

Parsiānā

November '75

Price Rs. 3



The
Priests

The Cinthol Promise...

*Complexion
Care

*Everfresh
Fragrance

*Body Odour
Protection



...that only Cinthol can keep

Parsiana

August - November 1975

CONTENTS

	<i>Page No.</i>
EDITOR'S COLUMN	3
READERS' FORUM	7
IN THE NEWS	11
WAR AND PEACE	13
THE PLIGHT OF THE PRIESTS by Sanobar Marker	14
rites, READING AND 'RITHMETIC	20
WEST SIDE STORY by Pervez Patel	22
THE PARSI PRIESTHOOD by Sir Jivanji Jamshedji Modi	24
THE RISE AND FALL OF THE CLERGY	31
THE LOST GENERATION	32
SHOULD PRIESTHOOD BE BY CASTE? by Feroza Paymaster	34
JAMVA CHALO by Pervin Mahoney	38
HIEROGLYPHIC CONFUSION by Ruzbeh Antia	41
IN FOCUS, OUT OF REALITY by Manjula Padmanabhan	43
IN MEMORIAM: ADI DAVIERWALLA	48
Parsiana Cover design 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 Peth, 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 worry about getting old...who wants to be nine???

Courtesy: Charles Schulz

It is regarded as a sign of senility when a journalist starts to write about himself. So for a long time we debated whether I should inform you that I had just turned 30, and what a trauma it was (it happened overnight). Everyone said there must be some justification for stating such a personal fact and we thought of somehow tying it up with larger issues at stake such as the emergency, the Prime Minister's 20-point programme (if it had only been 30), the kharif crop and so on. Finally it was decided to link it with the editorial policy of the magazine, noting that as your editor had finally reached the age of reason, the magazine would follow suit.

For thirty is an age of reconciliation, if not compromise, of reassessing policies, if not principles, of admitting that others may be right (on the few occasions they are). In my callow youth, the deep insight I gained into life from fairy stories and illustrated classics convinced me I could change the world. Today if I can just convince my mother that two eggs for breakfast will raise my cholesterol, I feel I have achieved more than most.

Growing old is growing sentimental. If you see a 30-year-old crying in his tea-cup because The Victory Stall is being closed down, don't write him off as hopelessly bourgeois. After all a port city is entitled to one decent restaurant on the waterfront. To deny the common man (at 30 you have no illusions of grandeur) the south-west sea breeze (or is it north-east?), the cry of the sea gull, the wheel's kick and the misty salt spray, verges on the criminal. We can understand if the Atomic Energy Commission, which unfortunately owns the place, wants it back either for a high-rise office block or a nuclear blasting site (one never knows, these being matters of national security) but to trade off butter for bombs is self-defeating in the long run. Anyway, the last cup of tea to be drunk at The Victory Stall will be toasted to those intrepid women of the Time and Talents Club who kept the estab-

lishment open even when they were denied permission to repair the makeshift roof before the onslaught of the last monsoons. Amid the cascades of water that flooded the premises and sent chills down your spine they continued to serve who sat and waited.

Growing old then is growing alone. All your friends have either married or emigrated or stopped subscribing. It's not that one complains but we do need the subscriptions. For if at 30 *Parsiana* continues to gather and disseminate information, it is only through the munificence of a handful who, without seeking any return, stretch out their hand in friendship. They live the moral of the *Ashem Vohu*: The greatest happiness comes to those who practise righteousness for its own sake.

* * *

How does a condemned man view death? That was one of several questions we put to the convicted killer, Phiroze Daruwala, through the good offices of his father, Rustom. Phiroze was in St. George's Hospital at the time, recuperating from a kidney removal operation (he had donated a kidney to the ailing social worker, Hamid Dalwai). Appeals were being made then to spare his life but met with no success and the young man who took the lives of four others in February 1971, was hanged on December 31.

Below are the questions and Daruwala's unedited replies:

Parsiana: How do you view your crime today?

Daruwala: As the court has given its verdict up to the Supreme Court, I have to accept its decision and bow before its judgement. But my statement to the Courts are

The Parsi Connection

Communication moulds individuals into a community. The exchange of ideas, the free flow of information, knowing what others are doing and sharing in their successes and setbacks, cements the bond between people.

