts from these papers which follow will serve to show how Shepstone and his colleagues were anxious to win the press over to their point of view. "The Natal Commercial Advertiser" was first published on March 20th, 1860, and the "Times of Natal" was founded on August 19th 1865. Of the latter, Sir Theophilus Shepstone wrote to Mr. Henrique Shepstone from Maritzburg ten years later: "The 'Times' newspaper as you know has been at the service of the Government since Sir Garnet arrived and is for a few weeks longer, but the consideration will then cease and the bargain will be ended; it is, however, desirable that one paper in the Colony should be the exponent of the Government side of any question that may arise, but how to secure this without special consideration given by Sir Garnet is the difficulty. Sir Henry thinks that the newspaper of the establishment which does the Government printing ought to support the Government and so do I, but will it because we think so? He is quite horrified that the 'Witness' newspaper should be that in which the Government printing is carried on, he says it is feeding the enemy at our expense.... What is wanted to be known as a fact promise

50

is whether if Vause gets the contract for the Government printing his paper, 'The Times' will continue to support the Government in a rational way and be its organ when occasion required. Of course in return for this--- the earliest authentic information would be given it on all subjects.... It looked to me at first sight like a piece of bribery and corruption but when I came to look at it more closely it

resolved /

---

50. Mr. Richard Vause at one time joint proprietor of the "Mercury" with Sir John Robinson.

resolved itself into saying I will give you the advantages of being Government contractor although your tender may not be lower than the others if you give the Government the advantage of a fair statement of its own case when wanted and generally afford it reasonable support, and this is wanted not for any personal benefit but for the welfare of the Colony".<sup>51</sup>

Other newspapers which unsuccessfully sought a permanent place in the social and political life of Natal included "The Natal Herald", May 3rd, 1866; "The Natal Colonist", January 3rd 1871; "The Natal Mercantile Advertiser", January 5th, 1878; and "De Natal Afrikaner", 1886, which later changed its name to "Die Afrikaner", and only went under as recently as in 1932. It was a bi-weekly paper and a sup-<sup>52</sup>porter of the National Party.

The Native and Indian newspapers of Natal will be considered in Chapter II. It is therefore not proposed to comment on them here. It remains only to summarise the country Press of Natal before passing over to a consideration of the Free State and the Transvaal. These are comparatively few in number and do not exhibit that characteristic of bilingualism which is so marked in the Cape and in the Transvaal. The "Greytown Gazette", which is described in the Newspaper Press Directory as "a well-conducted up-country newspaper", is sold at 3d weekly; the "Ladysmith Gazette" is sold at 1d; as is also the "Dundee and District Courier"; Vryheid boasts two newspapers--- the "Vryheid Gazette" and the "Vryheid and District/

- 
51. Shepstone papers, 1835-1891, University of Pretoria, page 374.
52. Copies of complete issues of the Natal papers for the period which they existed, as well as files of those which are still published are preserved in the Natal Archives at Maritzburg.



District Mail", the latter being a bilingual production. The "Zululand Times" is published at Eshowe every Thursday. The "Newcastle Advertiser" published every Saturday claims to be run on the lines of the principal English country papers with serial stories by foremost authors of the day.

Of the more important Natal papers, the "Natal Mercury" published in Durban, is a morning daily of considerable importance and influence. During the recent Devolution movement in Natal it supported the Devolutionaries, and the writer's comments in this connection appear later in this thesis. The "S.A. Women's Weekly" is published every Thursday as a free supplement. The other large Durban paper, "The Natal Advertiser", is the only afternoon paper published in Durban and two editions are brought out daily, as well as an enlarged week-end edition with feature and sporting articles. It is connected to the Argus group of newspapers. The "Natal Witness", the oldest established newspaper in Natal, publishes morning and evening editions. It has no rivals in Maritzburg. It claims that its views are "liberal without respect of persons or parties".

---

#### NEWSPAPERS IN THE FREE STATE.

"The Friend of the Sovereignty and Bloemfontein Gazette" was the first newspaper in the Free State. It was founded on June 10th, 1850. Four years later, when the Free State achieved independence it became known as "The Friend of the Free State". The first editor of the "Friend" was Thomas White, while the persons to whose inspiration the creation of the newspaper was due were White and Codrington, the association of the latter with the early Grahamstown papers  
having /



having given the necessary experience for this pioneer work. The first issue of the paper was bilingual and the Dutch name under which it was published was "De Vriend van de Soevereiniteit en Bloem Fonteinse Courant".

The avowed object of the "Friend" was :

"Spreiding van nauwkeurige berigten, de handhaving van regtvaardige wetten en goede order het verbreiden van vriendelijke en edelmoedige gevoelens; de bevordering van opvoeding; het inprenten van Christelijke waarheid; de uitbreiding van landbouw en handel, en in een woord, het bevorderen van aller welvaart door alle regtvaardige "middels". Verder sou die belange van almal, afgesien van ras of kleur, behartig word"

("The publication of accurate reports, the maintenance of just laws and good order, the spread of friendly and noble sentiments; the furtherance of education; the emphasis of Christian truths; the development of agriculture and commerce; and in one word, the advancement of the national well-being by all justifiable means; further the interest of all, irrespective of race or colour, will be cherished".)

With the change of name came a change in ownership, White buying out Godlonton and continuing alone until 1871, when the paper was taken over by White, Barlow and Co. On the death of White shortly afterwards, the paper was managed by the firm of Messrs. Barlow Brothers.

The arrival of the British troops in Bloemfontein on March 15th, 1900, under Lord Roberts, led to a further change of hands. Lord Roberts purchased the right to produce the paper for a month for £20 and an American War correspondent, together with certain South African journalists, assumed responsibility for the publication of the "Friend". Rudyard Kipling occupied the editorial chair for a short while until the evacuation of the troops. This, the first newspaper in the centre Province of the Union, is to-day the most influential English newspaper in the Province known by the brief title/

53 The full history of the "Friend of the Sovereignty and Bloemfontein Gazette" was given in "Ruis en Haard", October 1936 and the details in this connection have been abstracted by the writer from this publication, as also those which follow later in regard to other Free State Newspapers.

title of "The Friend". It is a unit in the powerful Argus group and from its press is run off the "Outspan", the weekly counterpart of "Die Huisgenoot". Neither of these are confined to the Province in which they are published but enjoy Union-wide circulation.

The first "Gouvernements Courant" was published in 1857, while five years later, on October 29th, 1862, "De Tijd", the first Hollands newspaper in the Free State made its appearance as a weekly, and continued for 13 years. The first editors were Hendrik Hamelberg and Kees Heligers. The objects of this paper were in many respects similar to those of the "Friend", except that no mention was made of the "cherishing of the interests of all, irrespective of race or colour". In spite of the similarity in the declaration of policy, a <sup>54</sup> researcher declares that "De Tijd" and "The Friend" were frequently at loggerheads.

Newspapers made tardy development in the Free state and it was not until March 11th, 1876, that the third newspaper made its appearance. In the meantime "De Tijd" had ceased to exist. This was "De Express en Oranje Vrijstaats Advertentieblad", whose motto was "Uwe onafhankelikeid hebt gij gekregen; houdt ze; en maak U harer waardig". (You have obtained your independence; maintain this, and make yourself worthy of it). It set itself out to determine "in what way our position may be improved, and to ensure a righteous influence for the Free State in the general affairs of South Africa". The "Express" thought it saw salvation in a closer co-operation between the two Northern Republics and continued to work for this ideal until it ceased publication in 1900 when it was suppressed by the military authorities for its

strong /

---

54. L.B. van der Walt, Archivist of the Free State, in "Huis en Haard", October 1928, page 24.

strong attitude against the English in connection with the South African War then raging.

"The Fully News" was brought into being in July 1882 by the "O.V.S. Nieuwsblad Maatskappij", which had founded the "Express". "We intend supplying our readers with the very latest telegraphic news available", it stated in its first issue. "News not views" was the key-note of this publication, which did not aspire to the inclusion of a leading article in its columns. It lasted for eight years. Other newspapers of less importance which grew up in the Free State prior to the South African War included "de Burger" and "The Independent" founded by F.H. Stutheim in Bloemfontein and "Fakkal". After the war, which carries the period under review into the twentieth century, there was greater activity in the field of journalism in the Free State, which has, nevertheless, remained the most backward of all the Provinces of the Union in this respect. This is only to be expected when the comparative circumstances of the four Provinces are taken into account.

Among the Free State newspapers of the Twentieth Century must be included "Vriend des Volks" a bi-weekly; the "Bloemfontein Post", now defunct, and the "Friend", a continuation of the old "Friend of the sovereignty", and later "Friend of the Free State". In addition to the "Outspan" which has already been mentioned, the "Friend" also has under its aegis "The Farmer's Weekly", perhaps the best authority in South Africa on agricultural matters pertaining to this country. It claims to be the only English weekly in the Union devoted to this all-important industry. It includes as a supplement, "The Homestead", a paper for the women on the farm. Established



in 1911, its circulation extends beyond the borders of the Union to the Belgian Congo, East Africa, South West Africa, and Kenya. It has a counterpart in "Die Landbou Weekblad" published in Bloemfontein under the auspices of "Die Volksblad", which latter is the most important addition to the Free State daily Press in the last twenty years. It will be considered later in connection with the chain of newspapers which sprang up in various parts of the country to support the National Party shortly after General Hertzog broke away from the South African Party in 1912.

Among its country newspapers, all of which are weeklies and bilingual, are "The Bethlehem Express"; "The Frontier Guardian", published at Ficksburg; "The Heilbron Herald"; "The Ladybrand Courant"; and "The Kroonstad Times". "The Harriemith Chronicle" is a weekly but is not bilingual. "Huis en Haard", the only Afrikaans literary periodical in the Free State, is the official organ of the Afrikaanse Studentebond.

