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VOL. II No. 6

APRIL 1966

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# Pārsiāna

VOL II No. 6

APRIL 1966

## P. N. MEHTA MEMORIAL LECTURES

(A SERIES OF TWELVE LECTURES)

DELIVERED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF

**RAHNUMA MAZDYASNAN SABHA**

AT

K. R. Cama Oriental Institute (Bombay)

ON

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE FOR THE RAHNUMAE OF THE  
PARSI COMMUNITY !

This issue of PARSIANA is devoted exclusively to this series and is called

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# Parsiana

## Rahnuma Number

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11. Mr. Kaikobad D. Katki (KHADA PARSI in service of Parseeism)
12. Mr. Ratan J. Mithaiwalla (Rathestar in the assembly of youth)

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Young Collegians' Zoroastrian Association (Y.C.Z.A.)

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## Editorial

This issue of Parsiana is the result of implementing the decision of the Rahnuma Mazdayasnan Sabha to have all lectures of the P. N. Mehta Memorial Lectures Series printed collectively. The Sabha has paid the cost of paper, wrappers, postage, delivery and other incidental charges in the preparation of this issue, but not the cost of composing, editing and other overheads. In return the management of Parsiana undertake to send a copy to all members of the Sabha over and above the subscribers on list of Parsiana. The object of the Sabha is thus served more extensively beyond their own membership and Parsiana benefits financially by the Sabha sharing the cost of production. However the cost allocated to the Sabha is still much less than what it would cost them if they printed these lectures as a volume all on their own. At the same time Parsiana considers compensation adequate and liberal.

In modern times Darwin's Theory of the Survival of the Fittest is gradually being by-passed by Kuropotkin's Theory of Mutual Aid, which aims at making as many as possible fit to survive. Foreign Aid, International Monetary Banks, Industrial Aid Corporations, P.L. 480 and Rahnuma-Parsiana collaboration are instances.

Why is such a small thing like Parsiana coupled with larger issues of survival here? It pointedly aims at fixing the attention of the community that by now each and every magazine in Gujarati or English meant particularly for circulations amongst the Parsis has closed down with the sole exception of Jashan Committee's quarterly printed from its funds and distributed to its small membership free.

Parsiana was started with full knowledge of this history and this handicap as an experimental magazine that must sink or swim on its merit to survive without donations or other forms of generosity. Several gentlemen out of goodness of their heart in appreciation of this magazine have sent donations. I have deeply appreciated their generous gestures and respectfully intimated to them my inability to accept donations. Parsiana is a personal and proprietary magazine and must survive on only two legitimate sources of income for it — subscriptions of members and advertisements. If it does not survive it means the community has no need of any cultural medium of its own and to prop up a thing not in demand would mean generosity misplaced.

I am happy to announce that though Parsiana is yet (in one and a half year) not self-supporting every day it is gaining ground and popularity — I believe by the end of two years it shall be respected as our cultural medium and shall be acceptable to advertisers with growing membership.

Our Advisory Editorial Board has worked admirably as a Prestige Body by lending it support of their reputation and advice. We deeply regret to announce the death of Dr. R. N. Cooper — whose name will in this issue appear last time on our Prestige Body. We take note of his death inside this issue.

We have several institutions which intend to bring their activities to the notice of the public — especially the Parsis. Rahnuma Mazdayasnan Sabha has for the first time opened the way and showed the way of collaboration as a form of Mutual Aid as a technique in survival by making as many as our other institutions and media fit to survive. This is the short story of "What should be Done ....."



# RAHNUMAE MAZDAYASNAN SABHA

## WHAT IT STANDS FOR

### INTRODUCTION

Mr. Erach A. Nadirshah, B.A., B.E. (Bom), B.Sc. (Edin),  
M. Inst. C. E., F. I. P. H. E. (Lond), M.I.E. (Ind).

The Rahnumae Sabha recently started a *series of lectures called the P. N. Mehta Memorial Lectures* in memory of the late Mr. P. N. Mehta a former President of the Sabha who spared no money or labour in promoting the aims of the Sabha. The subject of these Memorial Lectures is '**What should be done for the Rahnumae of the Parsi Community!**' The series was inaugurated by Dasturji Khursheed Dabu on 4th August, 1965, a day after the Foundation Day Anniversary of the Sabha. Thereafter, eleven eminent persons delivered lectures in this series. Thereafter was a *Symposium* in which the *Youths' Own Union, Young Collegians' Zoroastrian Association* and the *Dadar Youth Assembly* were invited to participate and young men and women of our Community had an opportunity to express their views on this important subject.

The summary of all these lectures and the Symposium are now published in a special number of '*ParsiANA*' for which we offer our grateful thanks to the Governing Body of that paper and especially to Dr. P. B. Warden who attended most of the lectures and took trouble in the preparation of this publication. '*ParsiANA*' has started its career only recently and I take this opportunity of congratulating those responsible for its publication and wish it success. This Magazine brings out what is good reading for the Parsis and publishes scholarly, interesting, informatory and thought-provoking articles on religious, social and other matters concerning the Parsi Community which deserve the attention of one and all, young and old.

The Rahnumae Sabha is in existence for one hundred and fourteen years. Lady Hirabai Cowasji Jehangir presiding at the lecture delivered in this series by Mr. H. D. Banaji said "the fact that this Sabha exists so long is in itself a proof of its usefulness to the Parsi Community". This

Sabha was founded in 1851 by the then leading Parsis of Bombay, Mr. K. R. Cama, a great Oriental Scholar, Mr. Naoroji Fardunji who was its first President, and Dr. Dadabhoy Naoroji who was its first Hon. Secretary. My immediate past President was Sir Rustom P. Masani, himself a scholar and author. The main aim of the Sabha is to create robust faith in the Zoroastrian Religion and in the glory of Ahura Mazda and spread the original teachings of our Prophet Zarathushtra amongst Zoroastrians. It is also one of the objects of the Sabha to impress upon parents through lectures, symposiums, etc., the need for giving adequate and correct religious bias to their children in their home training so that when they grow up they may possess deep rooted faith in their religion. It is also the function of the Rahnumae Sabha to give the right guidance to our Community and to show the true Zoroastrian way of life, i.e. to follow the principles of Humata, Hukhta and Huvarashta. The fundamental basis of religion is the leading of good and useful life during the transitory period of our existence on earth. It is the duty of all Zoroastrians to follow the righteous path so beautifully taught by our Prophet, Holy Zarathushtra.

The Rahnumae Sabha is doing its best to promote these aims. Every week, mostly Wednesday evenings lectures are held at the K. R. Cama Library Hall, on religious, social and cultural subjects which are open to the public and every week Friday evenings classes are held at the same place where the Gathas are explained. With the co-operation of the K. R. Cama Institute the meaning of our daily prayers from the Khurde Avesta are also explained. All these classes are



entirely free. Symposiums, debates, elocution competitions and competitive examinations are also held and prizes given. The Rahnumae Sabha also encourages the publication of books on Zoroastrian religious subjects and at times gives book-prizes. In spite of all this as many of our younger people as we would wish do not take interest in these matters. This surprises us. We regret that amongst the grown ups non-Zoroastrian beliefs, superstitions and inclination to go to Bavas and Peers have not lessened and temptation and hope of some material gain pull them away from our Path of Righteousness. There is continuous need for the Rahnumae for bringing them back to the right path.

Generally speaking Parsis can be divided into three classes. One is the orthodox class who wish to preserve everything of the former generations. The second class is positively against religious practices customs and ceremonies and the third simply careless, callous and apathetic to all things Parsi and Zoroastrian. As regards the two latter classes the Rahnumae Sabha is doing its best to present to them the teachings of Prophet Zarathushtra in their pristine pure form and to show how much the Zoroastrian religion is based on the principles of Nature and science. As regards the first class, the Rahnumae Sabha is the last Institution to discard age old customs and ceremonies.

Some time in 1965 two demonstrations were held under the auspices of the Rahnumae Sabha, one of the Yazeshne ceremony and the other of the Vendidad ceremony and the implications of these ceremonies were explained. The Rahnumae Sabha respects ceremonies and tries to intelligently convey the same. The Rahnumae Sabha does not encourage mere blind belief but, as taught by Zarathushtra in the Gathas, lays stress upon the importance of the correct comprehension of the main principles of our religion, for true faith can rest upon enlightened knowledge alone. The Rahnumae Sabha advocates a proper study of our religious scriptures and believes that religious education of the right type is necessary and should be given. Once our people get an intelligent comprehension of the principles of our religion they will automatically stop all non-Zoroastrian beliefs and practices and learn to pin their faith in Lord Ahura Mazda alone. This is what the Rahnumae Sabha stands for.

The lectures delivered in the P. N. Mehta Memorial Series have provided food for thought. Many of the eminent speakers in this series of lectures have made constructive suggestions which our Community may well consider. The Rahnumae Sabha may form an ad hoc Committee and invite these and other eminent and practical persons out of our Community to show us the ways and means of implementing the suggestions contained herein.

*The greatest need for the Parsi Community today is unity.* It is a pity that we often waste our energy and time in dissensions on matters of trivial or no importance. Zoroastrians are spread out in several far off places in India. At many places the number of Zoroastrian residents is fast decreasing and immovable properties there are becoming useless or left uncared for. At many places the problems and difficulties of Zoroastrians cannot be solved unless by the co-operation and assistance of Zoroastrians from other places. Similarly, many Zoroastrians reside in different countries of the world. At the *First World Zoroastrian Congress held in Tehran in 1960*, which Congress by the way did honour to the Parsis of India by electing me as its President, *it was recommended to form a World Zoroastrian Body* and also that in countries where an appreciable number of Zoroastrians reside a *Countrywise Zoroastrian Organisation* should be formed. Both these recommendations were adopted by the Second World Zoroastrian Congress which was held in Bombay in 1964 and *the need for increasing contacts between Zoroastrians was acknowledged*. A Main Committee has been appointed by the Bombay Parsi Punchayet and it is hoped that both these recommendations will be implemented soon. Let us therefore get together, desist from trivialities, eliminate personalities and work together. Let us pray that Ahura Mazda will bless our Community and enable all Zoroastrians to understand and live up to the great principles of our noble religion which our forefathers have kept alive for thousands of years and which it is our duty now to pass it on.