The Parsis are a diverse and widespread community linked together by a common heritage but separated by the chasm of urban living. Communication within the community is limited to a chance meeting at a *Navjote* or wedding, a concert or a *natak*. A more systematic means of staying in touch is necessary. That's why a magazine like *Parsiana* exists. We keep you informed of events and personalities in the community. Every other month you get the benefit of a professional team of journalists who gather, research and analyse information that concerns you. Whether it be an interview with a Trustee of the Panchayat or a poet, a report on Zoroastrians abroad or a photograph of a widow's chawl, *Parsiana* will focus on it honestly and impartially.

By doing so we contribute to the wealth of information on the peoples and traditions of this great land and so bring them closer together. *Parsiana* is your magazine. It needs your support if it is to continue to serve. Subscribe today and encourage others to do so or gift a subscription to someone you feel should be in touch.

Annual Subscription (Six issues)
Rs. 16; For two years (twelve issues)
Rs. 30; Overseas (Sea mail) Rs. 24
for one year; Rs. 40 for two years.
Write to *Parsiana*, G. P. O. Box 892,
Bombay 400 001.
Phone: 262624

Dear Bombay Dyeing

*The party of the year—
and I don't have a
thing to wear! I want
something that's really
pretty but won't cost
the earth. Any ideas?*



The very thing! A zingy pink and blue halter in a bold new Bombay Dyeing print. Who knows what'll happen after the party's over! Bombay Dyeing's wear-anywhere range: Superfine poplins. Lawns. Cambrics. Rubias. Brushed Denims in 12 trendy colours. 100% Polyester dress prints.

Fashionably yours **BOMBAY DYEING** 

BD-8932

clear and so do I view it, as my conscience says. (Daruwala had to date denied that he killed the four deceased.)

Parsiana: Many people face economic hardships but few go to the extremes you did. What then do you feel really motivated you to kill?

Daruwala: If you study my reply to your first question then there was no question of any motives arising.

Parsiana: Do you feel if you faced economic difficulties in the future you would handle them better?

Daruwala: I have faced economic difficulties many times, and in future I am quite prepared to face it, if I survive.

Parsiana: Do you feel you would lead a straightforward life if you were spared?

Daruwala: Those who suffer injustice, they know better how to live and behave, for to criticise is very easy.

Parsiana: Is there any guarantee you could give that you would not indulge in criminal activity?

Daruwala: Criminal activity is like a shadow cast on me, shadow has no substance, so guarantee is out of question.

Parsiana: Are you at peace with yourself?

Daruwala: In this fast-moving world peace only few people have who are in tune with the Infinite, for others it is a mirage.

Parsiana: How have you passed your time in prison for the last four years?

Daruwala: This long period of four and a half years, I had to kill my time by reading, as I have been provided with daily and weekly papers. I pray several times in a day, not for my release or salvation but for peace of mind that I get. I am writing my diary, which one day I may be alive to produce. I have to face the realities as is destined and cannot fool my fate or escape it.

Parsiana: Are you afraid to die?

Daruwala: Death is certain for everybody and so I am prepared, always, only guilty is afraid to face it.

Parsiana: How do you view death?

Daruwala: Death if natural enables one to complete his duty towards society, to his own people and God.

Parsiana: Do you want to live?

Daruwala: When God has created, one should try to live its full span.

Parsiana: Do you feel you deserve to live?

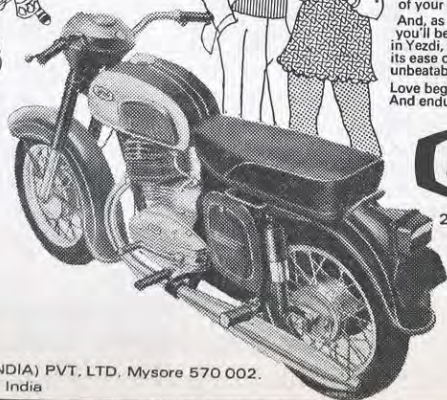
Daruwala: That is a question difficult to reply but your Creator who gave you life, expects that you should fulfill the mission of life assigned to you.

Custom Daruwala is a soft-spoken and self-effacing man who fought long and hard to save his son's life. The only grievance he voiced was that if there was no possibility of the sentence being commuted, if as the authorities said, it would set a precedent for all condemned men to donate an organ and thereby escape the gallows, the kidney should have been removed after Phiroze's death to spare him the painful agony of the major surgical operation.