---

#### NEWSPAPERS IN THE TRANSVAAL.

Twenty years after the historic Great Trek of the Voortrekkers from the Cape, a Government Gazette, published by Cornelis Moll, Jnr., was issued at Potchefstroom. That was on September 25th, 1857. Two years later the name was changed to "Gouvernements Courant der Z.A.R." The first newspaper, "De Oude Emigrant" was brought into being on October 15th, 1859, and was published at Potchefstroom in Hollands. Three years later "de Emigrant" was established. Its editor was A.F. Schubert and publisher J.P. Berrius. Its motto was "Concordia res minime crescunt".



The principles of "De Emigrant" as enunciated in its columns were: "The recognition of the freedom of the Press was granted by Article 19 of the Constitution, subject to certain restrictions. We shall not depart from the principles laid down in the Constitution, as the freedom of the Press must always be the medium of giving publicity to truth through the interpretation of feelings, though the columns of "De Oude Emigrant" were sometimes filled with insulting articles, which were not in accord with the noble calling of the Press, and which disregarded the Constitution. We therefore regard it as our bounden duty to strain every nerve towards the attainment of unity, because unity is essential if small states are to flourish. In this task we trust we shall enjoy the sympathy and support of every right-thinking citizen of the Republic".

"De Oude Emigrant" had ceased publication nine months previously. General Schoeman persuaded Borrius to transfer his paper and dispatched Fredrich Jeppe to the Cape for the purchase of plant for a new paper. This was in August, 1862, and in November of the same year "De Oude Emigrant" was resurrected. The establishment had not been conducted in a very businesslike manner, however, and a message from Potchefstroom in "Het Volksblad" in the Cape showed that the revival of "De Oude Emigrant" was only possible after two experts had spent two months sorting the type back  
 55  
 into their proper places.

In 1863 the "Staats Courant" was published in Pretoria for the first time, in an old building on Church

Square /

---

55. This information and much that follows has been based on Gustav Preller's valuable summary in the "Volksstem", October 1st, 1924, although the facts therein contained have been checked whenever possible and greatly supplemented.

Square, near where the Pretoria Club now stands. Its headquarters were moved from time to time, and, after being edited in the Office of Advocate Hollard, it was transferred to a building in Church Street East. It was printed on a second-hand printing press by Cornelis Moll, Jnr., and Daantjie Immelman. In the following year a paper called "De Republiksin" was issued in Pretoria but beyond that fact nothing further is known of it. In 1831 Pretoria gave birth to a monthly with a similar name but it was short lived.

The next move in the newspaper world came from Potchefstroom where the "Transvaal Argus" was set up in 1866. This was a bilingual weekly with Fredrich Jeppe as Editor and Borrius as publisher. After two years it was taken over by Roselt and assumed the name of the "Transvaal Advocate". The "Transvaal Argus" appeared in Pretoria ten years later and ceased publication in 1880, on the outbreak of the Boer War. Charles Decker who was later to own and edit the first daily newspaper on the Rand, was the printer and proprietor of the "Argus" which was entrusted with the printing of the "Government Gazette".

In a letter to Sir Bartle Frere, written from Pretoria on October 21st, 1878, Sir Theophilus Shepstone wrote:<sup>56</sup>  
 "There is another paper<sup>57</sup> published here, the "Transvaal Argus" and it is anxious enough to give the Government a fair hearing but it is published in English, has no circulation whatever among the Boers, and is in monetary difficulty like the "Volkstem"... They ask the Government to assist them in some way or they will have to discontinue the paper.. I have told them that I should not from my point of view be justified in supporting /

---

56. Shepstone papers, University of Pretoria, page 948.

57. In addition to "De Volkstem", Sir Theophilus' comments on which are quoted later.

supporting with public money or Government Guarantee any mercantile establishment that upon the face of it is not sound enough to support itself... Some time ago the people connected with the "Argus" offered to publish a sheet in Dutch provided the Government would keep them by way of subsidy or by taking a certain number of copies... but anything of the kind is so foreign as it appears to me, to what the Government can properly do, that I have declined".

The "Argus" press was used for the publication of the "News of the Camp", a small publication of no serious intent, published by the actor Charles Duval for the edification of the British soldiers in Pretoria. A bound file of this unique paper can be seen at the Pretoria Museum. It has already been shown how the advent of troops into Bloemfontein had affected the "Friend of the Sovereignty" and the "Express". It will be shown later how, during the second South African War, a comparatively large crop of small newspapers sprang up, mushroom-like, to fall away again within a short period.

The year 1873 is the earliest year of importance as far as the larger newspapers north of the Vaal are concerned, for on August 8th of that year "De Volkstem" was founded and still continues to-day. It is the oldest newspaper in the Transvaal and, as far as the Afrikaans newspapers are concerned, one of the most important. It has had a romantic history and, once again it is proposed to sacrifice strict chronological sequence, in order to sketch the history of this newspaper.

On February 21st, 1874, one year after it had been established, "De Volkstem" published the following unique

and /



and entertaining appeal "To Our Subscribers".<sup>58</sup> "Our ideal is to lead a God-fearing life and we foster the hope that thereby we may inherit the eternal Kingdom. We should like to meet all our subscribers there, which will not be possible unless-- as it is their duty to do-- they forward their subscriptions. Those who fail to do this may be struck by lightning in a thundering desert. He may have the life-blood sucked from him by thousands of fleas as he is now sapping us. May he, in putting on a tight shoe find therein a living porcupine. May he have a nagging wife and a smoking chimney-piece. Never yet-- and this is a striking fact-- has a man who regularly paid his newspaper subscription committed suicide. A long life-- with very few exceptions-- has usually been his lot. Failure to pay newspaper subscriptions is invariably the first step towards crime. Let that be a warning! We know a subscriber who regularly pays for his paper in advance. He has never been ill in his life. He has no corns; has never suffered from toothache, and his children never cry in the night. Well now, if that hasn't stirred you, nothing will!"<sup>59</sup> the father of Jan F.E. Celliers, whose name stands high among the Afrikaans poets and whose prose work has also won him well-merited distinction, was associated with the paper at its birth. Celliers declared himself vigorously against the annexation of the Transvaal in 1877 and incurred the displeasure of Sir Theophilus Shepstone, who confiscated the Press. It nevertheless continued to publish in a small form.

Writing to Sir Bartle Frere from Pretoria in 1878 Sir Theophilus Shepstone dealt with "De Volkstem" as follows /

58. This passage has been translated from Hollands into Afrikaans and then into English. It has probably lost much of its spice in the process.

59. "Die Volkstem" reproduced this appeal on October 1st, 1924.



60  
follows:

"Up to this moment there has been but one Dutch newspaper in Pretoria and it has uniformly devoted itself to creating disaffection and ill-feeling towards everything English. From being the oldest paper and being published in Dutch at the seat of Government it is universally read by the Boers who, being extremely ignorant, are correspondingly credulous and settle any doubtful point by saying: "Does it not stand so in the courant?". The Government has no means whatever of conveying any corrective to the sedition that is thus sown broadcast and weekly throughout the country. One Boer told me that his countrymen believed the "Volkstem" more implicitly than they do the Bible".

The arrest of the Editor of "De Volkstem" and W. E. Bok, sub-editor in 1879, has been dealt with in a subsequent chapter. With the outbreak of the Boer War in 1880 the "Volkstem's" offices were closed down, but, with the evacuation of the British troops in the following year a Press was presented to the Editor of the paper in order to enable him to continue. The "Volkstem" accordingly re-appeared in that year and was furthermore entrusted with the publication of the Staats-courant. In 1884 fragments of English were included in the columns of "De Volkstem". Four years later the "Volkstem" press and also the paper itself was sold to the Government and the Government Printing Works were established. With the change of hands came a change of Editorship. This was entrusted to W. Jonker whose period of office was terminated by his suicide in 1889. The third Editor was Dr. F.V. Engelenberg, who is still associated with the newspaper. His influence in building up the prestige of the "Volkstem" has been great and it is claimed for him by those who are best able to judge that he is one of the most fluent and capable writers in Holland in South Africa at the present time. One year after Dr. Engelenberg assumed control the

"Volkstem" /

"Volkstem" "Maatskappy" was formed.

It was not until 1895, however, that the "Volkstem" became a daily newspaper, while in the same year it issued a weekly supplement in French — "La Semaine" for a short while. Publication was interrupted by the second South African War in 1900 and, after the war, reverted to its former status as a weekly, continuing in this form until 1914 when it was once again able to appear as a daily. Round about 1911 it issued a supplement called "Die Boer", of which Marin Coet (now M.P.) was Editor. Mr. N. Levi, now retired, is one of the outstanding journalists who have been associated with the "Volkstem" at some time during the 59 years of its existence. Mr. C.S. Coetzee is the present Editor. The paper is a staunch supporter of General Smuts and owes allegiance to the South African Party. It is moderate in its views and conciliatory in its outlook.

Pilgrims Rest, that little mining area in the North Eastern Transvaal eight miles from the nearest Railway Station, was the next dorp in the Transvaal to have a paper of its own. In January, 1874, "The Gold News" was published at that centre. It was originally intended to call it the "Mac-Mac Weekly" but the name was changed. In the following month it was honoured with a second paper "The Goldfields Mercury" under the editorship of Phelan.