Yatha Jamyad Atha Afrinami.



# **“What Should be done for the Rahnumae of the Parsi Community!”**

**P. N. Mehta Memorial Lectures Series**

**Lecture I delivered under auspices of the Rahnumae Mazdayasnan Sabha**

**Lecturer:— Dasturji Khursheed S. Dabu**

**President: Mr. Erach A. Nadirshah.**

At the outset Mr. Erach A. Nadirshah, President of the Rahnumae Sabha said that the Sabha had started a series of lectures called the P. N. Mehta Memorial Lectures in memory of the late Mr. P. N. Mehta, former President of the Sabha. He also said the Sabha was established on 3rd August 1851 and this series of lectures was started on 4th August 1965, i.e., after 114 years and requested Dasturji Dabu to inaugurate the series by delivering the first lecture.

Dasturji Dabu opened his lecture with the remark that every man is imperfect and stands in need of guidance, Rahnumae. Likewise a community too needs guidance and a person giving advice must needs be competent and experienced. This is an age of specialisation in all matters and religious guidance is no exception. Danger of improper guidance is misdirection which might lead community astray. During our Zoroastrian age in Iran the Priests called Magavas were guiding the kings and the State in all matters. They were really learned men possessing vast experience. Not only kings but the entire people were following the advice given. Our Prophet, Zarathushtra, was not an ordinary person. He had attained the position of a Yazad. He possessed vast spiritual knowledge, vision and foresight. Only the one who is a **દેવ અથવા પ્રજ્ઞાન રૂપ** knowing both the worlds is a Prophet. He had taken birth in order to save the world from evil and to show the right path to mankind, and yet he never experienced any sort of compulsion. He asked people to hear what he had to say, to meditate upon it and to believe it only if they were intellectually and spiritually satisfied about the truth of what he said. Zarathushtra laid emphasis upon the freedom of will. Everyone was free to think and act as he or she pleased. But this freedom was to be exercised with full knowledge of the responsibility

which a human being carried towards his soul. Zarathushtra proved that there was only one way and that was the path of righteousness. Observance of religion does not rest merely upon outward conformation to set rules and customs. Religion goes deeper in the hearts of men and righteousness in thought word and deed constitutes the essence of our religion. The destiny of man is to become in course of time like Ahura Mazda, as pure, truthful and righteous as Him. Our guidance cannot be directed anywhere else except to rectitude — the plumb line that never deviates and drops straight on truth.

There is natural force in our religion based upon the power of our Mathra-vani that sustains and revives it. Our prayers must be said in the original. Translations may be made use of for understanding what we do not.

We are living as a Community. Our forefathers left Iran and after suffering untold hardships came and settled in this hospitable country in order to preserve our religion. Every Zoroastrian should remember this and consider this as a heritage. During the 1200 years of our stay here our forefathers underwent many sacrifices. They worked hard and attained position and wealth on merit. They possessed great qualities of truthfulness, honesty and affection towards all. At the same time we preserved our individuality.

Those who advocate mixed marriages forget that many such marriages end in disaster and divorce and our community has much to learn from such instances and do its best to preserve its individuality. As in all communities, there are ups and downs but in the hearts of Zoroastrians the fire of the basic teachings of our Prophet always lies dormant and may turn into







## Lecture II

Lecturer: Prof. A. R. Wadia M. P.

11-8-65

President: Dr. Sarosh R. Wadia.

At the outset Prof. Wadia said this was a vast subject and it was difficult to make any off-hand suggestions. There were many questions that were facing the Community and their solution needed consideration and planning. Times were continuously changing and the Community shall have to adjust itself according to the circumstances.

The Community must take up seriously the question of education, both at the initial and higher levels. It is true that in the Parsi Community the percentage of literacy is almost 100 per cent. Still that does not help much. There was a time when with some learning a Parsi could get good jobs in bank or government offices or commercial firm. These days are gone. Other communities are coming forward which is welcome but in order that Parsis should hold their own, the standard of our education should also rise. Parsis should expect to get recognition on merit only. It is desirable to have a College with Parsi management. At present we can only think of an Arts College. Science college would be beyond our means. Purely Parsee college cannot get government Aid. Considering the small number of Parsi students who would join, it should be kept open for all communities. In our schools too greater attention should be paid to religious moral education and the formation of character.

In order that the Parsis can live contentedly and well we should change our expensive and luxurious habits and learn to live with dignity in simplicity.

As a Community we should take keener interest and part in politics. Our older generation were the leaders in the political field. Capable Parsis

should come forward to enter the State and Central Legislatures and the Civic Corporations. There is respect for Parsis for their habit of fair-play and impartiality. We should stick to such principles and use them as stepping stones to higher achievements. Because of our good traits there are four Parsis in Central Legislature — two by election and two by nomination, nominated not as Parsis but as Indians as representatives of the teeming millions.

In religious matters we have become indifferent. A number of us may be going to the Fire Temples by force of habit but our warmth and love towards our religion has decreased. Christianity and others groups attracted some and charmed others. The wearing of Sudreh and Kushti should continue as our symbols. (Many Zoroastrians were saved by these symbols during communal riots).

Parsis are respected as a harmless honest and loyal class by all. We must therefore try to preserve our individuality.

It is a biological law, acknowledged commonly that union of likes produce specific results and in human beings it tends to preserve and perpetuate inborn traits. This is a rich inheritance of the Parsis which they should take care to preserve unsoiled. On this ground he opposed mixed marriages and based upon the male dominance in biology he agreed with our present system of retaining children of Parsi father and not accepting children of Parsi women by non-Parsi men. If such marriages cannot be stopped they should not be encouraged.



In the end the lecturer pleaded for greater unity amongst the Community and hoped that by united efforts and scientific planning the Parsi Community will enable itself to live as well, honourably and happily as in the past.

He deprecated the habit of drifting to Christianity for its pomp and pageantry and to Pirs, Sadhus and Saibavas for their so called miraculousness. In religion nothing matters except what is in our heart and Zoroastrianism has more than enough of good and great to fill any number of hearts. With outward indifference we are still

zealous as can be seen from large numbers flocking to our places of worship on occasions and many visiting them daily for religious inspiration. Parsis and Jews have endured most for their religion. As fanaticism will gradually fade away and proper understanding replace it our faith in our religion will blossom forth once again. Till then we must hold on, retain our beliefs and tenets in reverence they deserve.

The lecturer emphasised the need for industries to employ our younger generation.



Publications of Zoroastrian Religious Knowledge by Mr. Framroze Rustomjee of Colombo are available at :

New Book Co.  
Taraporewalla.  
Jehangir B. Karani's Sons  
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All books in which Texts are fully explained should be in every Zoroastrian home.



## Lecture III

Lecturer: **Dasturji N. D. Minochehrhomji M.A.**

18-8-65

President: **Mr. H. D. Banaji, Advocate.**

In his lecture Dasturji Minocheherhomji dwelt on the education of young children and the duty of the School and the parents. Dasturji referred to the late Mr. P. N. Mehta, in whose memory this series of lectures was arranged, and said he had worked under Mr. Mehta and knew how much Mr. Mehta cared for the education of our young people. Education must begin at a very young age when the child's mind is most impressionable. We may not be aware but a child even at the age of four or five is watching its elders very attentively and *the behaviour of the elders is the most effective teacher. Impressions made at this tender age last for life. Parents should therefore be very careful in their own behaviour and must never forget that every word they utter and deed they do is a chapter in the lesson book of the child.* Dasturji referred to the speech recently made by the Vice-President of India, Dr. Zaquir Hussein, at Hyderabad that "the child is like the essence hidden in the bud which later grows into a flower." It is the duty both of the parents as well as of the School authorities to see that this essence within the child is nurtured properly and helped to grow. The child passes through the school in about ten years. This is the most important period when the child's character is formed. The old method of punishment is now replaced by patient examination about the cause which leads a child to behave in a particular way. Bad behaviour in school is often the reaction of some maladjustment at home or even in school itself. Dasturji in an illustration described a case in which every Tuesday a child in school would beat its fellow boys. Investigation at home showed that the family was so poor that they took breakfast by turn and Tuesday was the day for the child to skip its breakfast. The school provided breakfast for that child every Tuesday and from that time the child gave up its bad habit.

All cases must be psychologically approached and examined and treated accordingly. In such matter the *co-operation of parents is most useful.* Parents must keep in touch with school teachers and the authorities, bring suggestions from time to time and adjust home influences as advised by the teachers. As regards teenagers there is a common complaint that they are fond of pictures and roam about in the evening. But the parents are to blame. If the parents themselves pass their evenings in the club or other places of entertainment what are the youngsters to do? Parents must spare time for their young sons and daughters, pass evenings with them, have attractive conversation, teach religion and make good impressions how to behave in public now and when they grow up. *Parental example is the key to family welfare.*

On 12th January 1966 Dasturji Minocheherhomji gave a second lecture in the same series under the Presidentship of Prof. A. R. Wadia, "Fields of Guidance for the Community — One More Humble Survey". In the course of *this lecture Dasturji Minochehrhomji gave a very interesting survey of what is found in Zoroastrian religious scriptures about the education of a child, of a grown up man, as a citizen and the training which used to be given to our Priestly class during Achaemenian and Sassanian periods of Persian history.* Dasturji also gave a clear idea of the method of modern education followed in advanced countries like England and America and suggested that those in charge of education, especially the authorities of Parsi-run schools should keep in touch with those methods and try to incorporate as many of them as suit our conditions. He said that visual method of training would be very helpful. Method should be employed to make uninteresting subjects interesting. Above all, maximum attention should be given to



the formation of character and for this purpose students should be watched at play and in their spare hours. *Parents should carefully impart at best the minimum religious education to each child at home, not only the basic principles of our religion but they should create a kind of affection respect and faith in our religion.*

Dasturji gave a general picture of education in ancient Iran.

