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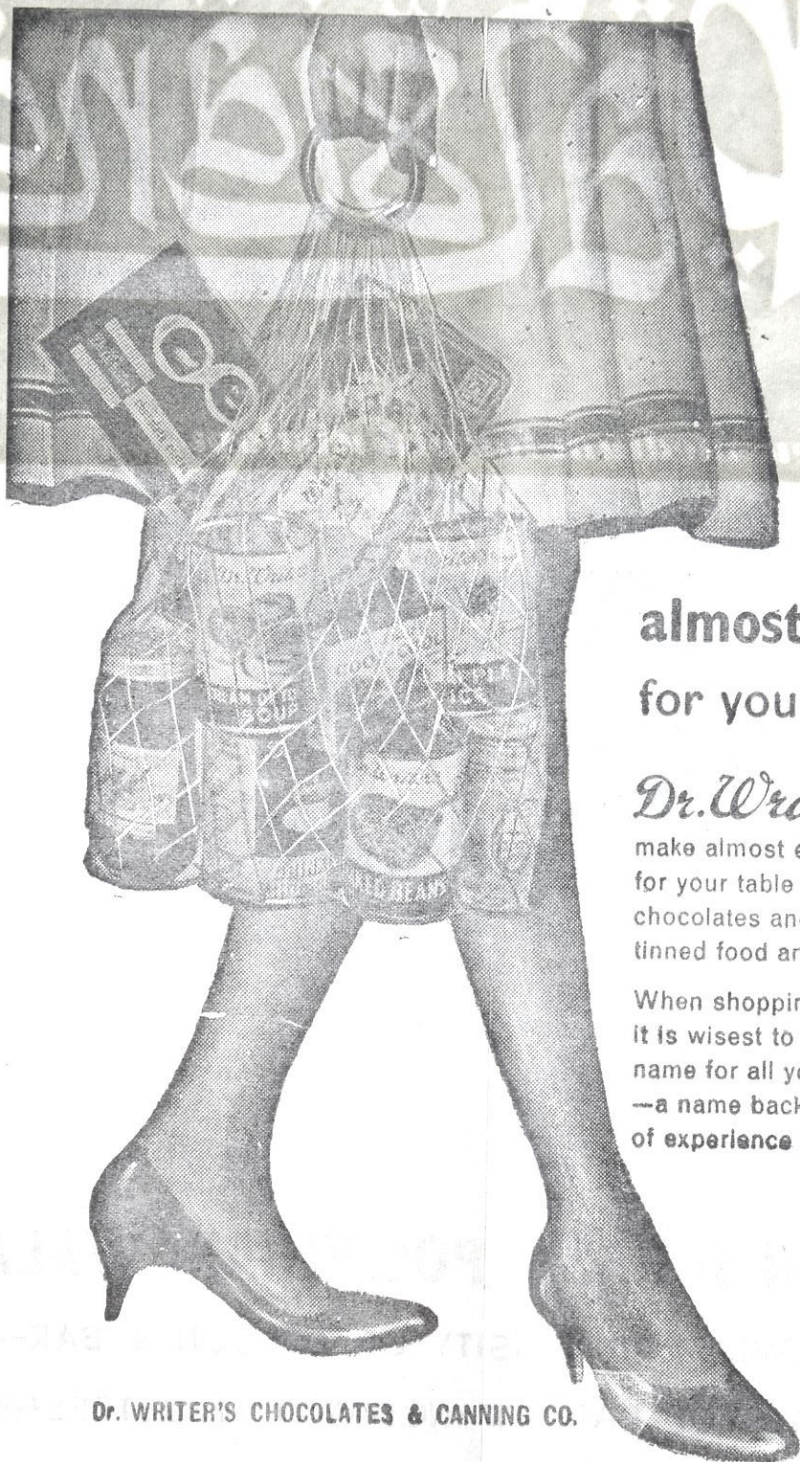
RATTAN SORABJI POCHKHANAWALA

B. Sc (ECONOMICS) UNIVERSITY OF LONDON & BAR-AT-LAW

CANDIDATE FOR PARSI PANCHAYAT TRUSTEESHIP.

Read Inside :

Election Matter



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VOL. VII No. II

SEPTEMBER 1971

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EDITORIAL

PARSI PANCHAYAT'S ELECTION -1971.

SOCIAL ENGINEERING FOR PANCHAYAT ELECTION

A NEED OF THE HOUR

LOOKING ASKANCE

Very many Parsis look upon Elections with complete detachment as if it were of no concern or significance to the community as a whole. Some voters make Election a prestige issue of their own ego. Some just get into the groove and sanctify sitting membership and the rest are led by group loyalty.

Voting should be taken more seriously as a duty to be discharged in the interest of the vital problems of the community's future as a whole.

During election campaign there is ample chance for off-beat considerations. Some posed me a problem that Mr. Pochkhanawala is tender and not tough. In proposing his candidature I was not voting him in for an all-out wrestling bout. Some others posed another problem -that he is immature at 50 to sit in our august "Majlis" when John Kennedy at 35 was accepted good risk for Presidentship of the U.S.A.

Election is for the community, its future and its good. Electorate is a coterie for the common purpose of safe-guarding the view-points of the electorate and also of all those large number left out who think but do not vote. Therefore the coterie should be real free and not "pressure-bound" by promise to vote for any of the candidates or their canvassers.

It is not a "promise to pay" note for value received -it is only a "promise to oblige", and one can with clear conscience refuse to abide by any such un-enforceable binding under judicial, social or moral codes. Ignoring the "promise to oblige" vote in Mr. Boman-Behram or Mr. Rattan Sorabji Pochkhanawala. I am for Pochkhanawala and recommend you Pochkhanawala.

Several voters have complained that ballot is not strictly secret and therefore they feel obliged to vote for the candidate promised to their canvassers. Cancel all promises and vote for the right man. That is voting. That is personal dignity. Do what is good for the community, not what is good for any candidate.

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16th October 1971

Dear Friend,

I am your Candidate for Election as a Trustee of the Parsee Panchayat Trust Fund and Properties which is to take place on 13th November 1971.