With the annexation of the Transvaal in 1877 the Transvaal Government Gazette took the place of the Staats Courant. In that year, Borrius, who had been continuing his journalistic activities at Potchefstroom, brought out "De

Transvaal". /

Transvaal". In 1882 the "Transvaal Advertiser" was established in Pretoria by John Keith and was later edited by Dr. Scobel. It continued until 1908. It was to this paper that Charles Deecker, that veteran pioneer journalist on the Rand during the early days of Johannesburg as a mining camp, was attached. He severed his connection in March, transferring to the "Cathcart Express", later running the "Krugersdorp Times" and "Roodepoort Mail" before coming to the Rand. The Barberton Goldfields had been opened in 1884 and on May 6th, 1886, Gordon Cameron founded the "Barberton Herald", while in February of the following year the "Representative" set up in the same mining camp. Thus both Pilgrims Rest and Barberton each had two newspapers before a single paper had been inaugurated on the Rand.

Less than a year after the foundation of Johannesburg in 1886 newspapers began springing up on the Rand like mushrooms after a shower. The first in the field is generally believed to be "The Diggers News", but Hedley Chilvers <sup>61</sup> states that Johannesburg's first newspaper was a Dutch journal published by a certain du Toit. It was non-political. Its life was brief and its name had been forgotten". Of the "Diggers' News and Witwatersrand Advertiser", Mr. Chilvers writes: "The first number was published at sixpence a copy by Will Crosby and Co., at their printing works in Market Street, on February 24th, 1887. The paper consisted of four clearly-set sheets, the greater portion of which was devoted to advertisements. The letter press section dealt with mining intelligence, local notes, and half a column of overseas telegrams". Only one day later, "The Mining Argus" was  
 established /

---

61. "Out of the Crucible", Appendix E, page 249 et seq.



established in Johannesburg. This was published by the late Charles Deecker who had returned to the Rand from Oshana, whence he had gone four years previously to edit the "Farmers Chronicle" there. His late widow, Mrs. M. E. Deecker<sup>62</sup> tells of the difficulties experienced in obtaining cash payment for advertisements:

"One day to pay for a birth notice a sturdy young Dutchman staggered into the office with a fat turkey under each arm... Another farmer could not pay in cash but offered to lend a cow which he guaranteed would give an ample supply of milk all the winter. I accepted and the cow nobly did her duty. In time we became educated to this payment in kind and would calmly see to the unloading of a crate of fowls or a few bags of potatoes".

The story of how he was beaten by a day by "The Diggers News" in the production of a newspaper for Johannesburg was told by the late Charles Deecker.<sup>63</sup> "In all good faith I went to Messrs. Will Crosby and Co. to have some dodgers printed announcing that the "Mining Argus" would appear on February 25th", Deecker wrote. "This gave the whole show away. The "Diggers News" came out the day before. But I could not do anything. My printing was being done at Pretoria and matters could not be speeded up. It was, to say the least of it, unsportsmanlike". It must have been a source of satisfaction to Deecker that he was the first to produce a daily newspaper in Johannesburg.

The first office of the "Argus" was nothing more than canvas stretched over a wooden frame which did nothing to alleviate the tremendous difficulties under which Deecker and his wife worked. His choice of name for his

paper

62. In an unpublished work "Ups and Downs - The Story of a Journalist" bequeathed to the South African Society of Journalists by whose courtesy the writer was enabled to consult the typescript.

63. In a memoir quoted by his widow, Mrs. M. E. Deecker, in "Ups and Downs".



paper was guided by his reverence for and memory of the old "Transvaal Argus" - "Why he wanted to perpetuate the memory of that ill-fated paper was rather a puzzle to me", wrote his wife. <sup>64</sup> Copy had to be sent to Pretoria (where the "Argus" was printed) in all sorts of ways, by coach, or by special messenger on horseback. "It often happened that copy went astray, as well as advertisements, the latter including a loss of revenue" (1 bid). Before the end of the year, however, a plant was acquired from Port Elizabeth and set up in Johannesburg. The "Argus" thereupon became first a biweekly and later a daily paper, being ahead of all contemporaries in this respect. It is interesting to note that advertising rates were higher in those days than they are to-day; advertisements were not canvassed - they were brought to the office and readily paid for. In some respects those were the "Good old Days".

"The Standard and Transvaal Mining Chronicle" came into being on March, 1887. It was printed on a Columbia Press and there was just sufficient type to set out a four paged paper. The Press was housed in a tent until a wood and iron structure could be erected to accommodate it. "The Standard" later amalgamated with the "Diggers News" under the style of "The Standard and Diggers News" which continued until as recently as 1920. The amalgamation in 1890 followed, strangely enough, a period during which the papers were constantly at loggerheads over controversial matters affecting that period. Both the papers had become dailies before they joined forces and the combination led to the production of a Sunday newspaper. This was something entirely new in the field of South African journalism and it was a failure. The

first /

---

64. "Ups and Downs", an unpublished work.

first issue was also the last. Before the year 1887 was out "The Transvaal Observer" had also arrived on the scene, and this activity in journalism on the Witwatersrand caused the "Volkstem" to remark <sup>65</sup> that there had been a general influx of newspaper proprietors to the Transvaal.

On November 29th, 1887, "The Transvaal" appeared at Lydenburg; while in the following year the following papers came into being: "The Bulletin", on February 21st, at Johannesburg; "Die Volksraad", a bilingual weekly at Pretoria, on May 10th; "The Goldfields News" at Barberton on June 22nd. "The Goldfields News is still in existence to-day as "The Goldfields' News, Barberton and Molepreuit Herald". "The Klerksdorp Pioneer" on July 23rd; "Land en Volk" on October 10th; and "The Eastern Star" on the Rand. The plant for the last-named paper, a morning, had been brought to Johannesburg by the brothers T. and G. Sheffield, who had conducted a paper of the same name in Grahamstown. After a short spell the "Eastern Star" set in favour of "The Star" which, as an evening paper, appeared on the horizon on April 3rd, 1889, under the editorship of the late Francis J. Dörner. <sup>66</sup> It sailed rapidly across the heavens and the commotion which this ephemeral body caused among the constellations culminating in the birth of "The Comet" has been fully described in Chapter III. It has identified itself with the agricultural, commercial, and more especially the mining interests of the country and to-day plays an important part in the national life of the country, and is one of South Africa's best-known papers. It is one of the more important units of the Argus Printing and Publishing /

---

65. October 20th, 1887.

66. As an indication of the hectic times in which journalists plied their trade in the 1890's it may be mentioned that on January 14th, 1891, Dörner was assaulted for an article of a contentious nature which had appeared in the "Star".

Publishing Company and publishes two editions daily. The practice of publishing a noon edition, which persisted for some years, was discontinued about five years ago. It is sympathetic to a greater extent probably than any other European newspaper in the country to the welfare and interests of the native people of the Union. Politically it is sympathetic towards the South African Party. The present editor is Mr. C. D. Don.

It is of more than passing interest to recall that when Johannesburg celebrated its fortieth birthday on a grandiose scale in 1925 the "Star" had a float in the procession on which was the first printing Press of any magnitude ever used in Johannesburg, namely that brought by the Sheffield brothers from Grahamstown. On it were printed leaflets containing extracts from early issues of the "Star" by men who had actually assisted in the transference of the plant from the Eastern Province to the Transvaal.

Simultaneous with the birth of the "Star" came the inauguration of the "Argus Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd" with Headquarters at Johannesburg. It was registered at Pretoria on June 11th, 1889, with a capital of £70,000 for the purpose of "carrying on business at Johannesburg, Capetown, Kimberley, and London, and other such places as the directors may from time to time determine". The then editor of the "Star" -- Francis J. Dormer-- was managing director and held 14,495 of the shares. Others associated with the "Argus" were Sir J.B. Robinson, and the brothers G. and T. Sheffield, who had trekked up from Grahamstown. The "Argus" increased its capital to £100,000 on October 7th, 1895, by which time the late S.B. Joel had become associated with the concern.

This /



This followed upon an extraordinary general meeting on September 4th, 1895, when it was decided to rebuild the Company's works at Capetown, to equip it with new machinery, and to purchase the business of the Rhodesian Printing and Publishing Co.Ltd., at Salisbury, Bulawayo, and Umtali, and to enlarge the scope of the company's co-operation in Rhodesia. In 1917 this capital was increased by a further £100,000. Such satisfactory progress did the company make that in its 41st Annual Report in 1930 it was able to state that "notwithstanding the restriction of business and the consequent decline of advertising revenue caused by the prevailing depression, the trade results were satisfactory. The circumstances of the newspapers in which the company is interested continue to improve, and, in some cases, show a substantial increase over previous records". A perusal of the documents of the company filed in the Companies Office, Pretoria, reveals the close association which has always existed between the Argus Company and Corner House.

On November 13th, 1888, the "Zoutpanenberg Review" was created with headquarters at Pietersburg, to cater for the greater part of the Northern Transvaal. Until 1932 it was the only newspaper published throughout the Magisterial Districts of Waterberg, Potgietersrust, Letaba, Pietersburg, and Zoutpanenberg, an area of more than 50,000 square miles. The advent of the "Northern Transvaal News", a bilingual biweekly paper of equal merit under the editorship of Mr. O'Reilly Merry has brought it a rival and had undoubtedly done much to stimulate enterprise and initiative which are not characteristics of journalism in areas in which competition is lacking. In 1939 was set up the "Klerksdorp



Record and Western Transvaal News", a typical country newspaper, which is still in existence to-day.