1st It sought God's Guidance.

2nd It taught adaptation to changes in earthly life.

3rd It asked for Courage to live.

4th It believed that only the universal elements in teachings will survive and really guide.

5th It made guidance an imperceptible teaching and not a form of driving through force.

These principles were introduced in teachings at all levels of life from child to adult and even the elders. Training was in the hands of Dasturs and Danavs (the wise). They decided when, where, how and why to guide and whom to guide. Those anxious to receive guidance are the most fruitful fields. It was the business of parents to inculcate respect for teachers. Khushrow (later known as Navshirwan-e-Adil) when ten years old was given three stripes by his teacher. He carried complaint as a future emperor to Kobad, his father and emperor of the time. Kobad said your teacher is not my subject he is our family Guru and I can do nothing to him. King Kobad died

when Khushrow became 21 years of age. Death took place at 4 p.m. Khushrow sent for his teacher at 5 p.m. He asked him "Do you know me?" "Yes ! You are Your Majesty. You can now do what you like". Khushrow said, "by your three stripes I have learnt not to seek vengeance. A king should not take revenge and appointed the teacher a courtier for his whole life.

We need more of such teachers and such pupils with reverence for teachers. To guide our children we need not just Parsee mothers but we need Parsee mothers Zoroastrians at heart ; whom Dasturji calls Parsee Zoroastrian mothers.

If rituals and customs differ they do not make any change in the basic beliefs of people. An Englishman went to a tomb with flowers and bouquet and a Chinaman came there with a bowl of rice. The Englishman asked the Chinaman will your grandfather when he rises partake of the rice ? The Chinaman retorted when your grandfather will rise will he smell the bouquet ? Ceremonies and rituals strengthen our faith and bond with God. We do need them. We mankind are Hamlets throughout countless centuries wavering to be or not to be this or that. We question everything. We question the value of prayers. May be after prayers we revert to our old wrong ways— but at least for the time being we are elevated— like daily bath after which we feel clean and fresh — though need another next morning.

Like today's bath today's guidance will not last for good but we need it today all the same. Let us seek it earnestly.





## Lecture IV

Lecturer: **Mr. H. D. Banaji, Advocate**

13-10-65

President: **Lady Hirabai Cowasji Jehangir**

Mr. Erach A. Nadirshah in a short speech welcomed Lady Hirabai Cowasji Jehangir and said she was one of the few ladies of our Community who was working day and night for long many years in the cause of the poor of our Community. The Rahnumae Sabha was proud to have a Patron like Lady Hirabai C. Jehangir.

Lady Jehangir occupied a unique place in our Community and had endeared herself to all, especially the poorer class, by her service, sacrifice and devotion. The princely charities of the Ready-money family were well known.

Mr. Banaji said the whole world was moving through constantly changing circumstances. Our country India was also moving fast. Therefore, it would not help our Community to remain stagnant. We should move with the times. It would not pay to stick to the old adage 'do as our forefathers did'. We must adjust ourselves to changed circumstances and try to hold our own. This we can do only on merit and be as fit in every way as possible. It is the work of the Rahnumae Sabha to show the right path and it was appropriate that the Sabha had started a series of lectures on this important subject as to what should be done for the Rahnumae of the Community. The first thing that was necessary, according to the lecturer, was that our community should shed its lethargy and be prepared for active solid hard work. We have shown lethargy in civic matters, in the political field and even in acquainting ourselves with our religion. There are good small books on our religion which parents should read and place in the hands of our younger generation. It is heartening to see that our national outlook is keen and vigorous and even today when the country was in danger not one but several Parsis laid down their lives in the defence of the country.

Our Community has social and religious problems. Inter-marriages is one of them. During the 1300 years of our stay in India the Parsis have rigidly followed the custom of not admitting non-Zoroastrian to our faith and this long standing custom has the effect of law. It is also legally settled that the offspring of a Parsi father and a non-Parsi mother wedded by civil marriage can become a Zoroastrian Parsi but Parsi female marrying a non-Parsi male cannot make her child a Zoroastrian Parsi. But what about the Parsi female who though continuing to be a Zoroastrian marries a non-Zoroastrian? All these problems must be faced and solved. The Second World Zoroastrian Congress which met in Bombay in 1964 made a number of recommendations. They must be implemented. We should appoint a committee of leaders and scholars and what is most necessary is that we should have a constitution. If we have a Central Organisation for all the Parsis of India we can do a lot. We can give proper leadership and guidance, lend assistance where necessary, relieve distress in far off places, look after properties in villages at present lying uncared for and what is most have a representation on behalf of our Community. The Main Committee appointed by the Congress is trying to implement these but we need the backing of the whole community in this great cause.

The lecturer analysed each of our problems—Social, Economic, Political, Religious, Legal, Educational and Health.

**SOCIAL:** We have taken large strides and made a considerable progress. Now it is time to take stock of them. We must look into our Marriage and social laws and customs and change them as needed. In political life each one of us must play his or her part appropriate to the station and period of life, young or old. Parsi parents must take up their children seriously in hand and treat



them as their TRUST. Parents must educate their own selves. School and college education are something apart. Knowledge of bringing up a new generation is more a question of devotion and sense of responsibility. We should prepare parents for their task. They will then guide their children. People will then say here is a community whose mothers know how to live and lead.

**ECONOMIC:** Millionaires are dwindling down. No big charities are possible. Everyone must pay his own way and help the needy by pooling a large number of small resources. For that our youngsters must increase their earning powers and share them to some better end. Our Employment Bureau tries to secure jobs. All cannot get the jobs they want but few are unemployed. The lazy ones swell their number. Our real headache is in securing employment for old people, healthy and willing to work. The Panchayet cannot open industries. Monies with them are ear-marked funds.

**POLITICAL:** Modern Parsi youth has complete apathy towards political career. We need not be deterred by the thought that unless we live up with political intregues ours shall be some lone voice in wilderness. Parsis should be active in Elections. Failures do not matter. The electorate is not all happy with those they have sent into councils and assemblies. They say "We have put you in we shall put you out." But if Parsis will go in in greater number they will clean up the mess and filth of political chicanery.

**RELIGIOUS:** These controversies have been dealt with by several other speakers and all have a common theme.

**LEGAL:** There are customary laws and there are statutory laws. The latter are enacted in legislatures and the former enter in by usage and practice till custom obliterates the written( enacted) law as not applicable under given circumstances. Our marriage and Divorce Act, our laws of succession and adoption (we have no adoption laws), implications of civil marriage and Basu Bill all need to be studied in context to our life. The Parsi Community has no Constitution even though Katchi and Lohana as castes have theirs.

**ZOROASTRIAN CALENDAR** is in a mess. Parsi Panchayet investigated it and the Calendar Report of 1927 was published in 1935 in two volumes with conflicting opinions therein. However, sanity seems to gain ground slowly and more and more people are inclined towards adoption of one Calendar in time to come. After long research Iran has finally adopted Zoroastrian Fasli Calendar as State Calendar. Let it now be universal Zoroastrian one calendar.

**EDUCATIONAL** problems are too vast and varied and are not specific to our community. They are being solved mainly on national lines and partly on community lines.

**HEALTH:** This problem is tackled by the Parsi Panchayet in its Tardeo Clinic and Parsi Ward of Sir Jamsheджи Jeejeebhoy Hospital and through munificence of great donors like Sir Bomanji Dinshaw Petit, Dr. Masina, Dr. Tehmulji Nariman and others.

#### CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH

The Second World Zoroastrian Congress has done yeoman services to the Community. It has opened the eyes of the Community to its many problems and made 72 recommendations of which the following 12 are significant and urgent

- (1) Compiling complete Parsi History
- (2) Formation of an All India Zoroastrian Association
- (3) Formation of a World Zoroastrian Association
- (4) Forming a uniform Civil Code



- (5) Compiling a Directory of Parsi industries and trade
- (6) A Zoroastrian Cooperative Credit Bank
- (7) Collecting and printing essential statistics
- (8) Marriage Guidance
- (9) Vocational Guidance
- (10) Microfilming Zoroastrian Scriptures and important works
- (11) Starting Congregational Prayers
- (12) Printing Avasta in English Scripts.

Lady Hirabai Cowasji Jehangir in her Presidential remarks agreed with Mr. Banaji that the Community should shed its lethargy and set about taking appropriate action for the good of the Community. Lady Jehangir deplored that amongst all classes there appears some leanings towards non-Zoroastrian beliefs. We must inculcate the teachings of Prophet Zarathushtra more and more

The community has not made the best use of its resources. Advantages are there but they are not taken in the right way. Better sense must prevail. We must welcome reforms where they are overdue and not fight shy of or show apathy and let things drift. Reforms must develop and strengthen our character. "LET OUR LIVES PREACH" — not writing and speeches.



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## **Lecture V**

**Lecturer: Prof. N. A. Mody Advocate**

20-10-65

**President: Mr. Erach A. Nadirshah.**

Mr. Erach Nadirshah referred in glowing terms about the lecturer, Prof. N. A. Mody. He was an Advocate, a Professor, the President of the Young Collegians' Zoroastrian Association, and the grandson of the late Sir Jeewanjee Mody who was a great Oriental scholar and religious leader.

