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VOL. IV No. 2

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<u>Contents :</u>	Page
EDITORIAL	3
Stray Thoughts on Zoroastrianism —by Rohinton Mazda...	5
Religious Ceremonies ! —by Dasturji Khurshid Daboo	12
Parsees Pioneers of Banking in Bombay —by S. H. Jhabwala	16
Late Nawab Erach Yar Jung Bahadur	18
Influence of Zoroastrianism on Christianity	19
Mithra: the Celestial Light: —by Mahyar Byramji Patel	21
Children's Corner 'Ashem Vohu,'	27

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EDITORIAL

We welcome Rohinton Mazda of London writing for Parsiana. His article introduces an approach which is unconventional if not strikingly new. It indicates the interests of Zoroastrians staying abroad, in even sophisticated western materialistic environment, do possess for their ancient faith. Stable men are never carried away by external glamour. Every man owes the roots of his behaviour to parental example, which the modern psychology iterates and re-iterates as the foothold of character. Rohinton is fortunate. It is the duty of all parents to live well, soberly and sensibly in the interest of their children to set them the right image of parental example, which is the one (and usually the only) image children incorporate in their life-plan and teaching of one's religion cannot be omitted in that plan. During this month I had an opportunity one evening of attending a dinner and discussion group of Parsi young men and women in the house of one of our senior lawyers. The atmosphere was lively and critical but intelligent and earnest as all participants were well-educated and well-placed in life and were normally meeting to discuss and to take up for solution some burning problems of the community. For me it was a satisfying experience. It revealed that groups at all levels of our society were alive and active; and although some of them expressed extreme views all of them were tempered with moderation, which is characteristic of intelligence. All agreed that there is need for change in some of our customs and usages but no one hesitated to accept on principle that the time was not ripe and haste will not hasten but block up all progress. **Masterly inactivity** is a recognised medico-psychological technique. Commonly it comes to us as **WAIT and WATCH**. However, the evening did not end blank. It confirmed that our children at all level of society were eager to learn about our religion and wherever the parents set a good example and/or provided children with opportunities to acquire information children felt happy and grateful and returned the parental care and consideration with lots of filial love. Family ties are consolidated. Children shake off their vanity coming to them from the angularities of soul-less learning and look upon parents not as providers but as feeders of faith which make their male offspring **MAN** and female offspring **WOMAN** — in the total sense of the terms to which they are aspiring. But the deplorable situation as noted by the group was apathy and ignorance of the parents, who hid their own short-comings under a pretence of superior understanding in having little conviction and less faith. It is a form of escapism to impress that what they do not understand is not worth knowing and therefore they are under no obligation to guide their children to the path. Care-free parents do not know what they are missing in exchange for a Mahjong party or a high tea, or just a

high-brow facade for life. Take your children in confidence and show them the path. Try it out. Home life cannot be exchanged for anything better. The path makes one's house one's home .

History of Banking in Bombay is one more example of our pioneering spirit. Perhaps even now in the community "the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak" Why ? It would prove a fruitful field of social research. Parsiana would love to carry out such research but it is helpless as members of our community have not yet grasped the value and the need of an authentic medium for themselves. Parsiana was from its start intended to encompass all aspects of our life and not to limit itself to religion. But it is going that way because that is the only thing it can serve without much effort or expense — at present.

Envisaging the value of a medium men like Late Nawab Erach Yar Jang Bahadur, who knew administration and practical applications started helping the magazine in their own way. Businessmen like Mr. M. P. Polson have promoted the welfare of Parsiana and thrown open other practical sources of help but I have fallen short of taking advantage. Mr. Rustom Sakhlal of Calcutta, Mr. Jal T. Desai and others of Bombay realise the utility of a medium and go their own way in first spreading the message later to result in some practical good. P. N. Mehta Trust (Seth Noshir Mehta) is as ever the stand-by for Parsi activities. Thus far and no further stands Parsiana by the end of 1967. Tomorrow is another day.



Stray Thoughts on Zoroastrianism

by

ROHINTON MAZDA

54, Onslow Gardens, London. W. 7

The Parsis have strictly adhered to their own old religion which is still the ancient Zarathushtrian religion in the form that it was many millenniums ago.

From the time they left Iran their pure Aryan strain is not lost. They are known for their loyalty to the ancient religion of their original homeland.

When the Moslems invaded Iran they stamped out and extirpated Zoroastrians wherever they were found. Those who forsook their religion were spared the sword, but they were forced to intermarry and change their entire mode of life. However, there were the zealous few who fled into the desert and lived a life of hardship to keep the flame of their religion alive. They were not pursued by the Moslems and consequently settled down at Yezd in central Persia, to build up a small community and learn how to adapt themselves to a new life. At the start of this century many of the Iranians came across to India in poverty and built up their lives. My own grandfather walked from Yezd to India as a young man and has become a successful businessman.

Zarathushtra was a high Initiate and an adept. He came as a teacher to the Iranian sub-race of the main Aryan root-race, to give them the original truths in a form fit-

ed for a civilization that was to grow up amongst them; in a form fitted for the type of mind which was to develop amongst them, suited to train, to evolve, to develop them, just as other faiths were given to other peoples with the same object and on similar lines. Zarathushtra blended philosophy and religion in a remarkable way. Coming to found a civilization which had its own peculiar features, which was essentially agricultural in its character, which was permeated through and through with the idea of the practical side of life, which was intended for men of noble faith and sublime morality. He did not give a metaphysical philosophy or an exoteric religion, but he linked up the two together.

However a better idea of the whole is obtained if we study the philosophy and the religion each singly.

Zarathushtra gave good amount of astronomical science interwoven with philosophy and the religious teaching. **To Zarathushtra the stars were not mere masses of matter, revolving by blind unconscious laws around dead unconscious suns. To Him the planets and stars were but the bodies of spritual Intelligences, whose will was their guiding law and whose knowledge ensured the stability of the universe. He taught astronomy not as of dead matter and soulless energy but as**

of living intelligences, moving in changeless order, because guided by perfect wisdom and unswerving will. Out of the teaching of religious philosophy and of science there grew up the ethics which down to the present day is the glory of the Zoroastrian creed. A perfect practical purity is the key note of that morality, purity in every action of the personal life, purity in every relation to external nature, honouring external elements as the manifestations of the divine purity, guarding, as it were, their spotless cleanliness as a homage to the Life, wherefrom the whole proceeds.

We shall turn to its literature and consider the documents. First comes the **Yasna**, of which the most ancient part consists of the **Gathas, the archaic hymns, which represent Zoroaster's thoughts and actual words. They are the basic teachings of Zoroaster.**

Second part of the Yasna consists of prayers and ceremonies - prayers addressed to the supreme Deity, prayers addressed to those who stand just below Him, forming the spiritual hierarchy of Amesha Spentas.

In Zoroastrianism, as in every other ancient faith, there is no gap in the Universe, no place where spritual beings are not working from man near the base to the Supreme Being at the top. All are ranged Intelligences growing higher and higher, diviner and diviner and all these are objects of adoration.