Parsiana extends its condolences to all the families involved in this sad chapter of Parsi history.

love at
first ride

adoration
comes
later



It's the smart new look of the Yezi that wins so many riders' hearts. But the attraction turns to something more solid after the first ride. The ample power, the smoothness, the feeling of absolute and easy control. It's the bike of your dreams.

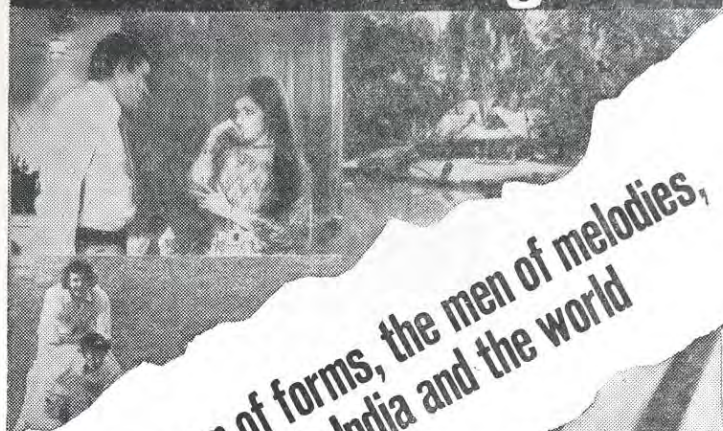
And, as the years pass, you'll become a firm believer in Yezi, for its dependability, its ease of servicing and its unbeatable fuel economy.

Love begins with the first ride. And endures forever.

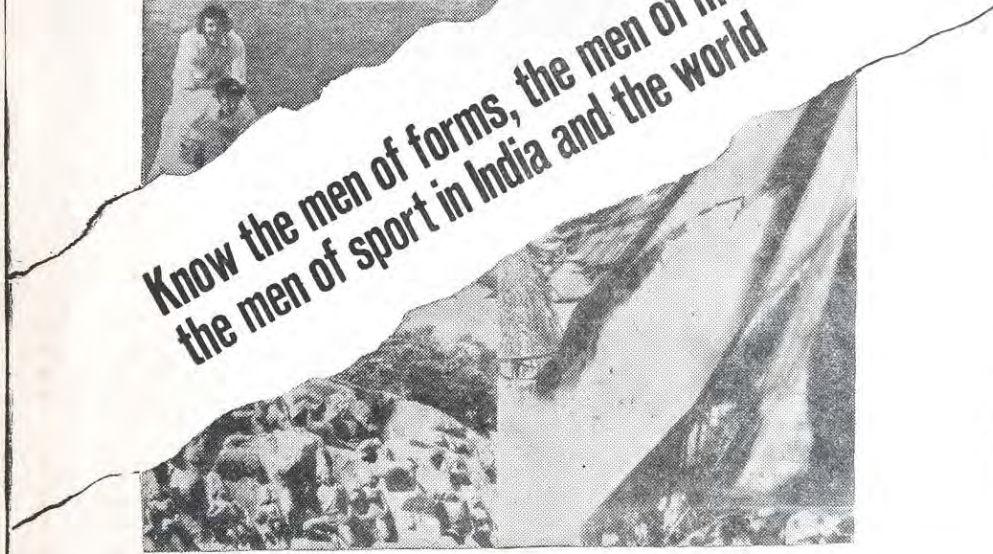


250 cc MODEL 'B'

The Illustrated Weekly of India



**Know the men of forms, the men of melodies,
the men of sport in India and the world**



India takes much pride in the men she has produced. A Hussain. A Ravi Shankar. A Vijay Amritraj. Men of quality. Men of the world.

Know India and the world through the Illustrated Weekly of India—Asia's most-loved magazine. It brings you also history of the peoples who live

and love in war and peace. Their foibles. Their achievements. It brings you the world of films, theatre, books, sport. There is no livelier reading than The Illustrated Weekly of India and no better way to know India week after week.

Discover

The Illustrated Weekly of India

—millions have already.