Several well wishers have been kind enough to approach me to stand as a Candidate for Trusteeship to which I have agreed.

I feel that I can be of service to the Parsee Community and I therefore offer my services and I assure you that I shall execute my responsibilities to the best of my ability.

I may mention that I am a graduate of the London University holding a degree of B.Sc. (Economics) and Barrister at Law and I have had over 25 years experience in the Banking field. I was previously the Managing Director of the Bombay State Financial Corporation and I am now Secretary to the Central Bank of India and during the course of my work I have had considerable opportunity to meet and work with various types of industrialists and individuals.

At present there are a number of important problems facing the Parsi Community particularly in relation to employment as well as for setting up new industries and business which would also help our Country. There is particular need for able and continuous guidance to the younger generation and for helping them in establishing themselves in the field of their choice. There is of course the standing problem of housing which needs to be tackled vigourously and finally there is need for schemes to assist aged persons, providing medical assistance etc.

I undertake to pursue these matters and bring about such improvements as may be possible in the best interest of the Community. I therefore urge you to consider me as your candidate and give me your vote and return the undermentioned confirmation to me at the above address duly signed by the 6th November 1971.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,
R. S. POCHKHANAWALA

I, Rattan Sorabji Fochkhanawala (50 years) B.Sc. (Economics), Barrister-at-Law having over 25 years experience in the banking field as well as in social service being associated with several social service organisations including the blind and the deaf, stand for election as a Trustee of the Parsee Panchayat Trust Fund and Properties to be held on Saturday 13th November, 1971 between 2 P.M. and 5 P.M. at its office at 209 Dadabhoi Naoroji Road, Bombay. You are requested to vote for me and to attend in person. Please bring your certificate, otherwise on request, a duplicate certificate will be issued on verification.

I am standing for election with the following objectives. I believe that:-

1. the major problems facing our Community today are in relation to employment as well as for setting up of new industries while the important social problems are in relation to housing and schemes to assist aged persons and providing medical assistance etc.
2. the electoral vote as at present constituted is very limited and a larger spectrum of our Community should be represented and qualify as voters so that the Trustees become truly representative of not only the donors but also the educated and the younger generation.
3. a Trustee should have sufficient spare time to be able to serve the Parsee Community effectively.
4. the service term of a Trustee should generally not exceed 10 consecutive years and that there should be a periodical retirement of trustees and if for any reason a Trustee is to re-elected he may stand for re-election after an intervening period of a year or two.
5. there should be elections for the appointment of a Trustee notwithstanding the availability of a single and able personality.

It shall be my endeavour to bring about such reforms as would be in the best interest of the majority of our Community and to bring about such improvement in their economic standards as may be possible within the framework of their capabilities and I undertake to work towards these objectives energetically with all the practical experience at my command.

Candidates will come and candidates will go, but the Community will remain what it is -lethargic, listless and lost unless we learn to vote seriously and sensibly -giving up our petty-mindedness of Hero-worship to extol the mock-heroic dramatics. What is the status and the social value of us voters, except as ballot box boys and ballot box girls who come to deposit a piece of paper in a box that entitles a candidate to enter the debating society that is Parsi Panchayat, where the sacred seven meet once a fortnight on a mandate obtained to last for ten years, with no check on them and even no machinery of knowing their work.

On Wednesday, 3rd November 1971, I was called to the Charity Commissioner's Office along with other complainants who have lodged complaints in the matter of Godrej Press embezzlement and associated scandals. It was a session of administrative inquiry when the presiding officer asked us a question whether we did or did not have any machinery for knowing the activities of the Panchayat's working in their meetings of the Board of Trustees? -We all said NO! -we do not have any such privilege. He said "How is it so?" In several other Parsi Panchayats of Gujarat and other places, there are one or two meetings held during a year when the Trustees have to face the entire Community in a general meeting for information asked for. The evil of this omission is apparent in the disgusting high-handedness in Godrej Memorial Printing Press in the face of the Community's disapproval of Bajan and Vesuna. Suffice it to say that in this latest development, all male members have exposed themselves as men without back-bone.

It is under such conditions we are entering election campaign. We shall take up that issue next time, after the election is over. We like election campaign to be clean on both sides and we want in the Panchayat such a man as Mr. Pochkhanawala who insists on election and internal administration both unstinted by party politics, to which the Kaiser-E-Hind refers in its last issue. Seven Trustees cannot manage our Trusts without bickerings when seven Ameshaspands are managing the Universe with just one law of Asha -Uprightness. We are taught that all seven Ameshaspands are of one mind but our seven Trustees are of two minds. Mr. Pochkhanawala will be a stabilizing force for ultimate fusion into one mind. That is why I insist on your voting for him.

In the Kaiser-E-Hind of 31.10.1971, one "Onlooker" childishly attacks Mr. Maneck Mistry as a double-faced Janus who as a Trustee of Jame-Jamshed has supported Mr. Boman-Behram and as an individual has put up Mr. Pochkhanawala as a candi-

date against Mr. Boman-Behram. Whosoever that "Onlooker" is, he is not a good "Observer". Mr. Maneck Mistry has never in his life-time even once seen or met Mr. Pochkhanawala to propose him as a probable colleague on Board of Trustees. The "Onlooker's" imagination runs riot from will to believe. There is nothing deeper than that. It is absurd, childish or purposely conjured. Nobody but myself thought of Mr. Pochkhanawala and it was I who carried this name to Mr. Boman Shah Minocher-Honji. He spoke to Mr. Mistry on phone that I, Warden, had proposed this name, because I know him for years as an excellent person and now propose his candidature. There is no question of putting up a candidate against Mr. Boman-Behram. This situation is only incidental to any election, but one thing is certain that Mr. Pochkhanawala and I are conscientiously opposed to too long uninterrupted Trusteeship because we are witnessing the evils thereof and we sincerely dislike many things connected with Parsi Panchayat and earnestly intend to work to bring changes in them.

