

January 1975

Parsiānā

Price Rs. 3





A winning partnership

In a combination of
Monthly Income Certificates and
Recurring Deposit Accounts,
you earn fabulous interest
of over **17% p.a.**



Bank of India



Parsiana

December - January 1975

CONTENTS

	<i>Page No.</i>
EDITOR'S COLUMN	2
READER'S FORUM	11
A TALE OF TWO JIMMYS	16
AN AREA OF DARKNESS by Pervin Mahoney and Thrity Keeka	25
WOULD YOU MARRY OUT OF THE COMMUNITY? by Feroza Paymaster	30
FIRE AND ICE by Geeta Doctor	34
"MARGINAL MEN"	36
IN MEMORIAM	38

Parsiana Cover of Parsi widow by Manjula Padma-
nabhan



**OVER 1700
Finest Hotels,
Restaurants
and Shops
spread all over India
display this sign**



**ENJOY
PRESTIGE
SAFETY
CONVENIENCE
BECOME A MEMBER**



**Dady House,
50 Vir Nariman Road,
BOMBAY-400 023

Tel : 291249

Cable : DINCLUB**

editor's column

In my final term in college, just before the exam which would terminate four years of sleep and study, I had a great urge to hop on a freight train and live the life of a tramp. But then that little voice inside, which had been thoroughly indoctrinated by society, argued: "Just a month more, you'll be free in a few weeks."

Needless to say I stayed on and received the slip of paper which stated I had spent four years in such-and-such institution without disgracing myself academically, morally or socially. I worked here and there and went about learning my trade always looking forward to that day when the decision not to drop out would pay rich dividends. Seven years later, the decision still weighs heavy and one wonders if only fools are free.

When we took over *Parsiana*, we thought it would be a roaring success. We envisioned such a great demand for the magazine that copies would be sold in the black. In my mind I even argued the ethics of accepting illegal tender, noting that while the government said it was wrong, one had to be practical. We finally decided that if any "on" money was offered we would pause for an appropriate length of time to indicate a mental conflict and then accept the amount before the other party changed its mind. But the copies we thought would sell like hotcakes, accumulated in our office and served as supports for chairs and tables that had legs broken or missing.

What kept us going (in the wrong direction), however, was the thrill of having started a new venture (I couldn't eat for half a day). We busied ourselves on the second issue, which we *knew* was going to be the big money-spinner. Needless to say, like the first it turned out to be a money-spiller. Gradually it began to dawn on us that every Parsi did not consider *Parsiana* to be Ahura Mazda's gift to the community. Here we were, offering people everything they always wanted to know about the Parsi community but somehow we were not winning friends and influencing people.

Issue three came out and everybody said we were concentrating too much on the *dokhmas* and why didn't we write about the religion. Issue four had the cover story on the religion and sales dropped to an all time low. In issue five we thought we'd focus on the Parsi Panchayat and put Ms Nelie Noble and B. K. Boman-Behram on the cover, but neither of them subscribed. People called us a sensationalistic rag.

After that each subsequent issue became an irksome duty. The arrival of the copies from the press were not greeted with our characteristic exuberance. Even the icing on the cakes we would buy to celebrate such occasions seemed stale. Subscriptions and advertisements which we thought would be flowing in, continued merely to trickle. We grew philosophical and started wondering whether there was more to life than *Parsiana*. Was it a mistake? Should we have gone in for pornography instead? What purpose were we serving and who were we pleasing besides the paper manufacturers, block-makers, and printers?

Short-staffed, and increasingly short-tempered, one went from pillar to Parsi attempting to bring out the magazine on time (we called it Project Time magazine and later changed it to Project Newsplate). We had as much luck as Ms Gandhi had *hataoing garibi*. When one staffer asked what we would do when the money ran out, I suggested phoning the State Bank but was told they no longer gave loans over the phone.

From *dhansak* our diet changed to *dosas*. Staffers started getting restless about being paid in subscriptions instead of cash. Only after hitting two of them and breaking the arm of a third did they agree to continue to work out of devotion.

And so another installment of the Impossible Dream rolls off the presses into your homes. Let its arrival symbolize the victory of mind over matter and inspire you, dear readers, to support this anaemic cause. *Parsiana* is your baby, so nurse it. Get your friends and relatives (if you're on speaking terms) to subscribe and advertise. Estates, priceless anti-

ques, jewellery, Picassos and the like will be appreciated. All wills must be made out in *Parsiana's* name, preferably as the sole heirs.

In a more serious vein (unless you were not amused) the Delhi Parsi Anjuman has broken the the institutional conspiracy of non-support (we've become paranoid) by sending us a generous cheque of Rs. 500. We can now count the number of donations received over the past two years on the fingers of both hands (on which we make all our calculations anyway, accounting being our weak point.)

But honestly if you want us to continue to serve as well as expand our services, you've got to help out. The community being so limited in size, circulation is low and advertisers shy away. So unless we are heavily subsidized, we'll have to go back to cyclostyling.

* * *

A decision by six newly elected jurors of the Parsi Matrimonial Court to form a Delegates Asso-

ciation is a well intentioned but ill considered proposal. In a circular, they requested other delegates to attend a memorial service for Delegates Goolcher J. Patel and Khan Bahadur Burjor Dhalla who expired earlier this year and "to come to a tea meeting... to enable all the delegates—and wives—to meet each other and form a Delegate Association and decide upon persons to serve on a Committee of the Association."

Jurors have to be by definition independent-minded individuals who arrive at a decision solely on the basis of evidence presented. If they are well-acquainted with each other, extraneous matters may influence their decisions to the detriment of the judicial system. The Parsi Matrimonial Court is the only one in India where the jury system still persists (see *Parsiana* August 1973). The jurors are referred to as delegates and instead of being selected are elected to office. Since the community believes in total democracy, only the 189 members of the "E"

Register can elect the delegates on behalf of the 70,000 Bombay Parsis. There are 30 delegates in all of which a minimum of five are needed to comprise the jury. While legal minds continue to weigh the pros and cons of continuing with the delegate system, the delegates have dealt the institution a severe blow by advocating the formation of an association.

And now a word of praise for the Rahnumae Mazdayasnan Sabha and its two active secretaries, Sheroo Jal Vakil and Parvez Katrak. The Sabha, which is one of the oldest surviving associations in the community, has arranged in addition to its weekly Wednesday lectures, several question-and-answer sessions, a musical *Kirtan* on Zarathushtra and a well organized annual elocution competition.

Under the leadership of Erach Nadirshah, Adi Chinoy, Dasturs Framroz Bode and N. Minocherhomji and members of the managing committee, the Sabha is one institution which is striving to bridge the cultural, social and



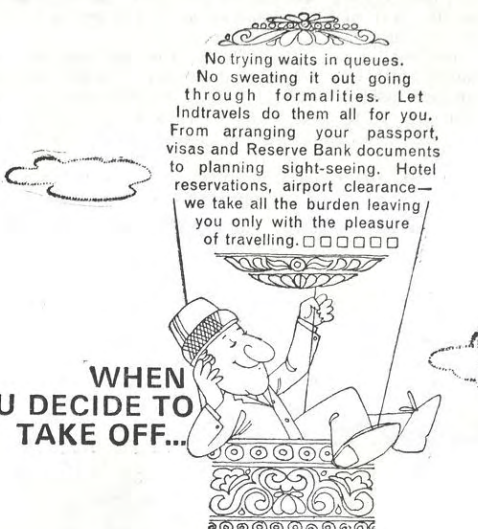
Have you ever walked on the beach
alone
with nothing on
and with nothing on
your mind
except him,
thinking of him,
craving for him,
to the symphony of rustling palms,
with the sunset
in your hair,
the cool breeze touching
your face,
the evening sun shimmering
in your eyes, and
the spray of surf caressing
your body?

It's a great feeling.

Shirtings by Navari.
The great feeling.



Navari Cotton and Silk Mills Limited



No trying waits in queues.
No sweating it out going
through formalities. Let
Indtravels do them all for you.
From arranging your passport,
visas and Reserve Bank documents
to planning sight-seeing. Hotel
reservations, airport clearance—
we take all the burden leaving
you only with the pleasure
of travelling. □□□□□□

WHEN
YOU DECIDE TO
TAKE OFF...

WE
TAKE OVER

A **INDTRAVELS**

YOUR FRIEND, TRAVEL AGENT AND GUIDE

NEVILLE HOUSE, BALLARD ESTATE, BOMBAY 400 001

BRANCHES: NEW DELHI • BANGALORE • HYDERABAD • KANPUR

Grant-14-74

generation gap that divides the community today. By gearing its programs to the demands of modern day audiences and limiting to a minimum the introductory and concluding speeches that mar most such functions, the Sabha may once again become a force in the community.

For those interested in acquiring books on the religion, the Calcutta Parsi Zoroastrian Association (1, Saklat Place, Calcutta 700 013) has several books written by J. M. Chatterjee: *Atharvan Zarathushtra —The Foremost Prophet*, (250 pages, price Rs. 12); *Message of the Gathas, as reflected in the Masnavi of Moulana Jalal-ud-din Rumi*, (204 pages, price Rs. 12); *The Gospel of Zarathushtra, in the Words of Moulana Jalal-ud-din Rumi*, (216 pages, price Rs. 20). The above books are also available from Mahyar Patel at The Iranian Zoroastrian Anjuman, Kermani Building, 2nd floor, Sir P. Mehta Road, Fort, Bombay 400 001; tel: 250401.

And for children the Calcutta Anjuman has a small booklet called *Fravarane* (I Believe) by Pilo

Nanavutti which is available for 50p a copy.

The death of Sheheryar Kaoosji in Hyderabad on December 25th and the subsequent refusal of the priests to perform his last rites because he chose to be buried instead of being placed in the Tower of Silence, is a tragic and sorry chapter in the history of the twin cities. The Anjuman was aware that at a poll taken in December 1973, 69 per cent of the respondents were in favour of the priests performing ceremonies for those who opted for cremation. Instead of taking any action, the Anjuman decided to close the subject "once and for all".

In a letter he wrote to *Parsiana* on May 20th 1974, Kaoosji stated: "I am a Zoroastrian both by birth and by conviction and am proud of it. I do not claim any scholarship but have always been a humble student of history and religion. My contacts with members of other communities is ample and I have spoken at many meetings giving the audience a gist of the teachings of our Lord Zarathushtra wherein I have carefully differ-

entiated the essence of the *Deen* as a way of life from *Aieen* or the customs usually followed by the members of a community. *Deen* is immutable but the *Aieens* change from time to time. To me the Gathas of our Lord Zarathushtra is the *Deen* and in spite of their being old and hoary, their teachings still hold good and will continue to do so."

When such men, who have served the community and their fellow men with sincerity and dedication are denied their last rites purely because they prefer one system over another for the disposal of their bodies, it is nothing short of spiritual tyranny.

A Neville Chinoy Memorial Fund has been started by the Time and Talents Club to honour the 19 year old pianist who died in a plane crash on September 9th en route to America (*Parsiana* September issue). The TTC President, Ms Gool Shavaksha, notes, Rs. 17,000 has already been collected. "Many people have given Rs. 10 and Rs. 11 also," she said. Donations are tax exempt and may be sent to the Time and Talents

Match your AMBITION to a CAREER

To do so we offer you:

- Diploma Course in Business Management
- Banking: C.A.I.I.B. Course (Postal & Oral)
- Commerce: G.C.D. Course • Executive Secretarial Course
- Private Secretarial Course • Telephone Operating
- Telephone Operating-cum Receptionist Techniques
- Shorthand & Typewriting • Punch Operating



Enquire at:

Sir J. J. College of Commerce

14, Nanabhoy Lane, Flora Fountain,
BOMBAY 400 001. Tel : 251185

Club, Victory Stall, Old Yacht Club Garden, C. Shivaji Marg, Apollo Bunder, Bombay 400 001.

A press release informs us that Ms Anahita Kersy Satarawalla of Maulana Azad Medical College in New Delhi, has won the University Gold Medal for standing First in Gynaecology and Obstetrics in the M.B.B.S. exam. She secured first class marks in all other subjects, and stood second in Delhi University. She is the first Parsi to win this award in her subjects at the University. Her father, Kersy T. Satarawalla, IAS, was the Secretary, Ministry of Steel and Mines, Government of India and at present is Advisor to the Governor of Gujarat.

In other academic news, our Associate Editor Feroza Paymaster returned to her old school, Queen Mary's, to attend its centenary celebrations:

*Your hair may grow white and
your step lose its spring
Your girlhood be left far behind,
But through all the mists that the
long years may bring
One longing will e'er fill your
mind....*

"I approached the school after

a lapse of almost five years and though my step has not lost its spring, nor my hair grown white, I could not help but feel ancient," said Feroza. While she didn't win a gold medal ("the examiner *mara par khar karyo*"), she got on very well with her principal of earlier years, Ms B. R. Shelton, who had flown in from London especially for the centenary week. "I always had an affinity for you," she told Feroza, "because we are both tall."

In Zoroastrians Abroad news, Dr. Keki Bharucha, a fifteen-year resident of Toronto, dropped by our office while on a visit to the homeland. There are about 800 Parsis in that Canadian metropolis which is the fastest growing city in North America, notes Bharucha. About three years ago they formed the Zoroastrian Association of Ontario. "Before that there was a loose body called the Zoroastrian Fraternity whose main aim was to provide information for immigrants," said Bharucha. Most of the Parsi settlers are from Bombay the next largest numbers being from Africa and Pakistan. "Right now with the tightening of the laws, immigration has come down

to a trickle," he notes. "Canada is not a paradise for everybody. Some people find the right slot while others have to move around for some time. It takes time to adjust."

Bharucha feels many of the people who migrate to Canada are the "cream of the crop. I don't know if their children will be brought up as Parsis. They may be lost to the community." The decision to migrate is not always an easy one. "You trade off the pros against the cons," he says. For professional people, for example, "you cannot find the work here (in India) which you find abroad." Bharucha himself holds a doctorate degree and does research in medical chemistry for the Canada Packers Company. Most of the Canadian Zoroastrians are professionals and a few are in business.