The Burlesque" a paper similar in style and tone to the "Critic" with which it later became incorporated, the first issue of which was on sale in Johannesburg on March 1st, 1890. It described itself as "A weekly Family and Society Journal of the Times". It was sold for 1/-. Its first issue contained the cynical observation that "If some men were half as big as they think they are, Johannesburg would have to be enlarged". In a notice "To our Brethren of the Pen" it stated: "The Burlesque is but a child and as such child asks you, its elders, that should you find in its columns anything worthy of reproduction in your journals that due credit be given to us. We shall respect this ourselves and give credit for any matter that we may take over from any other journal".

The advent of this paper was favourably commented upon by numerous newspapers. Whereas the "Critic" one of the militant weekly papers of the 1890's, was outspoken and straightforward in its criticisms, the "Burlesque" was cynical, sarcastic, and bantering. It was an inveterate leg-puller and, by these methods, endeavoured to bring those with whom it was in disagreement into ridicule. An example of this is given in Chapter III. in connection with the "Burlesque's" pseudo-interview with President Kruger.

In addition to the inauguration of the "Burlesque", the opening of the last decade of the Nineteenth Century was heralded by the commencement in Pretoria of "The Press", the first Editor of which was Baron Gluckstein, <sup>an English Jew</sup> who abandoned a Johannesburg paper, "The Bulletin", for his new

love /

love. He was succeeded by Leo Weinthal who, in 1891, brought out "The Weekly Press", and, in 1893, "De Pers", of which Mr. P. S. W. Grobler (the present Minister of Lands) was for some time Editor. Leo Weinthal's journalistic contributions to South Africa are too well-known to need any detailed recapitulation here. His death in 1931, while editor and proprietor of the "African World" in London, removed an outstanding figure from among the giants of journalism. While in Pretoria in the 1890's he was responsible for a valuable annual complete with illustrative photographs.

In 1892 death removed J. P. Borrius from his labours of love at Potchefstroom. In an issue of "De Potchefstroomer", another of his creations, appeared a glowing obituary of this hardy pioneer of South African journalism. The following year saw the advent of the "Transvaal Critic", which, as current events go to show, meant/that the worries of President Paul Kruger in the internal management of the Republic were to be increased tenfold. It adopted as its motto: "For I'm nothing if not critical" and immediately began to turn the searchlight of publicity upon everything and everybody that did not meet with its approval. Barry Ronan states that "Henry Hess was the nominal editor, while Gustave Halle did the work. Hess, himself a lawyer, had a busy time defending libel actions. His paper hit out fearlessly and it was the most respected journal of the old days".

The numerous cause celebre between the "Critic" and the President have been fully set out in Chapter II and it is not proposed to discuss here the relationship existing between the "Critic" and officialdom. The "Critic" violently

and /

---

67. "Forty South African Years", published 1919, page 60, et seq. Ronan was an early South African journalist who worked on numerous papers. He was employed by the "Natal Advertiser", Durban, until his death, two or three years ago.

and frequently attacked the "Standard and Diggers' News", which by lending its support to the President, automatically forfeited any claim to the "Critic's" sympathy. "Why is Mr. Kruger's organ, the "standard and Diggers' News" so foolish as to continue disseminating deliberate falsehoods?" it asked <sup>68</sup> "seeing that I am on the spot to contradict them immediately". The "Critic" which later resorted to changing its name to the "Transvaal Critic" to escape suspension <sup>69</sup> was reinforced on September 7th, 1895, by "The African Critic", published in London, but widely circulated in South Africa. In its initial issue it stated: "In these days of gigantic newspaper enterprises when there are organs published for every class of people, the 'African Critic' will not be conducted in the interests of any person or clique of persons. It will not waste its space and the patience of its readers in welcoming every coming and speeding every parting South African nobody. .. It will not reproduce process blocks of South African millionaires, nor of their wives or daughters, sons, sisters, cousins, or aunts, nor of their handmaidens, their oxen, their asses, nor of anything that is theirs... It will not fill its columns with wool quotations or nauseous divorce proceedings. These features are being developed so ably that the "African Critic" has decided to avoid entering into competition with its contemporaries".

"The 'African Critic' will be an ideal Anglo-African journal, quantity being sacrificed to quality. The predominant feature will be criticism, not reporting. The 'African Critic' will strive to uphold and maintain the highest traditions of the journalistic profession". How this

London /

---

68. "Critic", February 23rd, 1895.

69. See Chapter III.



London child of the Johannesburg parent followed in its father's footsteps was soon to be shown. On October 13th, 1895, it published the following :

"At a monthly meeting of the Anglo-African Writers' Club, the Chairman stigmatised the "Standard and Diggers News" as a 'venal organ'. Those who know anything about that paper, which is now about to issue a London edition in imitation of the "Cape Times" are aware how utterly dishonest its policy and tactics are".

70

In a subsequent edition it stated that "With the exception of the 'Transvaal Advertiser', the "Zoutpansberg Review" and the 'Critic', every paper in the Transvaal had adopted the attitude that the Boer could do no wrong".

The appearance of the "Critic" in Johannesburg in 1893 was almost simultaneous with that of the "Moon", and was followed by "the Sentinel" on May 30th, in Johannesburg; the "Transvaal Times" in Pretoria; and "Die Vierkleur" at Krugersdorp by Ben Viljoen, who later became the Veg-Generaal. Other publications which appeared before the Century came to a close included: "Het Christelike Schoolblad" in Pretoria in 1896; "The Johannesburg Times" 1895; "Die Boerevriend" at Nylstroom on June 22nd, 1896; "Ons Volk" at Krugersdorp on September 27th, 1897, by Ben Viljoen who had previously established "Die Vierkleur"; and "The Pretoria News" in 1898, by Leo Weinthal. The last-named is the most important and is still in existence to-day. In recent years it has changed its colours from pink to bring itself into line with the other newspapers of this country and has enlarged the size of its pages. Its closer affiliation with the "Star" and the Argus Group in 1930 led to a general re-organisation and an all-round improvement in its style and make-up.

"The /



"The Johannesburg Times" owned by Sir John B. Robinson, was packed with advertisements of dentists and of doctors bringing to the attention of "anaemic, suffering, and afflicted women the fact that "I will treat all cases (except surgical) by letter".<sup>71</sup> This was typical of numerous others. As symptomatic of the ill-feeling which existed in those days between the English and Afrikaans press -- an ill-feeling which persists to-day, though in an attenuated form, as will be shown later in this chapter-- the following extract<sup>72</sup> is given : "The 'Volkstem' is one of those papers that no one reads in Johannesburg, but it nevertheless contrives to write more unmitigated, spiteful, twaddle and compass more mischief amongst the Dutch than can be readily imagined", while, as far as its political sympathies were concerned,<sup>73</sup> Barry Ronan wrote :

"No difficulty in choosing a subject for a leader. One could always revile the Pretoria Government and utilise the Uitlander to the extent of a thousand words or so".

The "Times" was born during an unsettled period and on January 3rd, 1896, it published an advertisement to the effect that "The French Consul in Pretoria reminds all French that it is their duty to respect the laws and authority of the country of their residence and that it will be at their own risk and that they must bear all the consequences if they depart from this rule". In the same issue the "Relief Committee for the Housing of Women and Children" announced that "arrangements have been made to house a considerable number of women and children, should any panic or rush take place in town", while the "Town Body Guard stated that "though there is absolutely

no /

---

71. August 7th, 1895.

72. August 8th, 1895.

73. "Forty South African Years, published 1918.

no necessity for the further enrolment of men, those who have enrolled must hold themselves in readiness should necessity arise".

The next paper of importance was the "Transvaal Leader" edited by F. J. Pakeman, who had formerly been associated with "The Star". It was registered on April 8th, 1899, with a capital of £15,000 and paid £10,000 for the plant of the now defunct "Johannesburg Times". The "Leader" was among the foremost of the militant newspapers on the Rand and in the words of J.A. Hobson <sup>74</sup> "it was permitted day after day to use language which even in times of ordinary tranquility would have ensured the arrest and prosecution of editors and publishers in any other country in the world except England and the United States. The arrest of Pakeman and the attempted arrest of Monypenny (referred to in Chapter III) were resented in England as a terrible outrage on the liberty of publication. The language of "The Leader" clearly brought it under the law of High Treason of 1877".

Hobson quotes some extracts from the "Leader" in order to justify his statements :

"Fundamental Savagery"

On August 10th, 1899. "The ratification by the Raad of Article 74 of the concept Gronwet is in the opinion of the 'Leader' and, we believe, of every thinking man, a deliberate proclamation of a state of constitutional savagery. Even yet there is time for some strong and just man to arise and lead the Burghers to Pretoria to sweep the gang from power, to annul the decree of the Raad by a coup d'etat and eject the dynamitards from the State".

"Justice in the Transvaal"

On July 17th: "It will soon become possible to/

---

74. "The War in South Africa", 1900, page 266.

to get a Boer punished, no matter what his crime. We venture to think that there would have been precious little clemency had the offenders not been Burghers of the State" 75

"Over and over again", Hobson continues, "I have heard politicians in Johannesburg express their astonishment and indignation that their Press, having so good a cause, should damage it by gross exaggeration and positive falsehoods. The stories of Zarp atrocities and Boer assaults upon women did not even gain wide credence at the Cape, but, faithfully reproduced, and duly endorsed by the most reputable colonial papers, they passed by wire and mail to the great newspapers in London and there they were received with implicit confidence which must have brought a grim smile into the face of the colonial inventor. In speaking of this war as press-made it is right to mete out a fair share of reprobation to this Krugerite Press, though neither in circulation nor in real influence can it compare for one moment with the power of its antagonists.

