Chapter 5

GROWTH OF POPULATION IN SAURASHTRA
FROM 1901 TO 1951

As in the case of the growth of population in India, the population growth in Saurashtra also can be divided into two periods - upto 1921 and from 1921 to 1951. Table No. 15 shows the variation in population in Saurashtra from 1901 to 1951.

* TABLE NO. 15 *

Variation in population in Saurashtra from 1901 to 1951

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population in (000's)</th>
<th>Variation in (000's)</th>
<th>Percentage Increase</th>
<th>Net Variation during 50 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>22,78</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>25,24</td>
<td>2,46</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>25,57</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>29,54</td>
<td>3,96</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>35,61</td>
<td>6,06</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>41,37</td>
<td>5,76</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901- 1951</td>
<td>81.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Census of India, 1951, Vol., IV, Part II-A, Table A-II, page 15.*
Certain things are clearly brought out by the above Table. The growth of population has followed the general lines of the growth of population in India. This growth is not uniform, but it is entirely subject to the mercy of nature. If the period is free from epidemics and famines then the population increases at its own sweet will; if there are epidemics or other such natural agencies at work, it is controlled and cut down. The population of Saurashtra increased by only 7 lakhs during the period from 1901 to 1931 while after 1931 in the next twenty years it increased by 12 lakhs. Saurashtra area is an area of rapid increase of population. The proportional increase in the population of Saurashtra during the last 50 years has been higher than the increase in the population of the Indian Union. The Indian Union population increased by 50% while the population of Saurashtra increased by 81.6% during the last 50 years. The maximum growth was recorded during 1931-41 when the population increased by 20.6 per cent. The history of the growth of population in Saurashtra is almost identical with the growth of population in India during the last 50 years. From 1891 up to 1921 the population of India increased by only 1.2 crores but the period of rapid population increase began after 1921. During the thirty years following 1921 Indian population increased roughly from 25 crores to 36 crores i.e. an addition of about 11 crores in 30 years.
The first period from 1891 to 1921 is quite different from 1921-51 period. This difference is neither due to any change in child-bearing habits nor due to any extraordinary improvement in health services. The probable explanation is that the latter period is singularly free from epidemics and famines. The "abnormal deaths" used to claim a great many victims in the former period. These death dealing agencies were prevented from operating during the latter period.

The decrease in population during 1891-1901 was greatly the result of the severe famine and plague. These two agencies literally took away millions of the people and incapacitated others for the work of reproduction for a time. In the next decade from 1901 to 1911 also plague continued to take a heavy toll of life. Plague was assisted by malarial fever. The next decade (1911-21) was extraordinary in many ways. The Great War had come and gone. Economic disorganisation coincided with two successive bad seasons and extensive crop failures. Plague and cholera resumed their sway. Assam reported Kala-azar and in Bengal malaria was specially severe throughout the period. But these misfortunes paled into insignificance, when a world-wide epidemic of influenza swept the country from one end to the other in two waves, one closely following the other. A conservative estimate puts the mortality at between 12 and 13 millions for India, a large
part of which occurred in the space of three or four months.

Hence during the thirty years preceding 1921 severe (positive) checks of one kind or the other were in operation which increased deaths abnormally. These checks were famines and famine diseases, epidemic diseases and endemic diseases. The mean decennial rate of growth was effectively kept as low as 1.7% during the thirty years preceding 1921. During the period from 1921 to 1951 the country was successfully guarded from famines by perfecting the famine relief machinery and the deadly diseases of plague and influenza were successfully brought under control by the gradual improvement of the medical organization. Hence abnormal deaths were prevented and so big population increase was the result.

Table No. 15 clearly brings out how the growth of population in Saurashtra is at the mercy of the famous positive checks. Because of famine and plague during the first twenty years from 1901 to 1921 population increased only by 3 lakhs while after 1921 the rate of growth was so tremendous that as many as 16 lakhs were added in the next 30 years. This period was singularly free from epidemics and famines and hence the "abnormal deaths" were not allowed to take off a heavy toll of life. The mean decennial growth rate was invariably more than 15% per decade and during 1931-41, it even reached the peak figure of 20.5%.
Even a cursory perusal of the history of the growth of population in Saurashtra and for the matter of that of population of India - unmistakably asserts that in India the growth of population is regulated by nature. Nature and not man decides whether the people will multiply quickly, remain stationary or decrease. The initiative is in the hands of forces outside man's control. Man is controlled by nature and not nature by man as in Western countries. If the preceding 10 years are good i.e. if the monsoons are regular and if the area is not visited by any great epidemic like plague, influenza or cholera, then one can - without fear of contradiction certainly predict an increase of say 15% for the decade. This means that under this Indian prosperity, if it continues, the population will be doubled in less than 70 years.

