



In the process of the struggle for political and economic independence and liberation, the contemporary history of any Third World country appears shaped by the impact of a dynamic interaction between two logically interrelated phenomena: the imperialists' contention for achieving hegemony over the Third World country and the inevitable national movement which gradually grows out of combating this alien challenge. The history of Iran from 1884 to 1921, when viewed in the context of Anglo-Russian contention in Asia, can provide a case study of this dynamic interaction.

Municipal Corporation, were convinced that the 'effect of English education upon the Parsis generally will be to raise them still higher in the scale of civilization.'<sup>3</sup> His book tells the story of decades of hard, painful and incessant struggles which enabled the Parsis to carve out a place for themselves as an Anglicised and forward-looking, if not always an enlightened, elite.

The appropriation of colonial idioms and the relationship between public culture and colonialism are complex themes, but Lucknow's *Awadh Punch* and Bombay's *Parsee Punch* dealt with them dexterously. What is more, they illustrated, in a lighter vein, contemporary anxieties and predicaments, and unfolded events far more

complex in actuality than as it has appeared to later historians. And because they mirrored the changes around them, they occupy an important place in the history of illustrated books. 'A comic journal plays a good part in the development of the political and social reform of a country, and it shall be always our aim and desire to advance that end,' commented the *Parsee Punch*.

The *Parsee Punch* made its mark as the only illustrated comic weekly paper in the Bombay Presidency. It was published in July 1854 at the Apyakhtiar Press by Dadabhai Soheri from 12 Elphinstone Circle, Fort, Bombay, and edited by Barjorji Nowrosji. Appropriately enough, Dadabhai Naoroji figured on the cover page. The 'Grand Old Man' of India was the first to use the word 'swaraj' for India's goal. He was the Congress President in 1886, 1893 and 1906.

3 John Hinnells and Alan Williams (eds), *Parsis in India and the Diaspora* (London, 2007), pp. 120-21.