Earlier this year the New South Wales Australian Zoroastrian Association put an advertisement in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* and *Kaiser-E-Hind* stating "Fellow Zoroastrians intending to visit or immigrate to New South Wales (Sydney) Australia, will be provided with all

The Bank that gets things done

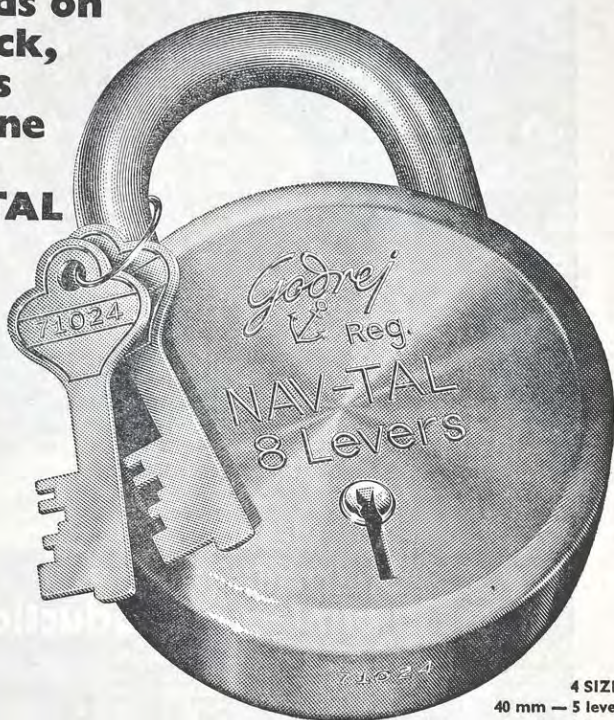
AMERICAN EXPRESS

American Express
International Banking Corporation
Bombay □ New Delhi □ Calcutta

OBM 2374

**when safety
depends on
one lock,
there's
only one
lock—
NAV-TAL**

USA-50114



Used by banks, warehouses, factories and households—because it is dependable. Precision-made, with keys cut in a different combination for each lock, the Nav-Tal is designed for unpickability

and maximum security. Double casing of brass and steel makes it uniquely strong. Manufactured by Godrej—the people who have made security equipment for over 70 years.

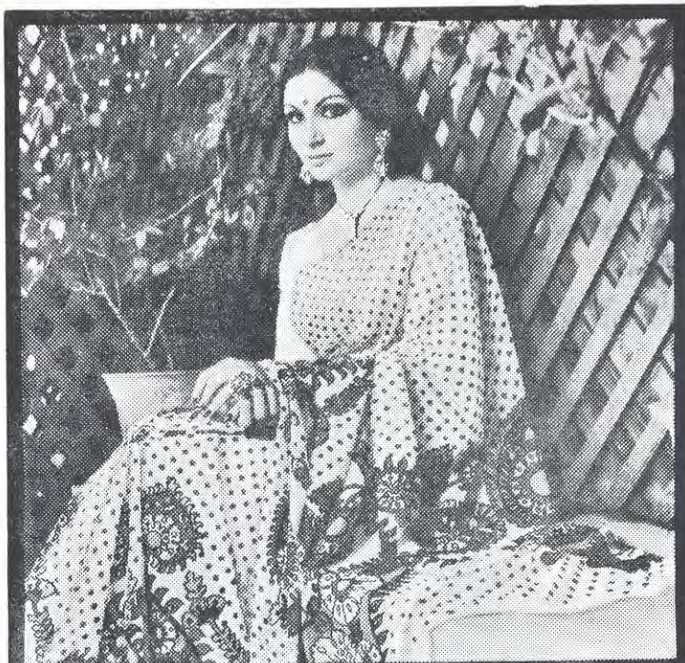
4 SIZES

40 mm — 5 levers
50 mm — 6 levers
65 mm — 7 levers
85 mm — 8 levers

NAV-TAL



Always ask for the Anchor Brand.



Sharmila Tagore stars in our latest production

The new Bombay Dyeing sari collection. A star-struck range in pure cotton and pure polyester. 'Ashiana', 'Chiffala' — crisp high twist voiles. 'Relika' and 2 x 2 Swiss voiles — so fresh and cool. Dreamy 100% polyester — delightfully feminine. Saris as breath-takingly beautiful as Sharmila herself.

**100% POLYESTER SARIS BY
BOMBAY DYEING**



HT-BD 8695

necessary information regarding prevailing conditions, housing, employment etc., with the object of smoothing over the transition period."

They were so "overwhelmed by the inquiries, requests and demands for help" that they had to write back and state "The Association cannot sponsor or give any assistance to prospective immigrants and visitors in obtaining visas, resident permits, job vouchers or job contracts. The Association will provide information about prevailing conditions in Australia. The Association regrets the misinterpretation of its offer to provide some comfort to Zoroastrian immigrants arriving in Sydney." The letter was signed by E. Giambuzi the Association's Secretary. Sarosh Khajotia also got an overwhelming response when he placed an advertisement in one of the local papers offering to give a ride in his car to England to anyone who was willing to share the costs.

Ms Goolbanu Sukhia, whose daughter and son-in-law reside in Los Angeles, makes an effort to arrange get-togethers for Zoroastrians in the California area. Her family keeps an open house on occasions like *Pateti* and *Jamshedi*

Navroz. "We just provide food, and guests chat, swim and play cards. When we first started these 'at homes' we had 25 or 30 guests. The last time we had nearly 200 from places as far afield as San Diego, San Francisco, and Berkeley. There must be about 50 families in this part of California alone." There are plans to start a Zoroastrian Association. "It's not a matter of lectures or discussions, but of Zoroastrians abroad getting to know each other," she noted.

And a college friend of mine, Don MacGillis, wrote in from Springfield, Massachusetts, to state I was not "the only Jehangir Patel on the face of the earth. A few weeks ago I was idly reading the honors list for a Jesuit preparatory school in the county and one of the boys honored was a Jehangir Patel. I asked our city editor, whose boy also attends the school, if he knew the person. He said he did; that he and his brother, Jamshed, were two of the brightest students the school ever had."

I have noted that nearly everyone with a name like Jehangir Patel does well. On numerous occasions I have suggested to expectant mothers that one sure-fire method of ensuring their child's success in

life, be it boy or girl, is to give it a name like Jehangir.

And finally, a classified advertisement in *The Times of India* offering an eye for sale aroused my mother's curiosity sufficiently to write and inquire about the particulars.

Promptly came the reply "I am having an eye in perfect condition. Doctor replace my eye to you, then you can see perfectly."

"So I am offering my eye for Twenty lakhs (20,00,000) and for details we will contact personally."

The Editor is willing to offer one of his myopic eyes for ten lakhs (slight astigmatism).

Wanted Chinese Embroidered Jhulas, Gharas, borders. Kindly Phone 369877 any morning.

Wanted Old watches in working order. Write to The Advertiser (Watches), Post Box 892, G.P.O. Bombay 400 001.

ARE YOUR CLOTHES LOST OR EXCHANGED ?

Stitch cloth woven labels of your personal name on your clothes.

For woven labels, write to :-

Nandkishor, 5A-161, Nehru Nagar, Kurla (East), Bombay-400 024.

**It was a philosophy
...before it became
a Tata Trust...**



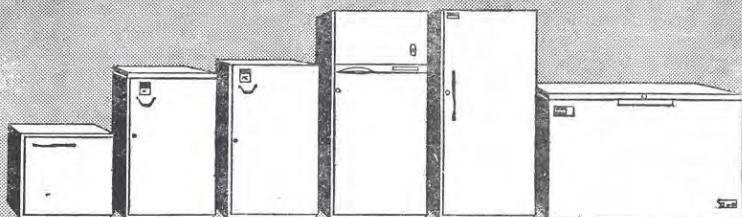
Many years ago, Jamsetji Tata conceived of philanthropy as a nation-building activity, to equip the most gifted to serve the Nation best.

Today, this philosophy finds fulfilment in the various Tata Trusts like the Sir Dorab Tata and Sir Ratan Tata Trusts and the J. N. Tata Endowment which provides the gifted and talented, regardless of other considerations, with the facilities to develop their talents further.

Thus, a philosophy, which went beyond merely clothing the ragged and feeding the poor, is today providing a strong technical and intellectual base for national development.

TATA ENTERPRISES

Kelvinator **has them all !**



Refrigerators - four sizes to suit your family, your pocket,
Deep Freezers - two models, chest type and upright.

Kelvinator, world famous for its leadership in refrigeration design and technology, has in the last ten years introduced four refrigerator models and two deep freezer models—each a superior work of craftsmanship. Each a best seller in its own right. Each a pace setter.

KELVINATOR—SOLD AND SERVICED IN 141 COUNTRIES



'A Descendant of the Sun'

I congratulate you on printing such a wonderful article by A. D. Gorwala in your last issue of *Parsiana*. If all your articles were of this standard your paper would be first class.

GOOL K. S. SHAVAKSHA

Congratulations for publishing in your November 1974 issue of *Parsiana* "A Descendant Of The Sun" by A. D. Gorwala. It is a story sublime in its simplicity, and beautifully told.

Gorwala has made the voice of Dastur Meherji Rana ring the Gathic Revelations—the revelations that should be within all Zarathustrans.

MURZBAN ARDASHIR (CHOKSI)

A. D. Gorwala's article "A Descendant of the Sun" in your last issue came as a breath of fresh air amid the pollution caused by Parsi "politics", religious bigotry, the chase after *sais* and *babas* and the struggle for power in the Bombay Panchayat. The simplicity and purity of our old religion has been so beautifully brought out by Gorwala that his article deserves a "reprint" and wide circulation among both Parsis and non-Parsis.

Compared to this, your effort at ascertaining "Are Parsis Rich?" was a terrible come-down. Is wealth the criterion of a community's greatness? We have wealthier communities in our country but persons like J.R.D. Tata, Neville Wadia, Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, Homi Bhabha, Homi Sethna, Rustum Alpaiwalla,

Mary Clubwalla and others still stand out because of merit, achievement and character rather than riches alone. Above everything else, character counts most. The one single factor that has contributed to the forming of the Parsi character of uprightness is our religion and its simple but noble precepts—not its rituals and *dokhmas*. We have had our black sheep too—Nagarwala (of the State Bank of New Delhi episode), Sammy Patel and others—but by and large, if we are respected in this country, it is because of our character.

Once, at a company board meeting I attended, a lot of criticism was directed against the Tatas for withdrawing from the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry on a matter of principle. But the non-Parsi head of a large industrial house in the North put an end to the discussion by saying that whatever the merits or demerits of the action, one could never point a finger at the Tatas. That is the kind of name and reputation which has made the community great.

With character, we need industry and enterprise. Unfortunately, the bulk of Parsis live in Bombay and, therefore, their attitude to life in general is city-oriented, with the attendant limitations. The backbone of a nation is the people of the countryside—not its city-dwellers. Parsis have of late moved to far and distant lands to seek their fortunes but it is a pity that few have moved to other parts of India. Parsi doctors, dentists, lawyers, engineers, architects, confectioners, hoteliers, furniture makers etc. would be welcome to do well in other parts of India, if only they ventured out. Bombay seems to have a magical or mystical hold on our community which must be removed if we are to maintain our position.

This brings me to a last and sad thought—why has the Gamadia Technical Institute in Bombay to close down? We need more of such institutions, not less.

N. H. VAJIFDAR
Ootacamund

Those who would like to read more of Gorwala's writing are referred to his collection of short stories entitled *The Queen of Beauty* and other tales (price Rs. 9). Copies are available from the author at Purnima, 40 C Ridge Road, Bombay-400 006. His acclaimed weekly, *Opinion*, still has an annual subscription of Rs. 2, the once price that hasn't gone up in 15 years.—Ed.

Gloom at Twin City

I am deeply grieved and perturbed at the cold indifference shown by the *mobeds* of Hyderabad and Secunderabad, and some members of the Parsi Anjuman at the funeral of Mr. Sheheryar Kaosji. The *mobeds* refused to conduct the *gah sarna* ceremony and one member of the Anjuman refused to allow them to pray; all this because, according to the wishes of the deceased, his body was entered in the Parsi *aramgah* at Nizamabad instead of at the *dokhma* here.

Mr. Kaosji was not buried in a Christian graveyard, or a Muslim graveyard (for which there were offers), nor was he cremated on any Hindu pyre, but rightly entered in a consecrated Parsi *aramgah*, where other Parsi brethren surround him. After all in districts where there are no Towers of Silence, Parsi bodies are always buried, so what was the objection to burial?

Throughout his life, Mr. Kaosji

FAROKH REPORTER Photographer

FASHION • ADVERTISING
INDUSTRIAL
CINE 16MM & 35MM

Phone : 263723

Patel Chambers, 5th floor,
Gunbow Street, Fort,
Bombay-1

JEENA & COMPANY

(ESTD. 1900)

IATA AIR CARGO

Clearing, Forwarding

Warehousing and

Insurance Agents

10, Veer Nariman Road

Fort, BOMBAY-1

Cable: "Justitia"

Telex: 2313

PHONE: 312032

Branches:

E. Merc House

19/B, Shakespeare Sarani
(Formerly Theatre Road)

CALCUTTA-16

PHONE: 444711

"Jeena House,"

50, Hanuman Road
Connaught Circus
NEW DELHI

PHONE: 310821

struggled to make the Parsi community realize that *dokhma nashini*, under the present circumstances, is not at all an aesthetic mode of disposal of the mortal remains of a human being, then how can such a person's body be disposed against his wish and will?

Mr. Kaoosji has served the Parsi Anjuman as the Administrative Officer, and Assistant Secretary for the past four years. He has rendered selfless services to the entire Parsi community. He has made arrangements for the funerals of innumerable Parsis, and has followed them with great reverence to the very door of the Towers of Silence (although he was very much against *dokhma nashini* himself). He was a social worker, a humanitarian, an educationist, a person who dedicated his entire life to the betterment of the deaf, dumb and the blind, and such a magnanimous person was refused the last rites.

DR. (Ms) R. E. TARAPOREWALA
Hyderabad

As you are aware my father, Sheheryar Kaoosji's body was buried at a private Parsi *aram-gah* at Nizamabad, a place 176 kilometers from here. He had visited that graveyard on 6th June 1974 and was satisfied that his body will not have to rot in our Towers of Silence.

I have heard many people talking and even writing against *dokhmanashini* but when it came to the test, they have shied away, waiting for someone else to break the ice. In Hyderabad it was broken by a man who practised what he preached. My father was a very honest man, devoted to his cause and I am proud that he has set a course for others with guts to follow. If the Parsis of Hyderabad and Secunderabad had a little sense, a will to fight against what is inhuman, crude and unearthy, we would have had an *aram-gah* a long time ago. I earnestly hope that some good sense will mature in the minds of our people who have nothing other than the *Vendidad* as their authority.

My father was a true crusader who has always fought a winning battle and his last battle too was victoriously won against our re-

ligious dogmas. What if the priests did not come to pray—we ordained non-professional priests to pray for his soul. Our thanks are due to them as much as to those good people at Nizamabad who opened their family graveyard for us.

BAKHTYAR S. KAOOSJI

Westward, Ho!

I read with great interest Lovji Cama's article "Westward Ho!" in the September issue of *Parsiana*. Both he and Erach Munshi are doing their best to bring the scattered Parsis of America together. It is a difficult task.

Cama notes the United States is the melting pot of all the cultures of the world and wonders whether we have any chance of preserving our identity after a generation or two. Most of the present American Parsis are born in India, probably wear a *sudra* and *kusti*, have a photograph of Zoroaster, occasionally offer prayers which their parents have taught them and can read and write a little Gujarati. But what of the next generation? Cama questions whether a child brought up without any religious influence, will ever remain a Zoroastrian. He firmly replies in the next breath that it will be a miracle.