After the Yasna, we have the **Visparad, a collection of preparatory invocations to be used before other prayers and sacrifices.** These two, the Yasna and the Visparad,

may be regarded as holding the position in Zoroastrianism that is held by the Vedas in Hinduism.

Below these come what was once a vast mass of literature of which only gists and fragments survive. There is only one book complete (and some fragments of the remainder) out of a list of twentyone great treatises —the 21 Nasks— of which the contents, roughly outlined in Pahlavi are available. These deal with sciences of every kind, medicine, astronomy, agriculture, botany, philosophy, and in fact, of the whole range of sciences and laws then known. They hold the position held by the Vedanta in Hinduism. **Only one book of Nasks survives in its entirety, the Vendidad.** It is the book of ceremonial laws affecting the preservation of purity both in external nature and in man.

Next we have the Khordeh Avesta or little Avesta, consisting of Yashts (invocations) and of prayers, which are used by the present Zoroastrians. The Khordeh Avesta was for the use of the laity rather than the priests who knew most of these prayers by heart. Many of the Zoroastrian doctrines are contained in this book which is written part in Avesta and part in ancient Iranian dialect known as Pazand.

Zoroastrianism is a religion of one God. At the head of the manifested universe stands **Ahura-Mazda, the God of Light, the Lord of Wisdom.** He is the Supreme, He is the Universal, the All-pervasive, the Source and Fountain of Life, He in the Zoroastrian religion holds the same position as the self-manifested Brahma of the Upanishads, who came forth at the begin-

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ning. Spenta-Mainyo is the Spirit of Good and Angra-Mainyo, the hostile spirit or spirit of evil. Both principles of duality have their root in Ahura-Mazda. They are unfolded in order that a manifested universe might be brought into prominence through appreciation of contrasts.

Good and evil may be said to come into existence only when man in his evolution develops enough intelligence for choice. **The original duality is not of good and evil but is of spirit and matter, of reality and non-reality, of light and darkness, of construction and destruction, the two poles between which the universe is woven and without which no universe can be.** The second phrase, "reality and non-reality", is used by Zarathushtra Himself in the proclamation of this fundamental truth, for we read in the *Gatha Ahunavaiti*, that the Prophet declared "In the beginning there was a pair of twins, two spirits, each

of a peculiar activity; and these two spirits united created one the reality, the other the non-reality". There is that primary duality, Sat and Asat, exactly the occult teachings, in order that the many may proceed. The Prophet goes on to say that the one or the other of these must be followed; just as in all ancient teachings it is said that we may choose either spirit or matter. Spenta-Mainyo and Angra-Mainyo are spoken of as "my two spirits" by Ahura-Mazda Himself. **Dr. Haug fully grasps this idea and remarks "They are the two moving causes in the universe, united from the beginning and therefore called 'twins'. They are present everywhere We never find Angra-Moinyo mentioned as an isolated constant opponent of Ahura-Mazda in the Gathas.**

In the Zoroastrian Trinity, Ahura Mazda is the first person from whom all proceeds, the second is the duality which is ever the mark of the second person in the

manifested Trinity. These two, have too often been placed as opposing principles, making the Zoroastrian teaching essentially dualistic instead of essentially **monistic** as it is. **The third person in the Trinity is the Wisdom**, the primeval Wisdom, or Mind, by which the world was made. **This is Armaiti**, of whom it is written "To succour this life Armaiti came with wealth, the good and true mind, she, the everlasting one, created the material world".

This continual fight then, between the forces of good and evil, have led people to think that Zoroastrianism is a militant religion. It is not. It is a religion that loves a fight against evil. Only by boldly facing and fighting the evil of one's lower self (and not by running away from it) man attains happiness in the world. Zoroaster says that evil is not Ahriman-made but man-made and can be crushed and destroyed by man. And then, merely fighting the evil will not give man complete happiness; he has to practise righteousness too, to get full happiness.

The main theme of Zoroastrianism is Righteousness (Asha), which is the path to Godhead and contains the essence of all Creation's purpose. The axiom of the religion is thus bound up in the three words — Humata, meaning good thoughts Hukhta, meaning good words; and Hvar-shta meaning good deeds. **Zoroaster** taught that man got happiness only through Righteousness and never through ritual or sacrifice, penance or self-mortification. When Zoroaster had reached the high degree of perfection, and received the Supreme light, he thought, spoke and

acted according to the law of Asha —that law of Righteousness and uprightness. The Destiny of the world and of Humanity was to progress towards perfection along the path of Asha. This stage of perfection was manifest in the life of Zoroaster, of Jesus, of Buddha and all the other Great souls; who lived to complete the total destruction of all desires, which bind man to cravings, and acquired all the good that Humata, Hukhta and Huvrashta bestowed on them.

Zoroaster emphasised the value of air, water, light, fire and earth and **that these primeval elements of Nature were not to be violated in any way**. Fire is held sacred and those Iranians who originally fled to India under persecution brought with them the sacred fire from Iran and to this very day it has been kept alight, that same fire still burning at Udveda which makes this place the Mecca of the Parsees.

The language of the Zend-Avesta and the effects of the prayers written and recited today in this ancient dialect may be considered. **In every religion there exist sounds of a peculiar character called "Words of Power", consisting of sentences in a particular language chanted in a particular way. Each religion possesses a stock of such sentences, special successions of sound now generally called "mantras".** In the East the science of mantras has been much studied and elaborated. The Zoroastrian prayers, because of the power of the ancient language and the combination of words is meant to have the greatest mantraiac effects. **Like all sounds mantras create vibrations in the physical and super-physical world.** Effects are caused in the higher worlds directly affect-

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ing the subtle bodies of the worshippers and also appealing to the Intelligences in those worlds with a meaning as definite as the words addressed by one person to another on the physical plane. **Mantras**, then, are supposed to be living forces in the invisible worlds. The sounds, causing active flashing forms rise through the worlds; affecting the consciousness of the Intelligences residing therein and bringing some of them to render the definite services required by those who are offering the **Mantras**.

Zoroastrianism teaches immortality of the soul and a life after death. **Although Zoroaster never mentioned reincarnation in the scriptures, this notion is implied in much of the writings.**

Zoroaster also taught that there was no forgiveness of sins, every action word and thought has its effect on the person who sets up the chain of causation. In fact, everything was based on the eternal and fixed law of Karma. Man created his own destiny and must be responsible for all his deeds. This notion is strongly embedded in the religions of the East and one of the tenets that theosophists hold to. The whole idea of rebirth was that man should come back time after time, the soul ever increasing in wisdom and spiritual advancement until at the end we reached that mark of perfection, like the Christs, Zoroasters and Buddhas.

Every religion is more or less closely bound up with morality. **Zoroastrianism insists with more determination that morality is not a mere convention but is something eternal.** It would be well to state some of the principles of the religion. Zoroaster taught that charity was essen-

tial. Respect for parents, elders and teachers was essential. Men and women had the freedom to choose their own thoughts words and actions. Man and woman had equality, both being entitled to knowledge and wisdom. Cleanliness of body, mind and heart were regarded as sacred duties — essentials before spiritual advancement could be attained. Zoroaster stressed that one should fight against Druj (evil) of any kind in one's life, and not fail to fight. The pure elements in Nature were never to be polluted with any kind of dead or decaying matter. One should keep pure from all contamination, especially corpses, where Ahriman's evil spirit resided in great strength. Every failure would mean that an agent of Ahriman would enter the soul and this could only be remedied by practising purifying rituals as detailed in our Scriptures.

