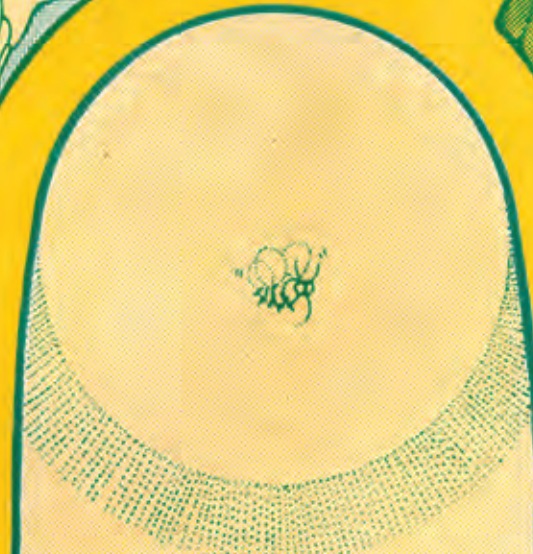


Pārsiānā

July 1975

Price Rs. 3



Genetics



The Cinthol Promise...

*Complexion
Care

*Everfresh
Fragrance

*Body Odour
Protection



...that only Cinthol can keep

Parsiana

April - July 1975

CONTENTS

	Page No.
EDITOR'S COLUMN	3
READERS' FORUM	7
THE PANCHAYAT PAPERS	13
GENETIC ROULETTE by Manjula Padmanabhan and Goolrukh Vakil	14
A SYMPHONY IN WHITE	20
THE NAVJOTE CEREMONY by P. N. Jungalwalla	21
THE PRIEST WITH OOMPH	25
WHO IS AN ORTHODOX PARSI? by Feroza Paymaster	26
THE HERETICAL DUO by Pervin Mahoney	31
RACE AND REASON by Jamshed Modi	37
ART REVIEWS	38
IN MEMORIAM	41

Parsiana Cover designed by Manjula Padmanabhan



Grindlays Bank Limited

Incorporated in the United Kingdom.
The liability of members is limited.

**-the international bank
at the nation's service.**

Bombay Branches
Smitkiran, 377, Swamy Vivekananda
Road, Vile Parle.

Mint Road.
Lloyds Branch,
21/29 Shamaldas Gandhi Marg.
24B, Club Road, Byculla.

43, Mahatma Gandhi Road,
Ghatkopar (East).

87, Bhulabhai Desai Road.

65F, Linking Road, Santacruz.

Shivaji Path, Jambhli Naka, Thana.

90/94, Mahatma Gandhi Road.

Lloyds Branch, 270/273, Dr. D. N. Road.

110/111, Kazi Syed Street, Mandvi.

Shivaji Mandir,
N. C. Kelkar Road, Dadar.

editor's column

I once told a doctor friend of mine that if he specialized in Parsi illnesses—indigestion, headaches, obesity, phobias and the like—he'd mint. He never took my advice (no one ever does) and went into the family asbestos business instead. My attempts to interest others in this field of specialization ended when, while researching our present cover story, we learned that these ailments may not be genetic in nature but the result of our environment.

However, never being ones to let facts come in the way of our prejudices, we voice our doubts about this 'environment' theory. Otherwise the next thing scientists will be saying is, Parsis don't have a special flame burning in them and that we're not God's favourite people and before you know it professional troublemakers will be demanding we treat others as our equals and put an end to all our racist policies.

Times being as they are, several well-wishers have urged us to be circumspect in what we write, noting that the greatest damage to *Parsiiana* is caused by the Editor's Column. So as not to aggravate matters any further we shall just write of events in our usual impartial and objective manner, leaving out the editorial spice that usually results in people cancelling their subscriptions.

In news around town, the managing committee of the Bombay Parsi Association saw fit to pass a resolution hailing Ms Indira Gandhi's 20-point economic program and supporting "the most admirable, bold and positive steps taken in right direction by prompt and stern actions by the Central and State Governments after the declaration of country's emergency... for the first time in recent years, people walk in the streets of Bombay with confidence and liberty so provided by custodians of law and order besides giving protection from such un-Democratic and anti-social elements who were bent upon destroying Democratic freedom by their insidious method of instigating, promoting and supporting Industrial and Commercial Strikes, Gheraos,

Morchas and Violence." And Minoo Masani, noted politician and statesman and Editor of the monthly magazine *Freedom First*, a Journal of Liberal Ideas, filed a writ petition in the Bombay High Court on July 18 challenging the Censorship Order of the Government of Maharashtra and the action of the local censor in prohibiting the publication of several articles among which are ones on the scope of the Pre-Censorship order by a former judge of the Bombay High Court V. M. Tarkunde, a resolution of the Maharashtra Bar Council requesting the President of India to revoke the Emergency, and a report on the order of the Madras High Court admitting a



Irani: The 'Bird' man

petition submitted by T. Sadasivam, publisher of *Swarajya*. The Maharashtra Government withdrew its State order on censorship around this time. The case is due for hearing on September 15 in the court of Justice Desai. Soli Sorabjee, appeared as Counsel for Masani and was instructed by Attorney D. H. Nanavati.

While attending the civil marriage of a friend we learnt from the Registrar of Marriages that Parsis have the highest number of civil marriages, with Gujaratis coming next. The season for saying "I do" begins around January and ends in June with April and May being the peak time for signing away one's

freedom. One advantage of a civil marriage is that it is brief, leaving the guests with more time for eating and drinking, that being the primary purpose of all such functions.

In the course of her seven-interview feature our Associate Editor, Ms Feroza Paymaster comes across many interesting people. Thus while getting Ms Perin Vajifdar's views on the definition of an orthodox Parsi, Ms Vajifdar told her that she was the first Indian and Parsi woman to play in an international chess tournament. It happened in July 1922, in London. "I just walked into the place where the tournament was being held and the secretary of the Chess Federation asked whether I could play and would like to play. I didn't know whether I was fit, so we played a lightning game. He observed my moves and in ten minutes placed me in Class B," she said. There were more than 200 entrants and it was on this occasion that Mir Sultan Khan played for the first time and won the British championship.

Ms Vajifdar played in several other tournaments and *The Daily Mirror* carried a photograph of her contemplating a move with the caption "The Wisdom of the East." Her interest in chess dates back to her childhood. "My uncle played chess, but he never let me come near when he played," she said. "Nobody could make any gesture or movement or he would get disturbed. So my father taught me the first few moves."

She also has the distinction of writing general columns in both the orthodox *Jam-e-Jamshed* under the pen name of Pervize and the reformist *Kaiser-I-Hind Weekly* where her column was titled *Banoo au ni Parliament*. She is also the authoress of three plays and has published two novels, and a book on sewing.

In out-of-Bombay news, the Igatpur Fire Temple is in the process of building up a *kaathi* fund, to ensure that the fire keeps burning. Ervad Tehmtan Bhicaji Karanja notes a target of Rs. 25,000 has been set of which Rs. 19,000 have already been collected. There are about 10 to 15 Parsi families in this Western



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 breathtakingly beautiful as Sharmila herself.

**100% POLYESTER SARIS BY
BOMBAY DYEING**



BD-9009

Ghat hill resort which also boasts a *dharamsala* and *dokhma*. The interest from the earmarked *kaathi* fund should suffice to keep the 88-year-old agiary stocked with sandalwood. "We never built up a fund all these years but met our requirements from donations received. But how long can we keep imposing on people's generosity?" notes the priest. A considerable portion of his trips to Bombay are being spent going from donor to donor. "The last six thousand is proving to be the most difficult," Karanjia notes. Donations may be sent in the name of the Igatpuri Anjuman President, M. N. Boatwala, the Igatpuri Zarhosty Anjuman, Parsi Agiary, Igatpuri, District Nasik, Maharashtra.

Stamp enthusiasts will be interested to know that the recent series of stamps on Indian birds are the artistic efforts of Jamshed Irani. *Parsiana* Art Editor, Manjula Padmanabhan, interviews the soft-spoken artist for the Editor's column:

During the week, Jamshed Irani,

like many another commercial artist, plies his craft drawing switches and gears at Larsen and Toubro. But come the weekend, the speed-ball pens and T squares of daily drudgery are put aside for a more pleasurable and in India almost unique pursuit: scientific bird painting.

"There are not many Indian artists who do this kind of work," says Irani, whose proficiency in the winged world resulted in his drawings being selected for the recent issue of "Indian Bird" stamps. The Postal Department "took infinite pains in the printing," says Irani, "It was a prestige issue, I think the forerunner of many more to come." Irani's work has appeared in five publications, including the ten-volume *Handbook of Birds of India and Pakistan* and in 1969 a five-stamp series on birds for the Government of Bhutan, as well as a set of four oil-paintings of birds for the late King of Bhutan, H. M. Jigme Dorji.

"I had a vague impression of becoming a fine artist when I was

young but when I grew up, my friends all told me to go in for commercial art, because there was more future in it," says Irani. He trained for his profession at the J.J. School and worked in different advertising agencies before settling at his present job ten years ago. Having spent his childhood in Deolali, Irani describes himself as "a village type of boy. My first love is gardening and nature. I didn't paint very much then, at that time I was not very original. If I saw a painting of a beautiful rose, I would want to paint it. As a result I had a developed sense of proportion."

In 1963, when Dr. Salim Ali, the well-known ornithologist and president of the Bombay Natural History Society, was looking for an Indian artist who could do some of the illustrations for the *Handbook*, Irani's name was suggested. "Every Sunday for over two years, I used to go to his house. He lives in Bandra and I live at Byculla—it used to take me an hour to get there." Under Salim Ali's guidance, Irani learnt the art of

The Bank that gets things done

AMERICAN EXPRESS

American Express
International Banking Corporation
Bombay □ New Delhi □ Calcutta

OBM 2374

drawing birds scientifically from dead specimens, called "skins". Unlike the stuffed creatures one sees at a museum these are simply the birds' preserved carcasses, with the plumage intact and "the neck and feet laid out straight. Not only do you have to get the colours exactly like the original, but the position you select when you paint the bird has to be typical of that bird. There is a difference between the way a crow and a sparrow perches. You have to draw the bird in exact proportions as well, because for science books, there is a scale so that you can measure any part of the bird in the picture and calculate what it is like in life.

"The plates in Indian books on ornithology are nearly always by foreign artists," Irani notes, "when it comes to drawing birds, for calendars and so on, many Indian artists just copy from other books." It is not financially worthwhile for them to study the art in depth. For all the labour that goes into copying a bird down to the last detail of the barbs on its feathers, in colour, an artist may get between 25 to 50 rupees per bird. "The resources are always limited, there isn't so much scope," he notes. "I never see this from the monetary angle. I do it only for the sake of love."

By the time we came to know Jamshed Pherozsha Paymaster, he was ailing. Bedridden for close to a year, he fought on courageously, never letting his interest in the world around him flag. He kept himself occupied by reading, keeping up-to-date on his personal matters, inquiring as to how the car was running and asking his daughter, Feroza when Parsiana was due. In his younger days he took to hunting and was prominent on the social scene. As a condolence letter from Scindia Steam Navigation Company, which Paymaster served for over 35 years, noted shortly after his death at the age of 63 on August 9, "He was known to one and all in Scindia House. He was a much missed man after his retirement and we miss him much more now."

Parsiana extends its heartfelt condolences to the Paymaster family.

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



Voting Rites

The question of reforming our election system has long been occupying our minds but little action has been taken thereon. My efforts to bring attention to the archaic state of affairs by running as a candidate last year prompted individuals to term my candidature a "highly successful failure."

I started the *Akhand Parsa* movement with the aim of introducing adult franchise in the election of Trustees to the Panchayat. In December 1974 Jehangir Shroff delivered a lecture in which he described the different legal and statutory aspects of our election system. The most impressive point was the condition that the community members must first formulate their demands and present them to the Trustees for their consent or approval for changes in the election system. The Trustees may then take the matter to the Hon. Charity Commissioner and bring about the necessary changes with the final approval and order of the Court.

Messrs Erach Nadirshah, P. P. Khambatta and Dr. Aspi Golwalla were seated together at a lunch table when I opened the topic of changing the Election System. I asked them why it was necessary for the Parsi public to carry the matter to the Trustees. Was it not sensible that the Trustees, should move in the matter? Their answer was: We do not know how far and to what extent and in what way the community seeks changes;

you must, therefore, present your demands to us.

It occurred to me that their contention was valid because in most cases community members do nothing beyond grumbling and no system could possibly be found which would not have its dissenters. In his speech, Shroff had proposed that we have 7,500 graduates who must at least, have voting rights, together with others. Even to such a suggestion one person raised an objection that if the ideas and outlook of our educated class be contrary to the outlook of our highly orthodox class they would jeopardise the unity and stability of our community. At this rate nothing could be done. We want to move ahead, not stagnate.

It is clear that the first and foremost item for reform is the duration of a Trustee's tenure. It should be curtailed to five years. The present tenure of ten, 20 and even 30 years has made the Trustees unresponsive to the public. All seven Trustees should be elected at the same time.

The Trustees have reportedly turned down several schemes for reforms. In many of these schemes, a certain class or classes of people are to be left out. Are the Trustees in a position to determine who is to be given franchise and who not? If our society is to be reconstructed let it be on a large and impersonal scale—which only adult franchise offers. The community should reject any scheme other than adult franchise as all other plans will have terms and conditions unfavourable to the majority and instead will favour individual sections. Any measure other than adult franchise will block the path of progress. All half-measures are intended to go halfway.

DR. P. B. WARDEN

Parsis and Professions

Even 100 per cent literacy notwithstanding, if the education of young Parsis is not geared to suit the needs of the present day employment pattern, it should be radically changed. By all means let us have intellectuals like doctors, lawyers, college professors, lin-

guists, scientists and the rest, but let us also have turners, fitters, die-makers, interior decorators, mechanics, electricians, odd repairmen and petty shop-keepers dealing in all commodities of daily necessities.

A skilled fitter or turner easily earns Rs. 700 to Rs. 800 per month within four or five years and more if he forks out on his own and sets up a small workshop; the Parsi landscape should be studded with self-employed artisans and tradesmen who can stand on their own, without being a drain on the community's resources. With this objective in view, every Parsi colony should have half-a-dozen industrial sheds for such self-employed entrepreneurs.