Prof. Mody gave a very illuminating and inspiring talk. He analysed the position of the Community from several aspects, physical, intellectual, social, economical and religious and said that all said and done what was needed was the right approach, correct planning and immediate action. We often fail to make the correct diagnosis. We do not become resourceful and find the correct remedy and we do not take action where immediate action is necessary. There are a number of directions in which the Community should take action without fear or flicker. If we look at the history of the Rahnumae Sabha we shall find that a handful of men came forward and showed the right path of true Zoroastrian living in spite of great opposition. Wrong beliefs, harmful customs and wrong outlook must be brought to notice and correct advice given. Opposition should not deter us if our cause is just and true. We must be actuated by the highest of motives, viz., the good of others and we should be able to show where people are wrong, what harm they would come across by following wrong beliefs and must be made by persuasion and education to go to the right path. Look at the position of our young men and women. They are intellectual enthusiastic and useful. But they feel they are being left alone. The elders must interest them in communal matters take them in their confidence and make use of their dynamic force. The glorious history of our forefathers should be repeatedly brought to their notice. Mere lectures will not attract them. For instance, our Young Collegians' Zoroastrian Association take them for picnics and tours to places of historical importance like Sanjan and Udvada and we once took them to the Bahrote

mountain and passed a night there. This makes our youngsters realise the difficulties and perils which our forefathers faced for the sake of our religion and the difficult circumstances through which they passed by strong will, faith and endurance.

The lecturer said we should study the economic condition of our community and find out the causes of poverty. Personal inquiries should be made and mere dole system should be replaced by some well-planned scientific system which would reduce poverty and make our Parsis depend less and less upon outside help. Some kind of co-ordination between Trustees of various charities would help. When a thing is considered to be for the good of the Community and capable of improving its lot, action to put it into practice should be taken immediately and without hesitation. One thing is necessary and that is follow up. Scholarships are given to students but we should follow up their career after they pass out, see what they need, assist them where we can to settle down in profession, business or small industry and give them small loans if necessary. Otherwise a kind of frustration comes on even to our students who are intelligent and who pass out high.

In religious matters we have not made any concerted effort. Societies like the Rahnumae Sabha have been working for years but we should plan our activities according to the needs of the time so as to attract the young. Like Christians we should bring out small picture books of the life of our Prophet and see that if the youth do not come to us we take the books to them, place them in their hands and go from home to home which would attract the attention of even the parents. Let us hope that we shall now meet and consider what action should be taken and once decided we shall not lag behind in taking speedy necessary action.



## Lecture VI

Lecturer: Mr. Jehangir F. Shroff.

3-11-65

President: Mr. Erach A. Nadirshah.

Mr. Jehangir Shroff speaking on the question of the need for the Rahnumae of the Community took a wide survey of several burning questions which were facing the Community and laid emphasis on certain problems which required speedy solution and early action. He drew attention to the progress which was made by the Parsis of a century ago. Coming to this strange land a thousand and more years ago without any money or possessions the Parsis made their way by dint of hard work, agricultural pursuits, trade and commerce and industrial enterprises. It is true that conditions at the time were favourable. There was less competition, there were no rigid rules in international trade and travels and there was stability of the British rule. Now the conditions have changed entirely. There is a general awakening amongst all classes, competition has become acute and rigid, rules and regulations often operate as a curb on trade and enterprise. Despite everything the Parsis must hold their own.

The lecturer said our boys and parents made much too much of College education. It was alright for the few bright ones but others must find their avocations suitable to their aptitude. There is no loss of dignity in manual labour. Preferably more Parsis should take to handicraft and technical lines. Such students should be helped on not only during studies but after they pass out. Helping hand should be given to them till they settle down to their trade. There was a time when many Textile Mills were owned by Parsis. This is now a thing of the past and Parsis now should not expect patronage but must learn to stand on their own legs and come up by sheer merit. In the agricultural line Parsis are falling back. Parsi farmers in Gujrat are slowly dis-

appearing. We must find the cause of this and try to help those of the farmers who wish to stick to their lands. Financial aid is necessary at so many points. The lecturer therefore recommended the formation of a Co-operative Zoroastrian Financial Corporation. We have good financiers and economists amongst us. We should take their advice and proceed slowly in the right direction so as to help and advise our people whenever needed. The lecturer said he had just returned from Yugoslavia and he was amazed at the speedy progress made by the small country in a short time.

Besides economical we had several other problems. Moral and religious education in our schools needs to be rigidly enforced and in the home and in the Fire Temples we should do all we can to inspire faith and respect for our religion. There was a time when Parsis were selected in Banks and responsible positions just because of their upright character and truthfulness. Character-building was, is and will remain absolutely necessary every time.

The lecturer drew attention to the condition of our Priestly class. He held the Behdins largely responsible in this matter. Most Priests who carry on professional work of performing prayers and ceremonies in the Fire Temples are meagerly paid. With economic strain on them we cannot expect them to fill in the role of teachers and guides which is really what they should do. We should consider this matter seriously and devise some plan whereby each Priest is assured of reasonable income. We should see that some provision is made for them in old age. There are many other problems also. But the greatest need



of our Community is unification. At present we Parsis are spread out in distant parts of this country. We must unite them by the formation of an All India Parsi Organisation as a Federation with authority to speak on their behalf and be able to give uniform guidance and leadership to all Parsis. We should shed our differences on small and unimportant points and all join in forming some plan for the lasting benefit of the Community.

The learned lecturer stressed three points:—

No. 1. Co-ordination of our resources in men, money and institutions which in the opinion of the lecturer was the supreme need of the hour.

No. 2. Machinery for long range thinking and planning in order to use properly the resources of the community which should be the first target.

No. 3. Co-operative Zoroastrian Finance Corporation to enable us to implement reforms.



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A great student, a great scholar, a great surgeon, a great soul, who endeared himself to the rich and the poor, serving equally the rich in their trouble and the poor in their misery. Loved by students, respected by colleagues, worshipped by all whose sufferings he relieved he ever extended his helping hand to innumerable men and numerous institutions in need of his mature judgment that cured all sorts of ills of life. From worldly wisdom for the Geta to the spiritual insight of Minoi he knew well God's plan of life and did his duty to all men on earth and remained ever mindful of the life beyond, where he now resides in Garodman. He was

"God's Compromise between an earthly flower and Heavenly Angel.  
A self-less interval between life and death".

We regret to announce that this is the last issue of Parsiana, wherein his name will appear in the list of Advisory Editorial Board — a prestige body that promoted Parsiana. "Namaste" — We bow to you for all that was divine in you.



## Lecture VII

Lecturer: **Mr. Bezoon N. Desai**

10-11-65

President: **Mr. J. E. Heerjeebehdin.**

Mr. Bezoon Desai, the Principal of the Boys' Town Nasik, recently returned from the United States where he had gone as a visiting teacher under the Colombo Plan, said he was very glad this series of lectures was arranged in memory of the late Mr. P. N. Mehta, a past President of the Rahnumae Sabha and the founder of the Boys' Town at Nasik. Mr. Mehta possessed zest for the Parsi Community and was particularly interested in providing proper up to date kind of education for the young. As he had experience in the educational line he would concentrate on the question of education.

Mr. Desai said it was a wrong notion that the education of a child commenced at the age of six or seven. At a much smaller age the child begins to gather impressions which remain for a long time in its mind and which go to form its character. It was therefore absolutely necessary that parents should see that a wholesome influence prevails at home. If a child sees constant squabbles amongst its parents, relatives or neighbours that creates a lasting bad impression upon its nature and future. Attention should be paid to moral training. Undesirable language used or other impressions consequent upon congestions at home should be carefully avoided.

Care must be taken at the time of admission at school. Parents often desire to put their children in higher class than the child deserves. This is not to the benefit of the child. Teachers at school take every care as regards instruction and behaviour outside teaching hours. But parents must co-operate in this.

Proper nourishment of children is necessary both for health of body and mind. Many Parsi schools provide food during the day which is commendable. The natural bent and eccentricities of children have to be watched and individual attention is desirable. This is not possible when

the number in each class is large. Method of teaching should be modernised and visual training helps a lot in making children to remember lessons.

Some children are bent upon mischief. In olden times punishment was the usual method. In these days a teacher would do better by approaching in a mild way. The first need is to find the cause and when that is removed the mischief ends. Proper friendly heart to heart talk often has better results than punishment. Contact should be made with parents and home atmosphere must be studied. All this is difficult in the present times when homes are far off from the school and teachers have hardly any time. In such cases the Parents Associations can do much. Regular parents' meetings should be arranged and free exchange of views would help both sides. Attention should be paid to physical exercise and in cities there are less opportunities for this. In comparison to that opportunities provided in boarding schools like the Nasik Boys' Town are many. If possible more teachers should be sent abroad to see the methods of education there and introduce desirable systems here.

Poorer boys are given help in studies, purchase of books, etc. Yet our Trusts are not able to cope with the demands. More attention should be paid in investigating each case carefully and estimating the capacity of the student before help is given. Boys should be trained according to their aptitude and encouraged in the line in which they can produce best results. Some kind of religious instruction should be given. This is not possible in aided schools run on cosmopolitan lines. But there too prayers on common lines and general moral instruction should be imparted. This should be supplemented by religious education at home. Mr. Desai said the subject was very vast and that he could deal with it in broad outlines only.



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There are 84 optional subjects in S. S. C. course. There are various handicraft, art work and science subjects. No school can provide for all 84 choice. Some concentrate on science, some on arts, crafts and multi-purpose courses. Bifurcation starts in 8th standard. All parents must have the whole list of voluntary subjects and help the students to select what is best for him. Our parents have a childish craving that their son must go in for academic lines for prestige of the family. Prestige is later ruined with the ruination of the students' third rate career in unsuitable line. Success is to be sought in the life of the student in the subject he prefers and not in the drift from examination to examination for collection of certificates. We are credulous કાચા કાનના and gullible માની લેનારા. We have fondness of college career without really benefitting by it. ફાલેલેનેા મોહ છે તે જાણે. Do not dump all your students in the S.S.C. heap. Ultimately what shall we do with that heap ? Let them have suitable careers — military, naval and different craft schools can make real men of them. We prefer pose to purpose વમાચો મારીઆલ શાલેઆલવાજી.