Voluntary regulation of population was unknown in India till practically very recently. The increase of the members of the family was left to the sweet will of nature. This regulation of population by nature is a patent fact about the growth of the population in all parts of India. The population of Bombay province increased by 15-06% between 1881-1891 as it was a good period free from famines and epidemics. In 1896 came the plague. The monsoon of that year failed in the Deccan and East Karnataka and in 1899 began the disastrous famine in Gujarat which continued for two years more. The Census of India, 1911
computed the loss due to plague and famine and put it at 30 lakhs. The Census of 1901, therefore, showed that the population of the Bombay Province had decreased by 5.7% from 1891-1901.

In Saurashtra also the same trend is visible. In Saurashtra, as in other parts of India, marriage is universal and full scope is given for utilizing the latent powers of reproduction. The result is an increase of population at the subsistence level. The positive checks of Malthus - famine and epidemics - comes in and stop this inordinate growth of population which otherwise would have been a definite certainty. The population of Saurashtra increased from 23 lakhs in 1881 to over 27 lakhs in 1891 i.e. an addition of 4 lakhs. At this rate from 1891 to 1901, it should have at least reached 31 or 32 lakhs. But in 1901 it actually came down to 23 lakhs obviously because of plague and famine. The actual deaths must have been much more for the figure only gives the recorded deaths and in Saurashtra reports are never reliable.

Plague and famine were not only greatly responsible in reducing population in 1891-1901 decade but the after effects were felt even during 1901-1911. The normal rate of growth was not attained and population increased by only

1.6 lakhs during 1911. People in the reproductive ages must have been taken away and thus the birth-rate could not come to its normal level.

The peculiarity of the growth of population in Saurashtra is that population has increased by about 3 to 4 lakhs in a decade if the period is marked by prosperous years and if no major epidemic has visited the peninsula. Hence upto 1921, at any rate, an addition of about 4 lakhs in ten years may be regarded as perhaps the "normal rate" of growth of population. By "normal rate" is meant the rate of growth which might be expected if there are no epidemics like plague and influenza and no famines. The general nature of society in this respect is almost static; so population growth is not affected due to any other cause - voluntary restriction being ruled out of the question. Hence the qualifying two conditions of the "normal rate" are absence of epidemics and famines. During 1911-21 the rate of growth had gone down to only 33000 and the population had even decreased during 1891-1901 when these two death-dealing agencies had combined. This decrease was even to the tune of 4 lakhs in 10 years. But in both these decades epidemics and famines were the principal causes of the decrease in the growth of population. In the absence of any major epidemic or famine the population of Saurashtra would have reached the stupendous figure of 39 lakhs by 1921. Actually however, the
population of Saurashtra was only 25.5 lakhs in 1921. The 1911-21 decade was the great influenza decade when the epidemic was raging throughout the Bombay Presidency and from 1918 was the most important cause of the reduction of population. Like plague influenza proved to be another effective death dealing agency in India and according to the Census of India, 1921 some districts for e.g. Nasik and West Khandesh showed an influenza mortality of 70 to 80 per mille. Unfortunately the Census Report for 1921 is silent about the effects of influenza on Saurashtra population - as separate Census Report for Saurashtra was published for the first time in 1931. But there is no doubt that influenza was the cause of the small increase of population in 1911-21 if we take into consideration the happenings in Gujarat and other places in the Bombay Presidency from 1918 onwards.

The severity of influenza was even greater than that of plague. "It will be noted that the plague mortality in the whole decade 1901-1911 carried off only a few more persons than influenza did in the six months of its height in 1918-1918." It is clear, therefore, that the lower rate of growth during this period was largely due to influenza. The high prices which ruled the market as a result of the First World War also acted as a contributory cause.

It is needless to point out that the death dealing agencies of plague and famine or influenza cannot be regarded as proper checks to population. They are fitful and operate not according to our needs, but according to the needs of nature and so such methods of birth control no one will ever advocate. In fact, efforts have been made by the Government to fight plague, influenza, Kala-azar, malaria and famine and to a great extent these efforts have been crowned with success. The improvements in transport together with the perfection of the famine relief machinery have brought famine definitely under control. During the first 50 years of the 20th century, India has not seen a famine as severe as the famine of 1899 except perhaps the man-made famine of 1943 in Bengal. This check to population is, therefore, blunted. The improvements in medical science have conquered malaria, plague and influenza. The general sanitation and hygiene have also considerably improved during the recent years thus reducing the abnormal deaths due to these epidemics. The death rate in future on account of these two agencies will definitely be under control so that population has much less chances of being reduced due to these two agencies.

The proof of what has been said above is obtained easily from the growth of population from 1921 to 1951. This period - as Table No. 15 shows - was the period of stupendous population growth in Saurashtra as it was in
the rest of India. As the Table shows, between 1921-31 population increased by almost 4 lakhs, between 1931-41 by 6 lakhs and between 1941-51 by 5.7 lakhs. The rapid increase of population between 1921-1931 has been the subject of continued comment of both the Provincial and Central Census Reports for 1931.