I have visited many parts of the world, and I have found that wherever Indian Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs have settled, they have their mosques, temples and Gurdwaras. They mix freely with the local population, speak their language, but they have not forgotten their mother tongue, religion and scriptures. Some have lived in these foreign countries for over a century, and have not been fortunate enough to visit India. Still they are good Indians. Why can we not do the same thing in the U.S.A. or Canada? In Iran, despite persecution in the past, Zoroastrians have preserved what little identity they could.

In East Africa, I found a Parsi fire temple in Zanzibar. The Parsis preserved their identity. But this is not so in the West. Even in a place like London, with its large Parsi population, there is no fire temple, even though most of the Parsis there are very well-off and can afford one.

In Bombay, with its large number of fire temples, the modern generation knows little about religion, because our community leaders are cool to it and discuss matters which have no bearing on bringing up good Zoroastrians. We observe the Christian New Year or even Christmas Eve with greater enthusiasm than our own Parsi New Year. There is nothing wrong in being cosmopolitan, but every Christian child knows the meaning of Christmas and who Christ was. Modern Parsi children know nothing about their religion or prophet. Like parrots, they recite the *navjot* prayers between the tender ages of seven to nine and soon forget them.

Certain institutions regularly invite speakers who deliver very high-power, scholarly, religious lectures, which are sparsely attended—the younger generation in particular being noticeably absent. To attract youth and to make them understand the principles of our religion, let us have some mass prayers in simple languages, in the form of music or poetry on auspicious occasions. Let the program be entertaining as well as instructive. Let the religious scholars who speak in Gujarati simplify their discourses on the principles of religion, and give small talks in English to those who do not understand Gujarati. There should be no bombastic words and quotations. It should be as simple as possible, to inspire faith and to create an interest in the young. The Bombay Parsi Association has given a lead. Let other institutions come forward.

May I request the Parsis and the leaders to wake up from their sleep and discuss things which may help the future generations. We have everything to gain and nothing to lose by practising our practical, good Zoroastrian religion.

DR. S. R. WADIA

Parsi fertility

It is surprising that Parsis devote little time to seriously think about their decreasing numbers while abroad there is a growing consciousness about the problem. For the last few years, several

How about a few speedy tricks to delight them with the flavourful fun of custard?



Kids fussy about drinking milk? Give them delicious custard pudding. Take 4 tsp BROWN & POLSON Custard Powder, 3 tsp sugar, a little cold milk. Mix to a smooth cream. Heat a cup of milk, add the mixed custard powder. Stir till boiling. Pour into lightly greased dish. Cool until it sets. A yummy way to give kids the goodness of milk every day.

Cheer up fruit salad, cake, jelly—pour on custard. To make up pouring custard: take 1½ tsp BROWN & POLSON Custard Powder, 3 tsp sugar, a little cold milk. Mix to a smooth cream. Heat a cup of milk, add the mixed custard powder. Stir till boiling. Serve hot or cold.



Special trick: When you're making ice cream, falooda, kheer, rabdi: thicken milk with smooth creamy BROWN & POLSON Custard Powder. Try the Variety Custard Powder pack: a combination of 6 super flavours.

Variety Custard Powder pack with 6 super flavours!



Contains no eggs

Made from the finest ingredients, processed with extra care, truly the best Custard Powder you can buy! Keep a pack on your shelf... always.



Corn Products Co. (India) Pvt. Ltd., Bombay

BROWN & POLSON CUSTARD POWDER

Dr. Writer's CHOCOLATE SLABS



Now in twelve varieties

FACTORY:
DR. WRITER'S CHOCOLATES & CANNING CO.
BHAVANISHANKER ROAD, DADAR, BOMBAY-28.

American researchers have come to India to study the reasons for the decline in population. Three years ago Michael Fischer of the University of Chicago studied the subject of Parsi marriages with close collaterals. He was awarded a Ph.D. for his dissertation "Zoroastrian Iran between Myth and Praxis" (1973).

Soon after Paul Mark Axelrod, from the University of North Carolina came to collect data for his dissertation: "A Social and Demographic Comparison of Parsis, Saraswat Brahmins and Jains in Bombay" (1974). Axelrod studied the problems of the Parsis in greater detail than that of the two other communities and contacted a larger number of Parsis.

In June 1974, Dr. Ketayun Gould who is an associate professor at the Jane Addams School of Social Work in the University of Illinois, studied the problem of fertility amongst rural Parsis. During the summer, she visited the villages of the Godavra area. She returned to India this January. On both occasions, she went to various villages in the Surat and Broach districts, visited houses of Parsi families and gathered information on the subject of Parsi fertility.

I had the good fortune to go to the rural areas with all the above three scholars and feel that an enlightened community like ours should take a great deal of interest in these studies. It may not be feasible for many members of the community to obtain and study these dissertations carefully; but the Bombay Parsi Panchayat or the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute or a similar institution may appoint one or two local scholars, well-versed in the field, to look into these studies, come to some conclusions, and present their report to the community. When so much trouble is being taken by foreign scholars and students on an important subject facing us today, we should take advantage of, or at least show interest in, the information that has been so painstakingly gathered.

Aside from these studies, it is important to note that the Government of India also thought the subject of Parsi fertility significant enough to conduct a separate study

as part of the 1961 census. They published a special report on the Parsis of Greater Bombay which is an eye-opener for the community. However, one is doubtful as to how many intelligent members of the community have studied this work, although it is available for a nominal amount. The decline in numbers is a subject which deserves careful consideration from the community.

RATAN R. MARSHALL
Surat

The Census report on the Parsis is available for Rs. 2.25 from the Census Operations Office, Exchange Building, Spott Road, Ballard Estate, Bombay-400 001.

'The Wheel Turns Full Circle'

The wanderlust of the Parsi travellers mentioned in the book *With Cyclists Round the World* (Parsiana November issue) existed long before they made that monumental journey.

In 1921 Gustad D. Hathiram and my father Keki Pochkhana-walla, along with F. J. Dayer cycled from Bombay to Kashmir, a distance of 2,068 miles, in twenty days. They were all Boy Scouts. In 1926 Pochkhana-walla and a friend, Eruch R. Khan swam from Uran to Bombay, a distance of ten miles in five hours and fifty minutes. On landing at Apollo Pier they were given a warm welcome by the Parsi Physical Culture League and garlanded by Justice Talyerkhan.

In 1935 Noshir F. Dalal, and my father became the first Indian aviators to fly from Karachi to Capetown and back in a Puss Moth. While flying over Africa they were scheduled to stopover in a place called Mpika. But the flares at the airport were unlit and the duo were misled by a jungle fire 20 miles ahead. With darkness approaching, they thought it best to force-land but in the process ripped off the plane's under-carriage. For four days they wandered in the dense bush with no food and a meagre ration of water amid herds of elephants, buffaloes and rhinoceroses. On the fifth day they came across some villagers who helped them back to Mpika.

Aside from his travelling my father was a member of the

"Health and Strength League." He fought in thirty boxing matches, winning 24, losing four and drawing two. He died at the age of 71, still eager to visit America.

FRENY POCHKHANAWALLA

'Window shopping'

What Ms Piloo Jungalwalla says in her letter in the last issue of *Parsiana* is perfectly true. We do not care to know our own religion. It is never too late to mend so why not begin from the beginning?

Magazines could help us a lot in this direction by giving us some reading on the subject of our religion. We have learned priests and scholars like Ms Jungalwalla who could help to enlighten us by giving their discourse on our forgotten religion in these publications which would thereby be more interesting and readable to young and old.

FRENY DALAL

'Book on Parsis'

At Manchester University we have a two-year course for students on the history of Zoroastrianism which includes one year on the Parsi community. As a result of teaching this course,

(Continued on page 28, col. 1)

**Warden is good
For sandalwood**

Head Office
378 Grant Road
Bombay 400 007
and Branches
Tel. 371464

Quality sandalwood
Aggarbatties, gum benzoin
(loban) and other
Perfumes



A TALE



Cartoon by Manjula Padmanabhan

The news leaked out to the crowd on Dadabhai Naoroji Road through an open window on the ground floor of the Panchayat. With cries of triumph men charged into the packed main hall to garland the victorious candidate, Jamshed 'Jimmy' Nusserwanji Guzder. As the large gathering broke out into tumultuous applause, the prominent entrepreneur was raised on the shoulders of his ardent supporters and carried to the closed doors of the Panchayat's inner sanctums.

It was a scene without precedent in the staid annals of that august body. Even the stately appearance of Chairwoman Lady Hirabhai Jehangir a few minutes later to officially announce the results failed to restore decorum. But while the emotional catharsis may not have been in keeping with the institution's image, it was the logical denouement to a hard-fought, neck-to-neck contest that saw a record 83 per cent of the eligible 394 voters turning out to cast their ballot. Aside from defeating his opponent, Jimmy Shroff, a lawyer and disciple of the Mystic Leader Minocher Pundole whose followers claim he receives visitations from God, Guzder's victory dealt a lethal blow to the Pundolite party's ambition to one day control the community's vast assets vested in the hands of the Panchayat's seven trustees.

The greatest casualty of the campaign, however, was Ms Nelie Noble whose behind-the-scenes manoeuvring earned the wrath of her fellow trustees, forging them into a united opposition that ultimately ended her meteoric role as the Panchayat's Kingmaker. She and Boman K. Boman-Behram headed the Independent Orthodox Party which swept the polls at the elections for the 189 "E" Register (So-nu-Mandal) seats last February. The voters of the "E" Register along with the 205 voters of the "F" Register, those who have donated over Rs. 5,000, elect the trustees of the Panchayat.

Guzder, who occupies the seat

OF TWO JIMMYS

Photographs by
Farokh Reporter

made vacant by the resignation of Shiavax R. Vakil in December, gives the Panchayat its only trustee conversant with the world of business and high finance. Aside from his family concerns, which include one of the largest air cargo and travel agencies in India, he is a director of several companies. His business contacts and family connections helped considerably in drawing the usually apathetic "F" Register donors to the polls, many of whom were not acquainted with the relatively unknown Shroff.

Guzder is expected to share the all-important finance portfolio with Lady Jehangir. Vakil, the legal advisor to the Industrial House of Tatas, was denied the crucial portfolios on account of his differences with the other trustees arising largely out of his public statements on the plight of the Towers of Silence. Vakil's inability to function on the Panchayat, led him to offer his resignation on condition that his business associate and neighbour, Guzder be elected in his place. By doing so he set off a chain of events that resulted in the remaining trustees entering into the rumble and tumble of Parsi politics and publicly charging one another with betrayal.

The scenario began peacefully enough:

4th Dec: Vakil meets Guzder in Madras where they are both attending a Herdillia Chemicals Directors' meeting. The beleaguered Trustee tells his friend of his disenchantment with the Panchayat. "I enquired of Jimmy ... whether he was willing to take over the trusteeship if I resigned. He thought I was joking." The Independent Orthodox had suggested Guzder's name for the trustee seat vacated by Nadirsha Mulla last year, but his name was rejected.

10th Dec: Vakil seeks police protection to attend the fortnightly Tuesday evening meeting of the Panchayat Trustees due to threats of physical assault and reports of an impending *morchha* against him.

On reading of the police



Guzder and Shroff: The scenario began peacefully enough

bandobast, Guzder tells Vakil he should resign if he believes his presence on the Panchayat serves no purpose. The matter is further discussed by them in Vakil's Bombay House office.

15th Dec: Vakil sends Guzder a letter confirming his willingness to resign "effective from 31st December 1974 provided the members of "E" Register are prepared to sign a requisition agreeing to accept you in the vacancy which will be occasioned as a result of my vacating my seat, but not otherwise, and I take it that as many members of the "F" Register will exercise their good offices in support of your candidature."

Guzder clears the proposal with Boman-Behram, who then presents it for Lady Jehangir's approval. Upon receiving her consent Boman-Behram schedules a meeting of the "E" Register leaders.

25th Dec: Afternoon; Boman-Behram's mayoral chambers. Present are Boman-Behram, Guzder, Ms Noble, Ms Jer Dhondy, Prof. Khurshed Sheriar, Homi Dhallal and others. Absent is the Pundolite group which controls the 28-seat "A" Register (those who have given over Rs. 500). Ms

Noble explains that they have gone to the Parsi mecca, Udwarda and will return the next day. Guzder is cross-examined for two hours by all present except Ms Noble. Noting the silence of the "Kingmaker sitting on my right," Guzder turns to her and says "I sense a reservation on your part. You don't approve of my candidature." Ms Noble reportedly replies she has "no reservations but I have to consult my group. You may not be our choice but we will do anything to get rid of Shiavax."

The same night Boman-Behram gets a heart attack and is confined to the Parsi General Hospital.

27th Dec: After consulting the Pundolites, Ms Noble reportedly phones Guzder to say he is "acceptable." She instructs Guzder to obtain a letter of resignation from Vakil. "I have grave doubts he will give it," Ms Noble reportedly says "therefore, get after him." Guzder notes that Vakil is out of town but will return on January 2nd or 3rd and would then give the letter. According to Guzder, Ms Noble says this is acceptable as long as the letter reaches the Panchayat before the January 14th meeting of the trustees so it can

be accepted at that time. Ms Noble, however, claims she insisted the letter be handed in by 31st December.

9th Jan: Vakil reportedly sends his letter of resignation to Lady Jehangir. He also advises Guzder to get a written assurance from Ms Noble as he has "reason to doubt" her *bona fides*. On conveying this message to Ms Noble, she reportedly replies "Our word is our bond ... tell Mr. Vakil that just because he is dishonest, he thinks everybody else is dishonest." Both Boman-Behram and Lady Jehangir assure Guzder that Ms Noble will keep her promise, Boman-Behram noting that he had brought her into the Panchayat and Lady Jehangir that she knew her well.

14th Jan: Vakil's resignation is taken up under the "other business" section of the agenda and accepted.

16th Jan: Ms Noble reportedly approaches Pestonji P. Kapadia, a civil engineer who heads the voters of the 18-seat "C" Register which is comprised of graduates and asks him to support the candidacy of Jimmy Shroff for the seat vacated by Vakil. Kapadia says he does not know Shroff and therefore cannot arrive at any decision till he meets him. He adds he has great respect for Guzder's ability to get things done.

19th Jan: Ms Noble reportedly introduces Shroff to Kapadia. Ms Pervez Dotivala, a social worker



Nadirshah and Lady Jehangir : Fear of a 'deep-laid plot'

and an influential member of the Independent Orthodox's party is also present. Kapadia suggests that a meeting of "E" and "F" Register voters be called at which both candidates should present their views. A decision could then be taken.

At six o'clock that evening Ms Noble visits the ailing Mayor at the hospital. Unaware of the recent developments, Boman-Behram notes that as he is bed-ridden, it is up to her to see to Guzder's election. Ms Noble reportedly replies that there is a "split" among the "E" Register voters and that they wish to put up another candidate. When asked

if she knows whom they have in mind she reportedly says they are in search of a candidate but whoever's name they propose will have to receive Pundole's blessings.