Our prosperity was due to our forefathers rising early, offering prayers and starting day for whatever they did and they did well. Today outward impression and show without substance characterises many a life. Even schools are selected by parents on basis of show. They look upon pure Parsi schools disdainfully તેને મારે સુગ બરાઈ છે. They do not know that now all schools are practically brought up to the same general standard. Everywhere all teachers must be qualified teachers. Good students make good schools. Good schools do not make good students. Many of our best men have passed out from schools you look at with scorn. If you will sow seeds of contempt you will reap contempt somewhere. All schools serve by rule and rule by service to your sons and daughters. It is only the glamour that catches your eye. You must care for those who care for the future (of your progeny)

Due to natural limitations imposed by I. Q. all children cannot profit by any ordinary school, pompous or plain. ખેટો મોહ જાણે.



Give up your false fondness.

The President, Mr. Heerjeebehdin in a very inspiring speech gave a number of points in matters of education, poverty and administration of Charity Trusts. He congratulated Mr. Desai for dealing so exquisitely with the question of Parsi education and complimented him in that the knowledge obtained by him during his visit to educational institutions in U.S.A. and England would be used to the benefit of our educational institutions here. Mr. Heerjeebehdin spoke

strongly about the present method of the administration of our Parsi Charity Trusts and said that large amounts were allowed to lie idle for a long time. If the object could not be served the Court should be moved to permit its use to another like useful purpose. The Trustees of the different Trusts should work in co-ordination. If any Trustees are adamant and do not co-operate the aid of the law courts should be invoked. It is time the Parsi Community awakes to this need and does something before it is too late.



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## Lecture VIII

Lecturer: **Mr. Sapur F. Desai**

17-11-65

President: **Mr. Maneck J. Gheyara.**

On behalf of the Rahnumae Sabha Mr. Erach A. Nadirshah, its President, welcomed Mr. Maneck Gheyara and congratulated him on his recent election as the President of the Surat Parsi Punchayet. Mr. Gheyara came from a highly respectable family of Surat. He and his forefathers are wellknown for working for Surat Punchayet and Parsi community round about. Mr. Gheyara is keenly interested in the community's welfare and is doing his utmost towards it. Mr. Nadirshah wished him every success.

Mr. Desai began his lecture with a question, could a hundred years of Rahnumae not suffice for the uplift of the community? Rahnumae depends on those who talk of Rahnumae, those who listen to what they say and those who actually carry out Rahnumae. Everyone considers himself a leader and we have Advisers in plenty. For every 50 Parsis we have 51 advisers, but the effect and value of what they say lies in their integrity and not in their words and the earnestness of the people who listen to them alone can determine its final value. We can evaluate what has been done in the last hundred years. Leaders can do nothing without earnest followers. The understanding that existed in the community about social, religious, moral and spiritual matters hundred years ago did not exist fifty years ago and what existed fifty years ago does not exist now. That earnestness is lacking. Time brings on changes. During these hundred years people have acquired education, broadened their vision and have met some of the problems in their own way. With changing conditions new problems have, from time to time, arisen. That must bring in the question of changing Rahnumae from time to time. Everything remains in a flux in this world and we have to examine our problems repeatedly in the light of changing world, for each of which we must necessarily develop a new outlook and a new appropriate technique of adaptation. It

augurs well for the community that it looks out for fresh approach and rational ways for corrections.

The Parsis came to India twelve hundred years ago and they have retained their individuality all these years, for which we are thankful to God Almighty. Now the question arises, Shall we be able to retain our individuality another twelve hundred years? In a population of four hundred and sixty millions a hundred thousand Parsis are a microscopic minority. At the end of this century the Indian population would be one thousand million, or one hundred crores. The birth rate in the community is low and falling; in fact the lowest in the country and in the past few years the Bombay Parsis, over seventy thousand strong, have begun to display a falling birth-rate. Today Parsi literacy is almost cent per cent. The overall literacy in the country is about thirty per cent. When this figure rises to hundred per cent Parsis may find it difficult to live with keen competition all round. Even at present the Parsis sense the slow grip of competition.

The Parsi community is highly individualistic and each one thinks he is capable of looking after himself. That in itself may be a virtue, but when such a virtue is stretched to its breaking point by trying to lead the rest, the virtue becomes non-existent.

Three hundred years ago there were only two Parsis in Bombay. Today there are over seventy thousand. Hundred and fifty years ago a number of Parsis began to come to Bombay. Many of them were pioneers. They loved adventure. Coming to Bombay from villages of Gujarat was not an easy thing then, since there were no means of communication or transport except by bullock cart and by prows. The growing prosperity of a few saw the rise of Charitable Institutions — first the 'Dokhmas' and then the Agiaries and Atash-behrams. But spiritual satisfaction is not all that



material body requires and the multiplication of the poorer elements in the community saw the rise of funds for helping the poor. The Trustees have to manage the Trusts in the same spirit that prompted the donor to settle the trust. The Trustees cannot use Trust moneys in any other way even though laudable as long as even a single person benefiting from the object of the Trust claims the benefit. People usually do not understand this legal binding on the Trustees and loosely talk of diverting Trust moneys to industry or trade for the Parsis.

Between Maharashtra and Gujarat there are over fifteen hundred trusts with a corpus running into over thirty crores. This is not a small amount and the millions that came by, up to a few decades ago, will not repeat themselves. It therefore behoves the community to make the best use of its resources for the uplift of the community.

In a number of cases the hand of the dead donor rests heavily on his Trust and no other use of the corpus is permissible beyond the wishes of the deceased donor. However where there is no possibility of carrying out the trust terms the doctrine of cy pres can be applied for and permission obtained from Court to divert the Trust money. *The old system of administering each Trust separately and independently of each other is now outdated and out-moded.*

Mr. Desai emphasised the desirability and importance of co-operation and co-ordination not only between trusts and trusts but between Anjuman and Anjumans. He said that it was the business of everyone to see that no Parsi ever ran into difficulties and if one did to rescue him. Towards that the leaders of the community and the Trustees of trusts should have at hand practicable measures, preventive and corrective.

Mr. Desai referred to the conditions prevailing in Gujarat towns and villages and said that the Parsis of those places were migrating to cities and their houses and land were falling into the hands

of non-Parsis. This question demands careful consideration. The question is grave and the solution difficult but not impossible. We need Rahnumae on how to solve this problem.

Bombay has attracted thousands of Parsis in the last few decades. But life in Bombay has now begun to be difficult. Some thirty or forty years ago those Parsis who retired from work left Bombay to settle in their towns and villages in Gujarat, but that tendency is now waning. There is highest concentration of Parsis in Bombay and villages and towns of Gujarat are being denuded of Parsi occupants. This has created problems on both sides.

*The funds in the hands of these trusts and Anjumans are a sacred trust for the good of the community. They should, therefore, be for any Parsi living anywhere in the country. There should be no parochialism and each one should work towards the larger end.*

Mr. Desai drew attention to the following needs:

1. Maintenance of the old and infirm.
2. Creating or giving employment.
3. Education from nursery upto university stage, for all, with help from trust funds wherever needed.
4. Prophylactic measures.
5. Development of arts and industries and directing and settling the Parsi youths into small scale industries.
6. Measures towards confining Gujarat Parsis to Gujarat where they can make a living with the increasing opportunities.

Mr. Desai warned the Trustees that if they failed to make use of the trusts in their hands, the Charity Commissioner may make them do it under section 55 of the Bombay Public Trusts Act. Sections 11, 12 and 13 of the Income-Tax Act of 1961 would fall heavily on them.



He suggested that statistics of fifteen thousand Parsis living in Gujarat should be taken at an early date so that practical measures can be undertaken. He appealed to the Surat Panchayet to take a leading part in the matter, especially to Mr. Gheyara, independent, vivacious President of the Surat Parsi Panchayet.

Finally Mr. Desai stated that on Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's suggestion, the United Nations had designated 1966 as the International Co-operation Year. If millions could think in terms of co-operation, the community which is like a drop in the ocean could consider the value of co-operation as something vital for its existence. He advised the community that if they wanted to live purposeful existence for the next twelve hundred years every individual should think at least for some time in terms of others and not of self all the time. He decried our pleasure-loving pre-occupations in which when an ethnic group gets engrossed it fails to spare any time for some larger and impersonal cause of the welfare of its own group.

He pointedly drew attention to the degenerating effect of dole system worked indiscriminately. It should be restricted to the incapacitated and the infirm only, for charity should be fruitful and helpful conducive to progressively less and less dependence on charity. Charity should not degenerate into any form of easy-money.

The Parsi Panchayet has its hands full. There is no side of daily life which the Panchayet is not looking into. There are several committees like housing, health, employment, education, finance, administration and management. Their reports are open to inspection and study. But who cares? The Panchayet maintains a good library. But who goes there?

It is true we do not have a constitution or a central body with authority and sanctions but the Bombay Parsi Panchayet is doing a number of things by long standing convention.

In his concluding lecture Mr. Gheyara referred to the difficulties of the Parsis of Gujarat who had to contend evil effects of social legislations like Prohibition, Tenancy and Agricultural Lands Act, etc. He stated that there was extreme poverty in remote villages of Gujarat and it was time something was done. Prohibition had taken away their trade and moneys earned and invested in agricultural land are forced out of possession. He deplored the slowing down of religious tempo amongst the youth and stated that something should be done to awaken their faith and strengthen it. He expressed his conviction that it was our faith in our religion that sustained us through centuries. Mr. Gheyara expressed satisfaction at the work which was being done by the Rahnumae Mazdayasnan Sabha and congratulated it on organising this series of lectures.





## Lecture IX

Lecturer: Dr. Peshotan K. Anklesaria

1-12-65

President: Mr. Adi N. Chinoy.

Mr. Adi Chinoy formally introduced the lecturer of the evening. Ervad Dr. Peshotan Anklesaria, was too well known in the Rahnumae Sabha to need any introduction. He is for many years the Principal of the Cama Athornan Institute at Andherj and is thus taking active part in bringing out a priestly class, not only qualified for daily ceremonial work but also learned and well equipped with knowledge of our religion and scriptures. Dr. Anklesaria was himself a scholar of Avesta and Paharvi and was recently selected as a visiting Professor of an American University and had the opportunity of seeing the methods of study in the States, England and the Continent.