Voters will please dispossess themselves of any credence to the rumour that because of a minor heart-attack, Mr. Pochkhanawala is now incapacitated. Throughout he was under treatment of Dr. Aspi Golwala, one of the Parsi Panchayat Trustees, and Dr. Golwala himself has certified him fit as fiddle for all work with a proviso "don't climb too many stairs" as a precaution only. If voters just give credence to rumours, they lower the calibre of Parsi voting rights. We are fighting a very dignified contest and expect the same in return. We give fair deal and like fair play. Mr. Pochkhanawala has made one request to the Chairman of the Parsi Panchayat that all measures be taken for proper secret ballot and written to Mr. Boman-Behram also to support him on this stand of the election.

I have heard from a very reliable source that Mr. Boman-Behram himself is considering ten year period too long and was not contesting election but for giving credence to the rumour that Mr. Pochkhanawala was Mr. Mistry's candidate. I have cleared this point. On my assurance Mr. Boman-Behram may withdraw his candidature and fulfil his original desire of getting out of the Panchayat to do more service to greater cosmopolitan numbers. After all, every man has only 24 hours to live in a day. We would like him to live more efficiently that way.

Voters may withdraw their "promise to oblige" given to Mr. Boman-Behram and vote for Mr. Pochkhanawala. Voting is one of the sacred human rights and must be exercised with prudence and probity for the greater good of the greater number (of Parsis) and not for the narrow good of any candidate.

"We cannot always oblige, but we can always speak obligingly." -Voltaire.

VOTE FOR MR. POCHKHANAWALA.

-P.D.W.

Parsiiana: September 1971

THE ANGEL SAROSH

by

SAM N. DOCTOR, B.Sc.

"Sraosh asho tagi, tanfarman, shekafta zin, zin avazar, salarey damane Ahura Mazda berasad."

May Sarosh the Righteous, strong, embodied with divine commandments, possessed of effective and victorious weapons, Leader and Guide of the creations of Ahura Mazda, come to us.

It was in a period of remote or hoary antiquity that Zarathushtra preached his new religion which embodied a monotheistic theology of the highest order, which centred on the worship of one God, Ahura Mazda, 'The Wise-Lord', together with some of the loftiest ethics or morals ever revealed to mankind. The prophet of Iran rejected the daeva-gods of the Indo-Iranian people, which in course of time became devils. **The only divine beings Zarathushtra would admit in his theology were abstractions, not so much angels as divine attributes or aspects of the One Godhead!** This we learn from the Gathas which are the earliest of the extant Avestan scriptures, being the immediate recorded utterances of the prophet himself.

Zoroastrian Angelology has its beginnings in the Gathas wherein we come across the divine heptad of the seven Archangels or Amesha-Spentas (Bountiful Immortals), these being Ahura and His powers or aspects (emanations), and after whom the first seven days of the Zoroastrian calendar month from Ormazd to Amardad are named. **The Amesha-Spentas are in one accord with Ahura Mazda who is the first Ameshaspand and who embodies the six powers within Himself!** Thus, in the

Gathas we have Zarathushtra saying: "When I held Thee in my eyes, I realised Thee in my mind, O Mazda, ... as the Father of Vohu Mano (Vohuman, Behman) or Good Mind, as the true creator of Asha (Asha, here, is Divine Order; Asha Vahishta or Ardibehesht is Best Righteousness) and Lord over the actions of life." (Gathic Yasna 31-8). Or again we have "Grant Thou unto me Asha for whom I have yearned, pursuing Armaiti (Spenta Armaiti or Spendarmad is Divine Wisdom) for that perfection." (Ys. 43.10)

Before venturing a detailed discourse on the Angel Sarosh, who occupies perhaps the highest place in the Divine hierarchy of Yazatas, and who, together with the Angels Meher (Av. Mithra), Adar (Av. Atar) and Behram (Av. Verethraghna) is one of the most oft invoked angels, it is necessary to elucidate and understand the terms Amesha Spenta and Yazata:

The Avestan word for Ameshaspand or Archangel is 'A-mesha-spen-ta', a triple compound literally meaning 'the non-mortal benevolent one'. Thus, the Ameshaspentas are 'The Benevolent or Bountiful Immortals.' The lesser angels are called Yazads (Av. Yazata, Phl. Izad).

'Yazata' is derived from the root 'yaz', to worship. Thus the Yazatas are the Ones worthy of adoration, or 'The Worshipful Ones.' Both terms are employed in the Avesta with two more or less distinct connotations: **In some places, notably in the Gathas, the terms "angels" denote only abstract ideas, e.g., Sraosha (Sarosh) in the sense of "Knowledge acquired by inspiration"; in other places, where the context implies personification, the Yazads and Ameshaspands denote personified Divine Powers or celestial genii (e.g. Verethraghna or Behram, the genius of victory). In this later sense the Yazatas figure in the post-Gathic Avesta, principally in the various yashts and Niyaeshes (litanies) dedicated to them, but never in the Gathas!**

We shall now first see which are the Yazatas that figure in the Gathas, the divine hymns which have come down from the prophet himself. These are three, viz. Atar (Adar), Sraosha (Sarosh) and Ashi (Ashi Vanghuhi or Ashishvangh in the later Avesta). A fourth, viz. **Daena (Din)**, may be added, but it is a pure abstraction, denoting **the Prophet's Good Religion**, conscience, etc. Ashi is sanctity or the good reward as blessing (The word ashish (blessing) comes from the same Avestic origin) And Atar is the **"Flaming Fire of Thought"**, the visible symbol of Ahura Mazda.

Sarosh, in the Gathas, is Sraosha, and is the "Faculty of Divine Obedience". More correctly the angel personifies **Divine Knowledge and Inspiration!** The word is derived from the root 'sru' to hear, though with the inward ear. Thus Dr. M. N. Dhalla rightly renders the term Sraosh as 'Obedience to the Religious lore'. Hertel, Herzfeld and Madan, on the other hand, favour the more literal rendering 'hearing' rather than 'Obedience.' **"It is through Sraosha that Ahura reveals the**

hidden things of the spirit to Zarathushtra (Yasna 44.12). Dr. I. J. S. Taraporewalla interprets Sraosha as the Pole Star of all spiritual endeavour, pointing steadfast and unerring to the final goal." (Vide Bode & Nanavutty in their 'Gathas', p. 37)

In Yasna 28.5, Zarathushtra longs to see Sraosha: "When, O Asha! shall I see thee and Vohu Mano, having known the dignity in respect of the most Beneficent Ahura, and obedience unto His Omniscience (Sraosha)?" or again in Yasna 45.5 the prophet exhorts mankind that "Ahura Mazda will give them Perfection (Haurvatat or Khordad) and Immortality (Ameretat or Amardad) if they will bring Sraosha's obedience unto Him." In still another Gathic passage (Yasna 43.12) we have Sraosha coming as a Judge to apportion the final reward and retribution to the contending parties.