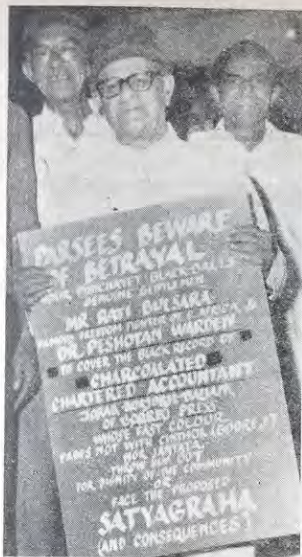
20th Jan: A well-known lawyer of the Bombay High Court visits Boman-Behram and tells him that Ms Noble has put up Shroff as a candidate. Boman-Behram summons Guzder to the hospital to give him the news. Guzder's initial reaction is to withdraw in disgust but the Mayor and Lady Jehangir plead with him to fight it out. The Chairwoman reportedly fears a "deep laid plot" by the Pundolites to control the Panchayat and its large assets. They both assure Guzder that the "F" Register voters can be galvanized in his favour.

21st Jan: Guzder says he phoned Ms Noble to inquire if he has her support. She reportedly says he does but that he should canvas also as other candidates may enter the race.

25th Jan: Manifestoes of both candidates appear in the *Jam-e-Jamshed*. Aside from expressing concern for the community, love for the religion and devotion to *dokhmanashini*, the candidates also oppose the entry into the community of the children of Parsi women who have married non-Parsis. This last clause, which is absent in the contestants' printed pamphlets (see boxes), appears in the daily paper at the behest of the *Jame*. In an editorial



Ms Noble, Guzder, Nadirshah, Boman-Behram : A parting of the ways



Warden: A poster of protest

on the 18th January, the paper insisted that aspiring trustees must sign a bond to this and other effects, which if they violated during their trusteeship, they must resign.

27th Jan: Guzder goes to the Panchayat office to meet Erach Nadirshah and runs into Ms Noble. He inquires "How are things," and adds, "remember, I am totally in your hands." Ms Noble reportedly says she has given her word to support him but her party members have changed their minds. Guzder then notes, "Wherever I go to canvas, I find that you or your agents have been there to canvas for Shroff". Ms Noble reportedly denies this and phones Shroff to ascertain her point, prefacing her conversation with the remark, "Mr. Guzder is sitting in front of me." She then hands the receiver over to Guzder to whom Shroff reportedly says, "I have nothing against you. (The late) Naval Vakil (a senior partner in the solicitor's firm of Little and Company in which Shroff is also a partner) always spoke highly of you ... I am pained to run against you. The decision is not mine." When asked why he was then contesting the election, Shroff, a

deeply religious man who prays for several hours every day, says it is at the behest of Pundole, his mystic guide. "I believe in two things," Shroff reportedly says, "one is God and the other is Minocher Pundole." Whenever he has not followed his aging guru's advice, Shroff says he has suffered greatly. Pundole's followers, many of whom wear red caps and plain silver rings and greet each other with the words: *Kshnaothra Ahura Mazda* (Glory to God), believe he speaks with the voice of God. As regards the dubious politicking, Shroff says, "I know nothing about the back-ground."

After speaking to Shroff, an anguished Guzder turns to Ms Noble: "For once all the Trustees were united. We could have worked together as a team. What have you done? You've spoilt everything ... do me a favour, don't cast your solitary vote for me."

The campaign then begins in earnest. Shroff concentrates his efforts on winning over members of the "F" Register, leaving the "E" roll to Ms Noble. Aside from the Pundolites, Ms Noble has packed the register with people who owe favours or allegiance to her and over whom she wields considerable influence. Initially Shroff is believed to have the edge as the donors seldom exercise their right to vote, many

of them having gifted Rs. 5,000 and over to a Parsi charity for purposes other than to buy a vote. Only the "C" Register, the graduates, tilts towards Guzder.

Lady Jehangir proceeds to mobilize the donors, flooding them with phone calls. She assigns social workers to canvas votes among the "E" voters. Such is the co-ordination that an hour before Guzder is to meet a prominent member of the "E" Register, the individual receives a call from Lady Jehangir's office urging him and his group to support the businessman. Boman-Behram patches up his long quarrel with Nadirsha, with whom he has not been on speaking terms though they live in the same building, and rallies his formidable political machinery in Guzder's favour. Letters favouring both candidates appear daily in the papers.

The first break comes when the *Jame* group as it is called, whose members number around 17 and include Ms Dhondy, Nadir Turel, Dhalla, Ervad Peshotan Pire and others, revoke their decision to stay neutral and back Guzder. A substantial boost to the entrepreneur is given by Naval Tata, Nani Palkhivala, Naval Godrej and former Magistrate Kaikhusroo Khambata who in a letter to the Press state that they have "not the slightest hesitation in recommending (Guzder). As no businessman for



Going to the polls. Shroff (right): "My hands are tied."

several decades has been a Trustee, it is time that the community realized the real advantage of having a businessman on the Board as a Trustee."

The *Kaiser-I-Hind* weekly in an unsigned article charges Ms Noble with reneging on her promise to support Guzder. No doubt stung by the allegation, Ms Noble rushes to press a copy of a letter she wrote to Lady Jehangir and Boman-Behram. The act proves to be her undoing.

In the letter Ms Noble states her supporters are ready to accept Guzder if Vakil hands in his resignation by 31st December. She says this message was conveyed to Guzder on 26th December. "Mr. Guzder phoned me in the first week of January when I told him that as per the promise Mr. Vakil had not sent his resignation ... by the 31st December and to this effect I haven't talked to the voters but would do so... On 13th January Mr. Vakil sent his resignation.

"When I spoke to the other voters they refused to agree and said it is a wrong procedure that when a trustee resigns, he appoints his successor. Trustees have no right to do whatever they feel like doing. It is only the privilege of the E and F Register voters to elect a trustee ... their right is being snatched away."

Ms Noble says that "on 6th January Lady Jehangir phoned me at the Panchayat office and I told her that some voters who were willing to give their support would do so on one condition—that Mr. Vakil must give his resignation by 31st December." In a letter to the *Jame* two days later, Lady Jehangir emphatically denies that she phoned Ms Noble "at the Panchayat office or anywhere ... I cannot find words to express the baseless and false allegations put on me by her."

Ms Noble's letter says that on a visit to the ailing Mayor in the first week of January, he "showed me a letter in which it was stated ... that if Vakil hands in his resignation then whatever can be done in (the voters) capacity to elect Mr. Guzder will be done... This letter was signed by some of Mr. Boman-Behram's voters and I was also requested

to put my signature to it but I refused." In a reply that almost runs into three full columns of the *Jame*, Boman-Behram narrates the chain of events that caused the break in ranks and denies

having asked Ms Noble to sign the circular as he knew "fully well that a Trustee of the Panchayat could not do (sign) so."

As for Ms Noble's allegation that both Lady Jehangir and

Guzder's Manifesto

During the last five years, I have on two occasions been approached to stand as a candidate for the election of a Trustee to the Parsee Panchayat, but I had in consultation with others decided that the moment was not opportune and had refused.

Since then, there have been certain developments within our community relating specially to the Parsee Panchayat, which have caused, I am sure, a certain amount of mental anguish to a great many members of our community. A great deal is being heard about how the electoral college has been divided into groups vying with other to elect their own special candidate. On such occasions, no consideration is given to whether the candidate himself is deserving of this honour and whether he has the capacity and the capability of administering the vast funds and properties of the Parsee Panchayat, the predominant thought behind this move being the anxiety of these various pressure groups to dominate the Board of Trustees.

This being the case, I have given the proposal contained in the above mentioned letter suggesting my name, considerable thought. I have decided that if I should offer myself as a candidate, I must do so on the strength of certain beliefs which I hold and my desire to serve the community constructively. With this end in view, I decided that I would consult all the present Trustees of the Parsee Panchayat. In my consultation with the Trustees, it has given me a great deal of satisfaction to learn that all the present Trustees have expressed their confidence in me. Heartened by this, I would now like to declare myself as a candidate for the forthcoming elections for a Trustee of the Parsee Panchayat Funds & Properties. It



Guzder, Ervad Manchershah Katrak, and Ms Guzder: an emotional catharsis

will be my object and endeavour to strengthen the administration and management of the vast funds of the Parsee Panchayat, and I feel that as a businessman, with 41 years' experience, I shall be capable of doing so—thereby supplementing the efforts and endeavours of the present Trustees, who are eminent social workers, prominent lawyers, doctors, and an engineer, with all of whom I enjoy the most cordial relations.

In December 1933, I started working in my father's concern, Nusserwanji S. Guzder & Co., which had about 35 to 40 employees. In the course of time, I expanded the Company's business considerably and, today, the Company employs over 300 people, a large number of whom are Parsees. A few years later, in 1946, I started the first Air Cargo Agency in India, and this Agency was appointed the official agent of Air India. The company started with two employees and in the first year, its turnover was barely Rs. 50,000. Today, this Company is one of the largest Air Cargo and Travel Agencies in India, employing nearly 400 people in five offices

Boman-Behram would resign if Vakil continued on the Panchayat, Vakil says under those circumstances he would have stayed on as that would make him a senior trustee if not Chairman of the

Trust.

Feeling their grip on the electorate slipping, the Pundolites issue pamphlets personally attacking Guzder, saying he is a non-matriculate, that he smokes cigars,

that his sister is married out of the community, that his wealth is all inherited and he throws his money around. Voters are also told that Vakil commands evil spirits and that if Guzder is elected these spirits would enter and destroy him.

A few days prior to the election Boman-Behram cautions Guzder that Ms Noble would arrive early on election day with 50 or so of her followers to vote in their candidates as presiding officers for the election. To elect his nominees Guzder would have to ensure his delegation also arrived early. Rather than risk an open confrontation Guzder phones Shroff to settle on a presiding president agreeable to both. He proposes Nanabhoj Jeejeebhoy, one of the major shareholders of the *Jame* and a one-time supporter of Ms Noble. Shroff reportedly replies he is helpless to take a decision. "Even if I agree, Pundole and Nelie may overrule me. My hands are tied." He then apologizes to Guzder for the leaflets distributed by his party. "I was against them," but the others had the final say, says Shroff. "I am in a more unhappy position than you."

Election day, 22nd February, begins inauspiciously enough for Guzder as the *Jame*, which till that day has remained neutral, notes in its editorial that people who are occupied with their own business may not have the desired time to devote to the Panchayat. Shroff stated during his campaign that he could devote as much time as was necessary for the Panchayat work as his firm would not be receiving as many government briefs as before due to a change in the State's policy. The *Jame* also decries the practise of a Trustee naming his successor and criticizes the blatant participation of the trustees in the election. To add to the tension Dr. Pestonji Warden, who unsuccessfully opposed Ms Noble for the trusteeship seat vacated by Nadirsha Mulla last year, threatens a *satyagraha* outside the Panchayat premises to publicize his long-standing battle with the Trustees. And the police which have become a familiar sight at Panchayat functions are present in large numbers.

Undaunted, Guzder's suppor-

in India, with a total turnover of several crores per annum.

In 1962, I was invited by Mr. Neville Wadia, the Chairman of Bombay Dyeing & Mfg. Co. Ltd. to become a Director of that Company. In 1964, I was appointed an Executive Director of Nowrosjee Wadia & Sons Private Ltd., who were the Managing Agents of the Wadia Group of Companies, and as such I was one of the Directors responsible for the management of the various companies in the Group.

Today, I am a Director of the following ten companies—Bombay Dyeing & Mfg. Co. Ltd., Sturdia Chemicals Ltd., Herdillia Chemicals Ltd., The Boots Co. Ltd. (Drugs and Pharmaceuticals), Assam Match Co. Ltd., Arlem Breweries Ltd., Citurgia Biochemicals Ltd., Josts Engineering Co. Ltd., Indian Gum Industries (Alternative) and the Managing Director of National Peroxide Limited.

In addition, I am the Vice-President of the Rotary Club of Bombay, the Honorary Vice-President of the "Federation Universelle des Associations di Agences de Voyages" the world body of national Travel Agents' Associations, with its headquarters at Brussels.

I am also a Trustee of the Karani Agiary at Cusrow Baug and President of the Gandevi Parsee Anjuman.

Today, I am associated in the management of companies which have a combined turnover of approximately 100 crores.

I believe that I can give the benefit of my experience and knowledge to the administration of the Parsee Panchayat, with special emphasis on its administration and finance.

Speaking about my faith and religion, I may say that I am a firm and a staunch believer in the precepts and teachings of the Zoroastrian faith. I am orthodox

by conviction. By this, I mean that I believe firmly in our religious customs, in our various ceremonies, and in the continuation of the "Dokhma Nishin".

It is my opinion that ours being a small community, even though there may be differences of opinion (as there are bound to be), it is in our interest to confine such differences within the community, as our best interest lies in not giving ourselves undue publicity for the preservation of our estates and properties.

If elected, I pledge not only to work for the improvement and better management of the Parsee Panchayat Funds & Properties, but I shall devote my energies to the improvement of the weaker members of our community.

I propose that the future of our youth lies in the starting and encouragement of small-scale industries. Today, in the context of the present economic situation, jobs are difficult to find, especially for Parsees. Therefore, proper encouragement and guidance must be given to our young men and women and the financial means must be found to enable them to become small entrepreneurs and start small-scale businesses and industries, instead of hunting around for jobs.

Believing that the need of the hour is more housing for the Parsee community, I, at the request of the Trustees of the Panchayat, recently procured donations from my friends and my own companies and contributed a sum of Rs. 1.50 lakhs towards the cost of construction of a block of flats on the Panchayat lands at Andheri East, which block is being named after my late cousin, Ruttu S. Engineer. I shall, therefore, endeavour, most earnestly, to find funds and the ways and means of providing more housing for the middle and poorer class of Parsees.

(Text slightly abridged)

ters cook up some *rava* for their chief as his office bustles with pre-poll activity. By 2 p.m. both factions are present in large numbers on the ground floor of the Panchayat except for Shroff who arrives 15 minutes late dressed in a *jetah* and *dugli*. Guzder, geared in a *pugree* and *dugli*, is seated in a side room where elections for the presiding president are underway. Jeejeebhoy is elected by 63 in his favour and 43 against. Jehangir Shroff and Jehangir B. Bamji also from the Guzder camp are elected scrutinizers, 62 to 52. At 2.30 the trustee election begins. The hall is packed throughout the afternoon with people swarming in and out. Both candidates are busy greeting their voters. There is an abundance of smartly dressed chauffeurs lounging in the back-ground, a sign that the "F" Register is present. The polling doors close at 5.30.