'Oomph'

In the last issue of *Parsiana* there is an interview with a Parsi priest entitled, "The Priest with Oomph". This is insulting in the extreme. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines "oomph" as a "humorous and contemptuous description of bigness and coarseness". The Dictionary of Slang imputes sexual overtones to the word as well. Is it not enough that our priests have to look for work outside the priesthood in order to keep body and soul together, but must they be mocked and ridiculed in print as well? I think it is admirable of Gowadia to do a full time job in a bank, spend hours doing exercises for the competition he wishes to enter for, and yet put in part time work at an agiary. What has "oomph" got to do with his work as a priest?

PILOO N. JUNGALWALLA
New Delhi

No discourtesy was intended and we apologize if any was caused. We used the word in the sense of: energy, vitality, enthusiasm, (Random House Dictionary.)

Soma

The obituary note on the late Minoo Burjorji Desai (*Parsiana*, July 1975) mentions that he was related to "Soma Desai" who was the author of over a hundred books.

The name "Soma" as it is written, may cause some confusion to Parsi readers because as far as I know, no Parsi has yet been named Soma. It obviously refers

to Shorabji Mancherji Desai, who was popularly known by his Gujarati initials as So. Ma. Desai.

The present generation may not know that he was one of the leading scholars and philosophers of his times. He wrote exclusively in Gujarati and had a wide readership among Parsis, Bohras, Khojas, and indeed all those whose mother tongue is Gujarati. His flowing style may rightly be said to have transmuted prose into poetry. Anyone who reads his works cannot but feel chastened and elevated above the dross of materialism. Besides Gujarati, he was a master of English, Persian, Avesta, Sanskrit, Arabic and Hindi. His writings were freely interspersed with quotations from a wide variety of religious scriptures and classics like the *Shah Namah*, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Gulistan*, *Boostaan* and the works of Tulsidas and Kabir.

Unfortunately all his writing is out of print. Three of his best works are: *Khuda Namah (Book of God)* in five volumes, which is a detailed treatise on the 101 names of God in Zoroastrian scriptures; *Dukhi ne Dilaaso (Solace to the Aggrieved)*, which convinces readers that God's will is best and should be cheerfully accepted; and *Gan-e-Shaayeraan (Treasure House of Poets)*. These at least deserve to be reprinted in low-priced editions, because the message they convey is of universal appeal.

B. S. SURTI
Secunderabad

'Out to lunch'

Much has been said and written in Parsi papers about unemployed Parsis taking up small shopkeeping. Well and good—only the major portion of the entrepreneur's capital will be spent on buying a shop and transferring it to his own name. He will require hard work and enthusiasm. Some Parsis had small shops but they sold them, got fancy prices and invested the money in shares, the prices of which dwindled because of the dividend control act. Some lost their money in deposits and others in *matka* dens. Some had

restaurants but they were sold to Iranis or Mohammedans.

No restaurant nowadays makes a loss. No shopkeeper loses money in his business. But Parsis do because they do not like long hours of work, particularly the young. When a Parsi owns a restaurant his family will consume most of the nice *wanis* (courses) causing the owner a loss of Rs. 100 or Rs. 50 per day while other proprietors are satisfied with a full plate of biryani each. One Mohammedan who bought a restaurant from a Parsi developed it into four restaurants in the same building.

I know of an instance where two Parsi gentlemen returned from service and started a restaurant in partnership, each investing his provident fund. The son of one partner was also working with them. Unfortunately, after his marriage the son refused to work in the evenings because he wanted to go out with his wife. Then the father died and the other partner had to work from 4 a.m.—going to the bazaar and fetching the milk—till 12 p.m. when the restaurant closed. Finally he got fed up and sold the restaurant to an Irani.