Ancestor-worship was prevalent among the Iranians, which in the later Zoroastrianism was transferred into the concept of the Fravashi or guardian-spirit.

The Fravashis are the real guardians of morality and the source of social custom, for while the sky and the elements generally were far off and took comparatively little interest in the affairs of men, the Fravashis were close at hand. Next perhaps to the doctrine of Angels the idea of the Fravashi is the most important of the Persian concepts governing life. The influence of the Fravashis as originally ancestors was in presiding over births. They were also very prominent in war, and we have not to go far for examples of the worship of ancestors as a means of aid to victory. From this conception we pass to another. **A verse tells us that the Frava-**

shis of the living are more powerful than those of the dead. They are the External Souls of men. The Fravashi is merely the astral body which can be perceived only by trained clairvoyant vision.

This astral body differs in size and combination of colours depending on the personality and spiritual stage that man has reached in evolution. It is the emotional body constantly changing in colour and shape according to the person's feelings at the moment. It is the real life-force of the person. Whether the conception of the Fravashi is original in Iranianism has been doubted; some suppose that it was tacked on to the Aryan ancestor-worship by the magians of an earlier race with whom the Aryans came into contact. **The Fravashis are never mentioned by Zarathushtra Himself.**

We now come into the method of disposal of the dead. The cardinal principle of the religion is not to defile the elements and so the Zoroastrians are against polluting Fire by Cremation. Every religion, in fact, respects fire as the symbol of the supreme God. Zoroastrians have laid greatest stress on this. Brahma is fire, Ahura-Mazda is fire, the Jews worship their God as a pillar of fire, and the Christians proclaim "Our God is a consuming fire"

"Nav" meaning **"new"** and **"Jote"** a **"disciple"**. Thus the composite word **"navjote"** means **"a new disciple of God"**. It is the equivalent of the Christian Confirmation and gives spiritual strength to tread the path of Asha. Zoroaster ordained that the navjote initiation ceremony should be performed only after the age of seven, for then the child is better able to understand the prayers and what is expected of him as a true Zoroastrian.

On the Sudreh, near the bosom, there is a small pocket called "**Giroban**" or "**Kisseh-i-Kerfeh**", the bag of faith and of Righteous deeds, which the Zarathushtrian is expected to fill during life-time.

Kushti means a belt. Every Zoroastrian is bound down as a soldier of God fighting against evil. It also reminds the wearer that he is like a servant wearing a waist-band in the service of humanity. It is made of lamb's wool because lamb denotes innocence and meekness.

The **Kushti** is tied on the waist with three rounds and four knots. The three rounds are symbolic of the axiom, Humata, Hukhta, Huvarashta. **The four knots** are mementoes of the four resolutions of a Zoroastrian, namely —

- (1) daily submission to Ahura-Mazda,
- (2) choice of Zoroaster as leader and spiritual guide,
- (3) continual fight against all evil and
- (4) fullest trust in God.

Zoroastrianism does not advocate celibacy even among the priests. Man has to live in this world as God has created him and be righteous in the midst of his natural human life. He can be divine though Married. Zoroaster was trying to stress that **industry is better than asceticism.** Perhaps a few are ready to lead the life of an ascetic, which may be pure, but on the whole, man is not cut out for that life and therefore he must seek purity in the midst of the life in which he is placed by the Almighty.

One noticeable aspect of the Zoroastrian religion is that there is no attempt by it to convert non-Zoroastrians to its fold.

Zoroaster does not say that only those persons who embrace his religion will attain salvation. On the contrary, he proclaims in his Gathas that each person, being endowed with reason, has to choose his path in the world, the path of righteousness alone leading to salvation. The law of Karma is the very heart of Zoroastrian ethics. As you sow, so shall you reap is the philosophy of the Gathas and no amount of prayers, penance or ceremonies can be a substitute for righteousness which alone can give happiness to man whatever be his religion. There is no intervention by the Prophet for redemption of sins. Reward for good is the bounty of the Almighty and not the right of man. But Asha is precision in justice and can be relied on implicitly.



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Religious Ceremonies!

Are they Voluntary or Compulsory!

by

DASTURJI KHURSHID DABOO

In the community there is difference of opinion on the ceremonies of the deceased. Some consider them only as means of livelihood for the mobeds, failing to realise that most part of the expenses go in purchases of fruits, flowers, sandal-wood, loban and accompanying offerings which go back to the spender. Some people describe ceremonies as "shells" (ઝીલત) . Their attitude however turns out to be queer or faked because despite what they ridicule for others they themselves get the ceremonies performed in the event of death in the family. They wish to deny solace to others but secure it for themselves. Because of this non-conformity or rather anomaly clarification is necessary.

It is often argued that the dead are dead and gone. It is true for the rank materialists only but not so for the many to whom the soul is immortal and indestructible. Based upon the teachings of all religions, experiences of several advanced souls and personal experiences of the many bereaved ones ceremonies are devised by some great pious Mobeds on the concept of universal animated nature wherein the soul of the deceased now abides. If things exist contact should be possible either direct or through an intervening agency. The method adopted in our ceremonies is of invoking the intermediary like Sroash Yazat

(or any other Yazat) and their farohars and worship them that they may out of good-will favour us and carry the message of our heart to the souls now abiding in animated nature and help them in their onward progress. The deceased souls are just merely remembered during the ceremony ("aidar yad baad"). Ceremonies are really speaking worship of the Yezats.

Every religion aims at knowledge, philosophy, devotion and some active support for them. It is the duty imposed on every priest or every member of the priestly class to promote these ideals and help fulfil those aims. Those who composed prayers and devised ceremonies were genuine magaos leading pure life and not caring for money or riches. The present day mobeds are their successors still living in comparative poverty, sacrificing all modern good things of life in the service of their vocation. Any disparaging outlook by Behedins towards mobeds should be studied as "The proper study of mankind is man". Any deterioration in their service to the cause dear to the heart of the mobeds is Avocation, thrust upon them by times they are living in.

Ceremonies are active supports to the philosophy of life we believe in and to the devotion we hold dear to our heart. Love, tender emotions and intention for self-sacrifice are at the root of ceremonies.

In our prayers that we recite our dear departed ones are asking "Who will remember us with love? Who will welcome us? Who will give out in charity on our behalf?" A ceremony is the response to the above desires. These are the words of the Farohars themselves. They soothe the living and help the dead and attract Minoi blessings in the environment.