Within 45 minutes the counting is completed and Guzder wins by a staggering and totally unexpected lead of 104 votes; the final results are 221 to 117. While the numbers reflect the new mood of the electorate they also serve as a painful reminder that of a Bombay Parsi population of 70,000 less than 400 people have a say in electing a trustee. The rest are silent spectators who can exercise their franchise only once in seven years and that too never for a trustee, but only for members of the "E" Register.

Sitting on his bed that evening in the Jaslok Hospital, where he was to undergo an eye operation a week later, Shiavax Vakil busied himself drawing up a scheme for extended adult franchise. Now that he was no longer a trustee he was hopeful that the proposal would be accepted. "In the past every plan I suggested for the improvement of the community met with opposition simply because it emanated from me," he said without bitterness. From his window on the 16th floor one could see the tree tops of Malabar Hill and a stray bird circling in the dusk; its wings spanned the Towers below and an 18-month controversy on the disposal of the dead. A chapter had ended. "Sanity has to prevail sooner or later," said Vakil.

Shroff's Manifesto : Portrait of an Orthodox

It is the cardinal doctrine of my faith that the salvation of the community lies in the maintenance and preservation of the religious institutions which have been nurtured for decades and generations by sincere and dedicated Zoroastrians for the ultimate benefit of posterity. The institutions constitute the pivot round which has grown the history of the Parsee community in India.

Amongst these institutions, I reckon the eight *Atash Behrams*, the manifold *Adaryans* and the sacred towers of silence—which are symbolic of our link with the past.

To me, the towers of silence are not merely the sepulchres of the dead. They are the emblem of our religious traditions and of our unique philosophy of conduct, both for the living and for the dead.

I am conscious of the fact that my colleagues on the Board of Trustees are great stalwarts with years of dedicated public service behind them and my first and primary objective will be to secure their goodwill, to co-operate with them unhesitatingly and to assist them in the arduous task of rehabilitating the poor, the roofless and the less fortunate members of the community.

It is my firm conviction that it is only through complete harmony and respect for one another's opinions that smooth, effective and expeditious progress can be made and no efforts shall be spared by me to ensure that such harmony is speedily restored.

Fortunately in all the Trusts and institutions with which I have so far been associated, we have worked as a team and there has never been the least discord between my colleagues and myself.

For the last several years, I have worked as a Trustee of the Soonabai Hirji Agiary Trust at Gowalia Tank, Bombay, and the Jerbai Cawasji Dinshaw Darehmeher at Lonavla. I have been a Trustee of the Zoroastrian Physical Culture and Health League and, of late, I have been unanimously elected its President.

I am also a Trustee of the Avabai Wadia Agiary and the Mazagaon Zoroastrian Anjuman Darehmeher. Apart from these religious institutions, there are many other Trusts with which I am associated and I comfort myself with the thought that in not one of these institutions has there been any unpleasantness or re-primination and my association with all my colleagues has always been one of intimate personal friendship.

Having passed my law exams at 19, I had to wait for 2 years to enrol myself as an Advocate, since I had not completed 21. I then joined the firm of Messrs. Little & Co. and there signed my articles for the solicitor's exams, which I passed in 1960, having stood first in the exams and securing all the prizes. Three years later, I was admitted as a partner of Messrs. Little & Co. with which I have been associated for now more than 20 years.

Since my firm acted as Government Solicitors, I had the privilege of dealing with a large number of important cases on behalf of the Commissioner of Sales Tax, the Charity Commissioner and the Collector of Bombay. I have also had the privilege of representing large public corporations including the State Bank of India and the Life Insurance Corporation of India, both in the Supreme Court and in the High Court. In the Supreme Court, I had the good fortune of appearing with eminent Counsels like Mr. C. K. Daphtary, Attorney-General of India, and Mr. G. S. Pathak, till recently the Vice-President of India.

Without being presumptuous, I feel that my intimate knowledge of the practical working of large public trusts together with my training in commercial law will stand me in good stead in the Parsee Panchayat and will make it possible for me to recommend speedy and practical solutions to the many problems with which the Panchayat is confronted from day to day.

I was first appointed by the Bombay University as a Professor

of Post-Graduate studies in Law (LL.M.) in 1965 and since then I have, from time to time, been teaching groups of students who, after finishing their law examinations, desire to proceed for advanced training in specialized subjects like Commercial Law and Tax Law. I am proud of the fact that many of my students occupy senior executive posts in the Income-tax Department and in large business houses.

I have also been nominated by the Bombay University Senate to act as a Paper-Setter and Examiner for Commercial Law in Post Graduate (LL.M.) Examinations.

Having acted as a Solicitor for some leading Indian and foreign banks, I am familiar with the schemes for Small Scale Industries evolved by the Maharashtra Small Scale Industries Corporation and the Banks. If small groups of experienced Parsees like retired technicians or retired foremen can get together to establish small workshops, an institution like the Parsee Panchayat can provide great assistance like working capital, interest-free loans, marketing facilities and statistical data.

In course of time these modest workshops can provide the nucleus for extensive projects which can generate fresh resources for ploughing back into communal industries.

If a chain of provision stores are established on a co-operative basis, I believe it will be possible for us to rehabilitate retired Parsees who, having the will and the capacity to work and having dependants to maintain, suddenly find themselves without a job.

Pilot projects can first be established in those areas where the Parsee population is concentrated like Tardeo, Gowalia Tank, Colaba and Fort.

I believe that if such co-operative stores are established, the Parsee population would unhesitatingly support them. If, to these stores, home delivery services are added, even illiterate Parsees can find an opening for useful occupation.

With imagination and dynamic leadership, projects like these can

go a long way to reduce unemployment and eliminate the tragic spectacle of able-bodied Parsees begging on the streets of Bombay.

It has been my firm conviction that the tenets, rituals and traditions constitute the basic framework of Zoroastrianism as practised by the Parsee community and I would, therefore, work assiduously for the establishment of Barashnum Scheme in every region and area where the community is concentrated. The Scheme has proved a great success at Malcolm Baug in Jogeshwari and it is my earnest ambition to spread it in at least nine other fire temples in the city itself. Since a successful start has already been made nearly 5 years ago by the Parsee Panchayat, its implementation on a wider scale would not be difficult.

As regards the social condition of the community, it cannot be gainsaid that the Parsees suffer from the most chronic paucity of housing and the middle class, in particular, are tragic victims of spiralling inflation which has rendered it impossible for the younger generation to bring up a family in decent and hygienic conditions.

I believe it is possible, by proper co-ordination between the Parsee Panchayat and the other Parsee Trusts (which have surplus funds), to utilize the land available with the Panchayat for housing middle class Parsees. A beginning has already been made recently with the help of the Shirinbai Banaji Trust and if this process of collaboration is continued with other trusts, the situation can be altered substantially.

I approach my task in humility and with an open mind, and with no pretensions either of any deep religious study or of high administrative experience.

The preservation of the religious traditions, tenets and rituals, as practised by my forefathers, without modifications and the welfare of my community as a whole shall be the only touch-stone on which my activities as a Trustee shall be regulated.

(Text slightly abridged)

BOYS' TOWN

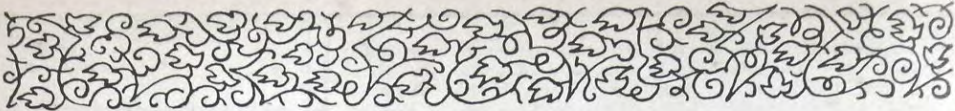
Public school, Nasik 2

CHOICE SCHOOLING FOR YOUR SON

Recognised as a Public School by Department of Education—for Indian Merit Scholars. Excellent Climate—All-round Education :

All Academic Subjects—
Technical Subjects : Radio and Wood-Work Technology, Farming—Training in Self-Government through Elected Boys' Office-bearers, Games—Physical Training—Daily Assembly with Congregational Prayers—Weekly intensive Zoroastrian—Geeta—Koran classes—Excellent Modern Kitchen and Dining Room facilities—Airy Dormitories. Moderate Fees. Concessions to Deserving Students.

APPLY TO PRINCIPAL FOR ADMISSION



Chemicals & Ferro Alloys Private Ltd

LIBERTY BUILDING, NEW MARINE LINES

BOMBAY 400 020

Phone : 256823
256866

GRAM: NONIONIC

TELEX: UNIFERO 011-3222

**With Best Compliments
From**

**DR. BECK & CO. (INDIA)
LIMITED**

Bombay • Pimpri • Calcutta



Photos by Farokh Reporter

An Area of Darkness

by Pervin Mahoney and Thrity Keeka

In Thakurwar's bustling commercial centre stands a solid, once handsome building well past its prime. Its dark staircase skirts the mammoth oven of a dingy bakery before reaching an iron-barred landing which blocks the entrance forbiddingly. Here women in faded dressing gowns and *eejars* confront the visitor with a barrage of greetings and questions. A strained expectancy in their voices betrays that new faces are rare. For the residents of the N.M. Petit Chawl are widows.

Built at the turn of the century through the munificence of various charitable trusts, to house Parsi widows, half a dozen such *Vidva Chawls* are dotted over the Bombay landscape. Hodiwalla Chawl, crumbling into dilapidation in Gunpowder Lane, Mazagaon, houses about twelve widows; once standing in a middle-class suburb, it is now a Parsi island on the fringes of dockland. A strangely rural building set in a large compound, like a once-grand villa going to seed, it shares

its isolation with an almost deserted *agary* opposite. A suddenly quiet lane off Tardeo leads to Murzban Colony, a group of one-storeyed blocks with a common reading-room and residents hailing each other from facing verandahs. Light and air filter down to the long gloomy corridors of Petit Chawl through five storeys of criss-cross wooden gratings covering the centre of the inner courtyard. And a naked bulb dispensing just enough light to see the darkness marks the dim entrance to the widows' quarters in the Wadia trust's Nowroz Baug, Parel. For the visitor coming around with gifts on auspicious days like Pateti, entering these blocks is like being adrift in a dismal backwater, bypassed by life.

Sixty-year-old Ratanbai Velati of Nowroz Baug *Vidva Chawl* recalled how she first arrived there in 1960. "I had no place to live in," she said simply. "My husband, who was a medical salesman, and I were staying in a building near Borivli. The build-

ing collapsed, so we had to move into the Panday Sanatorium where we stayed for eight years. During this time I lost my husband." As she has no children and no living relatives, except an unmarried sister who is a retired teacher, she applied to the Wadia office. "They sent me a postcard when a place became available," she recollected. "I wanted to settle in Gamadia Colony because it is more central, but they did not give me a room there." Another widow with two daughters and a young son had come to Petit Chawl in 1965 when the house in which she was a tenant fell down; she had heard of the chawl through a neighbour. Her husband, who used to work in a bakery, died in 1964, and she doesn't know where else they could possibly have gone. Other residents have arrived from places like Surat or Navsari.

New arrivals have to bring their own furniture, and memories of more spacious days are ever present: most rooms are crammed full of an assortment of be-

longings—towering four-posters, cavernous cupboards, chairs piled on easy-chairs. Some rooms are small enough to look over-full with just a bed, a cupboard and a chair, and their occupants hurriedly tidy away books and clothes to make room for visitors. But a walk along the connecting corridors reveals several near-empty rooms with no bed, just a mattress on the floor and a feeble kerosene stove. And a few rooms are entirely vacant.

"I get twenty rupees a month from *Jam-e-Jamshed* charities," Ratanbai calculated aloud. "I also used to get twenty rupees from Panday Sanatorium, but this has stopped because of some difficulties within the trust. I make another thirty or forty rupees doing small jobs for people in the colony—fetching milk from the Government booth, buying vegetables and other household things for some families. I also used to take some children to the primary school here," she gestured, "but since the school bus service started I don't do that any more. But I go to the school to pay the fees for those children whose parents work and can't find the time to go themselves.

"If I cook, I spend a little on vegetables or eggs; and forty paise goes on milk every day." Some-



"First I give Granny lunch, then I eat"

times she makes do with tea and bread; occasionally a generous neighbour passes on a bit to her. Fortunately she keeps good health so there are no medical expenses, though she had a cataract operation some time ago, and is at present being treated free for suspected hernia at the Parsi General Hospital.

"My day starts at 4.30 a.m. when I go and queue at the milk booth," added Ratanbai. "I fetch milk for about five families, distribute it, and by then it is 6.30." After attending to her personal chores and going to the market, it is time again for queuing for milk in the afternoon. That done, she has her lunch and rests. Evenings are spent either with neighbours from the colony or reading, which she is very fond of—"I have studied up to the sixth class" (the present pre-SSC). For this she borrows books and magazines from friends or from the free library in the colony.

No men are allowed to stay in these homes for bereaved women;

a resident's son can stay with her till he is eighteen, a daughter till she gets married. The comforts provided are minimal, but so is the rent. A room in Murzban Colony costs seven rupees a month; one in Nowroz Baug costs fifty paise, with no extra charges for electricity or water. Residents at Petit Chawl pay only the monthly light bill, amounting to about five rupees. Here the two bathrooms on each floor have no taps, so that all water has to be carried up as high as five storeys. Electric connexions cannot be given, allegedly because the wiring is too old, so that residents have to do without fans or irons. And because it is situated over a bakery, the rooms located above the oven become unbearably hot. Such a first-floor room is used as a study by residents' sons; one mother noted, "water placed there becomes hot enough for a bath."

Many widows quoted a monthly income of a hundred rupees, although they are helped along by individual donors occasionally



The comforts provided are minimal



'Khali, pi, ne majaa

handing round gifts of *sudrehs*, cash or food. The rooms of those who happen to be away are carefully pointed out so that the packet can be dropped through the ever-present iron-barred window. Sometimes the Time and Talents Club organizes a party; in Nowroz Baug kind neighbours from the Colony distribute clothes or sweets when there is a wedding or *navjot*, and often help the widows along with food, clothes or an occasional treat to the movies. But money is always short—and Ratanbai's parting question was whether our visit had anything to do with some charitable institution. "Some time ago a lady social worker had come here ... they come and go, but they don't do much."

Because of the housing shortage the Wadia Charities try and help widows with grown-up sons by transferring them to a low-rent flat in one of their colonies. However, a Petit Chawl resident claimed that many widows' sons had to sleep round the Bhika Behram well. "But if they are

studying, how can they manage?" she asked, looking worriedly at her own son, who is in his Inter-Commerce year.

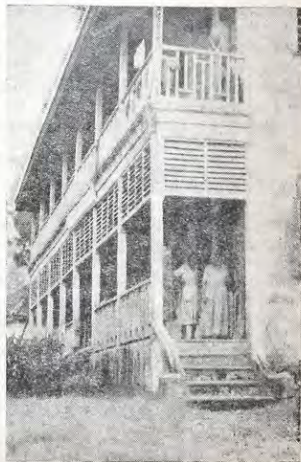
As for relatives, one occupant noted dryly, "They often don't pay a visit until we are dead. Then they put in an appearance, saying 'Oh, I'm her brother's daughter', and take the furniture away." A surprising number of widows had children living in Bombay; they lived in the chawls either because Mother-in-law couldn't get on with Daughter-in-law, or because of sheer lack of space—many residents' daughters were living with their in-laws. Yet, in spite of the lack of normal family life, the pervading atmosphere was one of overwhelming comradeship, a sense of community which has largely disappeared from urban living—so much so that when we asked how a blind resident managed to cope with her cooking and cleaning, an Irani woman (who was no relation of hers) replied, "First I give Granny lunch, then I eat."