The increase of 4 lakhs between 1921-31 compares very favourably with the period 1881-1891 when the population had increased by 4,085,050 and confirms the fact that population of Saurashtra would grow - on a conservative estimate - by about 4 lakhs in 10 years if all the things are normal (i.e. if the years are good and there is no major epidemic). It is to be emphasized that population increase is dependent on agricultural prosperity in Saurashtra. If there is no epidemic and if the famine is kept off the population will go on increasing in larger and larger proportions. The rate of increase of 4 lakhs which we pointed out as the normal rate of growth upto 1921 is steadily increasing as expected (because with the increase in total population the rate of 4 lakhs is bound to increase) we have, therefore, only to see the history of the decade to predict the growth of population. The two decades from 1931 have witnessed perhaps the most stupendous growth of population. This period is the most prolific so far from 1881 and is in line with the growth of
This tremendous growth of population is an All India problem. It is doubtful whether it is accompanied by a proportional increase in wealth or production. From 1881 to 1931 the population of Saurashtra increased only by about 6 lakhs in 50 years. This means that if the next 50 years be as good and bad as these fifty years, population of Saurashtra would not double itself even by 2001.

This calculation would have been correct but for the fact that there are two important points in the growth of Saurashtra population. Firstly population increases fitfully i.e. there would be a big addition if famines and epidemics do not visit the land. The rate of growth of population has been most uneven during the last 50 years. Secondly the death dealing agencies like plague and cholera have been brought under control so that their severity is considerably blunted. They will not be able to take such a heavy toll of life as they did in 1891 - 1901 and 1911 - 1921 period. The intensity of famines also will be much less severely felt than previously. The conclusion, therefore, would be that if the position with regard to family planning remains what it is to-day, population would be more than double itself by 1961, not to speak of 2001. The above contention is also supported by the fact that during the last 30 years 15-1/2 lakhs of people
have been already added to the population of Saurashtra. Thus the population of Saurashtra may become about 47 lakhs by 1961.

There is nothing objectionable in the growth of 1% to 1.5% per annum but even this growth in absolute figures creates a problem when it is taken into consideration that production has not proportionately increased. In fact in Saurashtra with an ordinary person the idea of the standard of living which indirectly affects population does not exist. It is only with a few educated people and the economists. The population grows naturally and is also controlled by nature. But the medical science has come to the rescue of man so that the population would be shielded against death. Thus population would grow naturally and would not be checked by the positive checks as before. But it would lead to lowering of the already low standard of living and to a life of poverty and wretchedness unless production (both agricultural and industrial) is increased and a craving for better standard is instilled among the population. If once the standard of life is increased people will struggle to maintain it. They will have either to increase income and productivity or restrict their numbers or try both ways. Here is a problem both for the government and the people and an opportunity for constructive work.
Kathiawar had almost the same population in 1901 as it had in 1872 but this was not due to the working of any human agency or due to any idea of restricting the numbers. The hand of nature was at work and so the population in 1901 appears to be only what it was in 1872. This should not be cited as a proof that there is no population problem in Saurashtra. As analysed above the position of remaining at the mercy of nature is dangerous. If medical science develops and reduces the "abnormal deaths" a more acute population problem will have to be faced. It is, therefore, imperatively necessary that the relationship between numbers and economic well being is well understood and proper means to attain the desirable goal are adopted. A double edged sword is necessary as the history of the last fifty years suggests. Medical science has shown its capacity of lessening the loss of life due to epidemics and better means of communication and transport have made famines a thing of the past. But if we stop here, there is a clear danger of an increase of population (as is clear from an addition of 15-1/2 lakhs in 30 years in an area which cannot support this increase at the present level of productive capacity) and hence the position must be viewed scientifically and not emotionally.

If Saurashtra has not to create the population problem all efforts must be made to raise the miserably low standard of living of the people. If their productive
capacity cannot be increased beyond a certain point at present they should be taught to restrict their numbers voluntarily. It is well known that when a man has very low level of existence, he does not care whether he has less members or more to maintain. But if he is lifted above the subsistence existence, he will understand economically better and happier life and perhaps try to maintain it as in Western countries.

It may be noted however that in percentage increase the increase is not objectionable. Not only that but even the absolute increase was only 6 lakhs in 50 years from 1881 to 1931. Further the people of Saurashtra have been famous from very early times as great traders and merchants. Moreover industry also supported a greater population in Saurashtra than Bombay only a few years ago and that the various handicaps to the economic development of this area due to the existence of small principalities have now been removed because of the establishment of the Saurashtra Government. There is also a further potentiality that after the development of Kandla - India's Karachi - as a great harbour this area will be certainly benefited and will become prosperous and that the railway system in Saurashtra will become more efficient due to integration.

But these are things of the future and there is no wisdom in multiplying at present at a faster rate because some developments are to take place.
Increase of productive capacity and dissemination of the birth control methods among the masses must go hand in hand if the population is to be better fed, better housed, better dressed and better medically attended.

From the Prime Minister to the peon in his department all agree on one thing and that is India's poverty. People of India are poor beyond compare. They are incapable of resisting diseases and epidemics. What is true of India is also true of Saurashtra. The growth of population may not be perhaps the only cause of India's poverty but the increasing numbers have certainly not changed this position. It is these problems to which greater attention be paid and in order to do it we must be relieved from the strain and worry of maintaining an increasing population.