A bridge of love connects the bereaved ones with their dear departed ones and to remember them is one of the healthy urges common to mankind. How long ceremonies should be performed depends upon how long this force of love binds the two together. That long the person will do his or her utmost to fulfil the demands of the inner urge, pray fervently and spend voluntarily. The question of compulsion does not arise. There is no time limit for this love relationship but looking to the expenses the list of ceremonies recommended is limited to the first year. The moneyed class who literally throw away thousands in a day over decorations and feasts could spare a part of it to secure for their home continuous atmosphere of Farishtas and farohars (including the farohar of one's own departed dear ones). When invoked with Sroash Yazat and/or Fravardin Yazat (Ardafravash) the farohars together make a galaxy of immaculate souls moving around in the place making it pure and peaceful. In any case they are the protectors and the guardians of our homes and when pleased by our love for them may do more than protect and guide and shower blessings. Our religion clearly instructs us to invite such blessings through ceremonies and in a sentence in a prayer we do plead "do not

ever leave our house displeased with us", Once we feel convinced about the impressive presence of farohars around us it, thereafter, naturally becomes our DUTY to maintain such environment for good. Compulsion is ruled out when a thing is done with pleasure. And why not? All those who had money and place have done so in the past and prospered thereby. All ceremonies were performed in the house and the entire family participated therein. All those things which make ceremonies prohibitively expensive are redundant elements like expensive fruits, rich foods and cooked menu all prepared for the palate of self and the family and friends. It is not likely that material food will nourish the etherial soul. One slice of pomegranate, one date or other dry fruit, one sudrah (or even a small piece of mal cloth) and a darun are all that are needed symbolically. Idea underlying a ceremony is charity — not personal use.

Ceremonies are not necessarily some adjuncts to a recent death in the family. They are performed on all happy occasions also as invitation to the Yazats of animated nature as in Ghambars and Jashans which are for the good of the entire world and all mankind (જગ કલ્યાણ) But we are destroying the spirit of the thing. Presence in the jashan is thin and the crowd swells for the dinner table, for which a large number of fowl is massacred, even if the jashan is held in Behman month and Behman Yazat is known as the Guardian of animal life. Such is the twist given to Faith to make the occasion merry and bright with some added tamasha. "એ ધનના ધણી એ ધર્મ તમારે।"

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(a refrain from Kavi Dalpatram) "Oh the rich this is thy Faith". Time has ripened now for us to understand that we have deviated from the right path and vitiated the objective. It is never too late to mend. But who amongst the elite could bend down and lend a helping hand to bring on the change ? To be or not to be the elite is the question.

Our religious scriptures mention two intentions in a ceremony —

- (1) Snathai (સ્નાથૈ)
- (2) Fradathai (ફ્રાદથૈ)

(1) **Snathai** is using the ceremonies as instrument for destruction or diminution of Dev-Daruj (Satan and Satanic traits in man) and in this way purifying the world so that the world may benefit by healthy atmosphere so created. Prayers going with ceremonies have power in their words. When Dev-Daruj were trying to overwhelm Zarathushtra He said "I will defeat my enemy with my instrument, namely, powerful prayer."

(2) **Fradathai** is helping nature and promoting its purpose of bringing the kingdom of God on Earth by joining the army of workers for Ahura-Mazda, Ameshaspands, Yazats, Prophets and ashvans (pious persons). This may bring the minoi blessings to proliferate the good creations of Nature like water, vegetables, arable land, cattle, domestic animals and man, the paragon of animals, who can with knowledge and wisdom promote universal good, stage by stage, as described in the Ghambars. It is a duty put on the wealthy that they get (મોતેયર ક્રિયાઓ) big ceremonies performed at their expense from time to time, to welcome the Yazats help destroy or diminish wickedness and thus make good use of their wealth. Gatha (33) refers to the minoi force of the Almighty (ઉતયુતી) (Ootaiyuti) — descending into the Darun and the Droning or vibrations so created are a gift of God to man. The Darun holds on to these

vibrations and acts as a battery (ડી-ઇઝ = ડીઝ = ડી ઝ) discharging its potentiality as and when required for proper functioning of nature for the benefit of the creation. Christian ceremony of **Eucharist** has identical meaning in which "the loaf" turns into a "shining host." The Sacrament of the Christians are bread and wine. The Sacraments of the Zoroastrians are darun and Haom-ras. The sacrament of the Hindus is Prasad and so on for others. Those who eat them (taste them — chasni) get the taste of unity and brotherhood and of prosperity of their soul (સોજ-દશીએ રવાન) by the union of many souls heading for a group-soul ready to receive Grace or Yazati Blessings. Articles used in ceremony become excellent through divine purity incorporated. It is essential that the giver should have love and generosity for the oblation (યજ્ઞ) he offers. Whatever is thus offered in the name of a deceased turns into an oblation in the name of the Almighty, who returns good for good by his bounty and blessings. The heart of the poor is the noblest oblation he can hold before Ahura Mazda and is accepted as the richest offering. But the rich must give and receive — give away oblations to the poor and receive back from the Almighty blessings for things dear to his heart.

Weddings and Navjotes are no doubt religious ceremonies but there is room for cutting off waste. To those whom it concerns—cut off your waste on empty show, burning your good money on cigars, taking chances on horses, losing money in speculation which is only a respectable word for gambling. Collect figures for both sides and add up. Which is more expensive Religion or Pretention ?

(Material selected from Rahe-Mazda yasni)

Free and selective translation

— P. B. W.

Parsees Pioneers of Banking in Bombay

Dadabhai Pestanji Wadia

Leads the way

by

S. H. JHABWALA

It is little known that Parsees were the pioneers of modern Banking in Bombay. While money-lenders, regular and irregular were in plenty during the British Raj in India till 1836 there was not a single Bank in Bombay although the scene of national industry and commercial enterprise had shifted here from Surat. In 1687 the East India Company shifted its treasury from Surat to Bombay and that gave a great impetus to trading activity. Banks being a necessary appendage to business, some leading European and Indian citizens of Bombay held a meeting in John Skinner & Company's building in Fort in 1836 and appointed a Committee of 11 representatives to draft a constitution for what afterwards was known as the Bombay Bank. Its first Board of Directors was of 10 English merchants and Dadabhai Pestanji Wadia, who became the first and the only Indian and Parsee Chairman with Mr. George Ashburner, Secretary. The authorised Capital was Rs. 30 lakhs divided into 3000 shares.

Dadabhai announced the formation of the Bank on 31-12-1836 and by 3rd January, 1837, 19½ lakhs of rupees were subscribed. Dadabhai was descended from the illustrious family of Lovji Wadia, the first great Indian Master Builder of British

ships who came to Bombay from Surat in 1735. Dadabhai's father Pestanji Bomanji who owned vast estates at Parel and Mazagaon had advanced large sums of money to the British Government. When in 1832 Commander-in-Chief, Sir Collin was entertained at a public function in Lal Baug, Newnham, Member of the Council of the Governor of Bombay greatly applauded Dadabhai Pestanji's public spirit. When the Indian National Congress was being formed in 1885, Dadabhai was one of its principal organisers and before he could give his services to that august body he died.

Three-eighths of the shares of the Bank of Bombay were held by Dadabhai. He knew very little English, yet he conducted the European dominated Bank meetings with ability and vision. In 1840 the Bank was shifted to No. 23 Rampart Row in Jehangir Pestanji Wadia's Buildings.