All existing Parsi business houses and for that matter, every Parsi must open accounts with the Zoroastrian Co-operative Bank, which in turn should open branches in all the principal Parsi colonies, and thus help swell the Bank's working funds which can be diverted to advance loans on liberal terms to deserving Parsis to start small businesses, be it a transport carrier or a service industry or even plying an autorickshaw. An autorickshaw owned and self-driven will bring in anything upto Rs. 800 a month, plying only in the suburbs; no elaborate knowledge except the ability to drive a three-wheeler vehicle is required. If ten

FAROKH REPORTER Photographer

FASHION • ADVERTISING
INDUSTRIAL
CINE 16MM & 35MM

Phone : 263723

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

No trying waits in queues.
No sweating it out going
through formalities. Let
Indrtravels 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

INDRTRAVELS

YOUR FRIEND, TRAVEL AGENT AND GUIDE

NEVILLE HOUSE, BALLARD ESTATE, BOMBAY 400 001

BRANCHES: NEW DELHI • BANGALORE • HYDERABAD • KANPUR

Grant-14-74

Parsis of means come forward with Rs. 10,000 each which they lend to the Zoroastrian Bank with or without interest, the Bank can easily accommodate upto eight purchasers of such a vehicle who will then be economically independent. To make a beginning, I am so prepared to deposit Rs. 10,000 with the bank and shall be happy if the bank undertakes to help any Parsi who is willing to own and ply a rickshaw.

Our community used to supply over 90 per cent of textile technicians of the country upto about 30 years back; today hardly any Parsi—experienced or qualified (B.Sc. Tex) can be found and even the remaining mills of Parsi ownership have perforce to look elsewhere for their requirements.

This state of affairs requires to be set right at the earliest; what has been said before regarding textiles holds good for almost all other industries. In Maharashtra which manufactures over 75 per cent of the total Scooters made in the country, one can find barely

half a dozen Parsi engineers; the same is the case with the sugar industry, plastics, ship-building (once our exclusive strong-hold), mining, ordinance factories, government owned steel plants and food processing; in fact in all organised industries the Parsi is becoming a rarity. The Panchayat has done little to rectify the present state of affairs in the community. The majority of the Trustees are well past their prime. The lure of office looms large with them—some have been trustees upto 30 years.

The Augean stables must be cleared of those who have come to think that the funds and properties of the Parsi Panchayat are their private preserve. The new administrative team must have the ability to take quick decisions on the subjects they handle and must avoid the committee mentality.

Every available inch of land of Parsi ownership should be developed, and cheap, preferably initially subsidised, colonies

should spring up. Flats in these colonies should be on a deferred ownership basis where a fixed amount is collected every month for a period of 15 or 20 years and after that period the tenant becomes the owner; this step will free the Panchayat from the worry of upkeep of these buildings in the long run.

The present Dharamshala at Hughes Road could well be pulled down and a modern building with vast showrooms and spacious and prestigious office premises should be constructed in its place which will fetch a handsome rent; the present occupants can well be housed in any cheaper suburban locality.

These are serious matters requiring the urgent and immediate attention of all right-thinking people who are concerned with the very existence of the community. It is hoped that action will be taken before the twelfth hour—the proverbial eleventh has already passed.

DINSHAW A. MERCHANT



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 Navsari.
The great feeling.



Navsari Cotton and Silk Mills Limited

IF STATISTICS MEAN ANYTHING TO YOU



***In 1974 India
produced 1,01,512
Scooters & scooterettes*
HASMAN manufactured
80,189 locks for†
them. That's a
staggering 80%
or 0.8 locks
per vehicle
per year!***

**AND since this is an
advertisement in
Parsiana we can confide
in you that this is a Parsi
enterprise—Apro Dinshaw—
with the traditional
standards of Parsi
excellence ingrained in
every piece or else how
do you expect us
to extend a life-time
guarantee?**

**P. S. Though Scooters are our first love,
our products also adorn Cars, Jeeps, Trucks,
Refrigerators, Elevators,
Switch-gear panels, T.V. Sets and Automatic-
interlocking Systems.**



**HASMAN INDUSTRIES
Bombay 400 072.
Tel : 551940**



* Figures taken from All India Auto. & Ancillaries Assocn.

† Excluding other items.

Iranshah's Plight

To us Zoroastrians, the Iranshah at Udwarda, is the holiest of places, a place of religious pilgrimage. But its physical structure and environment is a cause for concern. The building itself is old. It has no impressive frontage facade, or open garden space and is situated in the midst of old houses in unsanitary surroundings.

The Iranshah *Atash Behram* should be a centre of Parsism with a library, museum and cultural institutions. It should be the meeting place for Zoroastrians from all over the world, to discuss and get information on our religion, culture, social and economic problems.

The Zoroastrians of Iran on the other hand have a beautiful centre in Tehran. Other small communities like the Bohras, Jews and Bahais have centres of which they are proud. We in India have none.

The newly formed Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India should take a lead. Iranshah must be made a centre worthy of the name of our community.

DINSHAW BEHRAM

Communal Sense

I and my friends enjoy reading *Parsiana*. It is a pity that for minor affairs, such as *dokhmas* and burial, there should be such misunderstanding and waste of efforts. The main feature to keep in mind is the religion, its philosophy of life and that Great Man's teachings, set down thousands of years ago.

We should preserve our balance of mind and try and bring peace and harmony to our community and consequently to the world. It is a pity that having so much wealth we should gradually lose it to the Government due to infighting. It is a pity that there should be a wide generation gap and that young and old should never come to a good and favourable conclusion. Why should we be so selfish and not think of other peoples' and our future generations' welfare?

I hope that in the near future we will come to our senses and think of nothing but the good of others and our poor community.

M. J. ZARTOSHTY
Iran

Revealing

I enjoy reading the articles and the different views expressed in *Parsiana*. The write-ups on the

Parsi Panchayat are very revealing but I wish they would stop their infighting and get down to solving some of the pressing problems of our community, such as housing, employment, education, etc. After I finish with the magazines I give them to my friends to read in the hope that they too will become interested and subscribe. A magazine like *Parsiana* must be encouraged by our community.

LT. COL. DADY S. MAJOR

"Municipal Law"

Hyderabad has experienced a fine series of lectures by Dr Framroze A. Bode. Bode is a person who has the courage to quote from the *Gathas* and not the *Vendidad*, which he rightly describes as "municipal laws".

He emphasized that everyone has the right to choose the method of disposal which he or she likes best. According to him that is a fundamental right which no one can be denied and as the dead body becomes the property of the next-of-kin, the final decisions should be left to the family. His approach towards life is practical, as he holds that "the people should move with the times, otherwise be left behind."

If only our community had more stalwarts like Bode we would have seen the light of day many decades back. I pray he has the patience to bear with ignorant custom-bound people, who lay more stress on irrelevant ritual than on the actual religious teachings of our great prophet.

BAKHTYAR S. KAOSJI
Hyderabad

The Chosen One

Ever since *Dastooran-e-Dastoor* Manekji Noshirwan Dhala passed away, our community has not conferred that title upon any other Dastoor.

It is high time that the elders of our community made up their minds to confer this title upon the most deserving Dastoor in the world. In my opinion an ideal *Dastooran-e-Dastoor* should fulfil the following criteria: he should be a very experienced and fairly senior Dastoor; physically robust, mentally alert, morally and ethically above suspicion.

Please turn to page 44, col. 3

PHOTOPHONE

leading

manufacturers of
35mm Theatre
Sound and Projection
Equipment
and the whole
range of Audio-
Visual equipment
comprising:

- Photophone
Super Lite
16mm Sound
Projector
- Photophone
Instavision
Super 8mm
Sound Projector
- Photophone
Overhead
Projector

Photophone Pvt.
Ltd.

Fazalbhoy House
11, Marine Lines
Bombay 400 020

Tel. no. 212565



why is MEA the obvious choice for businessmen from the Middle East?



For one thing, we have connections to every important business centre in Europe and Africa. And, we do not take off from Beirut at odd hours. Besides, of course, the in-flight duty free shopping and exquisite Service. Reasons enough for MEA to be the obvious choice.



MEA

the Cedar airline

2-B, J. Tata Road, Bombay 400 020.

Telephone: 293354 Telex: 011-2588



AB advg. 7538

THE PANCHAYAT PAPERS

In the Panchayat's scale of dissonance, it was barely worthy of note. To relate: A few papers had been reportedly misplaced by Trustee B. K. Boman-Behram. Duplicate copies, therefore, were circulated among the seven Trustees causing Trustee Ms Nellie Noble to reportedly express her "shock" at the "gross negligence" of Boman-Behram which "just cannot be condoned." Boman-Behram chose to ignore the outburst alleging that it was motivated by her candidate's loss in the last Trustee election (see "A Tale of Two Jimmys", *Parsiana* January 1975). When the papers reached Trustee Jamshed Guzder he reportedly deplored the attack on Boman-Behram and noted that a Trustee should practice a certain measure of decorum. He suggested that in future remarks of this nature should not be mentioned in the circulars but reserved only for the Trustees. Chairwoman Lady Hirabai Jehangir and the other Trustees concurred with Guzder's remarks, causing Ms Noble to reportedly blast the Chairwoman ("show her own standard of responsibility"), Guzder ("He must be used to losing important files and documents") and Boman-Behram ("He is hardly expected to do anything better than to sit and clap.")

Like most internecine feuds, the matter would have festered there except that the relevant papers were leaked to the Press. The *Kaiser-E-Hind Weekly* gave the episode prominent play in its July 27 issue under the headline "Bitter Battle of Circulars." The *Bombay Samachar* Editor, Jehan Daruwala, related the incident without mentioning the Trustees' names in his *Parsi Tari Arsi* Sunday column of August 3. "There is something rotten in the state of the Parsi Panchayat" he wrote. "Their style of functioning in isolation and even secrecy misleads and alarms the community. Their confabulations, so far as we know, do not reflect deep thought, good planning and constructive work. We gather the unhappy impression that they study books of quotations, Devil's Dictionary, one thousand insults etc."

The orthodox *Jam-e-Jamshed* daily condemned the leakage to the press in its editorial of August 6 noting that while the community was kept in the dark in matters that should be made public, confidential material which should be private was instead made known to all.

Stung by the allegations, the Panchayat issued a two-part series on the "Working of the Bombay Parsi Panchayat" which was published in four instalments in the *Jam-e-Jamshed*. The first part, titled "General Administration and the Doongerwadi Department", notes the accounts managed by the Trustees are in three classes and total 1,172 in number; their total corpus is Rs. 5,98,52,044. The immoveable properties are valued at Rs. 2,60,00,000. The bulk of the report deals cursorily with the administration of the Doongerwadi Estate and housing where the Trustees note that "when donations are received, new construction work is taken up in hand... The Trustees have been able to provide accommodation to only 20 per cent of those on the Register. The remaining 80 per cent naturally are still on the waiting list and it is apparent that as the Trustees are not in a position to fulfil the requirements of this large majority, dissatisfaction occurs."

The second part concerns "Welfare and other Educational Institutions". Names of institutions, their functions and the nature and amount of aid they give is listed. The Trustees note that in many cases "loans are NOT returned by persons concerned in spite of agreed easy instalments. The result is that money under these circumstances remains blocked and other deserving persons are unable to be given necessary loans to the extent required by them."

While the bureaucratic jargon of the reports did not shed much light for the lay person on the Panchayat's workings, their publication marked an awareness on the part of the Trustees that they had to take the community into confidence. As Daruwala noted in the *Samachar*, "If you go on hammering at a door it is bound to open even if it be a wee bit."

**GAZDAR
PRIVATE
LTD.**

JEWELS

Taj Mahal Hotel
Bombay

Appointed Valuers
of Jewellery to

The Government of
India

**We are
buyers of
your old
Jewellery,
Diamonds,
Emeralds,
Rubies,
Pearls, etc.
and pay the
Highest
Prices**

Code: "MANUSCRIPT"

Telephone No. 255577



GENETIC ROULETTE

by Manjula Padmanabhan and Goolrukh Vakil

The science of genetics is very much like a game of chance. The odds vary with each roll of the human 'dice'. For centuries people have invoked the gods and besieged the stars to predict whether their child will be a boy or girl, blue-eyed or brown, normal or deformed. But only when the Austrian biologist Mendel began his experiments with the lowly sweet-pea, did the mysteries of genetics and the laws of human heredity begin to unfold.

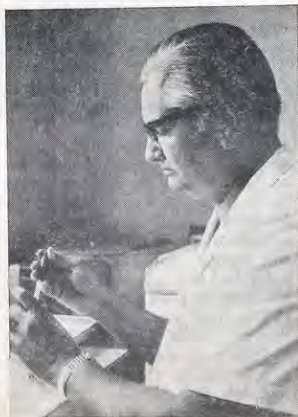
For Parsis the word genetics has an ominous ring. The declining birthrate, the high incidence of diseases and mental illness and even the increasing poverty are often thought to be the result of genetic laws working adversely, or of excessive "inbreeding." It is with problems such as these that Geneticist Dr. Jayantilal V. Undevia of the Cancer Research Institute at the Tata Memorial Centre and the author of *Population Genetics of the Parsis* deals daily. "Young couples come to me and say, 'Doctor, I have married my first cousin. Am I going to have a bad child?' I

have been struggling to answer questions like that for the last 17 years," says the large jovial geneticist. "They say perhaps there might be more abortions and stillbirths in cases of cousin-marriage, but we can never say for sure. I can only tell them

that the chances are higher there may be a defect."

Going from colony to colony, taking intravenous blood samples and testing for various elements, Undevia has come across some six thousand Parsis in the course of his study. Since in any genetic survey it is important to trace the genetic links through families, Undevia says, "now it has become a rule that every young couple comes to me to be checked. Parsis as patients have been very receptive, once they have been given the scientific explanation for the condition."

At the basis of any genetic study are the minute invisible particles called genes. A vital part of each of the billions of cells which make up the human body, they are responsible for all the characteristics which are passed on from parent to child—the color of hair and skin, the length of the nose, the tendency toward heart disease. Genetics, however, is a young science and scientists have yet to identify which gene goes with what characteristic and how exactly the genes exert



Undevia: Needles in a haystack

their control over a person's mental and physical features. As large racial groups tend to be of too diverse and doubtful origins to provide effective models for genetic study, a small and distinct community such as the Parsis is ideally suited to the task.