The density of population per square mile also reveals some tendencies in the growth of population. In India the density of population per square mile has gone on increasing beyond the capacity of an agricultural economy as the population has inordinately increased during the last 30 years. The density per square mile as also the area per capita give us some idea about the pressure of population on land. In India during 1951 the major portion of the country was in the high and medium density regions in which the average density per square
mile was 660 and 260 respectively. In the high density regions the land area per capita was naturally less than in the medium density areas. The average land area per capita was 97 cents in the former as against 246 cents in the latter. Whereas the World citizen gets per capita 351 cents of agricultural area and 126 cents of arable land and an Indian gets only 97 cents per capita of agricultural area and also 97 cents of arable land. Though the comparison with the World land area does not give us the exact idea the comparison with Europe gives us a correct idea of the Indian position. It is fairly certain that the average land of Europe is definitely better than in India. Europe has got the highest proportion of well-watered land. The rainfall is both adequate and reliable and the rains are gentle and the temperature is moderate. The fertility of the soil is not washed away by heavy rains. Europe has also fewer land forms (such as mountains, etc.) that curtail food production. Hence comparison with Europe will be very instructive. Table No. 16 shows the comparison between India and Europe. (Table on next page)

Europe is the most densely populated continent of the world, but it is less densely populated than India. The average European has more land per capita than the average Indian. The European has brought only 30% of his land under the plough while the average Indian has brought 43% of his land under the plough. Because the average
European has got more and better land and has used only a smaller fraction of it for cultivation, he is able to have and does have in addition, 61 cents of agricultural land under permanent meadows and pastures. The above facts give a direct answer to the problem in India whether it is of "over-population" or "under development". This explains the difference between the nutritional standards of Europe and India. The permanent meadows and pastures

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provide milk, milk products, beef, mutton and other foodstuffs of animal origin in Europe while in India there is no such possibility. The average European can produce not merely more food than the average Indian but also better food. Hence he is able to have a richer, better balanced and more nutritious food than the average Indian.

The picture in Saurashtra is in no way different from the Indian picture. As Saurashtra was not politically a unit till 1948 figures for the growth of density per square mile for Saurashtra as such, are not available. Table No. 17 shows the density of population per square mile in Western India States Agency as also some of the important States in Saurashtra from 1901 to 1941.

**TABLE NO. 17**

(Showing density per square mile in W.I.S.A. and some States)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1941</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western India States Agency</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhavnagar</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gondal</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junagadh</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navanagar</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Adapted from Census of India, 1941, Part III, Bombay, pp. 39-40.
The above Table points out that the Western India States Agency area was a comparatively sparsely populated area in India. The Agency as a whole started with a density of 89 persons per square mile and increased to 129 by 1941. The States of Bhavnagar, Gondal and Junagadh are comparatively thickly populated as they are more fortunate in getting more rainfall and have a comparatively better soil. Bhavnagar, Gondal and Junagadh are the most populated parts in Saurashtra. In the case of Bhavnagar the density has increased from 139 persons per square mile to 209 persons per square mile thus showing an increase of 70 persons per square mile. Gondal and Junagadh have increased their density by 80 and 83 persons during the same period i.e. from 1901 to 1941. The percentage variation for the whole area was 45 during 1901-1941 period.

But the density for the whole of Kathiawar was not uniform. The northern portion was and even now is comparatively sparsely populated. The average for north and north east was between 50 and 100 persons per square mile during 1901-1921. The southern portion is comparatively more thickly populated than the northern. The reasons for this are not far to seek. It is more fortunate as it gets more rainfall and also has a comparatively more fertile soil. As we proceed towards the north the rainfall decreases and the soil also becomes sandy. There is no record about the percentage of density on the basis of...
cultivable land. But in parts of Saurashtra which comprised the Ahmedabad district it was about 200. As this area is the beginning of the northern portion the density of population on the basis of cultivable land might have been between 250-300.

But Saurashtra was less thickly populated than not only Gujarat but also Bombay Presidency as a whole. There were many causes for the low density of population in Saurashtra. In Saurashtra density largely depended upon rainfall modified by malaria and qualified by the fertility of the soil. On the coastal areas density varied inversely with the distance from the sea. In Saurashtra rainfall is scanty - at least for the major portion of land - and land is comparatively much less fertile than in Gujarat while irrigation is conspicuous by its absence. The picture would be complete if we mention the tragedy of "fragmented sovereignties."