Other Banks were started thereafter. The Bank of Western India with a capital of Rs. 50 lacs transacted business in foreign Exchange, Framji Cawasji Banaji, Lieut-Col. Stratford and S. D. Murray were its three trustees and directors. In 1899 the Oriental Bank was opened as a subsidiary of this Bank of Western India

with Jejeebhoy Dadabhoy, Alexander Russell and Jagannath Shunker Sett as Directors and John Stewart as Secretary Framji Cawasji Banaji's Directorship greatly advanced the financial reputation of the Bombay Bank. Banaji Sheth had also started 3 private Banks of his own, circulating moneys which greatly advanced commerce and industry on a national scale.

The Oriental Bank then shifted its Head Office to London and spread out as far as Ceylon and China of which the principal spirit was Dadabhai Rustamji of Calcutta, son of Babu Rustamji as the Bengalis called him.

On 18-12-1838 the Bombay Bank was formally recognised under the Act of Incorporation. Upto 1863 the Bank flourished and the shareholders reaped large profits therefrom by way of dividends.

False and fabricated notes were rumoured to have crept into the financial transaction of Bombay in 1848 and due to panic the Bank almost faced liquidation. Sir Cawasji Jehangir, who was then Chairman of the Board, advised the Board to increase the share capital and this was increased to Rs. 52½ lakhs. In 1865 during the American Civil War the Bank again suffered heavy losses amounting to Rs. 1,88,99,324 when it had to be taken into liquidation. The Bombay Bank was again restarted under the name of the New Bank of Bombay with a capital of Rs. 1 crore divided in 20,000 shares of

Rs. 500 each. The Government co-operated and contributed Rs. 6 lakhs. This new Bank continued upto 1875 as a Shareholders' Bank.

In 1876 the Presidency Bank Act was passed when besides the New Bank of Bombay, branches were opened in Madras and Bengal. The Banks were given the right to import Gold which greatly enhanced the confidence of the public in the Banking System. The Parsees played a significant part in initiating banking by holding large number of shares and participating in the general management of the Banks. They organised the administration with the help of Parsee Staff who worked with diligence and devotion, honesty and fairness. The posts of Paying Cashiers were always held by generations of Parsees. That practice continued for a number of years and was followed even by other State Banks down till late in the present century.

All these Banks were run virtually under European management until Seth Sorabji N. Pochkhanawala with the backing of Sir Pherozshah M. Mehta started the Central Bank of India Ltd., in the year 1911 and ran it with entirely Indian personnel under his own lead. He became its General Manager and later its Managing Director until he died in harness. He was knighted for his meritorious services to Indian Banking, and is recognised as the "Father of Indian Banking". Today the Central Bank ranks first in the private sector of Banking.

OBITUARY

Nawab Erach Yar Jung Bahadur



Born September 1887
Died November 1967
Aged 80 Years

Here lies the worthy son of a worthy father, a great administrator, good to the core, noble in disposition, large hearted, broad minded, scrupulous and selfless. Gifted with superior intellect and inherent character directed in right channels by his good parents Goolbai and Nawab Sohrab Nawaz Jung his career was marked by stamps of good breeding — which is characteristic of Chinoy family of Hyderabad, to which he belonged.

He graduated from Poona University and joined the Service of the Nizam State as a junior to his father. He then held high posts in succession in the state as Collector of Senior districts, Joint Secretary of the Revenue Department, Revenue Commissioner of Varangal District, Customs Commissioner of Hyderabad, Special member of H. H. the Nizam Saheb's Council. Whatever may have been his assignment he had the good of the people before his mind's eyes. As collector he went to every village, however small, and in whatever subsequent higher capacity, he

served both the State and the people together, for the uplift of the masses and the benefit of the state. He was therefore loved by the people and respected by the State. For his meritorious services H. H. The Nizam by a Farman gave him the title of the Nawab and thereafter put him as States' Agent for Berar, a province in dispute between the British Government and the Nizam State. His sagacity and veracity made their mark and the British Officials and the Nizam Administration both listened to his conciliations and advice and respected his judgment.

Nawab Erach Yar Jung Bahadur had a long and happy family life with his wife Tehmina, the daughter of Seth Ardeshir Dosabhai Marker O.B.E. Golden Jubilee of his wedding was celebrated in 1965. He was a staunch Zoroastrian. For decades he acted as the senior Trustee of the Parsi Anjuman and also as its Hon. Treasurer. Other Trustees of Bai Manekbai Chinoy Daremeher honoured him a few months before his death by appointing him as its Vice-President. Amongst his laudable traits was his willingness to be helpful to those in need of jobs. Many a person owes his livelihood to him for having secured jobs and procured employment for the deserving ones.

By the death of Nawab Erach Yar Jung Bahadur Parsiana has lost a sincere patron. He at once saw the need of such a magazine for the enlightenment of the community and offered donation but as it is not the policy of this magazine to accept donations he circumvented the issue by enrolling members and paying their subscriptions out of his own pocket. We appreciate his generosity and realise his foresight in supporting the magazine from its inception as a need of the hour. He not only read Parsiana thoroughly but also sent appropriate comments and suggestions. His good soul must now be in Garodeman, but his spirit lingers on with us all.

Influences of Zoroastrianism on Christianity

**Selections from Parsi Sansar
and Lok Sewak
(Karachi)**

Professor R. C. Zaehner writing in "The Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism" states:

"One is tempted to say that all that was vital in Zoroaster's message passed into Christianity through the Jewish exiles, whereas all that was less than essential was codified and pigeon-holed by the Sassanian theologian so that it died of sheer inanition."

Unfortunately what are known as Sassanian theologians are the writers of Bundahishn, Denkart, Menok-i-Khrat and Datastan-i-Denik. These books have been written nearly 300 years after the death of the last Sassanian King.

It is an historic fact that after the fall of the last Sassanian King, all the books belonging to the Zoroastrian Religion were destroyed and the Iranians were not allowed to speak their own language. It was after nearly 300 years that Iranians asserted themselves and were able to use their own language and the Zoroastrians were able to rewrite their religious books from what knowledge was handed down from father to son.

These books clearly show the influence of Christianity, Manichaeism, and Islam.

In Bundahishn, the life of Zarathushtra is written in an allegorical language and a tinge of divine birth through virgin mother as in Christianity has been given.

In Bundahishn, Zatspram and Persian Rivayat, as noted by Prof. Zaehner, it is stated that in the next world "each man will be restored his wife or wives and that he will have pleasure of them though no children will be born to them".

This shows clear influence of Islam.

In Datastan-i-Denik, Dastur Manus-chaher describes a system of killing 4 different types of animals and taking out their fat and burning them on fire of holy temples. This is entirely against the precept of the Zoroastrian teachings where fire even in the house, leaving aside fire in a Fire Temple, is not to be defiled by burning wood which gives offensive smell and no animal matter whatsoever is to be burnt on fire. This also shows influence of alien religions.

To form our opinion about the religion followed by the Zoroastrian Sassanian Kings on writings of these books will be doing injustice to them.