Undevia's interest in the Parsis began when, while conducting a survey of the incidence of jaundice in newborn children, they found that it was more common among Parsi mothers. Newborn jaundice or haemolysis is caused by the presence in the mother's blood of an element known as the Rh Negative factor. (See box "Monkey Blood.") "We investigated the incidence and found that, while it was between two and five per cent among Maharashtrians and Gujaratis, with Parsis it was at 11 to 14 per cent," recalled the geneticist. It was then that they came across a Parsi woman whose blood contained a complex variation of the Rh Negative called the Ry, which "is so very rare, that we wondered whether it was really an Ry or whether we were not detecting it properly." Though its significance is not known Undevia says, "if it is there, there must be some reason for it."

Through that Parsi woman they were initially able to find three

families which possessed the rare blood type, "and now we have fourteen," says the doctor with obvious pride. Only a few isolated groups have been found to display this trait but not in concentrations comparable to the 0.7 per cent found among Parsis. The groups are all native to Europe, leading Undevia to believe that all these groups perhaps share a common ancestry originating in the Caucasus. Based on his findings on the Ry factor, Undevia says, "one thinks of the Parsis as being of the same stock as the Iranis, but that might not be so. The Parsis were quite different to the native Iranians. In Cyrus' day, they were probably a strong group. I feel perhaps they were a more priestly class."

Searching for genetic features which distinguish a particular racial group is like searching for needles in a haystack without knowing how many there are. For instance, in the early twentieth century, during the malarial epidemics in Bombay, it was found that almost 24 per cent of the cases of malaria were accounted for by Parsis, as against 5 per cent by the Hindus. "The Parsis were rather upset by this report," says Undevia, as it was alleged that the high incidence was due



The older women always kept a close watch on the younger ones.

to keeping open wells in their compounds, which served as breeding grounds for the malarial mosquitoes. "So they carried out a second investigation. This proved that the earlier finding was correct and that the incidence was higher for the Parsis." The significance of those reports only came out later, with the discovery among the Parsis of the Glucose-6-Phosphate Dehydrogenase (G-6-PD See box "Man's World") deficiency in the blood. It is known that the lack of this long-named enzyme leads to a partial immunity to malaria, yet the Parsis suffered heavily from the disease. The explanation for this, says the geneticist is that the gene carrying G-6-PD is "after all only one small gene. At that time the rate of cousin-marriage may have been almost 60 per cent as against 8 per cent nowadays. The resulting conglomeration of genes due to inbreeding then must have made Parsis more prone to malaria, even though they had a high percentage of G-6-PD."

Every eighth Parsi male has

'MONKEY' BLOOD

Until 1940 about five babies out of every thousand born, suffered from haemolysis, a disease of the red blood cells. In that year, research carried out on Rhesus monkeys (familiar to holiday-goers in hill stations all over India), revealed a substance in their blood called the Rhesus factor, which makes red blood cells form clusters. From statistical surveys in England it was found that that "agglutinin," as it is called is present in 85 per cent of the population who are said to be Rhesus Positive (Rh+) and absent in the remaining 15 per cent, making them Rhesus Negative (Rh-).

If a person with Rh- blood were to receive a blood transfusion of Rh+ blood, that person would develop antibodies (agents which fight infection)

in their blood. With any subsequent transfusion of Rh+ blood the antibodies would attack it in the same manner they would fight disease germs, causing the destruction of the red blood cells. This is called haemolysis. When an expectant mother with Rh- blood has a baby with Rh+ blood, if there is an occasional leakage of the baby's blood into the mother's blood system, her Rh- blood would build up antibodies. These would then pass back into the baby's blood system, causing haemolysis and sometimes death. Quite often the first child is normal, with the chances of fatal consequences increasing with each subsequent birth. The only cure in a severe case is to drain out all the haemolytic blood while simultaneously replacing it with normal blood.



"I have found all Parsis socially advanced."

the G-6-PD deficiency. But in Iran while Iranian Moslems demonstrated a 15 per cent concentration of the deficiency, among the Iranian Zoroastrians, there is hardly any. "When you go to Iran, from the air you can see the desert and absolute wasteland that it is. The Moslems tried their best to push any of the remaining Zoroastrians into this part of Iran. In fact, while we were making a survey of the area, one could see the G-6-PD factor growing more common as one came away from the central desert areas to the more Moslem parts, like circles growing wider, starting with the Zoroastrians, who have almost none." The gene, he therefore infers, may have come from India.

Explaining his view, that when the Parsis first came to India they brought their families and women with them, Undevia says, "When you plan a migration—and I think this one was planned—you don't leave your dear ones behind." Yet he feels convinced Parsis must have married among Indians. "I think this happened around three hundred years ago," he says. "It would have been around this time that the community might have started moving into areas further inland thus coming into contact with the tribals. I feel it is possible that these children may have secretly been brought into the community because any man seeing his child will want to keep it as his own. By this time the economic position of the priests was not as strong as before and they may

have been coerced into performing the ceremonies to make the children Parsis. The women may not have raised their voices when these children were brought into their homes because at that time, as one author has written, they were like parrots in cages and had little say in these matters. My colleagues are more inclined to believe that the fault lay with the women rather than the men since the servants in most of the houses were from the tribals and because the houses where they lived were often very large and allowed more privacy. Personally, I find this difficult to believe because even in Hindu families, under the joint-family system, it would have been very difficult for the young married woman to go out alone or be by herself much. The older women always kept a close watch on the younger ones."

Backing his argument are the genetic pointers. "Sickling" is the name given to a tendency among blood cells to form sickle shapes rather than circles when deoxygenated. Like the G-6-PD factor, it confers partial immunity to malaria but with the added trait, that it can be fatal. "Twenty-five per cent of the children of two sickle parents die before the age of ten," notes Undevia. The racial significance of sickling is that again as with the G-6-PD deficiency while Parsis show this trait Zoroastrian Iranis (who came to India later than Parsis), show almost no trace of the characteristic, both in Iran and India. In fact, says the doctor, "I have not found sickling among caste groups (in India) except the tribal people; genetically this fits in quite well with my thesis." Undevia feels it is unlikely that genes such as the one causing sickle-cells could have been transmitted to the Parsis by the few high

caste communities in the Gujarat area which have been found to possess it as well (though in smaller concentrations), because, "in those times the caste groups would never have allowed integration."

Once the genes had been introduced in sufficient strength, their proliferation can be easily explained. "The Parsis migrated because of religion, and when they came here did not plan to mingle," says Undevia. "Brothers and sisters could not marry, but eventually cousins would have had to be found." What happens when cousins marry is that the genes within a particular family will tend to keep mixing with themselves, strengthening further those traits which are already strong and weakening others. As the family grows larger a small common pool of genes would tend to dominate. This is called genetic drift. "Either a particular gene will proliferate as all the members of the family inherit it, or it will be driven out of the pool entirely."

The surroundings in which a people live can also affect their genetic makeup. This is known as the "environmental effect." It can ensure for instance that people with darker skins will survive more easily than others in tropical regions, or that light eyes will be commoner in areas where the sun's rays are not so strong. The Parsis who lived on the hot, wet Gujarat coast were often subjected to malarial epidemics. Since malaria is a disease which takes a greater toll among children, those youngsters who were susceptible to the disease due to inbreeding, died before being able to pass the responsible genes on to the next generation. At the same time, those who survived the

IT'S A MAN'S WORLD

Though the absence of the G-6-PD enzyme has the beneficial effect of preventing malaria, it can also cause haemolysis (the rupture of red blood cells) in the newborn, and in adults as an allergic reaction to some drugs, (sulpha drugs, antimalarials, certain antibacterial agents, Vitamin

K and Quinine). A peculiarity of the deficiency is that while it is definitely passed on through the genes, it is "selective" in its victims—almost all those deficient in the enzyme are men. Only one per cent of the women are susceptible, though they are responsible for passing the gene on to their children.

scourge because of the partial immunity conferred by the G-6-PD deficiency or sickling were able to procreate and spread the genes further. In time, these genes proliferated to produce the high concentrations which exist today.

"The chances of a child getting diabetes is higher if both parents have it, but whether diabetes is entirely a genetic defect or not we don't know for sure. It is not a single genetic feature," says Undevia. Diet, exercise and social habits may as well be the cause of diabetes as genetics, underscoring one of the most baffling aspects of the science—defining what is caused by genetics and what by environment. Coronary heart disease, kidney ailments, hernia, brain haemorrhage and cirrhosis of the liver, all of which find many victims among Parsis, may similarly be caused by the facts that Parsis eat meat, drink, enjoy a relatively lengthy life span and often engage in an active social life. Concerning the alleged tendency for mental illness, Undevia says, "it could be that it is more noticeable in a small community. Also Parsis are comparatively better off than others. They may go to the doctors more often, and more cases are detected than with others."

A good example of how easy it is to impute hereditary causes for diseases where no genetic links exist, is the one about some Iranis who began to come to Undevia with cases of oral-cancer. "Each of them had the cancer in the oral cavity (mouth) and we thought it must be a genetic character. But we could not find any family relationship between them, no connection through which the gene could be carried. Then, by coincidence one day, one of them told of a habit among Iranis of chewing over bones after meals. Only then we realized it was the constant friction of the sharp edges of the bones which caused the oral cancers and not genetic susceptibility." As with every issue, there are those who feel that genetics is responsible for even more than is usually accepted—such as the habit of smoking. Though he does not endorse this view, Undevia feels perhaps certain so-called



"Perhaps brilliance
is simply
more noticed in
a small
community."

Genius
is generally
a mutation
rather than
a genetic
entity."

social characteristics may be carried genetically: "I have found all Parsis socially advanced," he says, "for instance, no Parsi has ever walked into my room without first knocking!"

Through his long association with the community Undevia is aware of the strong social and religious resistance to the issue of marrying "out". Genetics has frequently been called in as the chief witness for the case made against marriage within the community, but Undevia feels, "it might not be necessary to marry out." Consanguinity, or the intermarrying of close relatives, is on the decline and with it the immediate dangers of excessive inbreeding have been staved off for the time being. "But there is no doubt," adds the geneticist, "that if Parsis were to marry out, and see that the children were kept within the Zoroastrian fold, it would be ideal." In

illustration of his point he says, "A teacher at Campion School once told me, 'there are two kinds of Parsi students—those that are very clever and those that are very dull.' To subject any genetic strain to such extremes is like stretching a rubber-band too far—after a point it would have to snap. The genes need a balance compatible to life." The only way to mitigate this tendency of the genes to veer between extremes is to introduce to the pool genes from outside that group. "A hybrid is always of greater vigour. The first generation is always good," he notes. When two hybrids of identical backgrounds mix, however, the product may not be so good—for the same reason that marriage within a family is not advisable—because the genes which may have been suppressed by the mixture earlier will again pair off.



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

"The good qualities won't go," says Undevia in response to the common fear that such graces as the community's aptitude for music might be wiped out when marrying out. "Perhaps brilliance is simply more noticed in a small community. Genius is generally a mutation rather than a genetic entity," he explains, a mutation being a sudden fundamental and as yet unexplained change in heredity, producing an individual basically unlike its parents.

One sure indicator that a population is becoming non-viable Undevia says, is that its numbers start decreasing. All the same he feels that the steady drop in the Parsi population, about 1 per cent a year, is for reasons "more social than genetic." The fact that Parsis marry late is one possible reason for the infirmities noticed in the community—"children born at the later end of a woman's menstrual cycle are more prone to being genetically diseased," Undevia explains, "and late marriage may also deplete fertility.

The male sexual drive declines after around forty, so that there would naturally be less progeny in a late marriage." Even the lack of adequate housing facilities may be blamed for the drop in numbers as Undevia finds that Parsis tend to expect a higher living standard than other communities and are unwilling to marry and produce children before being reasonably well-settled. "They can produce more children if they want," maintains Undevia, "by less family planning and a longer married life. If the Parsis are to exist well, marriage should be early and reproduction should also start earlier." The ideal ages, he feels, would be "twenty to twenty-three for women, so that they can get their degrees and marry, and for men around twenty-five to thirty." For a community with an average connubial age of 33 years, Undevia's words have a prophetic ring. The future of the Parsis may well hang balanced between a way of life and life itself. ●

Illustrations and photo by Manjula Padmanabhan



To many newly-wed Parsis, the name of Dr. Jayantilal Vithaldas Undevia is as familiar as that of their family priest. The couples come to the geneticist's test tubed study in the Cancer Research Institute of the Tata Memorial Centre, to be assured that the offspring of their union will be blessed—genetically speaking.

"Understanding the nature of the inborn genetic diversity of human beings is an essential prerequisite for taking care of their physical and mental health," notes Undevia in the resumé of his thesis, *Population Genetics of the Parsis*. "Man is migrating and mixing and he is altering his social, family and marriage patterns. The current human activities are so fast changing that their possible genetic consequences in terms of human health and disease will be far reaching unless a clear baseline picture is defined and understood."

It is to help define this baseline that the 47-year-old father of three, has directed his professional career. After obtaining his bachelor's degree in Chemistry and Physics from Bombay University in 1949, he received a year's professional training in clinical pathology at the Haffkine Institute. In 1964 he completed an M.Sc. in Genetics, and was awarded a Ph.D. in the same subject in 1969. He has attended various seminars and symposia in India and abroad, and

Please turn to page 43, col. 2

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

A SYMPHONY IN WHITE

It was like any other Navjote—multiplied by 21. One after the other the children sipped the *nirang*, underwent the ceremonial bath and mounted the sheet-covered dais in the midst of Allbless Baug. Here, flanked by white-robed priests on either front, they recited the initiation prayers and received the *sudreh* and *kusti* which symbolized their admittance to the Zoroastrian fold.

The occasion was the annual mass Navjote ceremony conducted by the Youth's Own Union (YOU) for children from limited income groups. "Most of the children are from out of Bombay," notes Ms Hilla Nariman who along with Homi Tavadia and other YOU members organizes the May function. "Their fathers are usually manual workers or they work in the *agiaries*. This year there were only two orphans; all the rest had at least one parent."