76

The late Edgar Wallace gave examples of the part played by the Afrikaans Press in connection with the "Pressmade War" of which Hobson speaks. These instances are given below :

"The Dutch Organ at Worcester published on November 23rd 1900 details of 'atrocious murders committed on both women and some children near Boshoff'. On the 24th "Oms Land" published an account of how General French had, (with cursing), ordered women to be fired on with gun and cannon". 77

During the Boer War of 1899-1902 a number of  
newspapers /

---

75. This comment was in connection with a case in which a Burgher named Krester had had his sentence reduced from six months to one month in a case in which a man named O'Neile was the complainant.

76. "Unofficial Dispatches", representing articles by the author which were published in the "Daily Mail" during 1900 dealing with the Boer War.

77. Ibid, page 294).



newspapers, similar to the "News of the Camp" of 1880, sprang up and died away in a short space of time. They emanated from the Prisoners' camps of the Boers. Some of them were printed; others were merely handwritten and passed round from prisoner to prisoner for consumption. Papers of this nature include: "Di Skoorsteenki", which appeared only once, "De Brandwacht", and "De Staatscourant" the last-named being printed by the Government Printer ensconced in a kloof on Snymanhoek farm near Fouriesburg, the last capital of the Republic of the Orange Free State. "Kampkruimels" was edited by the prisoners at St. Helena and was suppressed by the censors because the Transvaal emblem appeared on the frontispiece. It was succeeded by "De Kryggegevange"; "De Prikkeldraad"; "Diyotolawa"; "Camp Lyre"; and "De Strever". The last-mentioned was a Christian weekly and was printed. Most of the others were handwritten. "The Tick" was issued by the prisoners in the Oombilo Camp, Natal <sup>78</sup>.

A Company known as the "African Daily Mails, Ltd", was registered on September 1st, 1902, to take over the business then being carried on in Johannesburg by Messrs. Mendelsohn and Bruce in connection with the publication of the "Standard and Diggers' News". This company was finally liquidated in 1906. On March 2nd, 1905, the "Rand Daily Mails Ltd", was formed to take over the "African Daily Mails Ltd., and to publish a newspaper in Johannesburg or elsewhere. Its nominal capital was £50,000 and the subscribers to the memorandum included Sir Abe Bailey (39,479 shares of £1 each). The shares of the company have since changed hands a good deal and it is not proposed to trace this aspect of the newspaper's /

---

78. Article in "Die Burger", July 20th, 1933, by B.H.J. van Rensburg of the Bloemfontein War Museum, where the above-mentioned papers have been preserved.

newspaper's history beyond mentioning that in 1911 Mr. A.V. Lindbergh became associated with the concern, followed in 1918 by the late Sir Julius Jeppe.

On September 17th, 1915, an agreement was arrived at between the "Rand Daily Mail, Ltd.", and the "Cape Times", the proprietors of the "Transvaal Leader" whereby the "Leader" was to cease publication on May 13th, 1915. The "Leader" thereupon became incorporated in the "Rand Daily Mail", the first editor of which was Edgar Wallace, the well-known mystery writer whose death early in 1932 robbed thousands of lovers of detective stories of their most prolific source of literature. Ward Jackson was for a number of years editor of "The Rand Daily Mail", the present editor of which is Mr. Lewis Rose Macleod. Mr. Hedley Chilvers, Literary critic of that paper, describes it as

"Johannesburg's notable morning newspaper (which) has always sought to maintain an independent policy and to do justice to all sections of the community. Some of South Africa's most brilliant journalists have at one time or another contributed to its columns. Its influence to-day is very wide indeed".

#### SUNDAY NEWSPAPERS.

The "Sunday Times", South Africa's only Sunday newspaper, and the newspaper with the largest circulation in the Union, was founded on February 4th, 1906, at a time of great depression on the Goldfields, following upon the disastrous effects of the Boer War. Its first directors included Messrs. G.H. Kingwell, A.V. Lindbergh, R. Ward Jackson (one time editor of the "Rand Daily Mail") and Sir Abe Bailey.

In /

In 1915 Sir Lionel Phillips, Sir Julius Joppe, and others became associated with the paper. The "Sunday Times" is unique in that it started with a nominal capital of £200 in £1 shares. This was increased in 1915 (when an agreement was entered into with the "Sunday Post" whereby the latter undertook to cease publication) to £256.

In spite of rivals in the field at one time or another, the 'Sunday Times' has forged ahead under the able guidance and direction of Mr. J. Langley Levy, who still occupies the editorial chair to-day. It adopted a cheerful and lighthearted tone from the start and, by the introduction of such bright features as "A Letter for Home", "Sunday Sallies", a cartoon, and the inimitable Mr. Gettys B. Snook-nee-Haddock and family; and by its Literary, Comic, and Farmers' Supplement as well as its domestic and foreign news service it has caught the imagination of the South African public. A regular reader once remarked that the "Sunday Times" was less of a newspaper than a habit and there is an element of truth in that remark. Its first managing director was G.H. Kingwell. It was the first Johannesburg paper to feature a weekly cartoon. Among the artists who have from time to time been associated with it in this connection are W.A. Lloyd, (now of the staff of "Punch"), Denis Santry, J. H. Anshevitz, and W.A. Bradley. The present cartoonist is Fred Thomas who has been invited to send some of his work to an International Exhibition at Stockholm in which only eminent artists throughout the world have been invited to participate. Mr. Hedley Chilvers ("Out of the Crucible", Appendix E) says of it: "The 'Sunday Times' has always been strictly impartial

in /



in its attitude and is to-day almost a national institution".

Let us see who the rival Sunday papers to the "Sunday Times" were. The "Sunday News" came into being as the result of the formation in 1909 of the "Sunday News, Ltd" to print and publish a Sunday newspaper. By 1911 the company was defunct. The "Sunday Herald, Ltd", was registered on March 11th, 1907, and went into liquidation in June of the same year. Mr. I. W. Schlesinger was one of the directors of this company.

"The Observer", set up in 1910, lasted for only 34 issues. It was buried on April 27th, 1911, and the "Critic" sympathetically wrote the following epitaph :  
81

"Very Sacred to the Memory  
of  
"The Observer".  
Passed Peacefully away, April 27th, 1911.  
Aged 34 issues.

Away to the great beyond--  
Another soul has passed;  
Life's battle proved too strenuous--  
The pace too fast.

Gone to that sweet rest--  
Deserved of those  
Whose efforts count for nought--  
in verse or prose.

Yet solace all will find--  
In the glad news  
Rejoice alike yet Gentiles,  
Turks and Jews.

For tho' the "Observer"  
Giveth up the ghost,  
Another trier comes-- the  
Tickey "Sunday Post". "

This Tickey "Sunday Post" came into being in 1911 and on March 25th, 1912, a Company the "Sunday Post, Ltd" was /

was registered to acquire and take over the business known as the "Sunday Post". The Company was finally liquidated in 1919, although the paper itself ceased publication in May 9th 1915, as the result of an arrangement arrived at with the "Sunday Times".

THE GROWTH OF THE NATIONALIST PRESS.

One of the features of newspaper development in South Africa was the group of Afrikaans newspapers that sprang up round the National Party soon after General Hertzog broke away from the South African Party in 1912. The first move in this direction in the Cape was made in Capetown towards the end of 1912 when "Die Voorloper" came into being. It was edited by Dr. van Zyl and was notable for its cartoons by Boonsasier. In the Transvaal Harm Cost, who was then engaged on the editorial staff of "Die Volkstem" found that current developments in Afrikaans nationalism necessitated him choosing to remain with "Die Volkstem" or to follow Hertzog into the unknown. He decided upon the latter course and founded "Die Week", the first Hertzog weekly newspaper in the Transvaal. This was succeeded in 1913 by "Het Volk" under Harm Cost's editorial guidance, which succumbed during the troublous times of the Rebellion in 1914.

These journals, torchbearers of the new cause, were inadequate for the purpose they were called upon to serve, and the birth of "Ons Vaderland" in 1914 was calculated to prove a more efficient and serviceable mouthpiece for the National Party. Other Transvaal papers which supported the new political party were "Het Western", at Potchefstroom, and still in existence as "Die Weste", and "Die Spektator". The Potchefstroom paper "Het Volksblad" also allied itself to the National Party and it was decided to transfer its headquarters from the Mooi River to Bloemfontein in order to  
 provide /

provide an official organ for the movement in the Free State. This was considered by the Party organisers as essential in view of the almost universal hostility shown by the English Press. It was intended to set up "Het Volksblad" as a counterblast to the dissemination of news and views in connection with the National Party by the other papers in the Free State. At the National Party Congress in the Free State in 1915, the following resolution was unanimously adopted :

"Deze vergadering wenst deze gelegenheid te baat te nemen om 'Het Volksblad' haar innige dank toe te brengen voor zijn mannelike optreden tijdens het gewapende protest en die moedlijke tijd waarin wij geleefd hebben en nog leven. De vergadering wenst hare waardering hierover uit te spreken".

("This Congress wishes to take this opportunity of expressing its deep gratitude to 'Het Volksblad' for its manly attitude during the armed protest and in the difficult times in which we lived and are still living. The Congress wishes to express its appreciation in this connection".)

In the following year it was reported to Congress that "the increase in the membership of our Party is largely a result of the power and influence which it has been able to exercise during the last twelve months through the medium of its Press.

At this time "Het Volksblad" was issued biweekly. It was taken over by the Nasionale Pers, Beperk, and, as "Die Volksblad" has been issued as a daily newspaper since 1924. The Nasionale Pers, Beperk was formed in 1915 and established "Die Burger" at Capetown as the official organ of the National Party in the Cape. The first editor was Dr D. F. Malan (now Minister for the Interior), leader of the Party in the Cape. He left the pulpit of the Dutch Reformed Church at Graaff-Reinet in order to assume his editorial duties, the first issue of his paper appearing on July 26th, 1915. announcing  
 itself /



itself thus :

"We recognise the existence of an Afrikaans nationalism with which we are in accord, and of which we hope to be a representative and interpreter".