But notwithstanding the fact that Saurashtra cannot maintain a denser population at its present level of production population has increased considerably during 1921-1951 period and with this increase the density has also increased. Table No. 18 shows how Saurashtra is fast becoming a densely populated area without any material change in the factors mentioned above.
The period from 1921 to 1951 is a period of rapid increase of population in Saurashtra as in other parts of India. This is quite naturally reflected in the increase in density per square mile which has increased from 119 to 193 persons per square mile from 1921 to 1951. In Saurashtra as in Gujarat density varies inversely with the distance from the sea. Population has also increased only in those areas which are already thickly populated. It should be noted that large parts of Saurashtra (especially in the north) lie in a tract which is nearly rainless or has poor, sandy and salty soil. Further the economic progress of this area was impeded by "fragmentation of

* Adapted from Census of India, 1951, Vol. IV, Part I subsidiary Table 102 page 192.
Sovereignties. Under these circumstances the increase in the density of population must be regarded as something like "pressure of population" on the limited means of subsistence. There is no statistical evidence to prove as to what is the total per capita land area as also the total per capita cultivable area in Saurashtra but the area of cultivation per capita is certainly much less than in the Bombay State and that it is also declining. The following Table — Table No. 19 — points out these facts:

**TABLE NO. 19**

(Showing land area per capita and trend of cultivation per capita during 1921-51)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total area of cultivation per capita (in cents)</th>
<th>Cultivable land per capita (in cents)</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1941</th>
<th>1951</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saurashtra</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bombay State</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>166.0</td>
<td>154.4</td>
<td>136.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konkan Division of Bombay State</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>102.6</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>59.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above Table reveals certain startling facts about the growth of population in Saurashtra and the "pressure

* Adapted from Census of India, 1951, Vol. IV, Bombay, Saurashtra and Kutch, Part I, Table 4.9 pages 246-247.*
of population" on land. Though cultivable land area per capita and total land area per capita are not available the figures that are available throw a flood light on what is happening. Moreover it should be noted that vast areas in Saurashtra are rainless and salty and that the soil in Saurashtra is comparatively poor than the soil in Gujarat. This means that total cultivable land area per capita cannot be expected to be higher or at least as high as in the Bombay State. Not only is the area of cultivation per capita much less than the area of cultivation per capita in the Bombay State, but that it is also rapidly declining. From the meagre 30.1 cents per capita cultivation in 1921 it has come down to 23.1 cents in 1951. The Konkan Division of the Bombay State (Comprising of the districts of Thana, Kolaba, Ratnagiri and Kanara) is classified by the Census of India 1951 as the high density sub-region and it has a density of 638 persons per square mile. But even for this Konkan Division per capita area of cultivation is double that of Saurashtra.

The population in Saurashtra is also most unevenly distributed. In 1941 little less than half the population was in 1/3 of the area of Saurashtra. This area comprises the central and southern parts of Saurashtra as it gets more rain and the soil is also comparatively more fertile. The uneven distribution is another characteristic of the density of Saurashtra population. It is in these areas
that the population has been increasing obviously as the other parts of Saurashtra cannot give sustenance to this increased population. The increase is naturally restricted to more favoured regions. Some parts in Saurashtra though not half as fertile and favoured as for instance the Indo-Ganggetic plain had in 1941 a density of 239 persons per square mile. Table No. 20 shows how density is increasing in those parts of Saurashtra that are already densely populated.

**TABLE NO. 20**

(Uneven distribution and concentration of population in the same areas of Saurashtra)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Density per square mile in</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1941</th>
<th>1951</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gohilwad</td>
<td></td>
<td>135</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Saurashtra</td>
<td></td>
<td>142</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zalawad</td>
<td></td>
<td>77</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The increase of population in an area which is already densely populated points out the same conclusion to which Dr. Gyanchand has come for the whole of India. In the words

*Adapted from Census of India 1951, Vol. IV, Part-I Subsidiary Table No. 1.2, page 192.*
of Dr. Gyanchand, "the fact that there (i.e. in the favoured parts) the population has been growing more rapidly than in the other parts of the country may be taken to indicate the increase of pressure there and the lack of capacity of the other parts to permit or absorb a corresponding growth of population."

It may be noted that the population may not exactly be "swarming" in these areas but it may become so in the nearest possible future if the present rate of growth is maintained. The other areas (e.g. Zalawad) are not rapidly increasing their density obviously because they cannot do it under the given circumstances. These areas cannot simply bear a higher pressure of population at the present level of production.

There are three major areas in the world where the density of population is very high. One of them is in Europe (England-Italy-Russia triangle), another in Eastern Asia in an area embraced by China, Korea and Japan and the third occurs in the Indian sub-continent. India had in 1951 an average population of 281 per square mile. No other political entity of equal or greater size in the world had a higher density. Bengal, Travancore, Cochin and U.P. are the most densely populated areas in India. From 1931 to 1951 the density in all these areas has been

3. Gyanchand, "India's Teeming Millions" page 90.
tremendously increasing as the following Table - Table No. 21 shows:

**TABLE NO. 21**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province or State</th>
<th>Density per square mile in 1931</th>
<th>Density per square mile in 1941</th>
<th>Density per square mile in 1951</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bengal</td>
<td>627</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.P.</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travancore</td>
<td>665</td>
<td>792</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cochin</td>
<td>807</td>
<td>953</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travancore-Cochin</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Lower Gangetic Plains, the Upper Gangetic Plains, Malabar-Konkan, South and North Madras and Coastal Orissa are the high density regions in India where the average density is 660 per square mile. This high density is phenomenal even for an industrial country and would be nothing but sheer pressure for a predominantly agricultural economy as that of India.