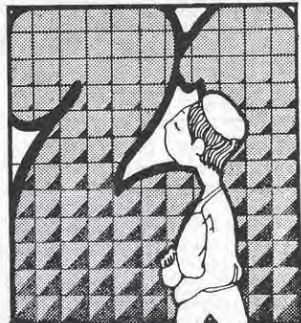
Each child is presented with 12 sets of clothes which include trousers, shirts, *sudrehs*, two *kustis*, school uniforms and a *dugli*. "We ask for their measurements beforehand and do the necessary shopping before their arrival," explained Ms Nariman. The parents also receive a set of clothes.

"YOU pays for the travelling expenses and three days' stay in Bombay as well," says Tavadia, "but the main item of expenditure is the clothes." Each Navjote costs YOU around Rs. 900, he notes. "We have to keep our budget flexible, as next year the costs may rise to one thousand rupees. The money is raised from public donations and various fundraising activities such as the annual YOU-on-Parade Show which includes a play directed by Tavadia starring many of the YOU members. "Formerly we used to announce all donations but at the request of the donors we stopped because bogus parties would approach the donors requesting money for Navjotes which were never performed," says Tavadia.

YOU, which was started by Jal Heerjibehdin with the encouragement of Burjorji Bharucha in 1945 as a forum for Parsi youth, has been performing Nav-

jotes almost from its inception, notes Jal Tata, president of the Union. "The Navjotes were held to bring in to the Zoroastrian fold those who found it impossible to have the ceremonies performed because no one cared for them. It was the best means to increase the dwindling numbers of the community."

"Navjotes are rarely performed for Bombay children because the prestige of the parents is involved," says Tata. "They feel mass Navjotes lower their status." As a result most of the initiates are selected from the rural areas. "We used to write to the Anjuman to send us names of eligible children," notes Ms Nariman, "but now it is not necessary. We have



built up closer contacts with the families and relatives so we get in touch with them directly. Besides making local enquiries, the main question we ask is 'Do you have any Parsi relatives in Bombay?' Then we talk to the relatives to double-check that the cases are genuine, as it is public money we are spending." Navjotes of children who have a non-Parsi parent are not performed by us," says Tavadia. Some of the children are up for adoption but YOU is not in a position to arrange all the formalities. "We only provide the case histories as the families are known to us," says Ms Nariman.

Preparations for the Navjotes start in December on Behram *roj* with the order for the *sudrehs*.

The sacred garments are tailored by Parsi women of limited financial means as an additional source of income. The selection of children is completed in March and measurements and names of relatives are sought. The collection of donations also begins in this month. The Navjotes are held on the last Sunday of May after the children's school exams. The children and parents are housed in *dharamsalas* during their brief sojourn in Bombay. Shoes are bought on the last day.

Once the Navjotes are performed, YOU does not have the facilities to follow up on their well-being though individual donors sometimes do. "One woman who lost her son wanted a Navjote performed," recalled Ms Nariman. "She asked for the name of the boy whose Navjote she was sponsoring; he was the son of a rickshawalla. The boy's birthday was on the same *roj* as her son's. She was moved and gave money for sweets and decided to follow up with money on the birthday and during the *muktads*. Other donors follow up to matric even."

As regards the suggestion that mass-marriages also be performed in the community, both Ms Nariman and Tavadia feel it is "not feasible. Each marriage would cost three thousand rupees. People ask for beds, cupboards and so on. One woman asked for a set of utensils, asking 'What shall I cook in?'"

Aside from performing the Navjotes YOU also gives financial aid to over 60 organizations, says Tata. It arranges lectures, debates, whist drives, music circles and other activities once a week. Though all members of the YOU managing committee have to be under 40, young people are not able to take much interest in the Union because of the increasing burden of studies, notes Tavadia who along with many of the other YOU members joined as a youth.

Despite a low annual fee of Rs. 6, membership has declined but there is no move to make it a cosmopolitan organization. "The community needs help," says Tavadia.

THE NAVJOTE CEREMONY

by Piloo N. Jungalwalla

"The initiation of a Parsee child into the fold of the Zoroastrian religion is known as Navjote. The ceremony of the initiation consists of the investiture of the child with sacred shirt called *sudreh*, and a sacred thread called *kusti*.

"The word Navjote is made up of the two words Nao—new, and Zote—one who offers prayers. Hence, the word would mean a new initiate to offer Zoroastrian prayers. The ceremony is so named, because it is after its performance that a Zoroastrian child is said to be responsible for the duty of offering prayers and observing religious customs and rites as a Zoroastrian.

"Seven is the age at which it is enjoined to initiate a child. In the case of some other unavoidable causes, it is permitted, that the ceremony may be postponed to any age upto fifteen, at which age the investiture must take place. A Zoroastrian without the sacred shirt and thread after the age of fifteen is supposed to be out of the fold and likely to fall into evil paths."

Abridged from The Navjote Ceremony of the Parsees by Jivanji Jamshedji Modi

Before the Navjote can take place, every child is taught the *Kusti* prayers and their meaning, as well as how to tie the *Kusti* over the *Sudreh*. Both the *Sudreh* and the *Kusti* are put on the child for the first time by the officiating priest at the Navjote ceremony, and in the presence of parents, relatives and friends. The *Sudreh* and *Kusti* are meant to be worn throughout life, as a badge of service to Ahura Mazda, Lord of Life and Wisdom.

In the past, the Navjote was always performed in the morning, but today, it is performed either in the morning or in the evening. On the appointed day, the child is first given a *nahn*, or purificatory bath, to symbolise the washing away of all sins. Certain prayers are recited both by the priest and the child, who is then given a leaf of the pomegranate to chew, and a sip of the Haoma juice to drink. In ancient Iran the pomegranate was considered

the Tree of Wisdom, so the chewing of its leaf symbolises the acquisition of Wisdom. Drinking the Haoma juice symbolises striving after immortality, as the Haoma plant was considered to be the Tree of Immortality.

After the sacred bath, the child, wearing a long pyjama, with his bare upper body covered by a shawl or a piece of cloth, is taken to the room where the assembly is gathered. Here a platform has been prepared on which one or more priests are seated. A small stool, covered by a sheet, is in the centre. The child is made to sit on it. The following six items are placed on the carpeted floor: one tray bearing a new set of clothes including a new *Sudreh* and *Kusti*, another filled with raw rice, *akhiana*, to be presented to the family priest at the end of the ceremony, a third full of flowers which are distributed to the assembled guests at the end of the ceremony. A wick lamp, fed with *ghee*, an *afargahan*, with sandalwood and incense to hand, and a tray containing a mixture of raw rice, pomegranate grains, raisins, almonds, and a few slices of tender coconut, all symbolising plenty and prosperity.

By the side of the new clothes, are placed some betel leaves, a couple of areca nuts, some pieces of crystal sugar, a few grains of raw rice, a tender coconut in its husk, a garland of flowers, a silver *pigani* containing some *kumkum* powder, a sprinkler with rose water for wetting the *kumkum*, and a few silver rupees. All these have nothing to do with the religious ceremony, but are borrowed from the Hindus and considered auspicious. The silver coins are given to the family priest as part of his fee for performing the ceremony.

The child is seated facing East. In front of him is the officiating priest. He makes the child hold the *Sudreh* in his hand, and the ceremony begins. Prayers are recited while the child joins in. Then both priest and neophyte rise, the child making a public declaration of his faith by reciting

the following portion of the *Fravarane*: "Praise be to the most righteous, most holy, most wise and the best *Mazda-yasna* law, the gift of Mazda... of all religions... it embodies the Law of Ahura, the One Eternal God, as they were taught to the people by Zarathushtra, His Prophet."

After this public declaration of the faith by the child, the priest clothes the child with the *Sudreh* all the while reciting the *Yatha Ahu Vairyō* prayer. Then he stands behind the child, both facing East, if the ceremony is performed during the day, West, if the ceremony is performed in the evening. The *Kusti* is held, doubled, in the hands of the child, with a portion hanging vertically to one side. The two hands of the priest hold the two hands of the child, and guide the ritual performance. The *Kusti* prayers are recited in unison, and the *Kusti* tied as prescribed.

When the last knot of the *Kusti* is tied with a recitation of the *Ashem Vohu*, the child repeats the entire *Fravarane*, the confession of faith. This is the most important part of the ceremony, for the child must realize that in thought, word and deed he is dedicated to Ahura Mazda, from now till the end of his life.

The officiating priest next makes a vertical mark on the child's forehead with the *kumkum* powder, if the child is a boy. If the child is a girl, the priest makes a small, circular red mark on the child's forehead between the eyebrows, with the *Kumkum* powder. This is for good luck.

The final benediction, the *Doa Tandarusti*, is pronounced by the priest, invoking the blessings of Ahura on the new initiate. While reciting the prayer, the priest showers the raw rice, raisins, pomegranate seeds, etc. on the child's head.

The most moving part of the benediction is as follows: "May you enjoy health, long life, and splendor of piety. May the good Angels and the *Amesha Spenta* come to your help. May the religion of Zoroaster flourish. O

Sipping nirang



Waiting their turn



Preparing for the bath

charitable and religious life. May you perform righteous deeds. May health, virtue and goodness be your lot. May all your good desires be fulfilled like those of the *Amesha Spenta*. Amin! Amin!" (Trans: Dr. J. J. Modi).

The chief priest and the other priests now greet the child and leave. At this point the mother of the child, together with other women relatives, come forward and form a ring round the child

Almighty God, may you bestow long life and health upon the ruler of our land, upon the whole community, and upon this...(naming the child)...May the child live long to help the virtuous. May this day be auspicious, this month be auspicious, this year be auspicious. May you live a good number of years and lead a holy,



Reciting the kusti prayers



The final prayers



Being c



**Blessings before mounting
the dais**

and help him or her to put on the new clothes ready in the tray.

The guests now queue, one by one, wish the child and place a small gift in his hand. The ceremony concludes with a lunch or dinner for all present. This is known as the *Jarthoshti sikkani salamati*, prosperity to the Zoro-



ing clothed

Receiving the sudreh



astrian fold. Literally, the phrase means, safety or prosperity of the Zoroastrian coinage. And so ends perhaps the most important event in the life of a true Zoroastrian.

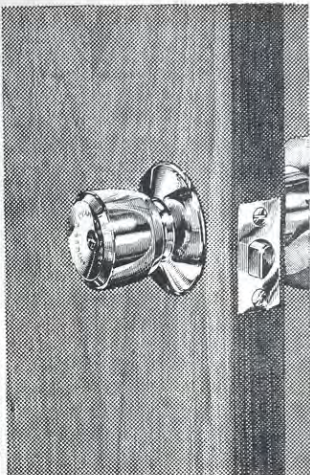
The *Navjote* ceremony, being an initiation ceremony, is only the beginning of our religious education. Every night, the mother should sit with her child, listen to the recitation of the *Kusti* prayers, then explain some aspect of our religion, and teach a short prayer at the end of the session. Stories from the *Shahnameh*

should also be told the child, alternating with stories from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. Tales from the *Masnavi*, like that of "The Little Chick Pea", and the lives of the Sufi saints, also broaden the child's mind. Nor should we omit telling of the lives of our own great saints such as Guru Nanak, Tulsidas, Mira and others. There are plenty of spiritual riches in our land. Let us fill our lap with these treasures, so that we may become good Zoroastrians, good Indians.

The new initiates and friends



For every door, a Godrej lock—



a range to choose from

Godrej Night Latch

The only lock with a mechanism that deadlocks. 7 levers. Guaranteed tamperproof.

Made specially for front doors, right-sided or left-sided—it not only locks itself, but makes sure it stays locked. A safety catch inside spells added security—prevents it being opened even with its own key.

Godrej Mortise Lock The double-duty doorlock

For office cabins, bedrooms, hotel rooms, kitchen doors.

The 6-lever Mortise works 2 ways. As a latch that locks from inside, as a lock from outside when you go out.

Godrej Tubular Latch

Lock and latch mechanism in the door knob. With key or keyless.

Good looking and convenient—for bedrooms, office cabins, hotel rooms. The tubular latch locks when you turn knob from inside. To unlock from inside, re-turn knob. With the keylatch you use the key to open from outside.

Always ask for

Godrej locks. 

The Priest with Oomph

Manjula Padmanabhan

The coming of the push-button age and the dialectics of Women's Lib have conspired against that totem of yore, the muscular male physique. But while male cosmetics and frilly see-through shirts gain popularity round the globe, Mr. Atlas and Mr. World live on for those who have not yet forsaken their dumbbells. Among them is Tehemton Gowadia, recently awarded the Bharat Shree (Mr. India) title in the "Tall" category and chosen to enter the Mr. Asia competition in Singapore this October.

A part-time mobed at the Banaji Agiary, who also puts in a full day's work in the accounts department of Grindlays Bank, Tehemton trains for four hours in the evenings, six days of the week at the Cusrow Baug Gymnasium. "It's what I call hard work," says the 26 year-old muscle-man referring to his preparation for the upcoming competition. "In India weighing a hundred and ninety pounds with eighteen-inch biceps, I'm supposed to be big. Internationally, if I were to weigh two hundred and twenty pounds with twenty-two-inch arms, that would be something.

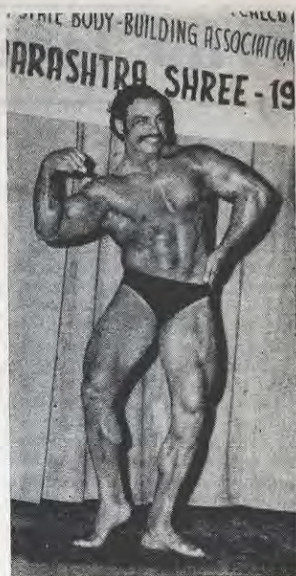
"Our standards in India are low mainly because of our diet. Here you have to concentrate on exercise and forget about the diet part. Everything you eat has to contain protein—it's next to impossible for a vegetarian to compete—and for that you don't have the money." Japanese Sumo wrestlers, he notes for example, "are very well paid" so that they can support their enormous gastronomical intake which can include up to 20 eggs for breakfast alone. "I eat what other Indians eat," says Tehemton noting he is on a low budget. "The body-building associations don't have much funds either," as a result of which he will have to pay the projected Rs. 5,000 for his Singapore trip out of his own pocket.