Events of little consequence else-

where suddenly assume different proportions when they occur to the elderly women in their bleak, solitary rooms. When the eldest resident at Murzban Colony went to answer a visitor's knock, she fell down before she could unlock the door of her room. Immediately a hue and cry for help was raised by the other women. As anxious faces peered into the ill-lit room they saw the lady struggling to rise. She held on to the side of her four-poster bed and inched her way up. When she appeared at her door a few moments later, she was greeted with much relief. "You shouldn't keep your door locked," chided one neighbour, but the bent-up lady just smiled. And to her visitor's inquiry as to how she was faring, she replied wryly, "*Khali, pi, ne majaa*," (eating, drinking and making merry).

Without any prompting, most women talked gratefully of the benevolence of the trusts and of the older generation. But one spoke bitterly of having to queue to see the "shethji" to collect her monthly pittance of forty rupees, and a few lamented the smell in their lane or the darkness in their room.

In a land where the pavement-dweller aspires to the plastic sheet and the cardboard-and-corrugated-



Hodiwaila Chawl: On the fringes of dockland



Ms. Velati: "Money is always short"
(Photo by Ian Pinto)

iron hut, any roof over one's head is a blessing. However, side by side with the lack of modern sanitation, cooking and electric facilities in the chawls goes the fact that most of them stand on valuable land whose price has soared. Petit Chawl is situated in the heart of Bombay's business district where land would be snapped up for high-rent office buildings; Hodiwalla Chawl and Murzban Colony house a minute number of people in comparison to the land they occupy. If the trusts could act in unison, this real estate could be sold for multi-storied offices or flats and the money realized used to build more compact and comfortable accommodation elsewhere. This would permit a greater number of widows to be jointly housed in greater comfort—and the result would not need to be named "chawl".

Forum (Continued from page 15)

I am writing a book on the religion of the Parsis. To do this, I need help in obtaining books, magazine or newspaper articles, old letters and documents—any-

thing about the Parsis, from any point of view, from any date (preferably in English). If you have any old books or copies of Parsi newspapers (like *The Hindi Punch*, *The Parsi*, *The Young Zoroastrian*, *Journal of the Iranian Association*) lying about and which you do not want, please send them to the Jt. Hon. Secretaries, K.R. Cama Oriental Institute, 136 Bombay Samachar Marg, Fort, Bombay 400 023, who will then direct them to me in England. Thank you.

JOHN HINNELS
Dept. of Comparative Religion,
University of Manchester.

Unfair

Most people are carnivorous i.e. non-vegetarian. They kill and eat all kinds of animals throughout their life. Yet at the end of their lives they do not wish to offer even their dead bodies as food to carnivorous animals or birds. This is, to say the least, very selfish behaviour on the part of non-vegetarians.

These non-vegetarians want to be buried or cremated. Burial not only occupies several hectares of land but also pollutes it. The body is eaten by bacteria—a diminutive form of life. There should, therefore, be no objection if vultures, a larger form of life, eat dead bodies. One may call them "big bacteria".

Cremation pollutes the air, especially if the body is burnt electrically. Timber is definitely very costly for the poor Indian and the flaws of an electric crematorium are ably brought out in your September 1974 issue of *Parsiana* (Letters' Column). At present, India loses thousands of tons of valuable timber at burning ghats. On the other hand *dokh-manashini* has many advantages: it does not require a coffin, costly clothes, or timber for burning; it leaves behind no air pollution, no ashes, no half-burnt bodies for disposal.

K. D. CHARGEMAN

Vulture Monarchus

As I push my way through the horde of competing dinner seat-snatchers at weddings and nav-

jotes, I am suddenly illumined, and tremendously enlightened. For I have at last found the answer to that perplexing question, "Why do Parsis dispose of their corpses in a manner so conducive to the continued survival of *vultura monarchus*?" Out of charity? I think not! Because they are enthusiastic ornithologists? I don't think so. Because they want to be 'different'? No. It is because they respect, because they themselves invariably are, gluttons—even if the glutton in question has a hooked beak, a repulsively bald head, a scrawny neck, and a pair of monstrous wings.

FARROKH V. IRANI

"Are Parsis Rich?"

In your interview feature "Are Parsis Rich?" (November, *Parsiana*) I am quoted as saying that 80 per cent of Parsis are rich. What I had stated was that 80 per cent of Parsis are middle-class.

ADAR CAMA

Y.C.Z.A.

(Young Collegians Zoroastrian Association.)

Join, and make friends at our regular weekly functions including:—

Our Dances, Picnics, Whist Drives, Games, Film Shows, Hikes and Tours.

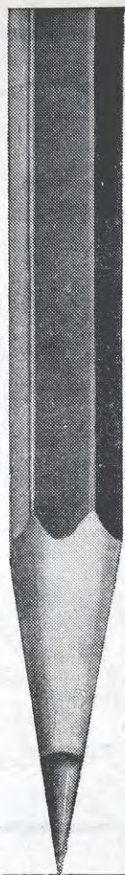
Religious lectures, Shah Nama Recitals and Literary / Musical circles.

Borrow from our Book Fund Library texts on Arts, Science, Law, Commerce, Engineering and Medicine at nominal charges and no deposits.

For further details contact :

Mrs. H. N. Modi,

Telephone No. 355241
Medi Lodge, 13, Vachha Gandhi Road, Gamdevi, Bombay-400 007



OUR ORDER BOOKS HAVE A STORY TO TELL

...SOME OF INDIA'S
WELL-KNOWN COMPANIES
ARE OUR CLIENTS

Employing 'Ahura' Process Chemicals has been found to be highly advantageous to manufacturers of end products.

Their uniform high quality and rigid adherence to specification and standards have a marked significance in the totality of good results achieved and such factors have contributed to Ahura's popularity.

The wide range of nationwide industries that thrive on Ahura Process Chemicals fittingly unveil Ahura's national stature as a manufacturer of outstanding merit.



38 YEARS OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE ENSURE UNQUESTIONABLE QUALITY.

AHURA CHEMICAL PRODUCTS PVT. LTD.

84, Sion Road, Sion East, Bombay 400 022. Phone: 473351.
Grams: AHURACHEM. Telex: 011-3917.

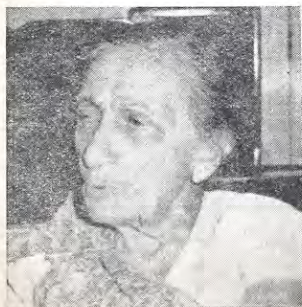
Graphic-A-74

Would you Marry out of the Community?

Interviews by Feroza Paymaster

One characteristic of an urban and secular society is the tendency toward inter-communal marriages. In 1971 every seventh day a Parsi married a non-Parsi; in 1972-73, it was every sixth day. In almost every Parsi family a relative, close or distant, has married out of the community. In the cases where there has been strong opposition to such marriages, personal relations have undergone a severe strain. Those who have reluctantly accepted inter-marriages have often done so with a sense of guilt, if not shame, and the handful that have welcomed such unions are considered heretics.

Parsi institutions have not reacted to the phenomenon. Instead of taking steps to absorb the new entrants into the fold, they have resisted any proposals for change. The children of women who marry out are still not considered Parsis, the non-Parsi spouses cannot enter religious institutions and are barred from attending prayers. As a result a son or daughter's decision to marry out is an agonizing one for the parents. And as long as the restrictions exist people who can be an asset to the community will continue to be treated as outcasts.



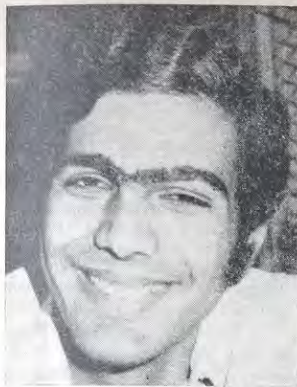
Dr. Avabai Dodhi, 86, Retired

"I don't think it matters. Those who want to can marry outside. Members of my own family have done so. I feel we should let people do what they like. Community *javani hashe to jashe*, and vice-versa. Nothing is going to happen because we say or write anything."

Ms Dodhi feels "If the non-Parsi wife chooses to come into the religion, we should let her. It is wrong to alienate anybody." Similarly for the children of inter-

marriages she says. "Why is a man sanctified that his children only should be allowed in, and not the woman's. The male is no superior. Both are equal in the sight of God."

Inbreeding she feels does not adversely affect the community. "We are just as good or bad as the others. In my grandfather's time, things were different. There was religious fervour, now Parsis go to the fire temple only once or twice a year. The ceremonies for the dead too have been curtailed."



Jehanbux Chichgar, 23, Medical Student

"No, I believe it is the duty of Parsi men and women to propagate the race. I feel I would marry a Parsi. However, if I did like someone who was a non-Parsi, I would go ahead." His parents' reaction to this would be "very hostile indeed" says Jehanbux. "They sort of told me I would have to marry a Parsi.

"Genetically, at this stage, it would be better to marry outside the community. Most marriages are intra-family ones, everybody is a third or fourth cousin. The incidence of first and second cousins marrying is also very high." As

a result, hereditary diseases are very common, he says. On the other hand if people keep marrying out, there is danger of the community becoming extinct, Jehanbux adds. "Our death rate is higher than our birth rate and we are dwindling in number." The remedy, he feels is to accept the children of Parsi girls married out into the community and the religion. "We should also accept the non-Parsi spouses into the community. I am against fire temples only for Parsis. Anybody who wants to should be allowed. They are not desecrating the place."



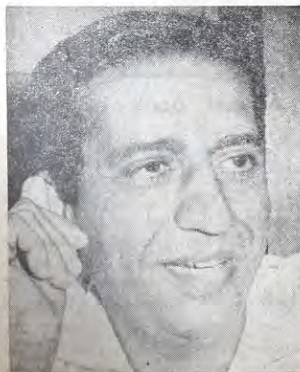
Siloo Limboowalla, 41, Proprietor, Gifts and Things

"I wouldn't mind. Why should we feel others are different. If two people can think alike, it is more important. It just so happens that my better half is a Parsi." If she had married out, Ms Limboowalla's parents would have disapproved initially. "I think our community is getting more liberal-minded about inter-marriages though," she notes.

"Genetically they say it makes a difference. First cousin marriages

may not be very healthy. Fresh blood should come in."

To offset the decline in population, Ms Limboowalla feels, "we could bring up the women's children in our religion." She favours conversion. "I don't see what is wrong with accepting converts. If we feel that our religion is purer, we are labouring under a delusion. What our religion needs is better understanding."



Dhunjishaw Billimoria, 33, Clerk, G. Claridge

"No, I don't think our views could meet. Disputes would go on regarding food, caste, religion, etc. Moreover after a baby is born, the non-Parsi wife might want to bring up the child in her own religion." Billimoria considers it his duty to marry within the community, "so that the girls will not find it necessary to marry out."

If he married out his parents would have opposed it initially, "but after some years or following the birth of a child they would be reconciled. I have seen so many instances when due to sickness or some other reason when the couple need help the

family is reunited and relations become normal.

"According to our rules, the child of a Parsi father would be considered a Parsi. A child born of a Parsi mother and non-Parsi father I would consider half-Parsi." Non-Parsi spouses should not be accepted as they follow other religions, he feels the priests will not allow it.

If Parsis marry out, the community that came from Iran will not remain, "there will be mixed-blood." Marrying in or out of the community does not make a difference genetically, Billimoria says, "It depends on the health of the mother and the climate."



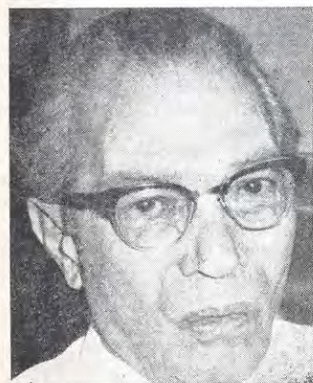
Pervin Zend, 38, Housewife

"Yes, I would marry out provided I can be away from my in-laws and my family. Marital problems start with the in-laws." If Ms Zend had married a non-Parsi, her family would have disowned her. "Nobody would have opposed my action more strongly than my father," she said, recalling her courtship days, when her father was scared her husband-to-be was a Mohammedan because of his name.

On the whole, however, Ms Zend feels one is better off marrying within the community. "If there is any trouble, your own people are there to help you. Other religions are so different, it would be difficult to convert."

By marrying within the community the children are brought up as Zoroastrians, thereby preventing our numbers from dwindling so rapidly. "If ours was a community which took in people, like the Christians and the Muslims, it would have been alright." The least we can do on that score she says, is give a woman married to a non-Parsi the right to have her child's *navjot* performed, and accept the child into the community. "Converts should be accepted, when inter-marriages occur."

As for the ban on non-Parsis entering fire temples, Ms Zend says, "I feel it is wrong. There is one Almighty who has created us all, so there should not be any discrimination."



Dr. Fredoon Antia, Age not given, Retired, Cement Marketing Company of India

"Yes of course if I had fallen in love with somebody outside the community I would have. But it would have created problems with my parents. They were deeply religious and orthodox."

In the present social set-up inter-marriages appear to be inevitable, and Parsis "would have to accept them as such" says Antia. "There is so much communication between young people belonging to different communities that it is not possible to isolate them."

If inter-marriages are freely permitted, he feels, given "the small number of Parsis and the relative strength of other communities, Parsis cannot survive as

a group for long. The total number in India I'm told has already dwindled from 100,000 to 91,000 between 1961 and 1971—a 1 per cent drop every year. I don't see how in the midst of 590 million which are estimated to number at least 900 million by the turn of the century, we can continue to survive as a community if the present restrictions continue."

The answer Antia feels is proselytization, wherever it is felt that the candidate is going to be "an asset to the community. Of course where *either* parent is a Parsi Zoroastrian no question should arise in admitting the children to the Zoroastrian faith. They should *ipso facto* be considered Parsi Zoroastrians."



Dolly Mehta, 23, Accounts Assistant, Bank of Baroda

"If I find a smart boy from my own community, I would prefer a Parsi. My parents would be dead against my marrying out. My father is very strict, and neither he nor my mother would accept it." The major drawback to inter-marriage, Dolly says, is that "our community would disappear in no time, especially since we do not accept any converts." This is because when the Parsis landed at Sanjan, they promised the Maharaja that they would not

convert the local people, she says, and the custom has since persisted. "If a girl marries a Parsi boy, why can't she be accepted into the community and the religion? A girl should accept her husband's faith." Children of inter-marriages Dolly says "are cleverer and more intelligent. Science has proved that inbreeding causes more diseases and results in a greater number of mentally retarded and deformed children."