Mr. P. N. Mehta memorial lectures are delivered and valuable suggestions have been collected from various speakers. Time has now come to take action. *After this series is over the Rahnumae Sabha may appoint an action Committee* and frame some concrete suggestions for taking action on our various problems.

Ervad Dr. Anklesaria first referred to the question of population and deplored the consistently decreasing number of Parsis as revealed in successive censuses. He pointed out that 97 per cent of literate Parsis come in the group from 15 to 55 years. Economic and other reasons were responsible for late marriages which is one of the causes of lower birth rate in our Community. The olden ways of living in joint families where married sons and their families used to live under one roof is no longer practicable. Housing is such an important matter for the future of the Community that the Trustees of the Parsi Punchayet should take it up and obtain expert advice of specialists if necessary. On our total population Dr. Anklesaria quoted census figures from Mr.

Sapur Desai as under:

|      |          |
|------|----------|
| 1891 | 89,887   |
| 1931 | 1,11,853 |
| 1941 | 1,14,890 |

*Then there is fall*

|      |          |
|------|----------|
| 1951 | 1,11,791 |
| 1961 | 1,06,087 |

Thus, about 11,000 persons are unaccountably **missing to the Community**. Previously each birth in every hospital was properly recorded about community and religion. Little irregularity here may explain a small number but there is definite decrease in our number. On an average there is one Parsi per 4500 Indians of all denominations and works out at 0.02 per cent of total Indian population.

*Improvement of the lot of Athornans, the Priestly Class.* Athornans are an important and perhaps an indispensable class in the Community. The majority of our Priests are in very poor circumstances. If a poor Priest has three or four children the problem of rearing them, educating them and making them fit to earn a living becomes very difficult. Again, the more intelligent of the boys go in for secular lines where the payment is attractive as compared to what they can get in the Priestly avocation. We have got the Athornan Madressa and the Cama Athornan Institute where we bring out a priestly class with good learning and good background. But the prospects in the priestly profession are unattractive. We are glad the Dadar Athornan Madressa has again started working. Mr. Maneck Mistry along with Dr. Karkhanawala are preparing some plan. We wish that something is done soon. Even at the Second World Zoroastrian Congress held in Bombay in January 1964 recommendations were made to devise some ways and means for the improvement of the economic condition of our Priests but no action seems to have been taken in the matter. We should follow the example of the Jesuit Fathers how devotedly they work all their life.



Some such system should be evolved whereby our Priests may be free from the worries of earning a living and may devote themselves exclusively to religious ceremonies, religious teachings, scholarship and produce useful books on religious subject as some scholars have done in the past. Dr. Anklesaria said *we Parsis are the inheritors of a great culture. We ourselves do not care to know about it but western scholars keenly study it and some are devoting their life work to this study.* For instance the great kings of the Achaemenian dynasty made so much impression on American scholars that on the general Post Office in New York the words of Herodotus are quoted about King Darius who introduced the Postal System first in the world:

*"Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds: HERODOTUS."*

Speaking about betterment of Athornans the lecturer spoke feelingly about importance of this class and our callous unconcern about them. All that has survived of our ceremonies and our religion is due to the sacrifice and simplicity in the life of Athornans. It is they who carry on the traditions of tending, attending and preserving our sacred fires in Atashbehras and agiaris and wherever faith exists it is these Athornans who enhance our joy of auspicious occasions and solace unhappy hearts by devotion to ceremonies and service to our religious institutions. We need them badly. We shall keep them well. He expressed great satisfaction that Dadar Madressa is reopened. He suggested that the premises of Dadar Madressa be used exclusively for betterment of Athornans and that ceremonies of those who have left donations for continuity of their ceremonies be done there, if need be by adding a structure in the compound. The spirit of cooperation now shown by the dissenting gorup is a laudable gesture of common weal.

The lecturer spoke of the good work done by our Jashan Committee and Jarthoshti Dharma Gnaynan Felavnari Mandli for sending out teachers to various Parsi schools, for conducting classes on our religious subjects and in general promoting our religion amongst us. He wished that more

knowledge of our ancient history and deeper understanding of our religion become more widespread. The outstanding trait of religious faith is the growth of faith in one's own self. The spirit of adventure and enterprise that our forefathers showed was the outcome of their faith in our religion and that put us on path of prosperity. With slackening of that faith we drifted to mixed marriages and loss of our specific traits and slow general deterioration in character and lowering of our ideals of life. Let us put our ideals back in our life by reviving our staunch adherence to our Religion which shows us the one and only right path — Ayevo pathaye Ashoi — of righteousness.

Speaking about education in general the lecturer said that all Parsi boys should not aspire to go to College. Aptitude and inclination should be watched in each case and each boy should be given the type of work which he is expected to do best. Dr. Anklesaria drew attention to the Butler Act of 1947 in England according to which every school was compelled to maintain a record of Ability and Aptitude Tests of each pupil and bifurcation was considered from young age. Our Parsi schools would do well to study modern methods prevailing in England and elsewhere and employ the same as suit local conditions. At any rate it is necessary to give greater attention to handicraft and technical training and some machinery should exist to follow up the career of a boy after he passes out and thus helped on to success.

*An explanation:* Someone had passed adverse remarks against the Trustees of the Parsee Pun-chayet for using the working profits of Godrej Memorial Press only for Golvad Rural Home. Dr. Anklesaria explained that Godrej Memorial Press came into existence out of funds of Godrej Farm. Its object was to improve the condition of poor Parsis in villages of Gujarat and for that reason the application of these profits are properly allocated.



## Lecture X

Lecturer: **Mr. Jehangir M. Ranina, Advocate**

8-12-65

President: **Mr. Boman K. Bomanbehram**

Mr. Ranina opened with the remark that advice unasked for was always unwelcome and at the same time it was the duty of the Rahnumae Sabha to give guidance. It may be asked what capacity is there in the Rahnumae Sabha or the lecturer to give guidance to the Community. Mr. Ranina pointed out that at times advice from an insignificant person proves useful. The wise listen to everybody and take lesson from wherever they find it. As in the case of individuals so in the case of a Community it is best to start finding out our own defects and deficiencies. *The best method is introspection. Let the Community think for itself and find out where it was wanting and then devise methods for improvement.* The Parsis have a glorious past and after settling in India Parsis shined out in several walks of life and were pioneers in many matters. We can no longer live on past glory. Conditions have changed. One undesirable feature in the life of our Community is that recently there is a rush to Bombay city. About 70 per cent of our population in India is residing in Bombay. This was undesirable because in case of danger or unforeseen events the majority would have to suffer. It was therefore highly necessary that serious and successful efforts should be made to *induce Parsis to go back to the mofussil, mostly Gujarat. We should arrange for their trade, agriculture facilities and small industries there.* This should be done in a planned way and seen that it is successfully accomplished. We have got enough funds but their use must be wisely guided. The problem of poverty among the Community is real. It must be faced and scientifically solved. The system of compelling the poor to apply for help is humiliating and harmful to their self-respect. We must go about their homes and find out the true needs of the families concerned

and see that necessary advice and help are given without waste of time. We should introduce a health scheme and a panel system of medical aid for poor Parsis. We can do a lot in this direction but nobody seems to move a little finger in doing the right sort of work. The system of education in Parsi Schools should be modernised without delay. We should insist on smaller classes, qualified teachers and enforcement of discipline. *The system of home work should be discontinued and in the evening scope should be given to students for physical exercise and relaxation.*

Parents must keep in touch with the progress of their children and the teachers and *devote some time in the company of their children* at least certain days in the week, *narrate to them interesting and moral stories and give them an idea of their glorious past.* Example was better than precept and parents should restrain their behaviour in the company of their children so as to inspire good aspirations and moral response. *The custom of small joint prayers at home would go a great way to create a liking for religion.* To teenagers, the basic principles of our religion should be explained in the proper way and *small books in English and Gujarati giving an idea of our religion and its sublimity should be placed in their hands. The custom prevailing in our Fire Temples should be forthwith changed. When all pray in loud tones creating a noisy atmosphere, meditation and concentration are impossible.* Similarly at ceremonies, especially at Mukhtad time when so many Priests sit separately and in loud tones shout something which cannot be understood or followed we are making a mockery of our ceremonies. Some method must be devised whereby ceremonies can be attentively followed



in a peaceful atmosphere. Our Fire Temples must be places of respect, concentration and meditation and must be free from noise and shouting.

*In a small Community like ours we have three New Years.* Parsis should think of this seriously. The greatest Fire Temple, IRAN SHAH, WAS CONSECRATED ACCORDING TO FASLI DATE AND WITH FASLI ALATS AND FOR CENTURIES CEREMONIES WERE PERFORMED THERE ON FASLI DATES. THE CHANGE TO SHEHENSHAHI WAS LATER. WE CAN CHANGE OVER AGAIN.

The condition of our Priestly class calls for our serious attention. We have a few learned and scholarly priests. But what about the rest? What attraction is there for bright priests to continue in this avocation? Their emoluments are very meagre. In the case of Christians they make provision for life for their Priests who have nothing to worry about. We must make some plan like that. At times we hear of some Priests doing Navjote or other ceremonies of persons who are non-Zoroastrians. The Parsi Punchayet on such occasions gives a lead to the Community by passing Board resolutions. But that does not act as deterrent. Why should we not introduce the system of giving Licences to Priests to practise

and renew the Licences at intervals so that any Priest found to behave contrary to the rules of the Community may be refused Licence.

What the Community needs most is a constituted authority for the whole of India with power to represent and speak on behalf of all Parsis. The Second World Zoroastrian Congress recommended the formation of such a body and the Constitution is under consideration of a Committee. Let us hope that soon we shall have a Central Parsi Organisation.