The mean density of India has also been increasing. In 1931 it was 213 per square mile, in 1951 it became 281 per square mile. But as pointed out above the density

* Based on the Census of India, 1931, 1941 and 1951.
varies considerably from place to place in India. The population is increasing in those parts which are already densely populated incidentally showing the pressure of population there and the lack of the capacity of other provinces to absorb the growth of population. The most promising parts of the country are occupied by a swarming population and in them the saturation point, even at the prevailing miserable standard of living, has to all appearances been reached.

Compared with these high density sub-regions, Saurashtra is sparsely populated even if we take up the 1951 Census figures (193 persons per square mile). But the capacity of Saurashtra to absorb an increasing population from other parts of India is obviously limited, not only because of its less fertile soil and scanty rainfall but because Saurashtra population itself is rapidly increasing during the last 30 years. Political unification, better government and integration of the transport system together with modernization of industry and agriculture will ameliorate the condition of the people and also increase the capacity of the area to support a greater population. But even if due weight is given to all these it appears doubtful whether Saurashtra can afford some relief to the "swarming millions" of India in the high density regions.

The general paucity of women as compared to men is
another noteworthy feature of the growth of population in India. The female deficiency in India has been confirmed by successive censuses in India from 1901 onwards as is shown by the following Table - Table No. 22 - which shows also that the deficiency is steadily increasing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>947</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the world as a whole there is perhaps (because statistics of all the countries are not equally reliable) a male excess. (992 females for 1000 males). Temporary differences in towns and new countries are generally due to selective migratory movements. But the North Indian deficiency is not due to migration as the migratory movements in question are too small in relation to total population.

Various reasons have frequently been given to explain the deficiency of women in India as compared to that of most European countries. Two facts may be noted very well in this context. Males and females are not born in equal

numbers and they do not die in equal numbers either in infancy or childhood or old age or at all ages taken together.

It is not necessary to prove the existence of a male excess at birth. The fact has been well noted over a number of years and the Census of India, 1951 adduces statistical evidence to prove this fact. But if more male children are born than female children Nature redresses the balance by taking a heavy toll of life from male children before completing the first year of life. In fact the proportion of sexes alters continually from year to year as people grow older. The strain of life and the risk of death tell heavily on women at some ages and on men at others. This causes inequality in the numbers of males and females. In the first year of life the hand of death falls more heavily on men than on women. Hence there cannot be any hard and fast rule governing inequality of sexes. But this does not explain why comparatively more males should be born than females and why death should spare females in the beginning and at the end of life. The causes of the comparative abundance of male children at birth are as yet a riddle and it seems that only more and more observation may perhaps throw some light upon this problem. Though no one has as yet given the answer to the above riddle research scholars have pointed out certain trends in the direction of masculinity or feminity
after the first birth takes place.

This deficiency of females is not uniform among all castes and communities in India. It is generally recognized that the ratio of females to males increases inversely with social standing among Hindus. This is well illustrated by the figures for Bombay Province where the whole Hindu population has been divided into advanced, inter-mediate, backward and depressed classes (1931 Census). For the advanced castes the ratio of women to men was 878 per 1000, for the backward, 953, while for the depressed classes it rose to 982 per 1000 males.

"Within the Hindu community the ratio increases in inverse proportion to social position and education" An increase in masculinity is an indication of declining population, but that is not the case in India as a whole. The low rate of increase among Hindus and Jains as compared to that in other communities is to be accounted for by the non-remarriage of widows. But it is also not unlikely that the caste system itself may be tending towards a preponderance of masculinity.

The shortage of females in India is not only confined to the Hindu community. Muslims, Christians and Sikhs all have less women than men. The original stock from which these communities have been recruited must have been very largely Hindu originally and may therefore be still influenced by the proclivities encouraged by previous in breeding.

Local conditions may also have some effect as the proportion of females to males is much higher in the damp climate, of the south and east than in the drier Deccan and north-west. Whatever may be the probable explanation as to why more boys are born than girls the fact remains that there is a shortage of females in India. The fact that the female infant is definitely better equipped by nature for survival is also not able to change the balance in their favour. In India the advantage she has at birth is probably neutralized in infancy by comparative neglect and in adolescence by the strain of bearing children too early and too often.

Mr. L. J. Sedgwick, I.C.S. has advanced the Racial theory to explain the shortage of females in India.

According to him the main permanent factor in producing and maintaining inequality of the sexes is the racial factor, modified by geographical and climatic conditions and social customs. Migration, famine and diseases with sex selection produce temporary disequilibrium. By "racial factor" he meant that the proportions of the two sexes was probably a "character" of the line. "The Indian endogamous caste with its exogamous divisions is a perfect method of preserving what is called in Genetics the "pure line". The endogamy prevents external hybridisation, while the exogamy prevents the possibility of a fresh pure line.
arising within the old one by the isolation of any character not common to the whole line. With the preservation of the pure line the perpetuation of all characters common to it necessarily follows. And there is no reason why sex ratio should not be transmissible in character. An excess of either sex may in this view be caused either by the birth of more of that sex than of the other or, the possession by the children of that sex of some character which tends to their preservation, probably greater resistance to certain diseases, etc.