This represented the culmination of three years of endeavour to set up such an organ. The prime movers were Advocate H.A. Fagan, and others. J.H.H. de Waal, W.A. Hofmeyr, and W.B. de Villiers. Fortune smiled on this little band of pilgrims for just at this time the "Transvaal Leader" became incorporated with the "Rand Daily Mail" and it was made known that the plant of the former paper was obtainable at half price. The offer was immediately seized upon and the bargain clinched.

Dr. Malan was succeeded in the editorial chair of "Die Burger" by Mr. A.L. Geyer in 1924 on the assumption by the former of Cabinet rank. Dr. Malan is not the only member of the present Cabinet to have occupied the editorial chair of a newspaper. This distinction can be claimed by two of his colleagues. Mr. P.C.W. Grobler (Minister of Lands) was at one time Editor of "Die Pers" in Pretoria; and Mr. E. G. Jansen (Minister of Native Affairs) was Editor of "Die Afrikaner" in Natal for some time; . These facts partly established the truth of the statement that :

83

"A number of brilliant South Africans confess to having started their career on one or another Afrikaans newspaper. They include Cabinet Ministers, Judges, and King's Counsel, to mention one or two of the most exalted positions"

D.C. Boonzaier, the cartoonist, who had been associated with "Die Voorloper" has been attached to "Die Burger" /

---

83. By Mr. Guy Gardner, Assistant Editor of the "Sunday Times" in the "S.A. Railways and Harbours Magazine" October, 1930, page 1503.

"Burger" since its inception and his cartoons are admired for their ingenuity and naive even by those out of sympathy with the sentiments which they express. "Die Burger" has gone from strength to strength and there can be no doubt that it exercises a wide influence throughout the area in which it circulates. Its leaders are frequently quoted, usually with disapproval, by the English newspapers of it may be said in the words of an old English satire that it is "at once the mouthpiece of applause and spleen".

The National Party in the Cape was furthermore able to rely upon the support of "The South African Nation", which described itself as a virile national weekly. It contained constructive articles dealing with social, economic, and political topics, and included supplements in regard to the development of trade and industry, the International Council of Women, this latter supplement being the official organ of the South African Council of Women. In its issue of January 9th, 1926, "The Nation" wrote: "Herein, unceremoniously, quietly, and naturally is taking place every day. Of a new party there is no immediate need. The party of the future is General Hertzog's party, fortified by numbers of liberal and progressive supporters from all sides". Doonzaaijer, the "Burger" cartoonist, frequently brightened the pages of "The Nation" with his works. The "Nation" ceased to exist about three years ago.

In Natal, "Die Afrikaner" - whose editor for some time was Mr. E.S. Jansen (the present Minister of Native Affairs) - did its best to represent the interests of the Nationalists in that Province and to make propaganda on behalf of that Party, but Natal was for the most part out of

sympathy /

sympathy with the Nationalist ideals and in 1932 the paper gave up the unequal struggle. It is understood that efforts are now being made to establish a newspaper to take its place and to keep the flag of the National Party flying in that Province. The catchwords of "Die Afrikaner" were the Union motto of "Bondrag maak Sag" and "Erecolstier". The "Bondrag" was conspicuously absent with the result that the realisation of the second ideal was not possible. It was a bi-weekly publication, with headquarters at Maritzburg.

An interesting experiment as far as the Transvaal is concerned, was tried in 1939. Mr. James G. McQuade, one of the doyens of South African journalists, relinquished a comfortable and profitable position as political correspondent of the "Rand Daily Mail" in order to found an English Nationalist newspaper. As a result of his endeavours the "Sun" rose, having its editorial offices in Johannesburg and making use of the printing Press of "Ons Vaderland" in Pretoria. Leaders of the National Party have complained long and bitterly that they were misunderstood by the English-speaking people of the Union and attributed this fact that they had no English Press of their own to interpret their ideals. This long-felt want had at length been supplied, but the support it received was disappointing and, after eighteen months, the "Sun" sank wearily to rest. At about this time, too, "Ons Vaderland" emerged from a bi-weekly paper to a daily. This was undoubtedly a great boon to Nationalism and brought the Transvaal's chief organ into line with the Nationalist newspapers of the other provinces. The strain was too great, however, and "Ons

Vaderland" /



"Vaderland" had to fall back to its two issues weekly.

In 1832 a further change was brought about.

"Ons Vaderland" became "Die Vaderland". It still remained a bi-weekly but was much enlarged and improved, by the inclusion of a literary supplement in addition to its news columns, running to 16 pages on Wednesdays and 20 pages on Saturdays. A new company was formed, known as the "Afrikaanse Pers, Depot", to take the place of "Die Hoordelike Drukkers", under whose auspices "Ons Vaderland" had been published. Prime movers in the formation of the new company include General J.B.M. Hertzog (Prime Minister), General J.C.G. Kemp (Minister of Agriculture) and Messrs. H.C. Havenga (Minister of Finance), H.G. Jansen (Minister of Native Affairs) and Oswald Pirow (Minister of Justice), together with the Prime Minister's son, Dr. Albert Hertzog. In a pamphlet issued for propaganda purposes, "Die Vaderland" stated that it was "a torchbearer in everything of importance to the Afrikaans social life. . In addition to politics our people will also be provided with food for thought in regard to the religious and cultural side of their lives, and their domestic and economic well-being".<sup>85</sup>

This concludes the review of the birth and development of the Nationalist Press. Some indication should be given in broad lines of the policy of these papers and their relation to the older established newspapers of the country. The papers claim to be not "anti-English" but "pro-Afrikaans", but there is very little suggestion of conciliation in their editorial columns. They are conservative and anti-imperialistic in outlook and look with horror upon any move made towards the advancement /

---

85. The groundwork for this review of the Nationalist Press was obtained from "Die Nasionale Woek" but the scope of information therein contained have been greatly supplemented.

advancement of the natives. In their eyes the "native problem" is the "black peril". There is little co-operation between the Nationalist and other newspapers although this "standoffish" tendency is showing signs of weakening.

Leonard Barnes himself a working journalist in this country gives an admirable, if outspoken, analysis of the part played by both the English newspapers in regard to the racial question in South Africa:

"The responsibility of the Press is heavier and its yielding to temptation more inexcusable (than that of political party managers). Reputable journalism would not need to rely upon the injurious elements of racialism. Unfortunately, the chief Nationalist newspapers are the tools of the party managers and their policy in racial matters is very bitter and reckless. Their persistent outrages on the sentiments of their political opponents are less successful than they might be, because being delivered in Afrikaans, they are little read by the British; but they are carried out extremely thoroughly and with a disregard of all literary and journalistic manners so savage that it has to be seen to be believed.

"The English papers, from their side, though their polemic methods as a rule are less uncouth, are hardly less provocative. Indeed, their effect is perhaps more mischievous still, because the Dutch pay more attention to them. There is not one of their number that can be trusted to handle the other side's case on any subject with even tolerable dispassionateness. I have often heard Dutchmen say that the English papers should bear the larger share of the blame, since their editorial staffs, having in general had wider experience and culture, ought to know better how to behave... The English papers may claim that they do behave better. And so they do. But not better enough! 86. Two things, at least, are certain. One that the incessant racial dog-fight which goes on in the columns of the Press is one of the most discreditable features of South African life; the other, that racialism in its more virulent forms would quite quickly become extinct, if politicians and the Press would /

86. Until recently no member of the staff of a Nationalist newspaper belonged to the South African Society of Journalists, a national body which claims to represent the interests of all bona-fide working journalists in this country. In 1931 two members of "Ons Vaderland" joined the Pretoria branch and were followed by others.

87. "Caliban in Africa", page 48.  
88. The italics are the writer's.

would allow the people a chance to forget it. At present they torture the poor dog by never letting to go to sleep".

There are signs of hope for the future. The bilingual country newspapers, which are rapidly growing in number, cannot find room for racialism in their columns, as this would be in direct conflict with their policy of catering for both sections of the community. Furthermore, positions on the editorial staffs of the English newspapers are more and more being filled by South Africans (both English and Afrikaans-speaking) who have a better knowledge and understanding of local conditions and difficulties than the English journalists who in the past came from overseas in large numbers and "rushed in" where South African born journalists "would fear to tread".<sup>89</sup> Points of agreement, rather than of difference, are coming to be stressed. But it is a slow process.

As far as the Press of the South African Labour Party is concerned, there have from time to time been various organs claiming to represent and safeguard the interests of the Labour Party but a perusal of the files of these papers show that relations between the different organs were at no time harmonious. One of these papers was "The Worker", a weekly paper published in Johannesburg, which dates back to just before Union. It designated itself "the official organ of the South African Labour Party" and had its offices in Von Brandis Street. Another, which was probably in the field before "The Worker", was "The Voice of Labour", the "organ of the United Socialist /

---

89. "The Afrikaans journalist has, moreover, one great advantage over his colleagues: he is wholly bilingual in nearly every case and can transfer his activities to a newspaper in the other medium without much difficulty".  
Guy Gardner, Assistant Editor of the "Sunday Times", "S.A. Railways and Harbours Magazine", October 1930, page 1503.



Socialist Party of South Africa", with offices in Fox Street, Johannesburg. It was "a weekly journal of Socialism, industrial unionism and Politics", and claimed the largest circulation of any Labour paper in South Africa. In its columns it referred disparagingly to the "Capitalist Press", printed the full text of "The Red Flag", and surveyed the life of Peter Kropotkin.