The expense and the time involved discourage many people from taking up the sport. "There's no professional class of body-

builders in India," he feels. "Military men have the best deal because they get their training and coaching at government expense. It's difficult to compete against them. They are as good as they can be." Punjabis, despite their superiority in stature over other Indians are not outstanding in the field, says Tehemton. "They are not really interested. Bhaiyas are good at wrestling but I've never seen any as such in body-building." In Maharashtra there is a lot of interest in the sport, the men in the area being generally tall and well-built.

In the past there were Parsi stalwarts in body-building, Tehemton notes, "like Bomi Irani, who won the Bharat Kumar title in 1962 and Adi Irani who was Junior Mister Bombay in 1969. There are still some champions left like Medhora, who comes to the Cusrow Baug gym—he's 40 or 45 but he still comes for training and has 18-inch biceps." On the whole though, he feels among young Parsis, "no one takes an interest in sports. Altogether the membership at the Cusrow Baug gym is ten to fifteen boys, and every day maybe four to ten boys come." Other gyms he finds "have no interest in building health or bodies. There are some newly opened ones; some boys say, 'We'll go and build our bodies,' but after a couple of days they stop."

Tehemton's interest in the sport was aroused by his father, Keko-bad, who is the panthaky of the Belgaum Agiary and an athlete in his own right. "I learnt from magazines," recalls Tehemton, "any magazine I could get my hands on, I read." Since leaving school at 16, he began working out, lifting weights and doing exercises. Within a year he had won the Shree Mysore title which he held for four years while his family was in Hubli. His father could not compete in body-building competitions because he is a priest, but Tehemton says today there are no restrictions as such. "I've been in lots of competitions!" he says from Nainital to Madras. In 1974 he won the Shree



Gowadia: "I learnt from magazines"

Maharashtra title and after being in the number three slot for the Bharat Shree title for two years, he won the title this year in the "Tall" category. "If I had more time to train I would have won the Mr. India title itself instead of only winning in my class," he said.

While body-building keeps him in shape it can be hazardous. "There're lots of chances for straining muscles doing the exercises the wrong way. You get an idea by looking at the magazines, mostly American ones like *Strength and Health*. You also have to do exercises for suppleness otherwise you'll get stiff. You must not become muscle-bound. And if you stop body-building, don't use your muscles or any energy but at the same time keep eating the same food, you'll go fat."

Despite the drawbacks Tehemton notes "there's a lot of interest in body-building in India. In Nainital, for instance, twenty-five thousand people came to see an open-ground show." The crowds that come to watch the shows vary in response. "Sometimes they

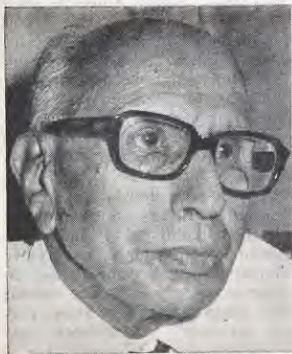
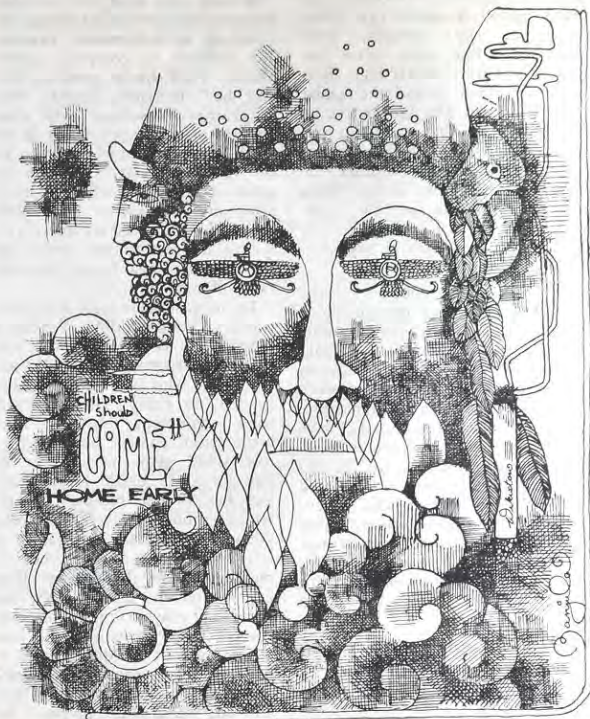
Please turn to page 44, col. 2

Who is an Orthodox Parsi?

Interviews by
Feroza Paymaster

'Orthodox' is one of the most maligned words in the community. Behind the facade of respectability it bestows on those who seek its shelter, exists a spectrum of opinion. Warring parties claim that it is their point of view which is truly orthodox and the others which is a sham. Both sides quote scripture to prove their point. The ensuing battle of semantics results in terms like "Independent Orthodox" being coined whose definitions are determined more by the need of the hour than by any principles or logic. It is not uncommon to hear a person say that though they smoke cigarettes, they believe in the *dokhmas* and, therefore, are orthodox. Orthodoxy has become today a term of convenience, a justification for a person's mode of life.

According to Webster's dictionary orthodox is defined as "conforming to established doctrine especially in religion." The "established doctrine" however is what is always in question. Is it the *Gathas* or the *Vendidad*, the *Shahnameh* or the *Jamaspi*? To determine how the lay Parsi views orthodoxy we asked our seven interviewees this issue to define the term.



Eruch Kapadia, 76, Physician

"In general terms, an orthodox is a person holding onto accepted views. Orthodox people believe in prayers and *dokhma nashini*, but in varying degrees. There are intelligent orthodox and those who are bigoted. In the latter case, even if the person sees reasons for changing his views he would not do so—and this is not desirable, for we have got to change with the times. An intelligent orthodox, however, is not narrow-minded and if he feels convinced of a reasonable argument, he is ready to change.

"Orthodoxy as such is good, be-

cause it tends to bind the community together. Being liberal implies an open mind, the same as an intelligent orthodox.

"I'm a conservative sort of man but would change my views if convinced." A good Zoroastrian need not necessarily be orthodox, says Kapadia. "We live in a changing world. Take religious ceremonies—we have neither the time nor the means to go through all the ceremonies of our ancestors and forefathers, yet some people insist we should. Those are the bigoted orthodox."



Hilla Irani, 30, Doctor

"Orthodoxy refers to the religious part of a person's life, what his opinions on it are, how strict he is in following prayers and ceremonies. Someone who by his dress and mode of behaviour would stand out in a group, but is not necessarily narrow-minded and rigid, who believes in the *dokhnas* but not in smoking or inter-marriage. Orthodoxy is good in some ways; it has kept our cultural and religious heritage intact. If we had been too liberal from the beginning, our religion would have been messed up by now, we

wouldn't have much identity left." Ms Irani feels an "orthodox person sometimes hinders progress, and when he can't get what he wants, he has to be liberal. Being liberal is to be broad-minded, tolerant and a person who could bring about progress. But a liberal does not necessarily contribute more to society than an orthodox.

"I am orthodox myself to some extent—I say my daily prayers and wear a *sudra* and *kusti*. I'm proud of being Parsi but I don't stick to rituals." A good Zoroastrian she feels need not be an orthodox one.



Capt. Homi Colabawalla, 56, Investment Advisor

"Someone who has set views, sticks to what he has been taught by his grandfather and father. He believes in *amas pur em nahi karvanu*, goes to the Fire Temple regularly, is against accepting people into the religion, drinking and smoking and feels the children must come home at a certain time."

"Orthodoxy is bad, because there can be no progress if we stick to old customs. No orthodox person can be liberal—that means moving with the times, letting others do what they

want to, not coming in the way, minding one's own business." Colabawalla feels a liberal, with his contemporary viewpoint, could reform the society.

"I am certainly not orthodox. I say short prayers every night and wear the *sudra-kusti* but I would allow a child to marry outside the community. With modern times, the older people should make way for the younger generation. It is happening in the community, but there's room for improvement still."



Tannaz Tarapore, 37, Chartered Accountant, Kamani Group of Industries

"An orthodox believes in the original customs and tenets which have been coming down over the years. She believes in the various religious ceremonies to be gone through, like the *dokhnas*."

"Orthodoxy in the religion is good, but sometimes you can carry it to extremes, especially as far as certain customs are concerned. We have mixed religion and community together. We should be able to adjust the customs of the community without losing the basic tenets of our religion."

"A liberal is someone who

would accept the tenets of the religion but who would also tolerate outside factors like inter-marriage. Like if someone wanted to be incinerated, a liberal would say, fine, it is his business."

Coming from an orthodox background, Ms Tarapore considers herself fairly orthodox, "I wear a full *sudra* except with sarees when I wear a strap *sudra*. I go to the Fire Temple on all festivals, and believe in *machhis* etc. The only really unorthodox thing about me is that I believe that the children of Parsi mothers who marry out should also be accepted into our religion."



Shiraz Cama, 16, Student, Elphinstone College

"A person who looks at the bad side of things. He doesn't see the modern generation's point of view even if it is an improvement on his, and believes that every day you must go to the Fire Temple and wear the sudra-kusti. Ritualism is orthodox.

"To be liberal" Shiraz notes "is to be free, to try and make changes and reforms for the betterment of society. A person may be liberal and yet orthodox. He will say you should wear the sudra-kusti and yet allow people to enjoy life and go their own way.

"I am not orthodox. Sometimes young girls are also orthodox, and talk like the older generation—don't do this, don't do that, stay at home. Right now the society is changing. We have a bright outlook and don't view things the way old people do; we try to adjust to our environment, they don't. A person may be a good Zoroastrian without being orthodox—though Zoroaster may have been for all we know, otherwise all the orthodox customs wouldn't have come up."



Aspi Sattha, 29, Solicitor, Little & Company

"A person who conforms to and believes in the traditions which have been there for generations, particularly someone who follows the religious tenets, the *ritrivaj* as it is called and the customs. Orthodoxy has nothing to do with the outlook but with theology. An orthodox person is not narrow-minded. Orthodoxy is good, because traditions have a certain background, a historic significance, and are not cooked up to suit anyone's convenience. I further feel that it is not right to scoff at them just because we are

not able to understand their meaning and significance.

"Liberals are those who do not conform to orthodoxy and continuing traditions. They could be reformists because they are the people with original ideas and may then propagate their views."

Sattha feels he is not orthodox because "unfortunately I have very little knowledge of religious tenets and Zoroastrianism is an orthodox religion—because it is ancient; its customs have been there for innumerable years."



Perin Vajifdar, 70, Free-lance Journalist

"Those who have old ideas, are old fashioned, stick to old beliefs and old traits. They are not orthodox at heart, they are just hypocrites. They just want to show off, for the sake of publicity."

Liberals can be hypocrites too, says Ms Vajifdar. She defines liberals as people who have a broader outlook in everything, who do not stick to any dogmatic views. "A person can be both an orthodox and a liberal" if he takes the middle path, looks to others' views, and does not stick to just one idea.

"Both the orthodox and the liberal can be reformists," she adds.

"I am a complex person, I enjoy yoga and dancing, and yet like old traditions, I like my children brought up in old ways, but I don't like *dhongodoxy*. Why should one stick to that sort of orthodoxy? Taking the middle path is the best." Religion to Ms Vajifdar is based on good things. "Why should there be any orthodoxy in truth? You don't have to be orthodox to be good."

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

**"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.)



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



Dara Cama

The HERETICAL DUO

Interviews by
Pervin Mahoney



Dhunjisha Joshi

There have been few critics of the Towers of Silence as vocal as Dara Cama and Dhunjisha Joshi. Over the years they have carried on their anti-*dokhma* crusade with missionary zeal. Cama once built an attachable aluminium ladder on his car so as to be able to scale the walls of the mofussil *dokhmas* and the first time he tried to enter the towers at *Doongerwadi*, he carried a revolver. And Joshi still exhibits at his Raveline Street office gory photographs of the interiors of various *dokhmas* throughout India. So it is no wonder that just the mention of their names is enough to arouse the strongest emotions in Parsis.

Crank calls, letters of abuse and threats on their lives are as much part of their lives as the monsoons. But lately the tempo of abuse has dropped. "It's a barometer of the times," says Cama, a well-to-do real estate man, "people have become more enlightened, have begun to see." While the flamboyant Cama may have a weakness for hyperbole, the climate has changed to the extent

that both he and Joshi say they can arrange for priests to perform the necessary funeral ceremonies if a person chooses to be cremated or buried. But, as the 81-year-old iconoclast Joshi adds characteristically, "a *mobed* is not going to give you a certificate to enter heaven."

Joshi began his anti-*dokhma* campaign in 1964 when he urged Parsis to utilize the Municipal crematorium at Chandanwadi. "God has given us fire to make destructive things harmless," he argued. Fire is God's greatest gift to humanity.

Joshi is convinced that in Iran there were no *dokhmas*. "When King Yazdagara Sheryar was defeated by the Arabs, the Arabs acquired all the graveyards of the Zoroastrians. Then the Zoroastrians started to put the bodies into rivers. When they were prevented from doing this, they resorted to another method. With their hands and feet folded, the bodies were put on a donkey; on the other side of the animal the soiled clothes of the *dhobi* were

fastened and in this way, secretly, bodies were taken into the jungle and placed there. It is absolutely wrong to say in Iran the bodies were put on a mountain top because it is physically difficult to climb a mountain carrying a dead body.