Coming down from the Gathas to the later Avesta we find Sraosha rising to great prominence. The seventeenth day of the month and two Yashts, viz., Yasht 11 and the Greater Sraosha Yasht (in Ys. 57) are dedicated to this angel whom Zarathushtra describes as "the most majestic of all". **The gradual development of abstract ideas or significations into the names of Yazatas bearing distinct anthropomorphic traits is clearly perceptible in the case of the angels Sraosha and Ashi!** Sarosh is now the divine messenger, the Guide. His office may be likened to that of Archangel Gabriel in Christianity.

We are told that Sraosha "was the first in the entire creation to worship Ahura Mazda, the Amesha Spentas, and the two protectors. (Ys. 57-2,6). From his battles against the demons, he returns victorious to the celestial assembly of the Ameshaspands. (Ys. 57-12). He is the word incarnate, the valiant wielder of the club, which is levelled against all demoniacal

powers, esp. against the fiendish Druj (the 'Lie'). He is a formidable foe to the wicked. (Ys. 57-18 et seq.). Just as the shepherd dog guards and protects cattle against harm, so does Sraosha protect men; and the faithful therefore yearn with good thoughts, good words and good deeds to live under his constant guardianship. (Yasht 11.7)" — Dr. M. N. Dhalla in History of Zoroastrianism.

"For his splendour and beauty, for his power and victory, for his praying to the angels on our behalf, I will worship him (Sarosh) with an audible prayer and with the offering of Zaotbra or consecrated water." (Ys. 57.3 as translated by Dr. M. Haug). The master of rituals takes his name from Sraosha, and is called Sraosh-avarez.

Dr. Harlez traces the history of the angel Sarosh well back into the Indo-Iranian period, and observes (Vide his 'Introduction to the Avesta') that "Sraosha in Aryan times designated the observance of rites and ceremonies. This could be seen in Yasna 58 as in Rig Veda I.139.1 Harlez equates Sraosha astu of the Avesta with Sanskrit astu Sraoshat.

Coming further down to the Pahlavi period we observe the same exalted status of the angels as we have noted in the Avesta. Especially is the angel's function as protector and helper further amplified. Sarosh now bears close association with the night hours, for, "Three times every night he comes to the world." (Pahlavi Shayast-la-Shayast). He helps the man who in the midst of temptations practises virtue." (Dinkard). According to the Pahlavi text of Zatsparam it was Sarosh and Vohuman (Bahman) who brought a

sheep with udder full of milk to give nourishment to the prophet child Zarathushtra when it was "thrown into the lair of a wolf for destruction."

Sarosh in the Pahlavi period also rises to great prominence in the eschatology of the period. The angel figures prominently in the Pahlavi accounts regarding Individual judgment after death, the Universal Judgment at the time of the Final Consummation of the world and subsequent Renovation (Frashokereti): It is Sarosh who leads the soul upto the Chinvad Bridge and who subsequently, at the time of the Judgment of the soul, acts as a co-assessor with Yazads Mithra (Meher, witness and the upholder of compacts) and Rashna (the just) who all combine to make up a heavenly tribunal. Prior to the Judgment (which takes place on the dawn following the third night after death) prayers are offered to Sarosh for three days and nights. At the time of the final Consummation and Restoration (of all souls to eternal perfect happiness) it is Sarosh who, according to the Pahlavi Bahman Yasht, "assisted by Neryosang, will be sent by God to excite Sam (grandfather of Rustom Pahlavan) or Keresaspa who has been sleeping for centuries and has to put Azhi Dahak (Zohak) to death." And so we find Zarathushtra (as early as in the Gathas) invoking Sarosh "as the greatest of the heavenly beings to appear at the final consummation of the world." (Yasna 33.5).

Thus, Sarosh Yazad is to a Zoroastrian a constant and eternal guardian, protector and guide both in this world and the next; A Zoroastrian remembers and invokes Sarosh in his daily prayers as also in almost every religious rite or ceremony because of that.

KISSEH -I- SANJAN

by

H. E. EDULJEE

AN ABRIDGED TRANSLATION (2)

I begin in the name of the Lord — the Wise, the Merciful and the Just. Bahman humbly bows before You; inspire him with the Light of the Good Religion and free his mind from sorrow and forgive him for his transgressions.

ARRIVAL OF THE PARSIS IN INDIA FROM KHORASAN

Now hear this wonderful story as told by the Priests and in ancient writings. The tale is long to relate but I will tell it briefly, compressing a hundred words into one.

I heard this story from a wise Dastur; he was famous for his piety and was a master of the Zend Avesta. In King Gushtasp's days Zarathushtra brought the religion to us. In the Avesta he foretold that Iran would be crushed on three occasions. First would come Alexander who would burn our religious books and enslave us for three hundred years. Ardashir would revive the Good Religion when he came to the throne, but after the death of Arda Viraf darkness would again fall on the land and sin and crime would flourish. After some years Shapur would come to the throne and restore the religion; Aderbad Marespand would testify to its glory by undergoing the ordeal of molten alloy. This glory lasted from Shapur's reign to the time of Yezdigird and then, after a thousand years, Zarathushtra's religion came to an end: all mocked it and no longer feared God.