Mr. Boman-Behram in the course of his speech as President agreed with the lecturer that there are many directions in which action should be taken for the common good of the whole Community. He laid stress on the need for providing *housing* accommodation that he said *should be given first priority*. *The improvement of the Priestly class* was equally necessary and the *Priests ought to teach religion to the laymen*. Mr. Boman-Behram said that the Bombay Parsi Punchayet were doing their best in both these matters. Mr. Boman-Behram appreciated the work done by the Rahnumae Sabha and was glad it had arranged a series of lectures on subjects vitally affecting our Community.





## Lecture XI

Lecturer : **Mr. Kekobad D. Katki**

22-12-65

President: **Mr. Pestonji C. Hansotia.**

Mr. Kekobad Katki opening his lecture said that in this series of lectures in memory of the late Mr. P. N. Mehta many eminent men have spoken before him and made valuable suggestions. He believed that the condition of our Community was becoming grave and demanded serious consideration and speedy suitable action. Referring to the remarks made by Mr. Sapur Desai at a previous lecture Mr. Katki said that decreasing population of the Parsis was a matter for serious consideration. At the same time we have to approach this question in such a manner that we continue to preserve the individuality of the Community as we have done so far. Besides number we must pay attention to quality and see that Parsis continue to possess character, honesty and integrity for which they have become so noted.

The economic condition of Parsis is also a grave question. As compared with our small number the amount of our Charitable Trusts is fabulously high, something like Rs. 22 crores. Why should poverty persist ? The method of the administration of our Trusts needs to be revised. Trustees should have direct touch with the donees and their families and effort should be directed to put Parsis again on the path of independent earning and independent living. Cases of help must be followed up and we should see that Parsis who set up small trades and industries thrive. *There is great need for co-ordination of all Charitable Trusts and the use of unused monies lying unfruitful.* Efforts at unification and consolidation of Trusts made upto now are haphazard. If Trustees of various trusts were impressed by such need and persuaded to pool resources many of them are human and humane and have the good of the Community at heart. Probably our approach to them is not satisfactory. Trusts should be administered with foresight so as to meet the requirements of needs which may arise in future. Our leaders can do much in this direction. Trustees of all Parsi Trusts should not rest content

with just routine administration but they must study the conditions and needs of our people and act upon some creative suggestions and new schemes so as to meet the demands of the present situation and effectively reduce poverty in the Community.

In religious and social matters almost all Parsis think they are all too wise and need no guidance. There is tendency to behave as one likes and the restraint which should prevail to conform to social and communal requirements are becoming weaker. High education is desirable but educated Parsis should not think that they are free to speak and act in any way they like just because of the degrees they hold. They carry a responsibility towards their Community which they should not forget. The educated have a duty to fulfil which they should not escape from by running after some mirage. Unfortunately, we have not got any Central Organisation amongst the Parsis which can show the right path, pull up delinquents and see that established Zoroastrian ways of life are not diverted from. It is time we have such a Central Organisation. It will have the benefit of having constituted authority to represent and speak on behalf of the Community. There always exist differences of opinion and this is a healthy sign. But this need not divide our small Community. We can all unite and work for the common good of the whole Community. For this purpose the leaders should come in close contact with the masses. In any new proposals the whole Community should be taken into confidence. The aloofness that exists between the Trustees and the beneficiaries, between the well-to-do and the needy and the condescending approach by the so-called social workers towards the down and out should all be given a go-by. There should be sincere approach and contact. This can only be possible if all consider our difficulties and handicaps as one problem-complex to be shared in and helped out.



Mr. Katki spoke about the need for housing accommodation. In spite of so many charitable tenements the need persists and many poor families are without homes. In many Parsi charitable colonies families are residing who are well off. They must be removed and poorer and needy must be housed. Despite so many colonies it is lamentable that about 20,000 (25 per cent of our community members) are homeless and the number is likely to increase with more houses being declared unfit for human habitation. If housing is primary need we can with the Court's permission divert idle charity monies to building houses and giving relief to those who need it. This is an age of action and speedy planning and we must accomplish these things soon before it is too late. Until new houses come up those who have to pay exorbitant rent may be helped by subsidy towards rent. A proper scheme should be devised to implement new and novel considerations as are possible. Due to high costs of materials building cheaper tenements for the poor is at present not possible. It is definitely objectionable that well-to-do people comfortably placed as tenants in charity buildings should look upon their tenancy as a hereditary legacy from their respective Trustees. They must realise that the Trustees admitted them as tenants at low rents to help tide over their then stringent circumstances. If they have outgrown their then income it is now time for their outgo. Rent Act was not intended to give advantage to obstinate contenders for their trifling gains. Ostracism as suggested by Miss Kanga (Y.O.U.) in the Symposium hereafter may not be an act of social outrage. They violate the very purpose of charity if reasonable other accommodation offered be rejected.

Mr. Katki emphasised the need for giving proper religious education to Parsis especially the young. The Rahnumae Sabha was doing good work but the old method of merely giving lectures should be changed and lectures should be arranged in the colonies and supported by visual entertainment.

The condition of our Priests needs improvement. Some Priests are acting contrary to established custom of the Community. We should see that we preserve sufficient number of Priests able to perform high religious ceremonies and for this

purpose attractive terms should be offered to them. The suggestions made by Mr. Ranina to give licence to Priests was worth considering. To establish identity as Zoroastrian every Navjote should be registered. Not only must we maintain the priests able to perform ceremonies and rituals of the higher order **હી પ્રેરતે પાવન હેલની ક્રિયાએ** but all the basic tenets and practices should be preserved along with our institutions. Without Mobeds we shall have no religion. Without religion we shall have no Community. More than in the numerical strength of our community it is on the solidarity of our religious practices and systems that our survival will depend as an ethnic group. Mr. Sapur Desai remarked that for every 50 Parsis there are 51 persons assuming the role of advisers. But where are they? Who are they? When we need them most they are not found. Many parade their prejudices and preconceived notions without any study of the problems. Some are engrossed in making money. The educated class lives in its air of superiority with silent contempt for all things Parsi — too big to condescend to the level of the community. They live in their own world, too vain to presume all knowledge and too proud to stoop to conquer. It is a foul bird that defiles its own nest.

Amongst those who participate in discussions one group is characterised by obstinacy of self-opinionatedness and the other by the obsession of personal prestige. They come out with conflicting schemes and implement neither. Those who seek Rahnumai feel frustrated. How long will our able men keep mum keeping their own counsel? Give us the benefit of your learning. We need you now. A change has to come over us all — Those who seek Rahnumai and those can offer it. It is time we become conscious of the wareness of the need for change, which precedes change.

Change is also due in the attitude of the Trustees. It must dawn on them that they are no longer just administrators of the funds and estates. They must in right earnest assume the role of the leaders every time publicly explaining their points of view and directing the destiny of the Community. They are the accredited heads of the



Community for their natural life time. Their action may make us move — move ahead, aside or zig-zag but their inertia can only put our clock back. A Federation of All India Zoroastrian Anjumans and An Association of World Zoroastrians are drafted and are collecting dust on a shelf.

The Parsi Punchayet must maintain an efficient Publicity Department and keep the community informed of its activities periodically. That will create enthusiasm and confidence amongst all. Undoubtedly a lot of meaningless and worthless criticism will come up but that will be all of educative value. That will help develop awareness, which we sadly lack.

Mr. Hansotia in his Presidential remarks eulogised the lecturer for his able and impressive survey of the conditions and needs of the Parsi Community and said the Rahnumae Sabha was doing very useful work and the Sabha was one place to which the Members of the Community can look for guidance. Our Parsi Trusts now realise that according to law if they do not spend 75 per cent of their income they would be liable

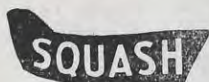
to Income Tax. The suggestion for co-ordination of Trusts is not new but is not satisfactory nor complete. He informed the meeting that the Banaji Trust has recently co-operated with other Trusts and with the consolidated amount they are building charitable tenements. In some of these buildings tenants able to pay good rent would be accommodated. If tenants who occupy charitable tenements are shown better places and persuaded to go there the effort will succeed. Lady Jehangir and others are constructing such tenements at Parel and other places and the scheme hopes to succeed. In the end Mr. Hansotia expressed his satisfaction at the work of the Rahnumae Sabha and wished it success.

Ervad Dr. Peshotan Anklesaria while finally thanking the President suggested that the Parsi Punchayet should also organise a Symposium of this kind.

He informed the audience that much material was gathered from the P. N. Mehta Memorial Lectures and that the Rahnumae Sabha has decided to get all of them printed in one volume.

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## Lecture XII

Lecturer **Mr. R. J. Mithaiwala, B.A., LL.B.**

9-2-66

President: **Mr. Kekobad D. Katki.**

The lecturer at the commencement questioned whether the Parsi Community's progress was of the right type? He said the Community needed advancing in various directions and progress was slow for lack of unity in the Community. We should pick out the questions which are agitating us and find out solutions.

Some people believe that to improve our economical condition we should try our luck in foreign countries. Some Zoroastrians who are settled in Canada send a call to Parsis to go there. The lecturer said that would not solve the all in all question of our poverty and economic progress. It is true in Bombay we are experiencing terrible congestion. In spite of so many buildings and Colonies built by the foresight of our ancestors we are finding no space in Bombay. The alternative is to look to places nearer Bombay in the suburbs as far as Thana and Bassein. We should open colonies there on the lines of Cusrow Baug and see that schools, shops, business etc. are opened there along with the colonies. There are many kinds of handicraft and small home industries that our young men can open and do agriculture, poultry farm, carpentry, tile making, brick baking, fishing etc. which can be taught and our young men can prosper there.

The lecturer drew pointed attention to the splendid work which was being done at Gholvad under Mr. Maneck Mistry. Such lines will in the long run prove advantageous to the Community. It was no use sending more Parsis to Gujarat where the same difficulties exist as in Bombay. We are unable to improve the lot of Gujarat farmers. Our rich Parsis may go to Gujarat and establish business and industries and absorb poor and middle class Parsis. Otherwise Gujarat is no solution.