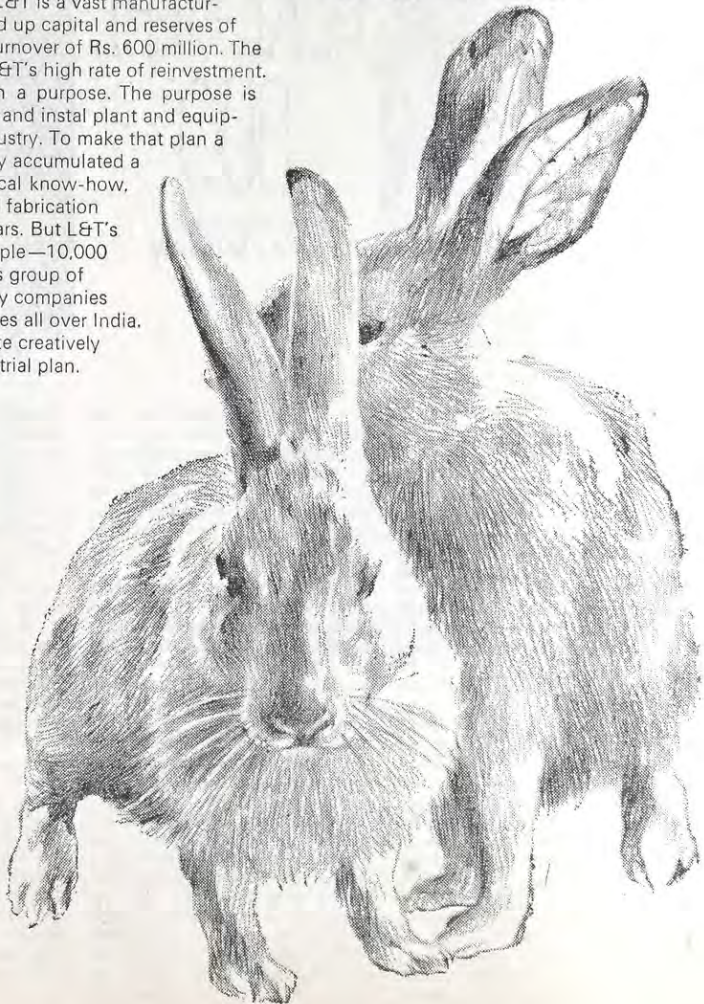
"Those who are in favour of *dokhmanashini* can follow it. I believe in keeping an open mind, not in insisting you are wrong and I am right. But I do believe the time has come to have an electric crematorium on *Doongerwadi*. Otherwise we will be forced to lose that land if the residents of the new 28-storey buildings band together and protest to the health minister that they can see decomposing bodies.

"I wear a *sudra* and *kusti* but I don't pray. I consider *agiaries* and *atashbehras* to be houses of cheating, where the priests, say: pay us and we will pray for you and you will get a good place in heaven. One of my relations, a lady, goes to Warden Road seashore every day to pray. I tell her that instead of praying before the

The common multiplying factor

The rabbit is a rapid multiplier. That is common knowledge. What is not so common is the knowledge that rests with the wise investor. For him major multiplying factors are L&T shares. From 1951 to 1973/74 hundred equity shares have multiplied to 1630. Right and bonus issues were responsible for adding up to a lot.

Facts about L&T make the figures possible. They indicate why investments in L&T shares increase and multiply. L&T is a vast manufacturing complex with a paid up capital and reserves of Rs. 143 million and a turnover of Rs. 600 million. The growth is fostered by L&T's high rate of reinvestment. And it is planned with a purpose. The purpose is to design, manufacture and instal plant and equipment for every vital industry. To make that plan a reality L&T has carefully accumulated a rich reservoir of technical know-how, manufacturing skill and fabrication facilities for over 35 years. But L&T's greatest asset is its people—10,000 specialised talents in its group of associate and subsidiary companies and its network of offices all over India. Together they contribute creatively to the company's industrial plan.



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

sea, you should go to Parsi General Hospital and help poor patients.... I tell her," and suddenly his voice sounded icily prophetic, "you will be punished by the Almighty for wasting your time."

Cama started his campaign against priestcraft and what he terms "The Towers of Horror" on account of a "fanatic relative who was soaked—no, drowned—in rituals. In 1965 I wrote a letter of advice to him." Two years later Cama's *jehad* started in earnest when he approached the Bombay Municipality in regard to building a crematorium for Parsis, but was told that they would not give land for a communal purpose.

His offer to construct an additional floor on the existing crematorium was also turned down on the same grounds. He even volunteered to finance a 10-lakh rupee one-oven crematorium at *Doongerwadi* which could incinerate a body in an hour and a half, leaving behind only the pelvic bones, "but for the moment," he noted, "my crematorium plans are in cold storage."

Cama, who claims to have spent over a lakh of rupees on his war, says he "always questioned what must be happening inside the walls. In my mind I compared a *dokhma* to an ash-tray. Unless we turn it topsy-turvy, it will never get cleaned."

In about 1967, Cama in conjunction with Joshi, had photographs taken of *Doongerwadi* and mofuss *dokhmas* in Kharedi, Sholapur, Poona and other towns. "I had a special aluminium ladder for scaling mofussil *dokhmas*. It's all a messy business—what else could it be? Especially in Kharedi and Sholapur, there were human bodies rotting."

While in the mofussil areas admission to the *dokhmas* was gained by paying around five rupees to the non-Parsi gardeners, Cama says it cost Rs. 28,000 to enter the *Doongerwadi* towers in the heart of Bombay's fashionable Malabar Hill. The first attempt made with a revolver on his person, was thwarted when, after entering through the Hanging Gardens and climbing over two small walls he was faced with a "huge one over which I couldn't climb and if I

had managed to do so, would not have come out again."

The second time, he resorted to a successful ruse. A friend informed the Parsi Panchayat, in whose charge the *Doongerwadi* estate is vested, that the *bunglis* where the ceremonies are performed prior to the corpse being placed in the *dokhmas*, were in poor condition and that he would offer to spruce them up, recalled Cama. "The Panchayat replied, '*Shabash*, we want more Zoroastrians of your type.'" While the painting was being done, Cama and a photographer ventured to the towers but found the doors locked. "We had to find someone to open the lock but we knew of no Parsi locksmith. So I went to a Muslim locksmith, purchased a lot of goods from him and proposed my plan. Fortunately he held the same feelings towards his Mullahs and agreed. He dressed up as a Parsi and opened the lock in two minutes flat—now the Panchayat have put on a larger lock."

Cama says he sent the photographs to various Parsi institutions and Joshi claims over a thousand people have viewed them



From experience comes faith ..

Watch a young boy comparing and selecting book after book.

They look much alike to him now. When he is older, through experience, he will have judgment. He will know books he can live by. The rest can gather dust on the shelf.

Life is like that. Out of each new experience, a man gathers wisdom. He learns to hold fast to things of proven worth.

By comparison, man also learns the value of things unseen, things in which he finally puts his faith.

The priceless ingredient of every product is the honor and integrity of its maker

SQUIBB®



A Century of Experience Builds Faith

SARABHAI CHEMICALS LIMITED
WADI WADI, BARODA

©represents the Registered Trademark of E. R. Squibb & Sons, Inc., of which Sarabhai Chemicals Limited are the Licensed Users.

ECF1

Dr. Writer's CHOCOLATE SLABS



Now in twelve varieties

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

in his Raveline Street employment office. The Panchayat admitted the photos were of the interiors of the *dokhmus* but insisted they must be of the mofussil areas while the *Jashan* committee stated it was all trickery, says Cama.

But the rebuffs did not in any way dampen the duo's zeal. Cama, is busy publishing a second booklet attacking the orthodoxy.

"People say that it is not me who is writing against priestcraft but some other wise man. I readily admit there is a wise man behind me, so why not accept his wisdom? All these rumours are circulated because I don't read any ancient scripts. But after all we know what the Koran and the Bible say, in spite of not knowing the original language.

"The *Vendidad* prohibits both *dokhmanashini* and burial because they are likely to spread pestilence. There is an additional reason against burial: graves occupy valuable land which can be used for tilling. *Dokhmanashini* might have been feasible in remote times, but not nowadays in big cities.

Especially in electric crematoriums there is no question of fire being present otherwise everyday the whole of Bombay would be ablaze. The heat of electricity burns a corpse. And even if there was fire in a crematorium, we are not fire-worshippers. According to Zoroaster that would be idolatry.

"The fire which burns in our fire-temples consists of sixteen different fires, such as the fire from a poor man's *sagdi*, the fire from a king's palace, the fire from a potter's oven. Did you know that the first fire in those sixteen is the fire from the cremation ground?

"As for the popular belief that by *dokhmanashini* we don't defile the elements—fire, water, air, earth—this is a total lie. The sun-fire beats on the corpse, the air kisses it, the rain-water washes away the filth and it goes into the earth. So if you can ever say that the elements are defiled at all, then they are equally defiled in *dokhmanashini*.

"Yes, I can arrange for *mobeds* for those who are going to be

cremated. But I say openly that *mobeds* will be able to do nothing for the dead. No amount of entreaties by hired priests will help the dead man. The *mobeds* are willing to come because their's is a profession. They get money, so they'll do anything; you can ask them to lengthen or shorten prayers. The prophet has called priests babblers of words for fees.

"Originally anyone was welcome into our religion. Conversion was a fundamental feature. How could the prophet have enlarged his fold otherwise? There was no Zoroastrianism before Zoroaster; only in conversion did it begin. To talk of respecting tradition, is to be most irrational and silly. All prophets fought against the established religion of their time. They started to preach a new religion only because they were dissatisfied with the old," says Cama.

"I consider myself a practical, wordly man. I don't think I am activated by any higher calling. But it must be something which drives me. It is the mind which says that all this *chu-cha* religion of today is nonsense."

SHAPOORJI PALLONJI & CO., PVT. LTD.

Building Contractors & Civil Engineers

Registered Office:

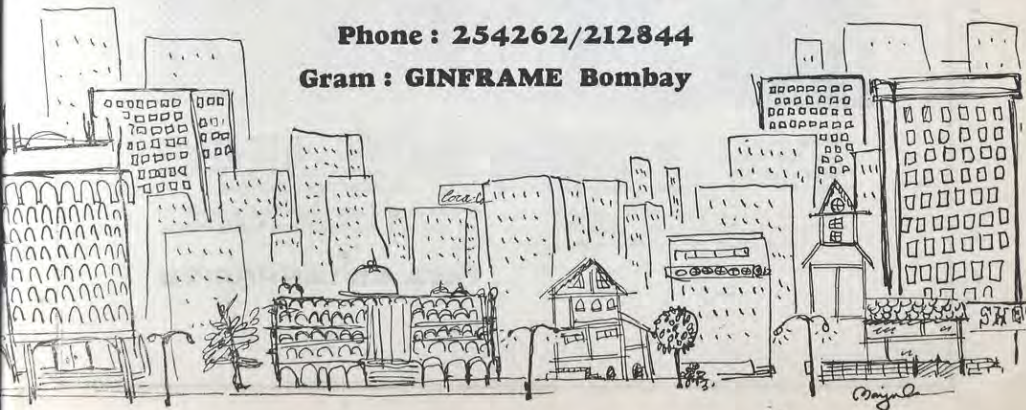
70, Medows Street,
Fort, Bombay-400 001

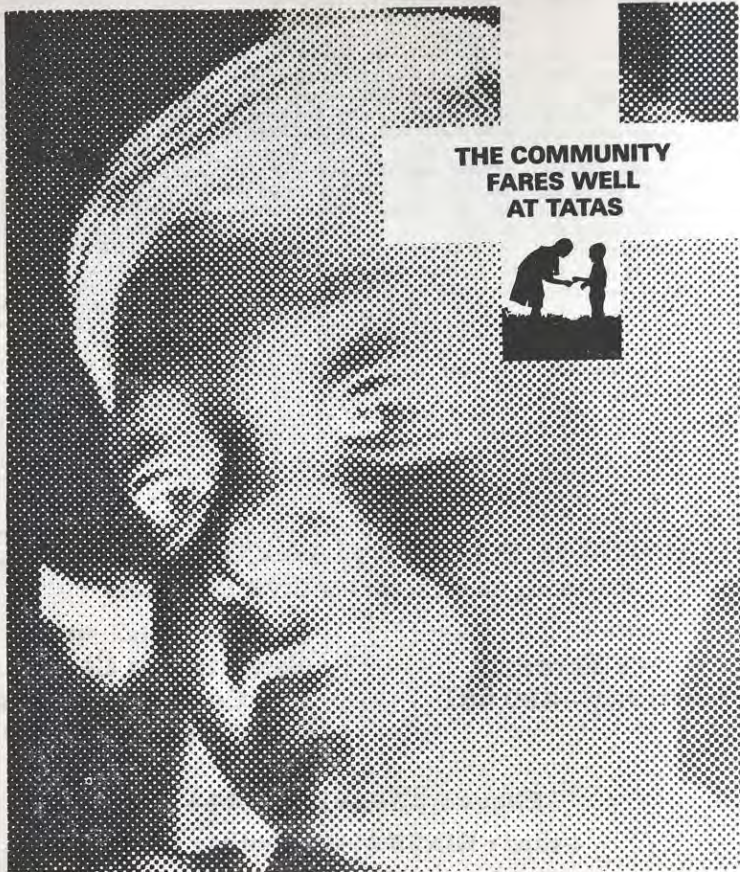
Administrative Office:

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

Phone : 254262/212844

Gram : GINFRAME Bombay





**THE COMMUNITY
FARES WELL
AT TATAS**



Community welfare is a social responsibility voluntarily accepted by Tatas many years ago. It was this sense of responsibility that prompted Sir Ratan Tata to finance studies into the causes of poverty in 1912, and the Tata Trusts to establish institutions like the Tata Memorial Hospital for Cancer Research and treatment and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences.

In fact, Tatas have gone so far as to turn the entire town of Jamshedpur into a model in community living. There are wide roads, tree-lined avenues, hospitals and family clinics, and schools which any community would be proud of.

TATA ENTERPRISES

comment: Race and Reason

by Jamshed Modi

It was many years ago that as a new arrival to the United States, I boarded my first Greyhound Bus to travel from one city to another. As I settled down in one of the high-back, reclining seats, and looked around the softly-lit interior with its special reading lamps and tinted glass windows, I noticed a sign in a prominent spot up front: "Seating on board this bus is without regard to race, creed or national origin. By order of the Interstate Commerce Commission." Later it was explained to me that in the South in those days, the "white" passengers would sit up front and the "coloured" passengers would be expected to sit in the back, and that the sign was put up to make it amply clear that on this bus (and all Interstate buses) any person may sit wherever he pleased.

Now in India I have lived among all kinds of people, and I was told about the many "races" all around me, but most of the time I was not very conscious of them. I suppose like most other Parsis I was raised to believe not only that Parsis were a race unique, but that they were one of the "purest" races still existing. Except for occasional pleasure when I heard such a statement (usually from another Parsi), I was hardly more conscious of the term "race" than the shirt on my back.