In this connection a remark recently made by a Muslim teacher is significant. Once in a class he was asked by a Muslim student what he thought of the Pahlavi writings. His reply was to the effect that all the learned people of the days of the Old Kings were dead, people were not able to think about their religion openly for 300 years and the books that have

been written are by novices and one should not expect much from them.

Leaving aside these influences from alien religions, even the translators have done injustice to these writers by personifying all the abstract good and evil characteristics they are talking about. This mistake is due to difference in the grammatical writing of the English and the Old Pahelvi language. In most of the ancient as well as modern Asiatic languages and also in several European languages, attributes are spoken of in male or female gender and not in neuter gender as in English. Whenever a virtue or vice is written in a masculine or feminine gender, the English translators have considered it as personified angel or devil and translated accordingly which need correction.

The Late Rabindranath Tagore, in one of his lectures, delivered in 1930 at Manchester College, Oxford, under the auspices of the Hibbert Trust, published in a book form under the title "The Religion of Man" has the following to say about Zarathushtra.

"The most important of all outstanding facts of Iranian history is the religious reform brought about by Zarathushtra. There can hardly be any question that he was the first man we know who gave a definitely moral character and direction to religion and at the same time preached the doctrine of monotheism which offered an eternal foundation of reality to goodness as an ideal of perfection. All religions of the primitive type try to keep men bound with regulations of external observances. Zarathushtra was the greatest of all the pioneer prophets who showed the path of freedom to man, the freedom of moral choice, the freedom from the blind obedience to unmeaning injunctions, the freedom from the multiplicity of shrines which draw our worship away from the single-minded chastity of devotion."

Monotheism is apparently a creed which men find it hard to put consistently into practice; it requires to be diluted before the common people can fully accept it.

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MITHRA: THE CELESTIAL LIGHT:

by

MAHYAR BYRAMJI PATEL

"MITHREM VOURU-GAOYAOITIM, HAZANGRA-GAOSHEM, BAEVARE-CHASHMANEM, AOKHTONAMANEM, YAZAMAIDE !"

"O ! Mithra of the wide-pastures, with a thousand-ears, ten thousand-eyes and Angel of wondrous-fame, Thee do we venerate !"

MITHRA, is one of the most prominent Yazatas in the Avesta. **He is nowhere mentioned in the Gathas**, which has led many eminent scholars to believe that either deliberately or otherwise, Zarathushtra has chosen to ignore him. There are also others, who disagree with this view, and hold to the belief that perhaps he might have been featured in the lost portions of our Gathic scriptures. If this might really be so, it would again lead to the controversy as to whether he was favourably or adversely treated in those presumably lost portions. Whatever might be the reason for his conspicuous absence in the Gathas, there is no gainsaying the fact that he exerts a very powerful influence on the religion of the Later Avesta.

Mithra, is an early Pre-Gathic Aryan Deity of Celestial Light, common to both the Iranian and to the Indian people. Vedic scriptures know him as Mitra, where he is very closely associated with Asura Varuna. In the Avesta, he is very closely associated with Hvare-Khshaeta, (Khurshed) the Radiant Sun. In both these scriptures, he represents Celestial Light, especially that of the Sun.

The second Nyaish (Litany) Meher-ni-Nyaish as well as the tenth Yasht (Hymn of Praise) Meher Yasht are both devoted to Mithra, where he is conjointly invoked with Hvare-Khshaeta, the Radiant Sun Khorshed Yazad. **The seventh month and**

the sixteenth day of the Parsee Calendar are dedicated to him. **During the Later Avesta, Mithra becomes Meher (Mihir).**

The Meher Yasht is the longest Yasht in the Avesta, and this hymn is a fine piece of ancient Iranian poetry of epic grandeur. Here, Meher is depicted as the first-born, matchless, most-powerful, greatest and fairest creation of Ahura-Mazda. **The Yasht reveals that he was especially created by Ahura-Mazda in order to bring His beautiful creation into view.** Rising from the eastern heights of Mount Hara-Berezaiti (Alburz), Mithra illuminates all the seven regions (Haft-Keshvars), of the world. He is the greatest benefactor, the best purifier, chief comforter, preserver and maintainer of the Good Creation of Ahura-Mazda. He vivifies and purifies waters, increases the vegetations and preserves the animals, and brings health and joy to mankind. He routs the evil brood of the dark world, and repels the daevas of indolence, evil-mind and wrath.

He is exalted and invoked together with Ahura-Mazda Himself. The composer of the hymn to Mithra gets so carried away in his zeal to glorify Mithra, that in his poetic fancy, he fallaciously portrays Ahura-Mazda Himself as adoring and worshipping Mithra. That is not at all in the true spirit of pure Zarathushtrianism, and actually goes against the re-

solute Monotheism of Zarathushtra in the Gathas, by thus introducing into it an element of polytheism.

Always alert, the leader of hosts, hearing with a thousand ears, and seeing with ten thousand eyes, all-knowing, incapable of being deceived, watchful, heroic, brave and lordly, he moves the swiftest, acts most wisely, and charges ferociously like a well-armed soldier when stirred. **Amongst his closest associates, Ahura-Mazda ranks the first. He is always jointly invoked with Hvare-Kshaeta, the Radiant Sun, Khorshed Yazat. Rashnu, the genius of Truth is synonymous with him.**

In his capacity as lord of the wide-pastures, he works in unison with Raman Khvastra. Raman Khvastra is Ether that pervades entire Universe through which light of Khorshed travels. Light is pure energy and even in the opinion of modern science pure energy cannot travel by itself and Ether is the medium of vehicle which light grasps on and travels all over and "vayu ooprakairiya" is the wind or force that makes light travel over and through Ether. That is why they Khorshed, Meher are always shown together.

His garment is the great vault of Heaven. His dwelling is on Mount Alburz, where neither night nor darkness, cold nor hot wind, sickness nor death, can ever reach him in his Elysian home built for him by Ahura-Mazda and the Amesha-Spentas. From here, he surveys the entire world at one glance, and nothing is concealed from him. His Light penetrates everywhere, and dispels all darkness, evil and sin. Mithra drives through the heavens and earth in his celestial chariot that moves on one golden wheel (which evidently means the sun). Ahura Mazda fashioned this chariot out of celestial material, and inlaid it with the stars. It is drawn by four shining white steeds that are immortal and spiritual, and who subsist on celestial food. He is escorted on all sides by Ashi-Vanghui, Atar, Chisti, Damoish-Upamana, the Fravashis, the Ka-

vayahecha-Kharenangho, Nairya-Ham-Vareti, Nairyosangha, Parendi, Rashnu, Sraosha, Thwashahe-Khadhatahe and Verethraghna.