In the case of geographical situation and climate it would seem probably that a low damp climate is more favourable to females and dry uplands to males ... In regard to social practices it is possible that any long continued female infanticide even though discontinued for many generations, may have reacted adversely to females, either by reducing the proportion of females born or by reducing children of that sex specially delicate. 7

In short permanent deficiency of females is due to racial character, climate and some social customs, while temporary disequilibrium is due to migration, famine and diseases with sex-selection.

The real biological deficiency of females is itself partly racial in character and partly the result of evil social customs aided by the legacy left from infanticide in the past. The Indian Census Report of 1911 (pp. 220-222) adduces some evidence to suggest that famine leads to a higher mortality among males, and may therefore function as a corrective to an excessive male ratio, so that a reduction of mortality from famine would automatically reduce the ratio of females to males.

The Bombay Census Report for 1911 gives the following causes of the deficiency of females in the Presidency.

(1) Female infanticide.
(2) Neglect of female infants.
(3) Infant marriage and early child bearing.
(4) Unskilful midwifery.
(5) Abortions in the case of pregnant widows.
(6) The hard life of widows and women of the lower classes.

Probably the most important single cause is the mortality in child-bed. The deficiency is mostly due to the loss of women due to early and constant child bearing and in the case of young widows the nature of their treatment. "The young mother is often confined in the most insanitary and ill-ventilated rooms or in the case of the less civilized castes goes through her confinement in an out-house or shed."
These methods coupled with the tender age of the child mother are quite sufficient to either kill her at once or to induce hysteria and complications which carry her off later."

For the increase in female mortality, relative to male between the ages of 5 and 15, when girls might be expected to be as healthy and as robust as boys, the reason appears to be the neglect of female infants. This neglect is of two kinds, deliberate and half unconscious. The deliberate neglect with the object of causing death is practically infanticide in a more cruel form. The half unconscious neglect is partly due to the habit and partly due to the parents' greater solicitude for their sons. The boys are better clad and when ill are more carefully tended. In poor families when there is not enough for all, it is infarially the girls who suffer. In this way a girl is at a great disadvantage as compared with her brothers in the struggle for life.

"It seems likely, therefore, that apart from racial and physiological causes the explanation of abnormal deficiency of females in India is due primarily to the ill-treatment of girls upto the age of 15 in the poorer classes."

According to the Census Report for 1931 for India the female population is understated especially in the lower age groups and this unduly depresses the sex ratio. This is due to the concealment mostly through sheer indifference of female births and female existence. Though this may contain some truth, the Bombay Census Report for 1911 gives a more realistic and probable explanation of the deficiency of females due to the neglect of female infants. The burden of bearing children too early and too often also puts an undue strain on our women in the child bearing period leading to a higher mortality in this period.

The lot of a woman in India is certainly not enviable. She is not wanted if born and so begins her tragedy from the very starting of her voyage through life. Till her 15th years, though she has a greater potentiality to survive, she is neglected and ill treated so that tables are turned against her. From 15 to 40 (the fertile period of her life) she is subjected to a very hard life. She has to satisfy the demands of marriage too early and bear too many children without enough care taken of her. She is required to labour with her hands as well as nurse and maintain children and do the household cooking. Hence as the Bombay Census Report for 1931 points out, the female ratio is usually most unfavourable in the 40-60 years age group.

It is no wonder, therefore, that there should be a
deficiency of women in India.

As Saurashtra was not a separate political unit till recently separate figures in this respect are not available. It formed, however, a major portion of the Western India States Agency. Hence figures for the agency have been given below.

Females per 1000 males in some of the important states in Western India States Agency from 1901 are shown below :

**TABLE NO. 23**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of State</th>
<th>Females per 1000 males in the year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western India</td>
<td>979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>States Agency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhavnagar</td>
<td>942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navanagar</td>
<td>988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morvi</td>
<td>964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wadhwan</td>
<td>975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. K. Agency</td>
<td>983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. K. Agency</td>
<td>950</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It will be clear from the above Table that the Agency and many parts of Saurashtra show a comparatively higher

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* Census of India, 1941, Part III- Bombay, Subsidiary Table No. 4, page 20.
female ratio than that of Bombay or India as a whole. Females are numerically inferior to males in the Agency as in the whole of India and to that extent the analysis given above about the shortage of females in India also applies to Kathiawar. But the degree of numerical inferiority is less in Kathiawar than that of Bombay or India as a whole. The difference, therefore, is of degree only and not of kind. All the same the fact that Kathiawar has a higher female ratio is noteworthy. It is highly problematic whether it is due to any racial differences for so much intermarrying must have taken place in the long history of India that it is very difficult to believe that any one area may be supposed to contain only a certain single race. The population of Kathiawar is mainly Gujarati speaking and has great affinities with Gujarat. In fact Kathiawar is a part of Maha-Gujarat of the future. The social customs and the position of women is in no way different from that obtaining in Gujarat. Gujarat with the rest of the Bombay Presidency also shows the same shortage of females. Racial influence, therefore, if at all operative, must be responsible only to a very limited extent as an explanation of the greater female ratio in Kathiawar.