Therefore, as a project of personal education, I undertook to find out what is this thing called race, how do you tell who belongs to what race, and how do you distinguish a pure race from an impure one. One quickly comes to realize that the term race means different things to different people. Some people use it for national groupings; hence we hear terms like the "Japanese race" or the "English race". Others use it to stand for religious groupings, such as the "Jewish race". At times the word race is used to denote historical origins, as implied in the term "Aryan race", a term which has accumulated tremendous notoriety today because of the Nazis having used it. Still other people use the term race for colour groupings, and

we hear about the "yellow race", or the "black race". Finally, it is used to denote physical feature aggregates, such as the "Caucasian race" or the "Mongolian race".

Out of all such diverse usages of the term race, Ashley Montagu, Professor of Anthropology at Princeton University, discerns two notions in his book *The Concept of Race*. One, he calls the "social (sometimes misnamed the sociological) concept of race, the doctrine, to put it briefly, that there exist superior and inferior races." The second, he calls the biological concept of race which has it that "within a particular species there exist different populations of the same species which are distinguished from one another by the possession of certain distinctive hereditary traits." I suppose most Parsis who subscribe to the concept of race probably harbour both these notions, that is that Parsis do have certain distinctive hereditary traits and that these traits put us some what higher up on the list.

The history of race-concepts is quite interesting and even amusing. L. C. Dunn and Theodosius Dobzhansky, both Professors of Zoology at Columbia University, mention in their book, *Hereditry, Race and Society* that the term race is attributed to the French scholar Buffon who used it in 1749. Later, the German scholar Blumenbach (1775) decided to distinguish five races in man: Caucasian or white, Mongolian or yellow, Ethiopian or black, American or red, and Malayan or brown. Skin colour was soon recognised to be too superficial a trait, so anthropologists resorted to measurements of the body, particularly the head. The rest of the history is best told in the authors' own words:

"The use of such methods led to a great multiplication of races. Deniker, in 1889, recognised 29 of them. . . . In 1933, von Eickstadt set up 3 'basic races' . . . 18 'sub-races', and 3 'intermediate forms'. In 1950 . . . Coon, Garn and Birdsell recognised 6 'putative stocks' . . . and 30 different races. No agreement has emerged from such efforts as to what constitutes a race."

As for "pure" races, Dunn and Dobzhansky write:

"If you say that something is a mixture you imply that pure ingredients which have been mixed together exist somewhere or have existed in the past. . . . Such notions are, however, definitely refuted by scientific data. Race mixture has been going on during the whole of recorded history. . . . Nothing can be more certain than that pure races in man never existed and cannot exist."

The first few times that I encountered such categorical rejections of the race concept, I could not help feeling that either we Parsis need to revise our notions about ourselves, or somehow the world of science has overlooked the Parsis of India. With further reading I have come to suspect that the former is probably the case. Of course, there is no need to feel bad about having had erroneous ideas on the subject, because the anthropologists themselves formulated and pursued the theories of racial divisions in man for many years. But that is the way it is with the acquisition of knowledge: further investigations invariably give rise to newer and more valid concepts. However, whereas the anthropologists have moved forward from racial concepts, the Parsis have not.

I think we should cease referring to ourselves as a race, or a "pure" race. The term, "pure" race makes some very offensive implications about others. It also places this aspect of Parsi ideology embarrassingly close to one which only 30 odd years ago caused some of the greatest human suffering in recorded history. Clearly it is contrary to the best thinking of our times, and should have no room in the "religion of good sense", which is what our religion has often been named.

If a new communal attitude on race could be evolved, it would hold many important advantages for us Parsis. Firstly, it would serve to dissociate ourselves from concepts which are scientifically false and morally repulsive and would serve to keep the religion on

Please turn to page 44, col. 2

The author is a consultant at Tata Consulting Services.



THE DANCING LINE

"Just as the potter shapes his pot, I paint and as I paint my idea takes its shape," said Shrivastava Chavda during his recent exhibition at the Taj Art Gallery. Surrounded by rippling canvases, brimming with dappled sunlit shapes, threaded by his strong pulsating line, Chavda is a soft-spoken quiet man, giving the impression of the still epicentre in the midst of restless creation.

Described as the draughtsman of all dances, Indian, Javanese and European, Chavda related how he would watch a performance and toss off 150 to 200 sketches in the course of a few hours. "The moment you ask a dancer to dance for you, he becomes dead," he said, explaining that he liked to study the very process by which a dancer travelled from one movement to another. This has given to his work a singular fluidity of line which has been hailed as the very "life and soul of Chavda's art." It is a line which is strong enough to capture the throbbing intensity of a Bharatha Natyam dancer's step, yet light enough to trace the fan like hand gestures of a Balinese dancer. It catches in its stroke the ponderous movements of a Kathakali dancer's costume as well the gossamer lightness of a ballet dancer's draperies. Like the dancers art, Chavda's line combines strength with suppleness, rhythm with control.

From the practised grace of dancers to the natural grace of animals seems but the logical step and it is interesting to note the delightful studies that Chavda has made of animals. Leafing through a small booklet of his work he pointed to a particularly sensitive study of a deer, its head turned back to lick its hind hoof. In its economy of strokes it recalled the technique of Chinese art where every line is practised with austere control until the very barest flicks of the brush will

convey the whole effect. And yet in its fullness it also recalled the natural spontaneity of animals depicted in the Ajanta frescoes.

"When I did those, people were surprised that anyone should want to draw animals. In those days we were expected to do copies from Western magazines." By this time Chavda had already been through the formal period of his apprenticeship, starting at the J. J. School of Arts and then continuing at the Slade School in London, where he had the privilege of working under the well known Russian stage designer, Vladimir Polunin, who he feels might have been responsible for his enduring love of the stage, and of dancing in particular. "One summer I spent studying the originals of the great Masters. Britain was at war with Hitler, but I spent my time wandering through the Museums." Chavda also took a course in Commercial Art, since at that time an artist's existence was considered to be too precarious to provide a living by itself. Naturally his formal training could not be considered complete without a sojourn at the Mecca of all artists, Paris, where he worked at the *Academie de la grande Chaumiere*. On his return to India he embarked on a journey of self-discovery, which, coinciding with an era of awakening nationhood, meant also a discovery of the place and country of his birth. Chavda's work from this period, like the work of others at the time, reflects an understandably self-conscious preoccupation with Indian themes, tribal women, rural scenes, festivals, all of which have now come to have hackneyed connotations, but which in his case are saved by the uncompromising clarity of his line. Here it must also be mentioned that perhaps, as a result of Chavda's early training in Commercial Art, he is quite often inclined to produce



Chavda: Flowing patterns

pictures which have a pleasing but superficial quality. His scenes are invariably tranquil, not necessarily sentimentalized, but after a while seeming to possess a one-dimensional quality. Perhaps it could be that he is inclined to use colour as merely a decorative adjunct to his linear composition.

In his last exhibition held at the Taj Art Gallery it appears to be a problem he has tried to tackle, for there is a definite attempt to concentrate on abstract compositions of colour. Our reactions to this are two-fold. On one hand we must admire the professional excellence of Chavda's canvases, the sheer technical finesse he brings to his work which immediately distinguishes him from the hordes of amateurs, who in varying degrees of brashness or hesitation, are still in the process of discovering their style. There is, therefore, an immediate attraction to his work. It is a feeling reinforced by the pleasing combination of colours he uses, and the range of his canvases from the

formal elegance of a crystallized rose, frosted in two colours, to the joyous unselfconsciousness of nude forms flinging up their hands in celebration. There is a delicate sketch of a bird etched against narrow panels of muted colour arranged in strips like a screen from a Chinese scroll and a series of vibrant abstracts the most notable of them being "Flowing Patterns" in which basic reds, yellows, blues and browns dance and gyrate together. Standing in front of a painting showing fishlike shapes flicking through an opalescent medium, Chavda explained that the subject would suddenly reveal itself to him after he had started work on it. Often in his work one sees the painting suddenly brought into focus by strong dark lines which immediately give a "meaning" to the painting, as for example in the one entitled "An Unknown King" which looks like the head of a Kathakali dancer or in those with figures of women. At other places, Chavda's famous line seems to have been used and then smudged out, giving only a faint hint of it. In these painting he seems to be deliberately suppressing the line which has been for so long his strength. Is it a result of heeding the carping of critics who detect a too facile quality in his work, or who feel that Chavda instead of controlling his line appears to be controlled by it?

These questions however are such as must trouble only the critics. At sixty, which he describes as "the second childhood of an artist," Chavda says, that he is drawn towards more childlike forms of expression, wherein he hopes once more to recapture the clear uncomplicated vision of a child.

Convoluted surrealism and strident social comment having become recurring nightmares on the Indian art scene, it is a pleasant distraction to find Nergish Irani's exhibition at the Jehangir Art Gallery. Recently returned from the Washington University School of Art, she feels "Harmony, peace and quiet, these are the qualities I want to express." In this, her first show in India, these characteristics are perceptible; there is a sort of controlled serenity in her art, her colors are muted to soft beiges and raw jute, the strongest tones being cool leafy greens verging on mellow yellows.

Though she studied five years in the J. J. School of Art in Bombay before going to London and then to America for her Master of Fine Art, the American influence is noticeable, particularly in a series of prints called "collographs." The original compositions for these prints are primarily collages, with the emphasis in reproducing them placed on capturing the texture of the materials used in the collage—such as the coarse weave of canvas sacking contrasted against smooth grained paper. Ms Irani fashions bleak landscapes from these materials, repeating the formula of a tree motif, set in wide fields bordered off with irregular slashes of what could be roads or waterways, depending on one's interpretation. Despite the vaguely random quality of the prints, as if the artist had haphazardly cut and pasted different bits of cloth and paper, there is a strong earthiness, a tangible sense of rough earth and hardy fibre.

While the collographs are mostly in wheaten colors which complement the materials used, the oil-paintings show faint stirrings of greenery in those arid vistas of solitary trees and lonely roads. In particular, Tranquillity VII is a large spacious canvas showing verdent green areas overlapping and gently merging as if the harsh



Ms. Irani: Rough earth and hardy fibre.

contours of the collographs had given way to lush outlines. The same theme is repeated in a small oil pastel entitled simply "Landscape" where the green masses take on a more definite shape and one can see a true tree form emerging where elsewhere there was only a blob. Though there is an unmistakable professionalism in her approach, characterized by the assurance with which she repeats her themes, one wonders after all whether technical skill has stifled the original inspiration. "One sees so much harmony around one," says Ms Irani, explaining the cool simplicity of the pieces displayed, yet there is very little harmony in the erratic lines of the collographs. They embody a bizarre reality, as if in trying to achieve the utmost in the quietude, "order and principle," that she seeks, she has created a disturbing world where all colors and forms have been negated for no apparent reason. Again, in the Tranquillity series, the images and emotions portrayed are all so smooth and unruffled as to provoke hardly any reaction, as if one were watching a scene so completely tranquil that it ceased to exist or to be of lasting interest.

Chemicals & Ferro Alloys Private Ltd

LIBERTY BUILDING, NEW MARINE LINES

BOMBAY 400 020

Phone : 256823
256866

GRAM: NONIONIC

TELEX: UNIFERO 011-3222

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

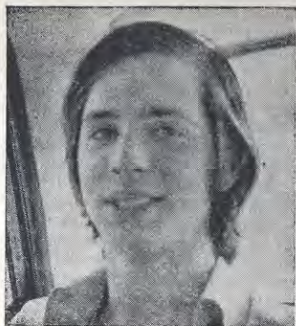
Safe permanent and most effective bleaching and whitening agent for cotton, wool, linen and rayon fabrics when mixed with domestic and industrial detergent powders (15 to 20 per cent) and used at a temperature of 60°C to 90°C.

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**



Dinshah "Danny" Mody

It had rained all night and into the morning, the day of Dinshah Kali Mody's funeral. But the sizeable gathering that did manage to traverse the flood-bound roads of Bombay, witnessed the grief-stricken Mody family give its youngest member a quiet and dignified last farewell.

The tall, nineteen year-old grandson of the late Sir Homi Mody lost his life in a tragic car accident on July 8 near the town of Bulsar. The family had gone to the Zoroastrian Mecca, Udwarda, to offer prayers and thanksgiving and were en route from Navsari to Devka on that Tuesday morning in two cars when a speeding truck came careening towards them from the opposite direction. Kali Mody, who was driving the first car in which were seated his American wife, Nina and two friends, swerved instantaneously and missed being hit. The truck driver then reportedly applied his brakes causing the vehicle to spin and collide against the second car, killing three of its occupants on the spot and seriously injuring the fourth. Among the victims in the car were two drivers, A. T. Jagtap and Raju Ramsawmy both of whom were reportedly seated in front. Dinshah's older brother, Jamshed, sustained multiple fractures and was raced in an ambulance—acquired with the help of some Bulsar residents—to the Breach Candy Hospital where he was reported to be progressing well. According to reports, several travellers in the truck were seriously injured. The truck



driver was said to have absconded after the mishap.

Dinshah graduated from Doon School in Dehra Dun. He was studying for a Bachelor's Degree in International Business Management at the American College of Switzerland in Leysin and had returned home for the summer holidays along with his brother, who is doing his Chartered Accountancy in England. "Danny" as the out-going six-footer was called was described by friends as a zestful but sensitive young man whose many interests included painting and writing.

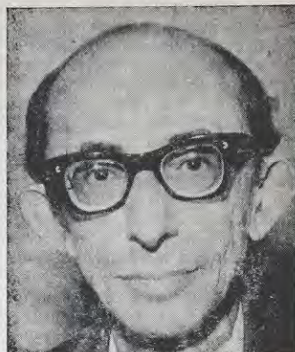
He is survived amongst others, by his grandmother, Lady Jerbai, and his uncles, Piloo (the noted politician) and Rusi.

Feroza Paymaster

Died : Minoo Burjorji Desai, 56, Editor of the Gujarati daily, *The Bombay Samachar* and noted poet and biographer; of cancer in the Parsi General Hospital, Bombay on May 25.