Foreigners occupied the throne of Iran, the country was made desolate and the people enslaved. Many became apostates, but some Priests and Behdins who believed in the Avesta left their homes and took to the mountains. They hid in the hills of Kohistan for one hundred years and suffered great hardship. Eventually a pious man advised the Zarathushtrians to go to Hormuz as they were being harassed by the Judins in Kohistan. They stayed for fifteen years in Hormuz but even here they had no peace. At last a wise Dastur, who was also an astrologer, read the stars and said: "The time has come for us to leave this place. If we remain here any longer we will suffer even more. We must go at once to India where perhaps we will prosper."

Tired of the continual harassment and anxious to preserve their religion, the Zarathushtrians put their women and children in the ships and set sail for India, which they reached at Diu and there they cast anchor.

The Parsis stayed in Diu for nineteen years till an astrologer said to them: "Our destiny lies elsewhere; we must leave Diu and sail to Gujerat." They therefore got

into their boats and again set sail. On the way, a mighty storm overtook them and put them in danger of their lives. In their distress all on board prayed to God that if He saved them from the storm and led them safely ashore, they would dedicate an Atash Behram to Him. Their prayers were heard, the storm abated and a gentle breeze brought them to the shore. The place where they landed was Sanjan.

THE SETTLEMENT IN SANJAN

The Raja of Sanjan was Jadi Rana, a wise and generous man with goodwill towards all. The Dastur, the leader of the Parsis, went to him with presents and asked for asylum: "Give us leave to settle here. We are poor and helpless. We fled from our home to save our lives and religion and have come here because we have heard of your generosity. We come to you for succour. We are told that you give sanctuary to the weak and homeless—now we are in your hands, O King; help us!"

The courtiers were very pleased to hear these words, but the King feared for his safety: would not these strange men create dissension and perhaps even usurp his throne? He addressed the Dastur:

"Before I can give you asylum, I must know something about your religion and your beliefs. What are your rituals—both open and secret? I will accept you only if you promise never to use your Iranian language here, but to learn our language. Your women must give up their Iranian clothes and your men must promise never to carry arms. Also, all your important ceremonies must be done in the evening. If you agree to these conditions, I will allow you to stay here and find peace."

The Dastur agreed to these terms and assured the King: "Do not mistrust us.

We shall always be friendly towards India and loyal to it, and we will be a terror to its enemies. We worship God and because we wished to save our faith from unbelievers we left our country. We gave up all our possessions and suffered great hardship to come here. Although descendents of Jamshid, we are poor. We adore the sun and the moon; we swear by fire and water; we look up to the cow. All these are God's creations; He is Holy and we adore Him. Our sacred thread has 72 strands, and we wear it for peace. Our women do not look up to the sun, the moon or the sky when they are unclean; neither do they look upon fire or water for these are part of the divine creation. They sit apart until they become clean again, when they have a bath; then only are they allowed to look at the fire again. When a child is born, the mother is also regarded as unclean and she has to isolate herself for 40 days lest her impurity contaminates other things. If the child is still-born or there is an abortion, the mother must isolate herself for 41 days.

The Dastur thus explained all the Parsi rites and customs and each pearl in their Rosary-of-Faith was displayed and elucidated. When the King heard all this, he was pleased and he asked the Parsis to settle in his land and contribute to its glory.

The wise and gentle Priests of the Parsis looked around and selected a piece of fertile land in the forest. There they built a town and the once empty forest hummed with activity. The Dastur blessed the town and called it Sanjan.

After the Parsis had built their town and settled down in comfort, they went to the Raja and pleaded: "You have graciously given us asylum; we now ask another favour of you. Permit us to build an Atash Behram and give us land for this purpose. The land must be three parsangs square and must be reserved only for Par-

sis. If any Judin enters the area, the Fire will lose its sanctity."

Jadi Rana immediately acceded to the request, proud that an Atash Behram should be installed in his Kingdom. He allotted the land to the Parsis and cleared all Judins out of the area. The Dasturs gathered the people on the land and, dedicating their labours to God, all worked hard to build the Temple. Even the Raja sent them material for the buildings. Dasturs and Behdins from other parts came to help them; many were expert with their tools, and the work proceeded apace. The ritual instruments had come from Khorasan and with these and with proper ceremonies the Sacred Fire was lit and enthroned. A great feast was organised to celebrate the event.

Three hundred years, more or less, passed in peace. The people did their religious duties and lived wisely and harmoniously. The Parsis then began to disperse throughout India, as it suited them; some settled in Vankaner, some in Broach; others went to Bariav, Anklesar or Cambay; many went to Navsari. Wherever they settled the Parsis prospered and were happy. In this way another two centuries passed by.

At this time Sanjan was denuded of its Dasturs; what calamity caused this, or what became of the Dasturs, I do not know. Only one Dastur remained; his name was Khushmat. He was learned, wise and charitable. He had a son named Khujasta who spent his time in performing the Baj, Barisam and Ijashne ceremonies. This saintly person has left his good name on earth — may he find happiness in Paradise!

SULTAN MAHMUD ATTACKS SANJAN

Seven hundred years thus passed and the

Parsis multiplied. But now Fate turned against them and Time decided to shorten their lives. Islam had reached Champa-nir after five hundred years in India. At that time Sultan Mahmud, the Shadow-of-God, sat on the throne; he was told that there was a Hindu Raja in Sanjan, so he called one of his Vaziers, Alf Khan, and said to him: "Take an army and conquer Sanjan; we must add it to our Kingdom." Alf Khan gathered his army and, with eagle-standards in the van, advanced on Sanjan like a black cloud. When the Raja heard that thirty thousand horsemen were bearing down on him, he swooned in terror. After he recovered, he called the Mobeds and Behdins and appealed to them: "What shall we do to avert this calamity? Our ancestors once did you a favour — now repay the debt by fighting for us. Take up arms, gird your loins and go into battle."

The oldest Mobed reassured the Raja: "Be not afraid. It is our tradition to fight to the last man, even though mill-stones break over our heads, and we shall kill thousands of our enemies." The Raja was pleased and bestowed a robe of honour on the old Mobed. Fourteen hundred Parsis answered the call to arms; they saddled their horses and put on their armour and with drums beating they marched out with the Raja's army as dawn broke and the light of the stars went out.