The weekly newspaper established in 1935 "Forward" "the paper that supports the Fact", whose guiding principles are "agitate, educate, and organise" was established later than either "The Worker", or "The Voice of Labour", and still exists to-day, while the other two publications are now defunct. It is the official organ of the South African Mine Workers' Union, The South African Boilermakers' Society, and the B.W.I.U. In addition to news items of general interest, it publishes material of a propagandist nature, and such articles as "Mussolini and the Trades Union", "In prison with the Jim Peiners", "How de Valera Escaped", and "The real lesson of the Coal War" are typical of its contents. A "Trades and Labour Journal" is published at Capetown.

In addition to the country newspapers, the Transvaal is notable for the chain of newspapers which circulate in the Reef towns from Randfontein to Springs. Although both the "Rand Daily Mail" and the "Star" have resident representatives in the larger of these Reef towns and a correspondent in the smaller ones and in spite of the fact that these newspapers are available to the residents of the Reef towns just as soon as they are available in Johannesburg itself,

local /

---

So. In the issue of December 15th, 1911.

local newspapers have sprung up in many of these Reef towns and the longevity of most of them indicate they are a paying proposition and that they have a very definite part to play in their own particular area. Among these Reef newspapers are: "The Springs Advertiser"; "The Brakpan Herald"; "The East Rand Express", with which is incorporated the "Boksburg Herald"; the "Geraiston News", and the "Benoni Advertiser"; "The Benoni City Times and Volksblad", edited by Mr. Williams Hill, which claims the largest local sale of any East Rand journal; "The Brakpan and Springs Advertiser and East Rand Review"; "The Geraiston Advocate and East Rand Record"; "The Latest" (Benoni); "The Standard and West Rand Review"; and "The Springs Commercial Review".

Some of the more notable of the country newspapers in the Transvaal (apart from those already dealt with in the historical review) are: "De Hoogavelder", a bilingual weekly published at Middelburg; "The Heidelberg News", a bilingual weekly; "The Lake Chrissie Chronicle"; "The Lydenburg News"; "The Middelburg Observer"; "The Susterburg Courant; the "Waarberg Advertiser", and "De Westelike Steen", a weekly Loyalist Afrikaans newspaper, Potchefstroom, all of these being weekly publications. The "Potchefstroom Herald and Western Gazette" deserves more than passing mention. It is the only English newspaper for the Potchefstroom district and claims to be "old established but up-to-date". It was established in 1861 and has incorporated "The Western Chronicle and Potchefstroom Budget".

---

THE JEWISH PRESS.

91

The association of a Jewish journalist with the early newspapers of this country has already been mentioned. Meurant<sup>92</sup> described this pioneer journalist as "A Dutch lawyer (of Jewish birth), a clever man and a linguist (who) was always in trouble, never paid anybody, especially his house rent." Although de Liza made no attempt to cater journalistically for the Jewish Community of South Africa, whose numbers at that time probably did not warrant such a step, "De Versamelaar", which was under his charge, published an announcement on September 22nd, 1847, "Heartily congratulating members of the Jewish persuasion with their New Year on this day". This custom, has, of course, now become customary, and the advertisements which members of the Jewish community insert in the newspapers wishing their friends and relatives "A Happy New Year and well over the fast" is a profitable source of revenue for the newspapers.

The pioneer of Jewish journalism in this country was Schemia Dov Baer Zeev Wolf Hoffmann<sup>93</sup>. Arriving in South Africa in 1890, Hoffmann imported the Jewish "lead alphabet". He may be regarded as the "father" of the Jewish Press. The first Jewish paper, "Der Afrikaner Israelit" was published in Johannesburg in 1890, an eight-page weekly. It continued for six months. It formed the foundation, however, upon which others have built until the Jewish Press has come to be recognised as a powerful factor for good among the people among whom it circulates. Unsuccessful with his Johannesburg venture, Hoffmann left in 1891 for Capetown where four years later

he/

---

91. Joseph Suasso de Liza, LL.D.  
92. "Sixty Years Ago".

93. "The South African Jewish Year Book"— "The Jewish Press in South Africa", by J.S. Judelowitz, page 249, et seq., from which much of the following information has been extracted, though checked and supplemented, where possible, from other sources.



he started "Ma-Or", a Yiddish weekly which ran from April 1st 1895 until July 5th, 1897. In partnership with Isaac Stone, Hoffman thereafter established "Der Judischer Herald" which ran for a further two years, and was succeeded by "Der Afrikaner Telegraph", which also lasted two years, Hoffman's next venture was more successful. It lasted three years.

His experience brought Hoffmann to a realization that there was no demand to justify a Yiddish weekly. He thereupon launched out with a monthly, "Der Afrikaner", which was still in existence in 1914, but did not survive that year. Simultaneously with this publication, Hoffman brought out another, "Kinereth", a Hebrew bi-monthly. This was unable to stand alone and was later incorporated with "Der Afrikaner" as a supplement. The first daily paper in Yiddish was "Der Kriegsstaphet", which was brought out in Capetown during the Boer War by David Goldblatt, who, after the War, agitated for the recognition of Yiddish as a European language. In support of his cause he published a pamphlet in 1905, while in the previous year he brought into being a Yiddish weekly, "Der Judische Advocate", which appeared regularly until 1914.

Before the end of the century, Hoffmann had been joined in his pioneer work by others, notably Isaac Berman, who published "The African Jewish Gazette" in Johannesburg on 1893, and Solomon Vogelsohn, who established "Der Expresse". Johannesburg was the scene of an attempt to found an Anglo-Jewish paper "The South African Jewish Chronicle and Jewish News" but the attempt was unsuccessful. This is probably the paper referred to by Percy Cowen in the following terms:

The /

---

94. "South African Jewish Year Book" 1909, page 153.

95

The Board considered the matter of establishing a Jewish newspaper. The project was gone into but eventually nothing came of it. In 1902, however, "The South African Jewish Chronicle" was published in Capetown as a fortnightly and is the first of these early ventures which showed any signs of permanency. The "Chronicle" which became a weekly in 1905, is still published.

The success which attended the "Chronicle" encouraged others, and the following papers came into being: "The Jewish Star" (Hacachav), Johannesburg established 1903, defunct 1907; "The Jewish Free Press", a Yiddish weekly, Johannesburg, established 1904 and running for five months only; it was revived for a short while in 1907; "Der Strahl", Capetown, 1904, and "The South African Jewish Standard", Durban, in the same year; "Israel's Messenger", a children's paper, Johannesburg;. These efforts were eclipsed by the production, on November 15th, 1908, of "The Zionist Record", a monthly magazine of general Jewish interest, which was issued by the South African Zionist Federation. Its progress was rapid. In 1924 it became a fortnightly and in 1926 a weekly. Other Jewish papers of this period include: "The Jewish Standard" (Die Yiddische Fohn), first a fortnightly, later a weekly, ceased publication 1913; "The Jewish Voice", a Yiddish weekly, established 1910 and lasted about one year; "Di Naie Zeit", which lasted from August to October 1912; "The Johannesburg Daily", from December 12th, 1912, until January 31st, 1913; "Di Naie Heim", from January to March, 1912; and "The Jewish Tribune" from May to December, 1913.

From among these numerous publications, none of which as their period of duration shows, were of much substance, arose the more successful Yiddish weekly, "Der Afrikaner" /

"Afrikaner", which first appeared on November 10th, 1911, and is still in existence. It publishes a supplement in English. Approximately half a score of other Jewish publications of little account sprang into being during the ten years from 1913 to 1923. The latter part of this period was productive, however, of two more substantial publications. These were "Dorom Afrika" and "Ivri Onouchi". The former came into being in December 1922, and after running for a year, remained dormant until it was resurrected in 1928 and has since been issued monthly until the present day. The latter is the official organ of the Jewish Guilds of the principal centres of the Union, and South West Africa, and the general Jewish communal organ of South Africa. It claims that it circulates from the Congo to the Cape, and that its circulation on the Witwatersrand is the largest of any African Jewish publication. It has hitherto been issued monthly but the writer was informed that it was intended to convert it into a Yiddish weekly published in English.

Close on sixty Jewish journals, newspapers, and magazines have been traced by Mr. Judelowitz but it is not here proposed to trace the history of each and every of these. Sufficient has been said to indicate the nature of the growth and the present strength of the Jewish Press in South Africa. It will readily be realised that lack of co-ordination of forces in the earlier days was the cause of the rapid rise and fall of numerous papers of straw which proved unequal to the strenuous struggle and had to give up the ghost. It will further be seen that Jewish newspapers in this country are of fairly recent growth, any marked activity in this connection

dating /



dating back only 40 years. In view of this fact the chain of newspapers and magazines which have been built up can be regarded as entirely satisfactory. Lessons have been learnt from the mistakes of the past and the future of the Jewish Press, in its own sphere, is particularly bright.

Apart from the Affikaans, Jewish, Bantu, and Coloured people's Press, - which have been or are to be reviewed in this work-- provision is also made by interested persons for the supply of news in their mother tongue to the German and Greek and nationals resident in this country. The Greek organ, the "Hes Hellas" is published weekly in Johannesburg and is now in its nineteenth year. There are two German journals, "Der Deutsche Afrikaner", published in Pretoria, and "Deutsche Afrika Post", which has its headquarters in Johannesburg.