Migration appears to be largely responsible for a higher female ratio. In the Ratnagiri District of the Bombay Presidency also females outnumber males and it is
well known that males are attracted to Bombay from there and so the females predominate. "It is possible that sections of the Agency may in this respect present features somewhat similar to those prevailing in the Ratnagiri district, where the female ratio is higher than the male."

The Agency loses more people than it receives from outside. The number of immigrants was about 1 lakh 10 thousand and of emigrants was roughly 2 lakhs 92 thousand in 1931; the difference being about 1 lakh 82 thousand. The loss is not surprising. The people of this area are famous from very early times as a great trading community. Commerce and trade is still principally the chief occupation after agriculture in Saurashtra. Hence many have gone in the past to various parts of the Bombay Presidency, to Gujarat, Africa and even to far off Burma. This tradition is continued even in modern times as is quite clear from the balance of immigration and the loss of the Agency.

The area again is not very fertile and so there is little attraction of agriculture. Industries on modern lines have not been developed and so people have to go out.

"The loss to the Agency is perhaps not surprising. It is only on the whole an arid tract and shows few signs of any great industrial developments. Many of the inhabitants are engaged in trade which encourages immigration."

It is well known that traders keep their families in the Desh (i.e. Kathiawar) and go alone outside either as traders or merchants or even labourers. Thus naturally a slightly greater female ratio can be seen in Kathiawar than in the Bombay Presidency.

Not only that emigrants are more than immigrants but even among the immigrants females outnumber the males. "Of the immigrants from Bombay Presidency the males numbered 18,962 and the females 27,900 of the Baroda immigrants the males numbered 11,970 and females 22,000."

Social and marriage arrangements of the people in Kathiawar explain the high proportion of female immigrants. It seems that women from adjacent Gujarat districts are given in marriage to people living in Kathiawar. The Census of India 1931 (Vol. X) page 21 also confirms this point and asserts that "women from adjacent parts of British Gujarat and from Baroda are being given in marriage to men living in Agency limits".

Immigration from Rajputana also is of the same kind.

The migration figures do establish the fact that Kathiawar does contribute quite an appreciable element to

the population of other parts of India as the Bombay city figures clearly show. The preponderance of females must therefore, be due to the cumulative effects of both these factors viz. that there is an unfavourable balance of migration and that of the immigrants the majority are women.

It may also be noted that though Kathiawar has a higher proportion of females than in the Bombay Presidency or many other parts of India, still it is not so high as in Western countries. In fact it is much less than that proportion, incidentally, indicating the improbability of the working of any special racial factors.

Saurashtra population is essentially a trading population and hence people from Saurashtra have migrated from times immemorial to distant parts, such as Africa, Burma and other parts of India. The nature of migration and immigration not only explains the comparatively higher female ratio in Saurashtra than in India but also throws important light on the trend of growth of population in Saurashtra. From Census to Census it is becoming crystal clear that migration from Saurashtra to other parts is much greater than immigration into Saurashtra. Bombay Presidency, Baroda and Rajaputana are the chief areas to which people from Saurashtra go for business purposes.

In 1931 the Western India States Agency received only 1 lakh immigrants whereas it lost 2 lakhs 91 thousand
emigrants. Thus the natural population of Saurashtra would be greater than what is shown at the beginning of this chapter.

The magnitude of migration and immigration for Saurashtra is shown by Table No. 24 and variation in natural population by Table No. 25.

**Table NO. 24**
(Migration and immigration for Saurashtra in 1931 - 1951)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immigration</th>
<th>Emigration</th>
<th>Immigration minus Emigration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>1951</td>
<td>1931</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 78353       | 128511     | 401761                       | -129678                      | -350838

**Table NO. 25**
(Variation in natural population and migration and immigration)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recorded Population</th>
<th>Immigration</th>
<th>Emigration</th>
<th>Natural population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td><strong>80,927</strong></td>
<td>206,031</td>
<td>3,080,980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>113,850</td>
<td>479,349</td>
<td>4,482,858</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Adapted from Census of India, 1951, Vol. IV, Part I, Subsidiary Table Nos. 1.6, 1.7, pages 206-207.

** Immigrants from outside India are included.
On the balance of migration and immigration Saurashtra is a losing area and this migration is on the increase from 1931. Thus people from Saurashtra go outside for trade and business purposes and leave their women folk in the Desh. Moreover as pointed out earlier the nature of immigrants also reveals certain facts. The marriage arrangements appear to bring more brides to Saurashtra as pointed out by 1931 Census as in every 1000 immigrants there were 564 females and 416 males (Census of India, 1931, Vol. X, page 25”). In 1951 out of the total immigrants of 1,33,850 there were about 90,000 females and only 43,000 males. The reason for a comparatively higher female ratio will thus become quite clear. Incidentally the above two Tables also bring home the fact that the natural population would have been 44.8 lakhs in 1951 and not 41 lakhs (as has been recorded) but for emigration from Saurashtra.