The question of education must be considered very seriously. The old method must be replaced by modern methods of education prevailing in

European and American countries. *If necessary teachers may be sent there for training.* Much can be done in our Parsi schools.

Along with school education they should introduce Commercial training in various directions. In the Byramjee Jeejeebhoy school book-keeping, typewriting and similar things are taught from 8th standard and many boys after learning them are able to make a living.

Attention of bright boys should be directed to the Indian Administrative Service, Indian Foreign Service where there is a bright future. Our able bodied boys should join the Army, Navy and the Air Force in larger numbers. There are military schools in Khadakvasla and Dehra Dun and Naval Training on the "Dufferin". Bright Parsis are sure to get officers' grade in a short time.

In our Parsi schools more attention should be given to imparting of religious education of the right type and in the right way. From infancy parents and teachers should interest youngsters in our religion. In all other religions they bring out beautiful attractive books. We Parsis have done nothing of the sort. Religious education should be systematised and given little by little according to age group in attractive form. Our Fire Temple should hold small religious classes for those who live in the neighbourhood. The Padre of the Christians becomes friendly with the families of the locality and calls on them at intervals, finds out their problems, guides them and comforts them in time of need. Such training is not given to our Parsi Priests.

We should have an Information Bureau and an Employment Bureau and systematic work should be done like a regular office.



One cause of inter-communal marriages is lack of proper religious knowledge and want of the knowledge of the ancient history of the Parsis. Shahnameh recitals are now few and rare and do not now interest our younger generation. Another reason is that on an average our Parsi boys, in the beginning of their careers, earn very little and our girls who have received college education and have opportunities of mixing with other communities often take hasty steps without or at times against advice. There should be classes and clinics for sex education and advice. Visual films in such matters are available which may be shown to the young which will have educative and deterrent value. It is essential to bring boys and girls of marriageable age together. In absence of contact they get easy contact of other Communities in colleges and services.

Mr. Mithaiwala had a few sharp remarks against people advocating migration to foreign countries. He made reference to England, America, Africa and of late Canada. Most countries are making Immigration Act stiffer and discourage outsiders and in Western Countries colour-bar is on the increase. African states recently becoming independent introduce such laws that those already settled there are returning to India — and only very few migrate to Europe. If our

young men go abroad for higher learning and training it is proper but patriotism lies in returning and serving the land of their birth.

By personal care and attention we should bring up and bring out suitable boys and girls fit for services and occupations of higher grades — such as can be suitable to take advantage of Colombo Plan, Engineering Plan of the French Government and Foreign Scholarships of Tatas. We have done nothing to draw the attention of our young boys towards such openings.

There are many arts, crafts and minor home industries to which attention of youths must be directed. Even with will to work many are loitering about for not knowing outlets.

The lecturer very strongly advocated a well conducted Employment Bureau, where outlets may be created or old ones drawn attention to.

He advocated opening Parsi Departmental Stores which can be manned by Parsis and where things made by Parsis at home, having no shop, can be put for sale. Such practice will not only give market to home industries but will open the eyes of many now ignorant to many opportunities that exist for making saleable things at home. Ignorance is a greater devil than indolence. We can chase both of them away.





# SYMPOSIUM

17th February 1966.

on

## "What should be done for the Rahnumae of the Parsi Community."

(Under the auspices of the Rahnumae Mazdayasnan Sabha)

President :—**Mr. Maneck P. Mistry**

### Participants:

Members of Youths' Own Union,  
Members of Young Collegians' Zoroastrian  
Association and  
Members of Dadar Parsi Youth Assembly.

*Mr. H. P. Tavaria (Y.O.U.)* It was the generosity of the Rahnumae Sabha that it was giving opportunity to younger people to express their views on this subject. Mr. Tavaria emphasised giving the right type of education to our young boys and girls and recommended that the rich class should patronise purely Parsi-run schools like the Sir J. J. Institution and the Sir Byramjee Jeejeebhoy School. To attract all classes the tops in the School should be men acquainted with modern ways of education and broad vision. If necessary the School should send young teachers to foreign Public Schools to see how they work and run our schools on those lines. The great advantage would be a truly Parsi atmosphere and sound moral and religious education. The Parsis have a weakness for the foreign. If we send for foreign qualified teachers vanity of our parents may be partially satisfied. We should follow up students after they pass out and those who are not able to study further in Colleges should be given opportunity to learn small trades like tailoring and Parsis should patronise such tailors, carpenters, etc.

*Mr. S. J. Mulla. (Dadar P. Y. Assembly)* drew the attention of the meeting to the deterioration of the physique of our boys and strongly advocated opportunities and regular arrangements for the physical training and body building exercises. A panel of Zoroastrians should be appointed for this purpose. In times of emergency able-bodied men would be useful to the nation.

*Mr. Maneck M. Mehta. (Y.C.Z.A.)* said that there was a time when Parsis were pioneers in many matters. Now poverty is increasing every day and Parsis are being relegated at the back.

We should proceed to make plans for the future progress and welfare of our Community, especially economic problems. Parsis should have a Parsi College. Boys should be induced to work in factories to earn and learn. We should send more boys for practical training and set up small industries and business. For boys who cannot go in for higher education, dignity of labour must be inculcated. Loan arrangement should be devised to set up small industries. The Second World Zoroastrian Congress made several suggestions but they have not been implemented. We should implement those of the suggestions which are beneficial to the Community. We are losing energy, vision and vigour. Our communal solidarity is our purpose and all should help to keep it up.

*Miss Aban Kanga (Y.O.U.)* laid stress on the economic difficulties especially housing problems. Many youngsters cannot get married for want of housing accommodation. The old custom of joint family system is gone because small accommodation does not permit this and modern boys and girls prefer independent residence. But in the beginning when the income is small it is difficult to run a separate home. There are many charity buildings but people with better means even owning motor cars live there with the result that the really poor cannot get accommodation. The well to do must be compelled to go to the suburbs. They can afford the cost of transport which the poor cannot. If legal action cannot be taken social ostracism may be effective. People should understand their moral responsibilities to the poor. There should be a Federation of Parsi Trusts and all should work for the common good.

*Mr. M. D. Hodiwala (Dadar P.Y.A.)* said that in what is good for the Community youth and old all should join. Unfortunately, our youth is averse to hard work, especially manual work. Both in the schools and at home amongst the parents there should be a psychological approach to create in the minds of our youth the right sort



of mentality so that they may realise their responsibilities when they grow up. Boys who are unable to learn much may be diverted to technical and handicraft lines. More attention should be paid to discipline at home and at school and the building up of character. Because right directive and advice do not reach the young in right time many youths loaf about and kill time and develop callousness for life.

Miss Zarine Sarkari (Y.C.Z.A.) congratulated the Rahnumae Sabha for selecting this subject which went to the root of our Community. She emphasised the need for building up character and for this purpose she said proper religious education from early age was necessary. At present a kind of lethargy has come over the community. What amount of trouble is taken by Christian Schools to attract youngsters to their religion. We are doing nothing in this direction. Christian Schools are helping the poor by holding fetes where articles made by the poor are sold. We should help our poor in the same way. Besides technical education we should teach farming to our boys. The condition of our Parsi farmers in Gujarat is becoming very hard. Immediate succor is needed. Our priests besides normal work should be employed as society teachers and encouraged to spread Parsism and Zoroastrianism. All labour to be good and holy.

Mr. Dara Katrak (Y.O.U.) This is an age of planning. We suffer for want of proper planning. We have no recognised leaders. We look to the Parsi Punchayet for guidance. The Punchayet should take advice of expert economists and make plans for the Community accordingly. We had an expert economist in the late Mr. A. D. Shroff but when he stood for election for a seat in the Punchayet he was thrown out. There seems to be something wrong in the system of election of the Trustees. Besides routine work and the administration of their trusts the Parsi Punchayet should take greater interest in the youth of our Community. Mere education is not enough but each boy should be followed up, his avocation determined and it should be seen that difficulties in his way are removed and he is put on the road to independent living. There should be a constitution for our Community with some kind of sanctions in order to discourage Parsis from acting in undesirable ways. If other Communities have their own Constitutions why not the Parsi

Community have one. What is needed is unity and co-ordinated work according to plan.

Mr. D. D. Kapadia (D.P.Y.A.) said the cause of the youth must be championed. Boys are a real problem not only to the parents but also to the Community as a whole. In Russia boys are selected according to their hobbies and tendencies and practical training given accordingly. Only those students should go in for higher education who are really fit for it. All our boys cannot get entrance in Colleges. We should have a Parsi College. If Sindhis and others could do it why cannot we? In some Engineering Colleges seats are reserved for Parsis but even there sufficient number of Parsi students do not go. *We must have a panel of advisers whose advice individuals may seek in private.* If families take their advice before marital separation or divorce many a home would not be broken. Our Matrimonial Court Parsi Delegates can do a lot in this direction. Our Community has no accredited leaders. The greatest need is unity.

In his Presidential remarks Mr. Mistry congratulated the Rahnumae Sabha for organising this symposium and said he was aware of the excellent work which the Rahnumae Sabha was doing. Mr. Mistry gave a summary of all that was said by the speakers and said that in matters like housing he himself had moved in the matter from 1935 and carried on this work now through the Parsi Punchayet. It was legally difficult to vacate tenants who had improved their economic condition but efforts were being made to house as many of the poor as possible. According to him IN THIRTY YEARS 5948 NEW TENEMENTS HAD BEEN CONSTRUCTED. RATHER THAN DEPEND ON CHARITIES CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT WITH TEMPORARY HELP SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED. Schemes in this direction are put into practice. Encouragement in farming and its training is given on sound and systematic lines in Gujarat. Owing to the present famine conditions urgent help to our Gujarat Parsis is needed. Arrangements are made for employment of Parsis in factories like Godrej with attractive terms. The greatest need was according to Mr. Mistry the building up of character. The youth must be given religious teaching of the right type and they should take things from their elders and Dasturs and scholars. Mr. Mistry's remarks were greatly appreciated by the audience.



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