Mention should be made of the numerous publications which have from time to time sprung up to serve sectional interests. These are too numerous to mention in detail and a representative few must serve to indicate the wide field which these periodicals collectively cover. After the War "The Call", "The Soldier's Paper run by returned soldiers for returned soldiers" was inaugurated as an independent weekly newspaper of general interest dealing specially with patriotic matters and the welfare of returned soldiers. "The Clubman", now defunct, was the monthly journal of the Unionist Party, before amalgamation with the South African Party. During the War "The Searchlight", a monthly independent non-party review, was issued by E.J. Moynihan, whose caricature appeared

on both the front and back covers and whose pen seemed to fill most of the pages between the covers. "The searchlight" devoted itself to discussing various phases of the Great War. In 1918 it announced that it "no longer publishes advertisements of any kind" and it was not long after that its publication was discontinued.

Further examples of these periodicals include:

"The South African Fruitgrower and Smallholder" started in 1915 and still in existence; "The Spiritualist Union of South Africa" which ran from 1930 to 1932; "The Ward 10 Ratepayers' Gazette" (1928-32); "Backwash", the organ of the South African Incorporated Sea Anglers' Association; "The South African Bowling Monthly", ceased publication 1931; "The S.A. Truck and Bus Owners" "The Boudoir and Smoking Room, marked "Price 6d" but distributed free; "Too H Times", ceased 1931, the S.A. Hairdressers' Journal; "The Traders' Protection Bulletin", ceased 1930; "Pigeon Racing in South Africa"; ceased 1931; "The S.A. Telephone and Telegraph Review", which is still in existence under the name of "The Live Wire"; "The S.A. Philatelist", which, started in 1925, was dormant from 1929 to 1931, recommenced in that year and is still published at the present time.

These examples have been culled from the Newspaper Register of the General Post Office at Pretoria and further examples of current publications are to be found in the complete list of registered newspapers in existence in South Africa (as at September 1st, 1932) which forms an appendix to the present work.

Owing to the diversity of systems-- and lack of  
 systems /

systems— of compilation of newspaper registration statistics in the four Colonies prior to Union, it is not possible to give a statistical comparison of the progress made in the newspaper world before 1910. The following figures <sup>96</sup> serve, however, to give some indication of the advance that has been made in regard to newspapers during the last 21 years for which <sup>97</sup> figures are available.

Number of Newspapers registered at 31st December, 1911 to 1930.

Year	Cape of Good Hope	Natal.	Transvaal.	Free State.	Union.
	European newspapers				
1911.	107	18	89	18	212
1912.	124.	24	82	20	230
1913.	140	23	85	24	274
1914.	143	22	83	19	267
1915.	138	22	79	15	242
1916.	123	19	83	17	242
1917.	130	23	89	17	259
1918.	130	24	88	18	260
1919.	134	25	97	20	276
1920.	146	33	101	24	304
1921.	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	308
1922.	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	325
1923.	136	33	101	24	294
1924.	137	29	95	25	286
1925.	141	29	120	27	317
1926.	144	28	121	30	323
1927.	150	30	122	27	329
1928.	152	30	136	32	350
1929.	156	30	147	34	367
1930.	159	27	135	38	340

⊙ Figures not available.

The value of these figures is impaired by the fact that the totals for the four Provinces do not, in all cases, correspond with the total for the Union. This is apparently the result of miscalculation on the part of the clerk responsible for this particular work and the writer has no option but to take over these figures, as there is no other authentic source from which more accurate figures may be

obtained /

96 Official Year Book, No.12.

97. Bantu newspaper development is similarly indicated in the following chapter).



obtained. The figures cannot be far wrong, however, and in spite of the deficiency referred to, provide a striking register of progress over the 31 years reviewed. It will be noticed that in spite of setbacks, notably in 1915, 1923-24, and 1930, the figures for the last available year represent an increase of approximately 50% in the total number of newspapers in each Province, as compared with 1911. When quality, as well as quantity is taken into consideration, it will be seen that the progress has indeed been striking.

This, then, is an historical survey of the birth and growth of the Press in South Africa, from the earliest beginnings until the present day. It is time now to call a halt and examine in broad lines the progress that has been made. Such an examination <sup>98</sup> was made some time ago and what was then said remains equally true to-day. Little has occurred in the last few years to bring about any changes of importance in the South African Press. "What use have we made of the privileges obtained?", "Die Volkstem" asked. "How do we value them? and what lessons have we learnt from the example of those patriotic pioneer fighters for the freedom of the Press, and for the freedom of thought and expression? "It is almost three hundred years since Milton wrote his famous "Areopagitika" in which he defended the advantages both for the people and for the country of a free press and of the unrestricted expression by every citizen of his genuinely-held opinions, against an autocratic policy which sought to suppress differences of opinion. ..The foundations laid by Greig, Fairbairn, and Pringle are to-day as secure as those laid by the eloquence /

elegance of a Milton or a Mallebranche elsewhere. The modern Press enjoys a freedom which is curbed, as all civilised freedom ought to be curbed, only by the law against contempt for opinions, rights, and freedom, of persons holding different opinions... It is undeniable that the sense of his responsibility held by every newspaperman, has, with very few exceptions, led to the South African newspapers-- irrespective of party allegiances-- imparting such a broad spirit of democracy as to enable them to lay claim to be interpreters of public opinion.. Even in time of acute national crisis, the S.A.Press has carried itself with a dignity and calm which compares very favourably with the newspapers of other countries".

On all sides those in a position to speak on the subject strike a confident and optimistic note in regard to the present and future position of the South African Press. Mr. Frank Trott <sup>99</sup> has pointed out <sup>100</sup> that the strides made in the newspaper Press in this country have been remarkable. "As journalists we are constantly recording the growth of commerce, industry, and the hundred and one activities which constitute the national life. .To-day the newspapers of the Union compare favourably with those of Great Britain and other Dominions. Because of this advancement, journalists generally have acquired greater responsibilities and so far as their craft is concerned they have not been found wanting. Mr. Guy Gardner (Assistant Editor of the "Sunday Times", in the "S.A.R. and N. Magazine", October, 1930, pages 1503 and 1504) wrote :

"The

---

99. Whose position and qualifications have already been stated.

100. In his presidential address to the South African Society of Journalists Congress at Johannesburg, in January, 1932.

"The outstanding feature of this quarter of a century of the Press is not, indeed, swift spectacular flights and sudden events, but an orderly, steady progress; the story is concerned with the growth of an establishment, but in no way with its foundation. In point of fact, a survey shows the apparent changes to have been small and not numerous, a condition by no means reflecting stagnation, but solidity. Alike in the old coastal towns, the veteran inland settlements of the Cape Province, and the newer centres in what was once the "interior", the changes in the newspaper press so far as "births" and "deaths" go, have been insignificant during five and twenty years.

"Backward or no, the South African newspapers have never descended to the ghastly preoccupation with futilities that distinguishes newspapers with which we are often compared and which should be models for oversea pioneers. With all deference to the brilliant contributors who discuss such topics as "Is the modern woman a flirt?", "Are modern girls selfish?", or "What is modern woman's charm?", at any rate there is a singular lack of their nauseous emanations in the South African Press.

"No reference to the South African Press would be complete without mentioning the creation of the group known as the Argus Press, with its representation in almost every big centre in South Africa. The building up of this great fabric has been done steadily, each newspaper in the group carrying on its own traditions and remaining, as it were, a separate unit within the organisation. It is reasonable to suggest that this system results in editorial independence and the maintenance of a high journalistic standard generally. <sup>101</sup>

"Intimately connected with the growth of the Press is the simultaneous development of the Central News Agency, Ltd., the greatest publishing House in the Union and a monument to the industry and foresight of its joint managing directors, A. V. Lindbergh and Michael Davis, who retired in 1938. The foundations of its business were laid in 1892 and expansion/

---

101. "Out of the Crucible", by Hedley A. Chilvers, appendix E.



expansion continued to an ever-increasing extent as the partners took over the entire issues of newspapers for distribution".

102

Finally J. Saxon Mills stated :

"The standard throughout the Empire is amazingly high. News is presented brightly, fairly, and intelligently, frequently under difficult circumstances, and the leader writer in the Dominions need not be afraid to look his august London colleague in the face".

Numerous publications are printed outside the Union dealing exclusively or largely with the internal affairs of the Union. It is not proposed to examine these at any length. Perhaps the earliest of such publications was the "Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter", which was started in June 1825 and continued publication until May, 1827. It was issued under the aegis of the London Society for the Mitigation and Abolition of Slavery in the British Dominions. In the issue of January, 1827, it advanced the argument: "Should the comparative mildness of Cape slavery be admitted, what a powerful argument does not the admission make for the speedy annihilation of human bondage throughout their Colonies by the powers of Christian Europe". "The African World", founded in London by the late Mr. Leo Weintal is among the most important of current overseas journals dealing with the Union. "The African World" was first published as a supplement to the "Pretoria News", with the proviso that "The Editor of the 'Pretoria News' is not responsible for any matter or views in this supplement". So wide has the scope of the "African World" now become that it publishes monthly supplements for West Africa and North Africa.

In 1888 E.P. Mathers, who had been associated  
with /

with the "Natal Mercury" and "Natal Advertiser" left for England to found the London weekly "South Africa". In the following year it had a Hollands counterpart in "Zuid-Afrika", a "maandblad voor de culturele en economische betrekkingen tusschen Nederland en Zuid-Afrika" which is published in Amsterdam by De Bussy and is now in its ninth year. All South African newspapers of any importance maintain resident correspondents in London and as well as in other parts of the world and the news supply of these correspondents is supplemented by Reuter, with the result that South Africa is kept in close touch with affairs in all parts of the world.

It should be pointed out that the absence of a segregated study of the early "giants of journalism" is of set design . The writer's endeavour has been rather to allow each of the pioneers to play his part in his own particular period, thereby bringing to light the great value of the foundations laid by those hardy forerunners for future generations to build upon.

---