As light is synonymous with Truth, so darkness is synonymous with Untruth. Avesta regards untruth as the most heinous of all sins, and sums up all human evil in one word 'Lie' called the Druj. This is the most detested of all the vices, and the liar is said to bring death to his country. **Mithra is intolerant of liars. He grants protection to the faithful as long as they do not lie and break contracts or vows. But when they perpetrate this wrong, the wrath of Mithra works havoc with them. Mithra does not spare even the kinsmen of the offenders, and they too are made to suffer agonies for long. Contracts are never to be broken, whether entered into with the righteous or the unrighteous, with the friend or the foe and also whether effected through freedom of choice or under duress, for Mithra stands up for the inviolability of the given pledge. He is the sanctifier of oaths. The word Mithra when used in the Avesta has the force of a 'legal contract', and being false to a pledge is called Mithra-Druj.**

Mithra was the chief diety in Western Iran, when Zarathushtra came upon the scene. He is spoken of as omiscient, the greatest amongst the Yazatas, with a body shining like that of the moon, and with a face as brilliant as the star Tishtrya. His body is made up of spells. After sunset, Mithra traverses around the world, and surveys all that is happening between the heavens and earth. His warmth gives life and fertility to the earth. **He is lord of the countries (dainghu-paiti).**

Being the lord of hosts, warring Nations invoke Mithra at the time of going to battle. He sides with those that excel in TRUTH. In the battle he throws into consternation the army of the enemy. The description of the battlefield is vivid. No weapons harm those whom Mithra protects. He binds the hands of the enemies,

ચાંદી તથા જરમન સીલવરનો ફેન્સી નકસીનો માલ
બનાવવાનું તથા ખરીદવાનું

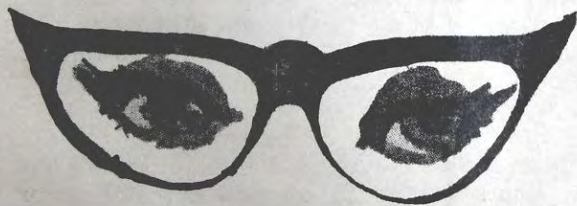
૧૦૭ વરસનું વીશ્વાસુ ખાતું.

(સ્થાપી ૧૮૬૦)

રતનજી જેહાંગીર

ટેલીફોન
૨૬૨૬૭૯

૬૬, બહારગેટ સ્ટ્રીટ,
ફોર્ટ મુંબઈ-૧.



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blinds their eye-sight, deprives them of hearing, numbs their feet, breaks up their ranks, and strikes terror into their hearts. Mithra rains destruction upon them from all sides. He slays the lying adversaries by their fifties, hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, and by their myraids. He confuses their minds, breaks their limbs, smashes their bones, knocks off their heads, and with his powerful mace brings down both the riders and their horses. Even the formidable Angra-Mainyu and his entire evil-brood flees before the might and wrath of Mithra, in utter confusion and terror. War and peace between the Nations owe their balance of power to Mithra.

When Mithra is pleased, he bestows upon the righteous, such gifts as radiance, glory, health, cattle, chariots, offspring and sovereignty, but when he is displeased, he inflicts upon the unrighteous, such sufferings as poverty, misery, powerlessness, and deprivation of offspring. He hold the key to the happiness of both the worlds.

In the hymn to Mithra, the apparently erring and fanciful composer declares that men are requested by Ahura-Mazda, through holy Zarathushtra, to offer worship, and sacrifices of cattle and birds, along with the Haoma and the libations to Mithra.

The pure form of Zarathushtrianism differs very widely from this description. In the Gathas, Zarathushtra clearly reveals that Ahura-Mazda alone is worthy of our worship, that any and every form of blood sacrifice is repugnant to Ahura-Mazda, and that the observance of debasing penances does not form any part of his religion. However, the composer advises the performer of penances to have his body washed for three days and three nights, then to undergo thirty stripes with a lash. Anyone who does not observe this ritual is prohibited from partaking of the sacred libation to Mithra. These observances appear to be precursor of the later orgies

perpetrated during the performance of Mithraic rites and mysteries, for which, centuries later, the cult of Mithra became famous. In old rituals Mithra was to be appeased with sacrifices around, within, in, above, under, before, and behind the countries.

In essence, Mithraism is a mixture of Aryan and Semitic accretions. During the Achaemenian period, the Chaldaean astrology (worship of the stars) became assimilated into the cult of Mithra. Planets and Stars began to receive homage, and the course of their movements came to be looked upon as the determinant factor in all the events of life. Mithra, who originally represented Light, and not the source of light, later came to be confused with the Invincible Sun, the source of light, the 'Sol Invictus' of the Roman mysteries. He got identified with the Greek Gods, of a later period. Cilician pirates carried the cult of Mithra to Rome. The martial instincts of the warlike Romans were enamoured of Mithra. Roman Emperors began to pay their homage to Mithra, and started to call themselves by names reminiscent of Mithra. The cult of Mithra spread fast, far and wide. Thus Mithraism, born amongst the Iranians, who were the inveterate enemies of Rome, remained the State Religion of Rome for two hundred years. Temples dedicated to Mithra began to abound. Almost all of Europe, during the middle of the third century, had turned Mithraic. Mithraism, imported from Iran, brought along in its train the concept of the Divine Kingly Glory of the Iranians to Europe. Mithra soon came to be looked upon as the dispenser of the Kingly Glory, and thus received the favour of the kings. It grew from strength to strength, until the advent of Christianity, with its message of love and compassion finally put an end to its violent cult, after a long and sustained struggle. However, it left its impress upon Christianity too, and the Christians, not knowing the actual day of the birth of Christ, chose to celebrate the feast of the Nativity of

Christ, commonly called the Christmas Day, upon the twenty-fifth day of December, on the day on which the Mithraists used to celebrate the Birthday of the Sun. On that day, the Winter solstice light triumphs over the darkness, and the lengthening of the day begins, thus the Christians united the two festivals of the Christian Nativity of Christ, and the Christ, and the Mithraic Birthday of the Sun, into a common day of celebrations on the day originally celebrated by the Mithraists as the Birthday of the Sun. **By this means, the Christians gave themselves a day to celebrate the birth of Christ, and appeased the Romans, by celebrating it upon their day of rejoicing.**

The creation of the material world began with Mithra combatting and reluctantly slaying the primeval Bull at the instance of the Sun. Carvings on the ruins of ancient Temples dedicated to Mithra still depict him in the act of slaying the primeval Bull. Today, even in India, where the Mithra cult had also spread a long time ago, this practice of sacrificing the Bull and partaking of its fat, in order to commemorate the slaying of the primeval Bull by Mithra, is still in vogue amongst some backward classes. The Moon then gathered the seed of this Bull, and purified it, from which ultimately, sprang the different kinds of animals. Under the protection of the dog, who is the faithful companion of Mithra, the soul of this primeval Bull was taken to heaven, where it became the guardian genius of cattle. Then, the first human pair was created, and Mithra sat guard over them. Ahriman set out to destroy this first pair, but was baffled by Mithra. After pestilential scourges, protracted droughts, universal deluges and huge conflagrations, man survived with

the help of Mithra. Man flourished, and Mithra's work of creation being over, he retired to the high heavens, from where he guards the world from up above.