Alf Khan's great army now appeared on the scene. The cavalry was in armour, the elephants with spikes, carried the standards. The field was crowded as the commanders deployed their armies; the bugles played, the drums beat and the forces of the Muslim Sultan and the Hindu Raja faced each other. The martial scene amazed even the elements. The two leaders fought like tigers; the sky was covered, as by a cloud, with arrows and spears; horses galloped hither and thither till they were tired. The dead

lay in heaps and the dying got no succour — so was Fate's grim decree.

Suddenly the battle turned against the Hindus and they all fled, leaving their Parsi comrades unprotected. At this a Behdin, Ardeshir, a man of fame and valour, spoke out: "Our Hindu allies have fled but, Parsis, let us not be down-hearted. This is where we prove our mettle. Let us attack the enemy and, with sword and arrow, kill as many as we can." So saying, Ardeshir charged at the Muslim rank; armed with sword and spear he carried the fight to the enemy. The rain of arrows was so thick that the armour of the soldiers were pierced like sieves. The cloud of dust covered the face of the sun so that one could not say whether it was day or night. Men fell and covered the ground so that it looked as though a black carpet was spread over the earth through which the arrows gleamed like diamonds. Few escaped death from mace or spear, blood streamed out of the wounds and flooded the plain, but the fight went on. For three days the warriors fought and at last Alf Khan admitted defeat and drew back, leaving immense booty in the hands of the Parsis. The dust settled and the sun shone upon the stricken field.

ALF KHAN'S SECOND ATTACK; THE FALL OF SANJAN

Though defeated in the first attack, the Muslims had not given up the fight. The next day, deafened by the martial music of the Hindus, the two armies again met. Ardeshir went to the Raja and promised him: "Sir, though the enemy be a hundred times more numerous, we shall put our faith in God and kill them." The soldiers put on their armour and all set out to meet the enemy.

Ardeshir armed himself with sword and spear and also tied a lasso to his saddle.

He rushed on to the field like a lion and roared out a challenge: "You who were once defeated! — Who is your leader? What does he want here?" A Muslim knight took up the challenge and, riding a swift horse, charged at Ardeshir with his lance. Ardeshir warned him to desist but the Muslim came on and the two warriors were locked in combat. The fight was grim but Ardeshir managed to unhorse his adversary by throwing his lasso around him and dragging him down, and then cut off his head.

The defeat of the Muslim champion enraged Alf Khan: "Kill all the Parsis, not one must escape; nor the Raja." Reinforcements were rushed to the field and infantry and cavalry advanced to give battle. The din of clashing swords rose above the land, waves of blood flowed over the field like a river till even an ant could not find safety from it. Ardeshir was in the thick of the battle and fought like a hero, but his days were numbered. An arrow pierced his side, blood poured out of the wound; weakened, he fell from his horse and died. When tragedy beckons, even marble becomes soft as wax. Ardeshir and the Hindus fought well, thousands were killed on both sides, but at last the Hindus were defeated; the Raja was killed, a loud wailing went up from his men and his lands lay open to the victor.

INSTALLATION OF THE ATASH BEHRAM AT NAVSARI

The fall of Sanjan rendered the Parsis homeless — for who can fight against God's decree? They took the Holy Fire and fled to the mountain of Bahrut and for twelve hard years they wandered. At last, by God's will, the Parsis with their families and the Fire made for the town of Bansda.

When the good people of Bansda heard that the Fire was coming to their town, they were overjoyed. Three hundred horsemen went out to meet the refugees and escorted them with every mark of respect. To the wanderers it was like giving healing medicine to the sick. Bansda now enjoyed eternal-spring, the people became prosperous and Parsis from far-off places came to worship the Fire; it was again like Sanjan in the days of its greatness. And so fourteen happy years passed.

There was at that time a Behdin called Changa, son of Asa. For piety and love towards the Good Religion he had no equal. He worked hard to keep the Faith pure; out of his own pocket he helped many to put on the sudreh and kusti. No man who was in need appealed to him in vain; he relieved many of their taxes and levies and by his influence raised many to high positions. No words of mine can suffice to sing his praise!

One year, at the time of the Jashan-i-Sadeh, in mah Adar roz Adar, he went to Bansda with several Behdins and Dasturs and they adored the Fire and found solace in its presence. Some months later Changa Asa called a meeting of the Anjuman and addressed them thus: "Brothers, it is my desire to bring the Atash Behram to this place. We have to endure great hardship to go to Bansda, specially during the rains. If we have the Fire here, we can worship it every day and so gain greater merit. I suggest that a group of worthy men should go to Bansda and bring the glorious Iranshah and install it here. This will bring prosperity to us." All were pleased at this suggestion, as it would save them the trouble of going to Bansda.

The Fire was brought to Navsari with great pomp and ceremony and installed with honour in a fine Temple. Three

Priests had accompanied it on its arduous journey. One was called Nagan Ram, a man of pious deeds; the second was Khurshed, son of Qiyammudin; and the third was Chayan, son of Sahyer. They and their families were appointed to the service of the Iranshah and they celebrated all the proper rituals. In this way the Fire reached Navsari. May Changa Shah receive my homage! May he rest high in Heaven!

CONCLUSION

To Him Who created this world I give unlimited thanks for giving me the tongue to tell this story. A Dastur related this tale to me—may he be blessed in both worlds. My name is Bahman, a humble resident of Navsari. Kaikobad is my father's name—he only sought delight in worshipping Iranshah. His father's name was Dastur Hormuzdyar—may he rest in Paradise! — who was called Sanjana. Because of his knowledge and wisdom in religious matters he was called Sanjana. He was also called the High Priest of the Religion and he showed everyone the road to piety. He had settled in Navsari about two hundred years ago. A hundred thousand blessings on him and all the other pillars of our Faith.

It was God's Will that I should write this story. When some devout man in future reads this tale he will bless me, and my blessings too will reach down to him. I wrote this history in the year nine hundred and sixty-nine of the Yezdigird era and completed it on roz Khordad mah Farvardin. I now beseech God's Mercy and the indulgence and blessings of the reader. I have told this story according to what I heard from the Elders, and polished it and showed it to my Teacher who added to it many a rose from his garden — may God grant him long life and prosperity!