SHAPOORJI PALLONJI & CO., PVT. LTD.

Building Contractors & Civil Engineers

Registered Office :

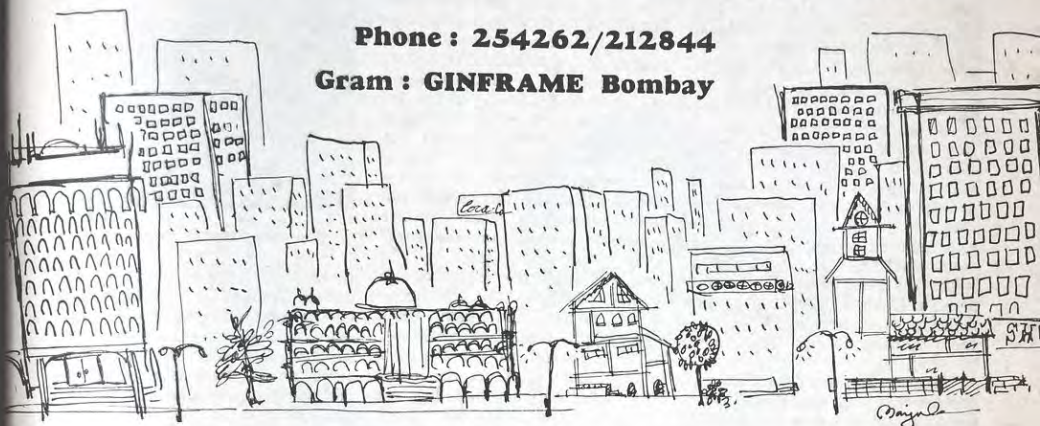
70, Meadows Street,
Fort, Bombay-400 001

Administrative Office :

New India Centre
17, Cooperage Road,
Fort, Bombay-400 001

Phone : 254262/212844

Gram : GINFRAME Bombay



NATIONAL PEROXIDE LIMITED BOMBAY

Manufacturers of:

HYDROGEN PEROXIDE

Ideal bleaching agent for cotton textiles, wool, synthetic fibres.

Useful oxidising agent for chemical reactions.

Economical and permanent bleaching agent for writing and printing paper, newsprint pulp and jute.

Bleaching and sterilising agent in cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, food and fermentation industries.

SODIUM PERBORATE

Safe permanent and most effective bleaching and whitening agent for cotton, wool, linen and rayon fabrics when mixed with domestic and industrial detergent powders (15 to 20 per cent) and used at a temperature of 60°C to 90°C.

Used as an ingredient of bleaching creams, lotions, deodorizers, hair bleachers, dentifrices and mouth washes. Used in electroplating.

Sole Selling Agents :

IMKEMEX INDIA LIMITED

**AHMEDABAD • BOMBAY • CALCUTTA
DELHI • KANPUR • MADRAS**

FIRE AND ICE

by Geeta Doctor

"There was such a terrible blizzard, we were nearly blown off," said Naazneen Katrak describing the great moment when the first Indian women's expedition to Hanuman peak, finally stood on top of the 9,930 foot summit. "We were there only for about twenty minutes" she said, "We put up the flag and had some toffees and hot coffee, while the Sherpas, who are very superstitious, made some offerings of *agarbatties* and coconuts to the spirit of the mountain." For Naazneen who was the youngest of the group, Hanuman peak marked a high point in her mountaineering career. To crown it she has been selected by Commander Kohli of the Everest expedition to go to Europe for further training in ice and snow climbing.

"People often come and tell my parents that they should not allow me to go off like this, but it does not bother them at all," said Naazneen. Her father, Maneck, is an ex-military officer and obviously encouraged her in pursuing an active life for she was already keenly interested in cycling and swimming before she began her mountain climbing career by joining the "Adventurers and Mountaineering Society" at St. Xavier's College.

"All we needed in those days were a good pair of shoes with a firm grip. We explored the Ambarnath Hills and the Sayadri Mountains, usually during the rainy season when there are plenty of streams." Later she did a course in basic mountaineering and rock climbing under K. R. S. Mani in the Garwal Himalayas. She remembered the excitement of seeing her first bit of snow on the way to the Pindari Glacier. "There were about twenty of us and when we came to this patch of snow we all rushed to it and rolled about and started making snowballs. When Naazneen was first asked to join the expedition to Hanuman Peak last year she was torn between whether to take a drop or not in her studies, but

her parents encouraged her to go ahead.

"Two days before, it didn't seem as though we would ever go. We had to go around collecting donations and as I was "Equipment-in-charge" there were mountains of stuff to be packed. We had to have two layers of windproofs and special feather coats, which are lined with feathers of a certain duck, that would protect us against the extreme cold. Then of course there was all our equipment for climbing, the ice axes and clubs as well as the food we would be carrying for the trip." They went by train up to Joshinath and then by truck up to Lata village. "We had about twenty porters and thirty goats to carry all our stuff. We had two Nepalese guides with us. We have to treat them as one of the members. I can only say that they are the most perfect gentlemen. Very honest and truthful and so kind! They would help us in so many ways. They are the only ones who know the track. They would tell us what weather to expect. If it was snowing they would even help us to tie our laces. Though of course they are very shy."

"Hanuman Peak is not a very imposing peak," explained Naazneen, "but you have to go right up an ice wall to reach it." After setting up their base camp, at which they spent five days getting acclimatised and waiting for the weather to clear, they went up to Camp Two. "Our last camp was on a tiny ridge," said Naazneen. There were three of us, the leader, the deputy leader and myself. It was terribly cold and we kept ourselves warm with soup and Bournvita. The next day we started for the peak. Our leader came with us for about fifty yards but then she felt that it was better that she went back. She was generous enough to allow us to go on. It was terribly tiring and pretty cold. It was blowing with such force that we expected to be swept off at any moment.

"We were all in a fantastic mood when we got back. While you're



Naazneen: "I become very cool."

there you only feel relief and a certain amount of satisfaction of having reached your goal. But when we met the others we were so happy, so eager to share our achievement, there is a tremendous sense of excitement. We all suffered from an attack of snow blindness by the time we came down. I had taken my goggles off for only a few minutes but that was enough. I must have got the mildest attack but it was still pretty bad." The best part of going up seemed to be coming down, the way Naazneen describes it. "It's so cold up there. You always feel like coming back. You enjoy it, in fact you sometimes long for it. After twenty days without a bath it is fantastic to be able to have one. I had to use about 18 buckets of hot water to wash myself out. There were thick layers of dirt.

"Besides," she went on, "there are small things which worry you all the time. High altitude sickness for instance. Some people get affected by the height and start behaving in an unpredictable manner. I once had a tent partner who was a very nice person but one night she suddenly became violent. She just sat up and started screaming at me. She took my sleeping bag and my rucksack and threw everything out of the tent." Naazneen maintained that she was not given to such bouts

(Continued on page 40, col. 2)



The world had nothing before it got zero

India introduced the concept. The Sanskrit name for the figure was Śūnya meaning void. India was the first to use it in the modern form. The earliest inscription dates back to 800 A.D. But there is evidence in Indian scriptures that the zero was used centuries before.

In this and other spheres Indian talents have enriched the world. We at L&T try to continue the tradition by enriching life through industrial development. We design, manufacture and instal plant and equipment for every vital industry—steel, cement, fertilizer, paper and pulp, nuclear. Leading companies like Toyo Engineering, Snam Progetti, Humphreys and Glasgow, Davy Powergas have called on us for complete engineering, manufacturing and construction services in and outside India.

Who are we? A major industrial complex strategically located to serve the developing world. The success of our service lies in the individual talents of over 10,000 people in our network of offices all over India.

LARSEN & TOUBRO LIMITED
P. O. Box 278, Bombay 400 038



"MARGINAL MEN"

by Pervin Mahoney

There is a slightly uneasy feeling about belonging to a minority which is being dissected as an agent for social change. In *The Parsees in India* by Eckehard Kulke* the feeling is heightened because all the achievements of the Parsis are firmly catalogued in the past tense. So, Kulke's Parsi reader muses apprehensively, the dinosaur, the dodo and me.

The 300-page study by the German sociologist from Freiburg University is meticulously and extensively researched. Founded on three years "in the field" plus a five month stint in London to acquire a working knowledge of Gujarati, it is backed by a 14-page bibliography, 35 statistical tables and 967 footnotes. Quoting from private correspondences, minutes of meetings, journals and biographies, Kulke supplies a wealth of details about well-known figures and little-known movements. These range from the call for the foundation of Parsistan, an autonomous 1,000-square-mile state around Navsari, to the fact that it was in a Parsi house that a Muslim woman first publicly removed her purdah.

The greatest obstacle to the general reader is the heavily academic style, enlivened only by masterpieces of clumsy English like "Saklatvala, who was just as much just as little at home in England as India..." Between this interesting but highbrow volume and the comicbook life of Zoroaster, there's still room for a readable book on the Parsis.

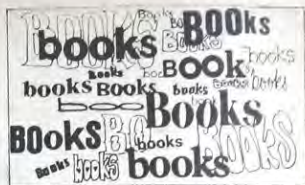
Still, thoroughness must be praised, even when slightly overdone, and Kulke is nothing if not thorough. He begins where the Parsis began—with Zoroaster and Iran's Sassanian dynasty, moves with the Parsis to the West coast of India, and discusses how the Parsis were helped to gain their leading position in British India by certain factors in Zoroastrianism—the stress laid on good works as against contemplating

one's navel, the relative lack of taboos on entering certain occupations and the importance of rational, ethical behaviour.

After analysing the influences which enabled innovators like the Tatas and the Wadias and key political and social reformers like Dadabhai Naoroji, Sorabjee Bengalee and Pherozeshah Mehta to flourish, Kulke ends on a sober note: although the community still provides public figures such as Minoo Masani and Homi Sethna, its existence is in danger from within itself because of a declining population and an impoverished middle-class.

The division of the book reflects the emphasis Kulke lays on the position of the Parsis at the time of the Raj. Starting as small traders and go-betweens who mediated between the strange ways of the foreigner and the customs of the dark hinterland, Parsis soon expanded into the China trade, ship-building, banking, starting the first steam-powered cotton mill, and founding the iron and steel industry. Kulke's analysis of the reasons why Parsis became India's first modern entrepreneurs is penetrating. Business contact with the British led to a rise in social status. Hindu traders and merchants occupied the third rung of the caste ladder—Vaishyas, but Parsi entrepreneurs moved into first place in Parsi society; this was reflected even in the make-up of the Panchayat. More and more Parsis acquired the qualifications necessary for the new occupations: administration and commerce. Education led to a desire for reforms, and the gamut tackled was breathtaking. Dadabhai Naoroji listed them: "Female education, free association of women with men, ... infant schools, ... abolition of child marriages, remarriage of widows among Hindus ... were some of the problems tackled ... such were the first fruits of the English education given at the Elphinstone College."

On their side, the British also aimed, in the words of Lord Macaulay, at bringing up a class



"who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect." Ironically, this was destined to work against British political interests, because education and social reform created the desire for Independence. It also complicated the Parsi identity crisis: from it stems the sad alienation to things Indian felt by Parsis till today. Kulke fits Parsis into the concept of "marginal men": hybrids, with roots divided between India, Iran and England. He explains the work of reformers and innovators like Naoroji and Jamsetjee Tata by theorizing that they had the insight of the member coupled with the critical attitude of the outsider. This explanation of facts by a theory makes for interesting sociology. But because Kulke's study is concerned largely with the Victorian and Edwardian eras, he writes of the Parsis' identity crisis in academic terms. He is not really able to convey how this alienation has stamped every aspect of life—from the Gujarati-English mixture that is Parsi-Gujarati to the young Parsi girl who feels more comfortable in a mini-skirt than a sari.

Oddly, although the period of British rule occupies the most space (and, therefore, the nationalist movement too figures largely), Kulke does not summarise the different strands which made up the nationalist movement. The non-Indian reader is left to fend for himself, with oblique allusions to Gandhi and Mehta and the Congress, instead of a helpful chronological account.

Kulke's ability to condense a vast amount of information and present it as a concise history is best seen in his analyses of institutions like the Press and the Panchayat. Tracing the growth of the Panchayat from an 18th

**The Parsees in India: A Minority as Agent of Social Change*, Vikas Publishing House, Bombay, pages 300; price Rs 50.

century institution of wealthy laymen which was meant to give stability to the growing Parsi community in Bombay, he charts the opposition to it in the mid-1800s by such reformers as Naoroji, Sorabji Bengalee, Manekjee Cursetjee, K. R. Cama and D. F. Karaka, and analyses what is today left of its authority: the administration of charitable foundations. The 1964 Panchayat report shows it to have movable assets worth Rs. 58,246,526 and property worth Rs. 37,467,477 (including the R. N. and N. N. Wadia foundations). With over 200 employees, it administers schools, housing projects and orphanages, advances credit and scholarships, and helps poor Parsis with the cost of religious ceremonies: "Such a comprehensive public welfare system... does not have to shun comparison with a modern welfare state."

The section on the Panchayat is one of the few areas where Kulke doesn't remain content with history but confronts contemporary problems too. "A large number of donations... were rather aimed at a direct alleviation of need than at a real rehabilitation of those who had become needy... as a result, a growing number of impoverished, formerly middle-class Parsis are dependent on the charities... the necessity of trying to improve their lot on their own is withheld from them... at the beginning of this century, primarily widows and half-orphans were helped by the Panchayat. In 1940, however, this group of persons constituted 25 per cent of those receiving aid while 33 per cent were complete families. Just this picture of a community consisting of a few generous Maecenas and a majority of matriculated or graduated welfare recipients lulled to sleep by charities was what N. M. Wadia had in mind about the turn of the century when he did not allow his 15 million rupee endowment to come to the community, for which he found little understanding among some of his fellow believers. The complaint that the dynamics and spirit of the founding years may have been lost to the community is thus certainly not without a real justification." Where do we go from here?

Kulke's historical analyses of those areas in which Parsis have proved particularly progressive—such as the divorce law and the press—show that our best institutions stem from our 19th century liberal reformers. Now that liberalism finds it difficult to make headway against a largely conservative leadership, our institutions show signs of stagnation. Our schools were in the forefront when they were founded. A few decades later they were out of date. Now they are antiquated. With upper-class Parsis sending their children to the best Government or private Christian schools, most Parsi schools have become charitable institutions, managed by trustees unqualified in education. Apart from J. N. Tata's Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore, no concessions have been made to the 20th century.

Occasionally Kulke doesn't follow a problem through to modern times. His explanation of why no anti-Parsi feeling, similar to anti-Semitism, has ever occurred is sharp and detailed but fails to mention current events: if economic and population pressures mount, Shiv Sena-type sentiments might well explode. And sometimes one just feels swamped by the book's sociological jargon. To explain the priesthood's loss in status Kulke mobilises an army of abstractions—urbanisation, migration, social mobility. But these trends have shown themselves all over the world, and Christian priests have certainly not suffered an equivalent loss in status in Western countries.