Mithra presides over the tribunal that judges the souls after death. He helps the righteous to ascend to heaven. **When at the end of time Ahriman will destroy the entire world, Mithra will descend to earth, and resurrect the dead.** He will awaken the sleeping Peshotan, son of Kai Gushtasp. Then, Mithra shall separate the righteous from the wicked. At that time, a Bull, akin to the primeval Bull shall appear on earth. Immolating this Bull too, Mithra shall give its fat and wine to the righteous, which will make them immortal. The Fire of Ahura-Mazda shall then fall upon the wicked and burn them out. Ahriman, along with his entire evil brood shall perish in that conflagration. Then shall the world be renovated for the endless joy of the good and the righteous.

Such, is Mithra, who though originally meaning Celestial Light developed into a cult quite foreign to the sublime teachings of the Gathas. Perhaps, now we know the reason why there is no mention made of Mithra in the Gathas. Perhaps Zarathushtra found in Mithra, a pagan deity whose cult of violent orgies was too repulsive for him to mention. Perhaps the worship paid to Mithra, who is put on an even footing with, and at times even surpassing Ahura-Mazda, might have appeared too distasteful to Holy Zarathushtra. Perhaps it was the deliberate intention of Zarathushtra to do away with the worship of Mithra. Be that as it may, in the extant portions of the Gathas, Zarathushtra is wholly silent about Mithra. Perhaps it is just as well that he should have remained that way.

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' ASHEM VOHU,'

The Bombay Parsi Association has taken a right course. Its circulars will hereafter contain the gist of Zoroastrianism and explain it to children in language suitable to them. This article is adapted from its circular No. 30. It tells children

If you are wise you act according to the advice of your parents. You make them proud of you. You become happy too. Happiness comes to the person who makes others happy. Your friends would be happy and they will become your lifelong friends.

Remember ! Lord, God, Dadar Ahura Mazda whispered the Ashem Vohu prayer in your ears before you were sent down. Dadar Ahura Mazda said, "Always be good, **Walk always on the Right Path, the path of Ashoi, for Ashoi is the only path.** If you follow the path of Ashoi, you will be happy, and people all around you shall be happy too."

Unfortunately on our journey down some of us forgot this beautiful message. **Those who have forgotten the holy word, run after happiness in the wrong way, with the result that neither they are really happy nor can they make others happy.**

If you wish to be happy, if you wish your parents to be happy, if you wish to make your surroundings happy, follow Ashoi or the Right Path. Be good. Do good. And Live and let live. Ashem Vohu means: "Ashoi is the best and real happiness comes through it.

Now let us examine Ashoi.

Let us divide Ashoi into (1) The Ashoi of the body. (2) The Ashoi of the mind.

Let us take the Ashoi of the body first. It is very simple to observe; and very important to carry out day in and day out without break.

Daily you wash you hands, nails, face, body and keep clean. You brush teeth, you keep your hair clean, you take care of your eyes and nose. Keep your body clean and keep all your surroundings clean-your food, your drinking water, your house etc. You put on Sudreh, the white spotless shirt, next to your skin. This pure white emblem gives you a bright freshening happy outlook after daily bath.

I am sure you all dear little children like to take care of your bodies and observe Ashoi as far as the Ashoi of the body is concerned.

Zoroastrian children must take care to see that their bodies are kept perfectly clean and that they do not move about bare-footed.

Now let us turn to the Ashoi of the mind.

How shall we keep our minds clean? Shall we break the skull, take out the brain, and wash it with soap and water ? Of course, we cannot do that. How then shall we keep our minds clean ? You think every second of your life. What do you

think? Your thoughts guide you to every thing — good or bad. Keep your thoughts good and you will find the world good. **Good thoughts stand first in the teachings of your prophet Zarathushtra. "Humata" means Good thoughts.** Your mind or your thinking makes you happy or unhappy. Milton said,

"Mind in its own place
Can make hell of heaven or heaven of hell."

The first lesson of life is Good Thoughts. "What are Good Thoughts"? You are yet young, you play, come in contact with other small children, you have your brothers and sisters, your cousins and neighbours, your friends, your fellow travellers in trains, trams, buses etc. How do you treat them? What do you think about them? Do you like them or dislike them? Are you selfish? Do you hurt their feelings? Think, Behave properly. Respect others, Help others and above all do not be a nuisance to anyone.

Never think of making anyone unhappy. Do not be selfish. In life learn the greatest lesson of life; **"Do unto others as you would they should do unto you."** That is called the **Golden Rule** of life.

If from the very childhood you think of goods things only as you grow you will think good thoughts wherever you go. That will win friends and your life would be happy.

Good Thoughts would lead you to good words and finally to good deeds, because thoughts create, words express and deeds perform.

Here I shall tell you a story of a wicked man whose single good thought won for him a pass-port to heaven.

Once there was a very very wicked man who had not done a single act of goodness to anyone.

One day he was passing by a road where he saw a bundle of grass lying a little away from the cow. She tried in vain to reach the grass. When the man saw this, he thought to himself, "Poor cow, she is trying to eat the grass but she cannot reach it. Let me help her." Immediately as this good thought entered the wicked person's mind, he was spurred on to do something good. He kicked the bundle of grass with his right foot and was very happy to see that the cow was able to eat the grass. It is said that when this wicked man died his whole body went to hell but his right foot went to heaven..

Dear children, your thoughts, words and deeds are recorded in the Heavenly Register and according to that you will be rewarded or punished.

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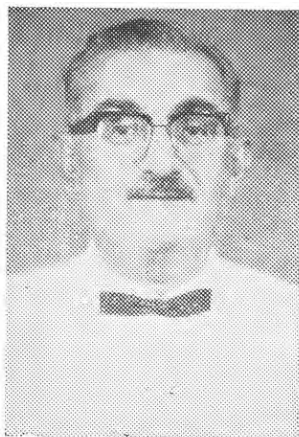
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Amongst the Toll of Good Men (1967)



NOSHIR BHARUCHA
B.A. LL.B. (Advocate)

He was a prominent figure in public life of Bombay for the last quarter century of his life. He was a man of character and a genuine servant of the public, whose cause he espoused and pursued to its legitimate end. He was for many years a Bombay Municipal Corporator. He then rose to be a member of the Legislative Assembly of the Bi-lingual State of Bombay. He very vigorously took up the cause of a separate Maharashtra State on linguistic basis because in his honest opinion it was justice in terms of linguistic formation of States. He was then voted in by the electorate of Bombay for the Parliament, where he gave his services till the end of its term. His health deteriorated and he died with his zeal intact. Good men must be remembered for good.



**TEHMURASP
BEHRAMSHAH
BADHNIWALA**

He was fondly addressed as “Taimur” by friends and co-workers. His life sketch has appeared in October 1967 issue of Parsiana. He was on our Advisory Board.



**THE MORE YOU THINK
OF YOUR FAMILY,
THE MORE YOU REALISE
THE NEED FOR
LIFE INSURANCE**



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Now young and care-free, he will grow up soon. You want him to have a good education and start in life. Guarantee the financial security he needs through Life Insurance. Life Insurance can assure him enough funds for his growing years.



THINK OF YOUR DAUGHTER:

Your little girl will be a grown-up lady before you know. Soon you will have important things to consider. Things like her education, marriage and perhaps a career. Like most fathers, you want to make her future secure. Guarantee it through Life Insurance.



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