MADAME BHIKHAJEE CAMA

BORN : 24th SEPTEMBER 1861

DIED : 13th AUGUST 1936

The Patriot whom India had forgotten

By

Dr. Minocher K. Contractor

President — Surat Parsi Pragati Mandal,

Founded in 1945 for political awakening
and social services.

Life Sketch :

A hundred years ago on 24th September 1861 a daughter was born to Sorabji Faramji Patel a prominent businessman of Bombay and Bai Jaijee and was named Bhikhaijee lovingly called Bhikhu. She took her education at Alexandra Parsi Girls School in Bombay and from the beginning was interested in social and political work and she spoke several languages fluently. She came in contact with Dada-bhai Naoroji and other leaders of the time and although young her work and views were much appreciated and respec-

ted. At an advanced age she was married to Shri K. R. Cama, a leading solicitor of Bombay. Her married life was far from happy and soon broke up.

At the age of 40, because of failing health she went to England. After some months of treatment she went to Paris and finally settled down there. There she came in contact with Indian Revolutionaries like Vir Savarkar, Virendra Chattopadhyaya, Mukund Desai, M. P. Acharya, Hardayal and others. Along with them she started carrying on propaganda for India's liberation from the British Rule, and they

all rallied round this frail patriot and her freedom flag.

She started the **"Vande-Mataram"** English weekly from Geneva in 1905 and ran it for ten years, advocating the cause of India's Independence.

It soon spread her revolutionary fame in Europe and the Continental socialists and revolutionaries began a pilgrimage to her small boarding-house in Paris. All were impressed by the tireless energy of this fragile woman; all were inspired by her fearless and selfless devotion to the cause of freedom for all subject nations.

In 1906 she went on a propaganda tour for India's cause in America.

In 1907 on 18th August, she attended the World Socialist Congress at Stuttgart (Germany) where over a thousand delegates from various countries of the world had come and **Madame Cama moved a Resolution demanding complete Independence for India. And it was here for the first time India's National Flag was unfurled by her with the following historic words :**

"This flag is of Indian Independence—behold it is born—it is already sanctioned by the blood of martyred Indian youths. I call upon you gentlemen to rise and salute this flag of Indian Independence." The entire audience rose, bowed and greeted it, "Long live India".

This flag was smuggled into India along with other records of the Revolutionary patriots by the well known Gujarat Socialist leader Shri Indulal Yajnik and kept in a hiding place in Bombay. He was in Yeravada Jail, Poona, in 1936. He took the opportunity to invite Shri G. V. Ketkar, grandson of Lokmanya Tilak and former editor of "Kesari" and "Tarun Bharat" and gave him a small piece of

paper. With this piece of paper Shri Ketkar could secure the whole bundle of papers and the records of the revolutionary patriots. This bundle contained Madame Cama's original flag. **On 18th August 1937, Vir Savarkar unveiled the flag which was neatly put in an ornamental frame and it was taken out in a procession at Poona.** Today this framed flag is hung prominently in the library Hall of the Kesari and Mahratta office in Poona and is shown to every distinguished visitor.

All Indians with patriotic fervour should feel thankful to Shri G. V. Ketkar of Deccan College, Poona, for focussing their attention on the life work of a neglected patriot.

Madame Cama has declared in one of her leaflets :

"I have come prepared for everything. I have but one life to give, one 'avatar' to sacrifice. Successful rebellion against foreign rule is patriotism. What is life without freedom? What is existence, without principle? A handful of foreigners, a few Englishmen have declared war on us. Who can wonder, if we millions accept the challenge and declare war on them? The price of liberty must be paid. We are all for India for Indians."

In 1909 Madame Cama left London for Paris where she associated as before with S. R. Rana, J. C. Shroff, Shyamji Krishna Varma and other extreme nationalists. She interested herself chiefly in the business of preparing and forwarding to India seditious literature and in assisting the revolutionary propaganda with her advice and with her money. She was at this time one of the recognised leaders of the revolutionary movement in Paris and was regarded as an incarnation of some deity, presumably Kali.

During the first world war, she appealed to Indians not to help the allies, this led to her internment and was released when the war was over.

Between the two wars, she had to live in exile and in spite of failing health she was not allowed to return to India, since it was her desire to end her last days in her dear motherland. Both the French and the British Governments refused permission because of her radical views and revolutionary activities.

At last in 1935 she was allowed to return to India when her health was completely broken and Britain had nothing to fear from her as she was now at death's door. This permission was only granted on one condition that she should not take any part in Revolutionary activities. By now she had grown old, sick, infirm and was completely exhausted and one and only one desire remained, to return to her beloved '**Vande Mataram**' — just as it was the dying wish, which even today has not been fulfilled of another great patriot that free India has utterly forgotten, Emperor Bahadurshah Zaffar, the last of the Great Moguls and the leader of the first War of Independence, the Great Rebellion of 1857. What love and what great sorrow must have possessed him, when he wrote the following fear-raising couplet:

"Oh! Miserable Zaffar! how unfortunate you are!

That you cannot get two yards of ground for your burial in your own land!"

Same must have been the burning passion, that finally forced Madame Cama to sign and thus return to her motherland to die. And after returning to her beloved country, on 13th August 1936 she died at Parsi General Hospital at Bombay, unwept, unheard, unsung.

"To-day, neither a bronze statue, nor a marble bust, nor even a clay image immortalises her name, not even a single tablet has been raised to enshrine her memory, not a single biography of her has been written. Historians of our freedom struggle have utterly neglected her. Our people, our leaders and our government had completely forgotten her. She bravely fought for our freedom, faced exile, courted imprisonment, roamed through the length and breadth of Europe, canvassing support for our freedom struggle. **She defied the might of the British Empire. And above all gave India her first National Flag, the first 'Tricolour' that inspired for years to come, countless of our freedom fighters under one banner for one cause, the cause of unity and freedom of India.**"

She has also given us the following messages.

"India must be free."

India must be a Republic.

India must be United.

India must have a common language, Hindi.

India must have a common script."