"Minooobhai" as the modest and introverted journalist was known to all the *Samachar* employees, guided the course of the oldest daily newspaper in India for fourteen years, during which the circulation rose from 46,000 to 130,000. A "meticulous precisionist", he focused more on organization and presentation than investigative reporting, notes Jehanbakhsh Daruwala, the *Samachar's* new editor. Desai commissioned several new columns and features such as *Vora Vartman*, *Mukhbir-i-Islam* and *Jai Jinendra* which dealt with the problems of the Bohras, Muslims and Jains. Though avoiding controversies that may have offended the sensibilities of his readers, he published Shrivastav Vakil's statement on the plight of the Towers of Silence.

Desai was awarded the Union Government's "Rashtriya Award"



Minoo B. Desai

for his anthology of poems entitled *Bapu* and won recognition from the Gujarat Government for his *Vidyarthi Natika*. The literary section he introduced in the *Samachar* provided a forum for much fresh talent in Gujarati. He also wrote the biography of Dastur Jamshedji Kukadaru and Burjorji Bharucha—which is awaiting publication.

Born in a literary family in Navsari, Desai's childhood teacher was the noted scholar-poet Jehangir Desai. Another relative, Soma Desai, was reportedly the author of over a 100 books. After graduating from the C. J. Madressa, Desai embarked on his journalistic career. He served a short stint on the Gujarati daily, *Jammabhoomi* in 1942 and then joined *The Mumbai Vartman*. He was active in the freedom movement and through it met Jehangir Sanjana and Burjorji Bharucha, both of whom, according to Daruwala, did a lot to stimulate his interest in Gujarati literature. In 1944 he signed on as a columnist with the *Kaiser-e-Hind Weekly* and in 1948 the *Samachar* asked him to write their Parsi column.

When in 1961 the paper's editor of 40 years, Sohrabji Kapadia died, the Cama family, which owns the *Samachar*, appointed Desai in his place.

A religious man who visited the Banaji Agiary almost daily, Desai was drawn towards mysticism. After recovering from an operation, he visited Shirdi to pay his respects at the shrine of Sai Baba, 155 Daruwala. He considered

Kamu Baba of Jogeshwari his "spiritual guru". Desai introduced the column *Bhajanavali* in the *Samachar*, where the precepts of various gurus along with detailed explanations are given. He was interested in the philosophy of the Parsi mystic teachers, but maintained he would only publish their extracts if they were rewritten in a language the paper's readers would understand.

On account of his shyness, Desai often hesitated meeting people he did not know. He may not have been at his most effective on radio or television, recalled Daruwala, because his natural element was the written word. But one of his favourite pastimes was discussing literature with a fellow poet or writer. On every *Poornima* (full moon) he and a small clique of poets held a *mandali* (circle) where they recited their poems.

Desai's goal was to preserve the beauty and clarity of the Gujarati language which had always been the intention of the *Samachar's* founder, Fareedoonji Murzbanji. To the end Desai retained his dedication to the paper and attended office soon after his last operation. He faced death as he had faced life, said Daruwala, "with unmoved faith". He leaves behind his mother, Jaijeemai, wife, Mani, and son, Berjis.

Ruzbeh Antia

Died : Ratansha Merwanji Chamarbaugwala, 63, founder of the popular, all-India R.M.D.C. Crosswords that were finally banned after several, historic and lengthy lawsuits; of cancer in the Parsi General Hospital, Bombay on May 1, 1975.

A fighter to the end, Chamarbaugwala "always fought for what he considered right", said his son Merwan, recalling his father's tenacity not only in dealing with the courts, but life in general. After the closure of the cross-words in 1957, he started the R.M.D.C. press with four or five workers and built it up into an organization employing over 300 people. The press has won several awards for excellence in printing from the Government of India and has printed literature free of cost for many Parsi institutions and religious causes.



Ratansha M. Chamarbaugwala

Born in Poona, Chamarbaugwala studied at St. Vincent High School there. After completing his studies, he worked with his father Merwanji, a leading liquor and toddy merchant of Bombay. He soon left to become the joint founder of the Indian Express group of newspapers, along with Mr. J. N. Hamilton, Rusi Karanjia and others. With the coming of independence, the ownership of *The Morning Standard* and *The Sunday Standard* changed hands, and Chamarbaugwala became the sole concessioner for the Littlewoods Football Pool in India and Burma. When the licence permitting him to run this pool was not renewed in 1947, Chamarbaugwala appealed to the Bombay High Court. His plea was upheld, but the Bombay Government appealed to the Supreme Court, where Chamarbaugwala lost the case.

Faced with the Supreme Court verdict, he migrated to Bangalore in 1947. His son Merwan recalls that Bangalore was at that time "a poverty-stricken city, and unemployment was rife". Through his sports weekly, *Sporting Star*, Chamarbaugwala gave employment to about five to six hundred families. This weekly carried the R.M.D.C. Crossword, which soon became popular all over the coun-

try. In 1948, the Bombay government passed the Lotteries and Prize Competition Control and Tax Act forbidding all such competitions. Chamarbaugwala once again went to court.

This time the case dragged on for ten years and created a landmark in legal history. At length the Supreme Court ruled in 1957, that all prize competitions amount to "gambling". This forced the closure of the entire Bangalore concern and Chamarbaugwala returned to Bombay to start life anew and to found the R.M.D.C. press.

An extrovert who abhorred loneliness, Chamarbaugwala's abiding interest in life was his work, followed by his love of animals, particularly horses and dogs. In his youth he was a fine horseman.

His charitable nature brought him into close association with the B. D. Petit Parsi General Hospital. Besides printing the annual reports, jubilee numbers, and programmes for its charity shows free, he was a member of both the Managing Committee and the Executive Committee of the Hospital. He was a staunch Zoroastrian whose views were "practical rather than orthodox," said his son. "The first day of January always found him at Udvada *Atashbehran* at six o'clock in the morning, where the first *maachhi* of the year was my father's". Chamarbaugwala was also a trustee of the Bangalore Parsi Anjuman. At his press in Bombay he often printed books on the teachings of Zoroaster, written by leading authorities, and circulated them free in order to spread what he believed to be the true essence of Zoroastrianism.

He leaves behind his wife, Perin, his son, Merwan, and his daughters, Ms Amy Damania, and Ms Maneck Gagrati.

R. A.

Died: Dasturji Kaikashroo Mahiyar Kutar, 87, head priest of the Rustam Faram Agiary and former head priest of the Wadiaji *Atash Behran* where his financial difficulties became the subject of a public controversy; of uremia at the B. D. Petit Parsi General Hospital in Bombay on April 18.

"Dastur Kutar was a leading religious scholar, an authority on



Dastur K. M. Kutar

the Persian language and the *Shahnama*, extremely well-versed in Parsi history and religious traditions, a good writer and an impressive and incomparable orator," notes the condolence resolution passed by the Zarthosti Jashan Committee of which Kutar was the former vice-president as well as its chief religious instructor for almost 54 years. In this capacity he dedicated much of his time instructing children on the religion and taught in 20 Parsi schools in Bombay, until he retired, at the age of 85. He also played a leading role in the formation of the Bombay Athornan Mandal as its Honorary Secretary, President and served as the General Secretary of the Bhagarsath Committee of Navsari.

Kutar's association with Navsari goes back to his birth there in 1888. The son of the late Dastur Mahiyar well-known for his pioneering translations and readings of the *Shahnama*, Kutar passed his Matric examinations from Bombay's Sir J. J. School and in college won the University Scholarship and Peshotan Sanjana Gold Medal for standing first in Avesta-Pahlavi in the B.A. examination. A student of St. Xavier's College, he completed his M.A. with History and Economics in 1915.

His professional life gave Kutar the opportunity to exercise his gift for oratory, and he gave innumerable lectures all over the country and was also invited to Iran to speak. His daughter, Ms Thrity Panthaky, notes, "He read extensively on Parsi history, religion and mythology. He also wrote a lot," many articles having been published in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* and other Parsi journals. He did not forget his native Navsari, however, and

though a staunch defender of the rights and titles of the Navsari Bhagarsath Anjuman he was at the same time instrumental in bringing about a compromise between the two rival sects of Navsari priests, the Bhagarsath and the Minocherhomji. Besides helping to found several schools and colleges in that city, he was also co-principal and co-founder of the Bombay Masters Tutorial School upto 1948 when he was compelled to sell his share due to pecuniary difficulties.

It was the same year that he became the focus of a controversy which eventually led to his relinquishing his *gadi* as the head priest of the Wadiaji *Atash Behram*. He was alleged to have borrowed heavily for speculation and gambling purposes from Marwari moneylenders who subsequently filed an application of insolvency against him. Despite these setbacks, Kutar remained devoted to the priesthood all his life.

An orthodox when it came to the issues of marriages outside the community and *dokhmanashini*, "he was fairly liberal minded in other matters", says his daughter. His advice on religious issues was widely sought. Just a fortnight before his death he received a letter asking him to resolve a dispute in some *agiary* outside Bombay. Neither were his religious duties forgotten. "Even during the last few months when arthritis confined him to his bed, he continued to teach the tenets of the religion to the children of the Dadar Parsi Colony," his daughter noted.

For six months Kutar bore his illness at home bedridden before being moved to the hospital finally. He leaves behind his wife Alamai, his son Faredoon, and his daughter Thrity.

R. A.

Undevia (Continued from page 19)

toured centres engaged in human population genetics in the United States and United Kingdom. His projects have included extensive surveys of the major communities and tribes inhabiting the West Coast of India, of which the Parsis formed a focal point of interest. In addition he has authored and co-authored twelve publications dealing mostly with treatises on blood-systems.

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**

Parsiana

Is on sale at :

Fareedoon and Burjor
Sandalwood Shop, Prin-
cess Street,

Karani Booksellers, Sir P.
Mehta Road,

K. Bomanji and Sons
Sandalwood Shop next to
Dadyseth Agiary, Flora
Fountain,

Nalanda Book Shop, Taj
Mahal Hotel,

Sahib Singh and Sons
Chemists, Veer Nariman
Road,

Warden Road Bookshop
next to Touche,

Manneys Booksellers,
Poona

And at other stalls and
bookshops throughout
Bombay

Or write to Parsiana, Post
Box 892, G.P.O., Bombay
400 001.

Subscription Rs. 30 for
12 issues

Foreign :

Seamail: Rs. 36, \$7 or
£3.50

Airmail: U.K. £4.50
(Rs. 80), U.S.A. \$13
(Rs. 100)

Forum (continued from page 11)

His general knowledge should be of a very high order. He should have a working knowledge of Avesta, Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian, and should have made a deep, comparative study of the major religions and philosophies of the world. He should be able to distinguish the essential teachings of *Mazdayasna* from conventional rites, rituals and ceremonies, which are bound to vary from time to time and clime to clime.

He should be an international figure, and spare no effort to spread the message of *Mazdayasna* to the four corners of this Earth. He must, therefore, be a very impressive, entertaining speaker and writer. Last but not least, he should not be afraid to speak the truth and to act according to the dictates of his conscience, irrespective of whom it pleases or displeases.

B. S. SURTI
Sunderabad

Oomph (continued from page 25)

behave as though they are watching some drama. In Bombay they make you run, making noises and booing. Each show lasts for around two or three days. Unlike similar competitions for women which are judged just for beauty, we have to show every muscle. We have to train much more in order to look good. The judges don't look at just one part of the body but for symmetry—you lose marks for lopsided development. First there is the pre-judging and then they put you before the audience. There's only a stage with a light above and you pose wearing your *chads*. At the end there are some parties and then you go home."

Race (continued from page 37)

the side of good sense and morality. Secondly, it would shift communal attention to the real factors which unite us as Parsis, our ideas and ideals. We serve notice, in effect, that the Parsi community will survive not by mere biological procreation, but by ideological affiliation. I do not have to point out the significance of this for our rapidly declining Parsi population.

Thirdly, we will be making a positive contribution to the solidarity of certain Parsi families. I am

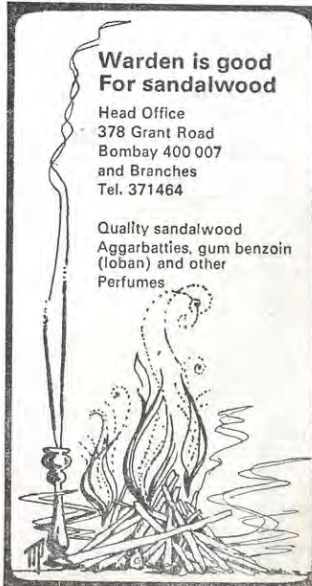
thinking now of the increasing number of Parsi men and women, particularly in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom, who marry non-Parsis. If we cease thinking of ourselves as a race, particularly a "pure" race, we allow no room for anyone to think of those spouses as second-rate. The community would recognise no division in the family, and the family would feel none. And the couple who might otherwise have been hurt, alienated and lost to the community might retain an attachment to it, and be more interested in raising their children in the Zoroastrian faith. That there is such an interest is evident, for example, from a newsletter circulated in this country, in which two such *navjotes* were reported. This too has tremendous significance for our declining population.

To conclude, let no man fear that the loss of "pure race" notions might destroy pride of membership in our community. I have full confidence that modern, educated Parsis do not need the support of ego-satisfying myths to sustain their pride of membership. There is plenty of good in our ideology which will shine all the more brightly when the tarnish of false notions from a bygone era is removed.

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





For Pure Diamonds

K. WADIA

JEWELLERS

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

Air-India gives you sixty-five flights every week—to 5 continents



13 flights a week to Europe.
London? Nine 747s lined up for you. Three of them faster on Fridays, Saturdays and Tuesdays. The other six—a choice via Rome, Paris or Frankfurt. Plus two 707s via Geneva. Moscow? Two 707s.



7 flights every week to New York
A 747 leaving everyday! Via the Middle East and Europe. On our special Excursion Fare, New York and back costs less than the normal one-way fare.



22 flights every week to Middle East
Beirut? Five 747s rearing to go! Kuwait? A choice of four 747s and two 707s. Board any of four 707s for Dubai. Three flights to Bahrain and Muscat, and two each to Abu Dhabi, Cairo or Teheran. That still leaves you one 707 each to Aden, Doha or Dhahran.

Also every week:
6 flights to JAPAN via Hong Kong—4 to TOKYO and 2 to OSAKA
10 flights to S.E. ASIA—6 to BANGKOK and 4 to SINGAPORE
2 flights to AUSTRALIA
3 flights to EAST AFRICA
2 flights to MAURITIUS

AL 9081

AIR-INDIA
the choice airline