In spite of being printed in Germany the book is distinguished by an amazing number of misprints. More surprisingly, there are some basic factual mistakes as when Kulke says that the ruling (passed by an Anjuman meeting in 1905) is still valid that "only that person is a Parsee whose parents are both Parsees". In the landmark case of *Petit vs. Jijibhai* in 1908, the Bombay High Court ruled that only the father has to be a Parsi.

On the whole, however, *The Parsees in India* is marked by precise documentation, and conclusions always based on given evidence—no windy assertions. The other side of this coin is that

Kulke is meticulous to cold-bloodedness. We never glean which facets of the community he has enjoyed and which loathed. Even though some of the subjects of his character-sketches of outstanding Parsis were nonconformists he hardly ever writes of them affectionately or familiarly or with any choice detail which would vivify them. All the life has somehow disappeared from this extensively tabulated study. An outsider would better sense the exact flavour of the Parsi-British relationship by seeing the ubiquitous portrait of Queen Victoria in a Parsi home than by reading all the expressions of loyalty which Kulke quotes.

You'll always look smart
Shapely & elegant...
You feel comfortable
and yet free...
When you
SHAPE YOUR FIGURE...
With



Gurle Panty
Bra sweeto
Stretch strap

Made
From
Imported
Stretch
Fabric

**FOR REDUCING
STOMACH & HIPS!
USEFUL AFTER
MATERNITY**

Per Piece
GURD. 35-90 GURD. 33-90 ABD. BELT 29-00

V. P. P. Order executed.
Send your waist
Measurement with order.

Mrs. K. R. VITHAL
13 Kitchen Garden Lane, Bombay 2



Ms Mary Clubwalla Jadhav

In memoriam

Few women have such distinguished records of social service as Ms Mary Clubwalla Jadhav. Her death at the age of 66 on 6th February at the Bombay Hospital deprived the country of one of its stalwart women. Geeta Doctor, who interviewed Ms Clubwalla Jadhav for our October 1973 issue, writes of the last days.

In the end there were only roses. They filled the room where her body lay in state. She was not a political personality, nor a leader of the masses, but when she died, people came in the hundreds, the well-to-do she had worked with, but mainly the poor she had worked for. They came bringing roses which filled her room and overflowed into the verandahs and lined the road all the way to the cemetery at Royapuram where she was buried.

It was an emotional farewell; when Subhalakshmi, the golden throated singer of the South sang a short hymn at her bier, not a person withheld their tears; it was a long farewell to a woman who had triumphed through her work, her dedication and her suffering. When her body was lowered into the grave, prayers from the Hindu, Christian and Muslim faiths were recited along with the traditional Parsi prayers. The ashes of her only son who died a year ago were sprinkled over it, thus fulfilling her last wish.

When she lay gravely ill at the Bombay Hospital, a leg and a portion of her hip removed, riddled with cancer, it seemed that

thoughts of her son, whose death she had born so stoically only a year ago, came back to her with painful intensity. His photographs filled one corner of the sick room. A few days after the operation, prayers were said to mark the first anniversary of his death. Never had she seemed so unlike herself, not so much sunk in pain, which was there and to be expected, but sunk into an utter weariness for life. That massive will to live which had shaped the wills of so many others to share her vision of total dedication to the service of the needy, lay completely exhausted and spent. She still responded to visitors and even smiled when well-meaning friends enthusiastically demonstrated how she would soon be making good use of the wheelchair and other walking aids that stood in one corner of her room. She sometimes joked about her condition, "I have become much lighter now," she said, and concluded that having become a truly handicapped person she would be able to collect more money for her cause.

It was a different Mary Clubwalla Jadhav however who, only a month back in Madras, had received a long line of well-wishers who had come to pay their respects before she left for her operation. She sat in her bedroom surrounded by a semi-circle of guests who would be promptly served with a cup of coffee, while she talked of some matter of common interest. For a while, members of a prominent Chettiar family (a leading business community in the South) were sitting in the room and she recalled with evident enjoyment how she had first met the present Rajah of Chettinad while she was a young girl in Ooty. "I was a tomboy in those days" she said. "Everyday I went out with my gang and we would see the Rajah, who as a boy would come to Ooty every summer, sit-



Sheheryar Kaosji

ting and watching us from a wall. He was very quiet and shy, so one day I beckoned to him to join us. He was so surprised—but he came and from that time onwards we became very good friends."

As each person finished the audience, they would go up to Ms Clubwalla Jadhav and kiss her on both cheeks. Some of the women who had sat silent throughout the interview would kiss her several times as though to make up for the lack of other communication. Ms Clubwalla Jadhav, who was notoriously allergic to strong perfumes and scents bore all this affection with an easy grace. "That was the wife of one of the leading DMK ministers," she whispered after a particularly silent and demonstrative lady had departed. "I have never had anything to do with politics and yet all these people come and shower their affection on me," she remarked. To others she spoke of her plans for the future. Only once did she wonder whether she would come back alive, but at that time there did not seem any doubt that she would.

Official honours came to her till the very end. In the last fortnight of her life she learnt that she had been named for a Padma Vibhushan during the Republic Day honours. She had always felt pleased at these tokens of recognition but towards the end even these seemed to hold no meaning. "Who is there to see all these awards?" she asked. Perhaps they will indeed be forgotten, and the several citations lie gathering

dust on some mantlepiece, but her name will remain synonymous with all that the human spirit can will, and through this, achieve.

Died: Sheheryar Kaoosji, 64, outspoken critic of the Towers of Silence and Assistant Secretary cum Administrative Officer of the Zoroastrian Parsi Anjuman of Secunderabad and Hyderabad; sixteen days after an ulcer operation in the Osmania Hospital at Hyderabad on December 25.

Former Principal of the Government School for the Blind, Deaf and Dumb, Mr. Kaoosji was awarded the National Award for teachers in 1960, the year the Government first instituted the award. He was also a recipient of the Colombo Plan Fellowship and travelled to Australia to study the workings of the social services there with particular reference to the blind and physically handicapped.

Born in Hyderabad, Mr. Kaoosji studied at the St. George's Grammar School and the All Saint's High School. He graduated from Osmania University in 1936 and entered the Education Services of

the Nizam's Government the next year.

Mr. Kaoosji was a scholar of religion and was engaged in translating the *Gathas* into Urdu at the time of his death. On *Moharram*, he was often invited to lecture on Islam and Muslim history.

After retiring from the blind school in 1966, he took up the Anjuman position and spearheaded the drive for reforms in the customs and ceremonies pertaining to the disposal of the dead. His efforts to permit burial on the *dokhma* grounds or to have a separate plot allocated for burial failed, though a majority of the Anjuman members, in a poll conducted by the Anjuman, favoured the second alternative. As a result he was buried in the *Parsi aramghah* at Nizamabad, with the priests of the twin cities refusing to say the necessary funeral prayers.

He is survived by his wife Parvis, two sons Yezdyar and Bakthyar and daughter Ms Nasreen Patel.

Died: Ms Threaty Jalbhai Dastur, 65, former president of the Uganda

Council of Women and an active social worker; of a heart attack in Vancouver, Canada, December 10.

"She was always the first person sought for in almost all fund raising campaigns," noted an obituary published by the Zoroastrian Society of British Vancouver. "When the Congo passed through turbulent times, scores of refugees came to Kampala, haggard, despondent and semi-dead. Threaty-mai left everything and took upon herself a twelve-hour-a-day voluntary job to extend a helping hand in organizing and endeavouring to ameliorate the pitiful condition of these unfortunate refugees." She was a member of the Executive Committee of the Indian Women's Association as well as its honorary treasurer and also ran a nursery school. Among the other organizations she served were the Family Planning Association—which she represented at the 17th International Conference held in New Delhi, the Salvation Army, the Women's Corona Society and the YWCA.

Ms Dastur was born in Colombo, Ceylon and received her early

Parsiana

More than ever before events and personalities are radically changing the fortunes of the Parsi Community. To keep pace with these developments *Parsiana* focuses in each issue on the social, economic, cultural, religious and political happenings in the community. For professional coverage and analysis subscribe today. (Cheques payable to Parsiana).

To Parsiana,

Post Box 892, G.P.O., Bombay 400 001.

Please send me *Parsiana* by subscription at substantial savings over the single copy price of Rs. 3/- as indicated below:

☐ One year Rs 30 (save Rs 6)

Foreign Air Sea

U.S.A. ☐ \$11 or Rs 75 ☐ \$6 or Rs 35

U.K. ☐ £3.50 or Rs 60 ☐ £2.50 or Rs 35

Name

Address

City

Post Code

Occupation (optional)

Date

Signature

☐ Please send a gift subscription on my behalf.

My name

Address

Parsiana is on sale at :

Fareedon and Burjor Sandalwood Shop, Princess Street, Karani Booksellers, Sir P. Mehta Road ; K. Bomanji and Sons Sandalwood Shop next to Dadyseth Agiary, Flora Fountain ; Rezasha, Grant Road ; Nalanda Book Shop, Taj Mahal Hotel ; Sahib Singh and Sons Chemists, Veer Nariman Road ; Warden Road Bookshop next to Touche ; Welworth Dept. Store, Peddar Road ; Taj Book Shop, Taj Mahal Hotel ; Swabal Stores, Colaba Causeway ; Danai Bookshop, Air-India Building, Nariman Point ; Manneys Booksellers, Poona and at other stalls and bookshops throughout Bombay.

education there. Her parents, Khurshedji and Avabai Bhagulia were a prosperous business family. In 1921 they left Ceylon to settle in India. Eight years later she married Jalbhai Fakirji Dastur, a businessman in Uganda whose brother, Peshotan, was one of the first Parsis to go to that African state.

At first the couple were stationed in Masaka where Ms Dastur served on the education board and took great interest in the welfare, and education of the Asian and African communities. In 1946 the family moved to Kampala. Aside from the social work she performed here, she helped her husband's business, maintaining the account books and also raising her three children.

When Uganda's xenophobic President Idi Amin ordered the expulsion of all people of Asian origin in August 1972, the Dasturs, like many others, had to leave their life's work and property behind and seek shelter elsewhere. They opted for Canada.

Despite the misfortune, Ms Dastur was "always cheerful and was a great asset to our community in Vancouver," noted the association's condolence pamphlet.

The Dasturs had planned to visit Bombay on December 24, 1974 for a grandchild's Navjot. But twelve days before she developed a pain in her chest and was rushed to the St. Paul's Hospital where she succumbed to a heart attack. She is survived by her husband, a son, Nanu, and two daughters, Ms Piroja Amrolia and Ms Rhoda Mehta.

Ice (Continued from page 34)

of erratic behaviour but became, on the contrary, very calm. "I am pretty hot tempered when I am here," she confessed, "but when I go up to the mountains I become very cool."

Her sea level temper was evident when during a recent political demonstration she grappled with a pickpocket outside Marine Lines Station. "I grabbed hold of him the moment I felt that he had flicked my purse. We both struggled but he knocked me against the wall. There was a *morcha* going down the road that day and in all the confusion he managed to escape." She did not give up, however, but went to the Police Station only to find that they were totally indifferent. "I

then decided to go to the Press, but at the *Times* also they did not seem to be interested as there was a political motive behind the *morcha*. So I went to the *Blitz* office and they printed the whole story." The best part of it she recalls is that afterwards she went to the hospital to visit a friend who was horrified to see her in her battle worn condition.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Naazneen has no patience for those who preach a certain form of behaviour for girls and another for boys. Even her brother she said preferred girls who wore sarees, their hair long and behaved in a "feminine" manner. Naazneen, who dresses generally in pants and shirts has a short boyish crop and the tanned glow of a healthy outdoor existence.

Despite her love for the outdoors she has not neglected the spiritual side. "I do not believe you have to go to the temples all the time to pray. But when you are up in the mountains you realize that the only thing that lets you go up is God. With every step you take you keep saying, 'God You've got to help me.' I kept repeating the *ashem vohu*. I have great faith in that prayer."

"QUALITY IS NEVER AN ACCIDENT — IT IS ALWAYS THE RESULT OF INTELLIGENT EFFORT." —John Ruskin



With Compliments of:

ASSOCIATED BREWERIES & DISTILLERIES—CORTALIM, INDIA
(Member of : Noshir Irani Group of Companies.)



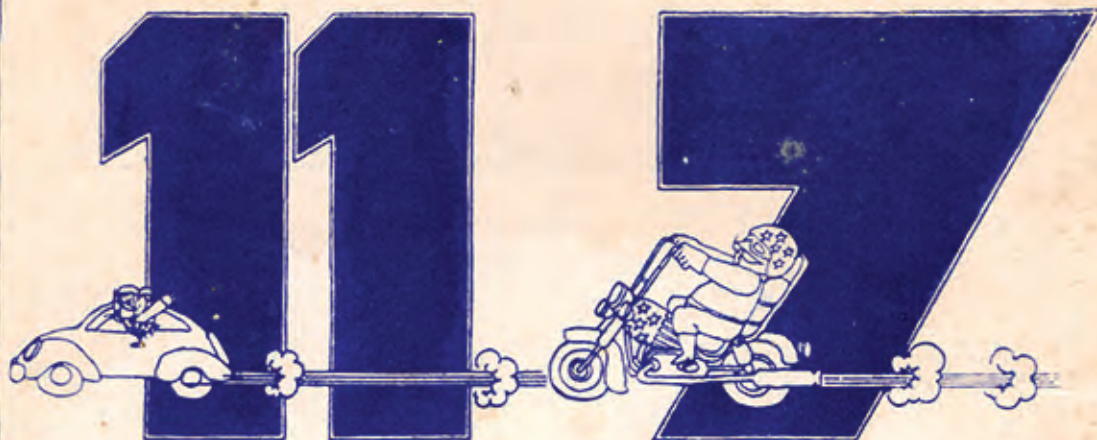
For Pure Diamonds

K. WADIA

JEWELLERS

324, GRANT ROAD, BOMBAY 400 007. TELEPHONE: 371483
APPOINTED VALUERS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

We've got all our flights going for you!



Europe

11 flights a week to Europe.
Our 747s fly 8 times a week to London,
4 times to Frankfurt, 5 times to Rome and Paris
and our 707s twice to Moscow and once to
Geneva and London.

New York

7 flights a week to New York.
One flight daily by 747 via the Middle East and
Europe. The return trip will cost less than the
one-way fare if you fly on our Excursion Fare.



Middle East

18 flights a week to the Middle East.
5 flights to Kuwait and Beirut, 3 to Dubai and
Bahrain, 2 each to Abu Dhabi, Dhahran
and Teheran, and one to Aden, Muscat, Doha
and Cairo.

Also every week:

3 flights to
EAST AFRICA

10 flights to
SOUTH EAST ASIA

6 flights to
JAPAN

2 flights to
MAURITIUS

2 flights to
AUSTRALIA

AIR-INDIA