Today our country is on the verge of disintegration due to the formation of linguistic States and regional language fanaticism, our government, our leaders, Political parties and the people have not found any solution: but when they will have realised the wisdom and the truth of her message, we shall have made her the symbol of our national unity.

"I well remember Madame Cama whom I met in Paris in the twenties. There can be no doubt that she was a brave fighter for Indian freedom and we should remember her."

— JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

"I am fully aware of the brave and tenacious part Madame Cama played when

patriotism was sedition and not a paying concern. I have written to Dr. P. Subb-
 rayan to consider the issue of a stamp."

—C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

The All-India Women's Conference urged the Government of India to take suitable steps to commemorate her memory and to issue a stamp on her birth centenary on September 24, 1961."

1. All India celebrations were held at Delhi, where Smt. Indira Gandhi had presided, at Bombay, Poona, Ahmedabad, Surat and all other great cities.
2. Commemorative stamp was issued by the Government of India on Republic Day.
3. Maharashtra Sachivalaya Road Bombay, was named after her as Madame Bhikhaijee Cama Road.

I appeal to our people, our leaders and our Government to do something so that her memory be kept green permanently in a most worthy and fitting manner, viz :

- (1) A portrait of Madame Cama proudly holding our first 'Tricolour', be placed in our Lok Sabha Hall at New Delhi. Smt. Coomi Dallas has consented to paint one for Surat Parsi Pragati Mandal, Nanpura, Surat.

- (2) A statue of Madame Cama, proudly holding our first 'Tricolour', be placed at a prominent place in New Delhi.

- (3) A prominent Road be named after her in New Delhi, the nation's capital, just as Maharashtra Sachivalaya Road has been named Madame Bhikhaijee Cama Road in Bombay, her home town, on Republic Day of 1962.

- (4) Henceforth every 24th September, Madame Cama's Birth Anniversary Day, should be observed as the "Flag Day" every year, instead of 7th December, as it is observed at present. This way two great causes will be served; the cause of our brave soldiers, the defenders of our motherland and we will also keep fresh for years and years to come the memory of this great lady patriot who also gave us our first flag of freedom.

- (5) Madame Cama's life sketch should be included in all our history books taught in our schools and colleges.

- (6) The house in which she lived in Bombay be kept as a national memorial, fluttering day in and day out the first national "Tricolour" as is done in America, in **Philadelphia at the house of Betsy Rose who gave America her first "Stars and Stripes."**



WONDER AND STAY SPELL—BOUND

—BANIPROSONNO

One Mr. Baniprosonno of Torrentium Villa, Simla 2 held early in 1971 an Exhibition of his paintings in Jehangir Art Gallery (Bombay). That exhibition was definitely superior in its concept than in its execution and technique of Art. It was aimed at connecting life's experience with the unfathomable internal intricate patterns into which Cosmos weaves its ephemeral forms. In June 1971 issue of Parsiana, the Editor clearly stated that the much witnessed thing called science does not exist anywhere in any form. Outwardly it must look like an assault on man's common sense but the philosophy of the form and content of Cosmos negates any existence to any objective reality because everything is nothing except fleeting energy in VIBES (Vibrations). It empties the same space into which it stays and stays in the same space it empties. Zoroastrianism has caught both sides of the VIBES — their make and break. Vibrations make our prayers work as Mathra-vani (ethical principles) and put us in tune with the infinite wherein Cosmos (ASHA, Divine orderliness) operates. Thus we have the best of both the worlds which Baniprosonno visualised on psychic level and attempted to transfer it on sensory level of human vision. That is art as it actually is. Now read his version :

The 'movement-lump,' cosmos is infinite and it is indivisible. The void, the inter-molecular and interatomic 'empty gaps' which 'are responsible' for the different stages of matter are all filled. The hypothesised 'cosmic corpuscles' maintain a zero inter corpuscular distance. We may hypothesise minute fractions of the cosmos-atoms-subatomic elementary par-

ticles, only to comprehend the construction and reconstruction of myriad of forms — from a galactic cloud to ultra micro forms and beyond. There is no limit of this hypothetical divisibility of a fraction of cosmos. Here a morphological search — a search for the everchanging forms — from a mountain to a short lived elementary particle — is the great search. Quantisation of the cosmic lump helps such a search. In this we see bricks of the ever changing buildings and bricks that make the bricks. Cosmic phenomena — perceptible or imperceptible to human or scientific instrumental senses — are extremely complex forms — forms inside forms made of cosmic clay. What is cosmic clay, is not the question, not the search. The search is for the forms made of it. A blade of grass is a combination of innumerable forms; so is a galaxy in its embryonic stage. Genes, the vital components of cells are forms; so are the rays of light with their internal intricate patterns. Thought, love, hatred, joy, pain, memory all are forms in the super complex body-mind form. Space and time are mats woven with strings of matter.

This illusion, this realisation, the awareness of these forms, the utter ignorance about them stimulate me in my constant search for new forms in the formless cosmos.

"Alles was wir machen ist falsch"
(Everything we make is false)

—EINSTEIN

"The highest to which man can attain is wonder, let him be content;"

—GOETHE

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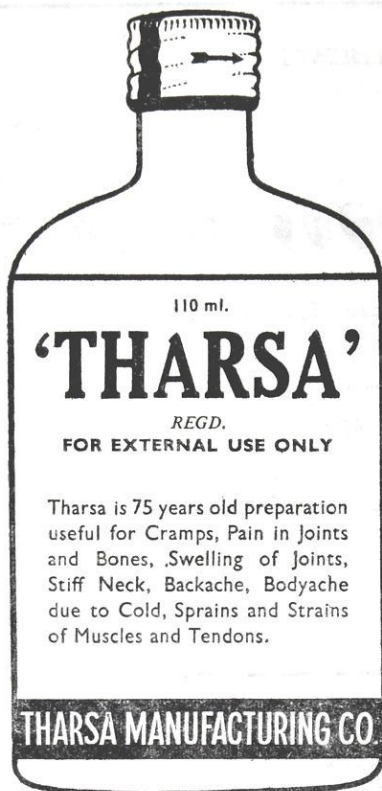
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