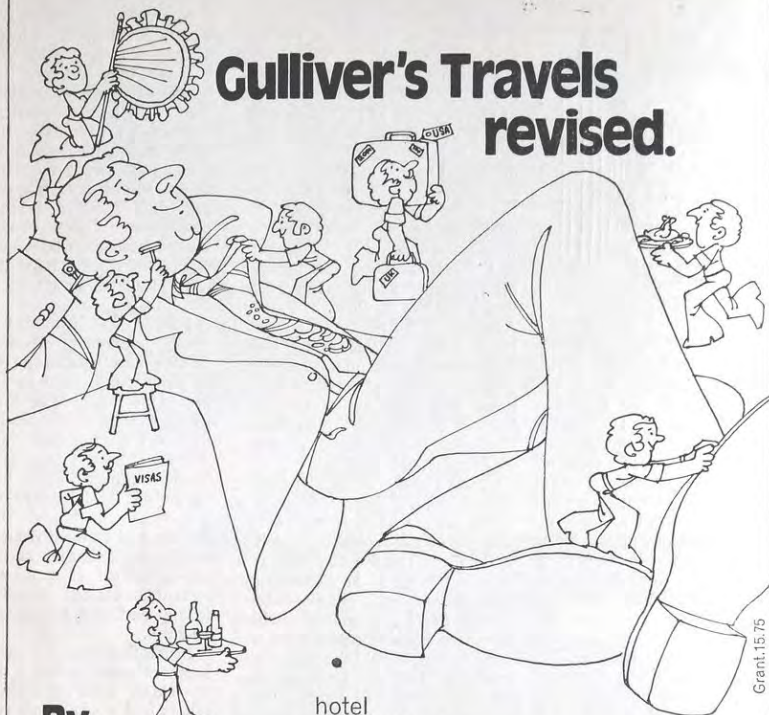
In another Parsi restaurant, five brothers were partners but only the eldest used to work. If the others had worked only two hours a day, the pressure of work on the eldest would have been reduced.

**FAROKH REPORTER
Photographer**

FASHION • ADVERTISING
INDUSTRIAL
CINE 16MM & 35MM

Phone: 263723

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



By Indtravels.

INDTRAVELS
see to all your
travelling
formalities—
air tickets,
charter or
group bookings,

hotel
reservations,
passports,
visas and
Reserve Bank
formalities.
All you do
is sit back
while we
take care of
everything.

INDTRAVELS
A Division of Airfreight Pvt. Ltd.
Bombay • Delhi • Kanpur
• Bangalore • Hyderabad

INDTRAVELS

welcome you to the
24th TAAI ANNUAL CONVENTION AT MADRAS—
the city of beautiful Hindu temples, Indian classical music and
dance and with the longest beach in Asia. May this Convention
in February 1975 be as successful as the past twenty-three!

When the restaurant opened a new department for supplying meals to homes and offices, it had to employ an outsider to manage the new venture. This restaurant too has been sold and the son from the first restaurant and the brothers from the second restaurant are now working hard at other jobs.

There are bazaars at Grant Road, Lamington Road, Dadar and other localities, as well as in the Fort, Colaba and suburbs where it is fashionable to call them "shopping centres". All the shops in these bazaars open punctually at 8 or 9 a.m. as the rule of the bazaar—but the Parsi's shop will open at 10 a.m., that too, by the servant while the *shethia* with *fenta* or *pugree* will come at noon, after having his lunch and sleep. The result will be that the servant will pocket much of the profit, and then buy over the shop. The original owner will be left thinking that business is no good (*chaltu nathi*).

PHIROJSHAH S. BHIWANDIWALA feel fire is their God. So where

To Cap it All

A Sikh was fined for not wearing a crash helmet while riding a motorcycle in England. He argued that it was his religious custom to wear a pugree, so as a good Sikh he could not accept the man-made law. His refusal to pay the fine resulted in his being sent to jail for 20 days.

The other day there was an argument on B.B.C. radio which went, "Sikhs do not wear a pugree during the Olympics. Where is their religion then? If Sikhs want to wear pugrees, they should use cars and give up motorcycles as irreligious, like not eating beef. If we permit the Indian religious systems in our country, we will have to tolerate Hindoo burning ghats on U.K. river shores and allow the ashes and remains to float in our rivers; the Parsis would be building towers on our mountains for the disposal of the dead and Zoroastrians would not extinguish houses on fire, as they

will we end up if we allow their religious customs in U.K.?"

We live here to learn.

SAROSH KHAJOTIA
London

Zoroastrians of Tehran

During my short stay in Tehran earlier I had great pleasure in observing the ways and customs of Zoroastrians there.

Gone are the unhappy days when my co-religionists moved about the streets with fear in their hearts, in those dark pre-Pahlavi regimes. Zoroastrians today move about in perfect peace and freedom, thanks to the benign leadership of the Shah of Iran.

In Stalin Avenue, Zoroastrian Lane, the Tehran Anjuman has its headquarters which consists of a secretary's office, a reception room for the visitors (where every visitor is offered a cup of tea on arrival), a committee room for meetings of the Anjuman and its sub-committees, a reception room where mar-

Please turn to page 49



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

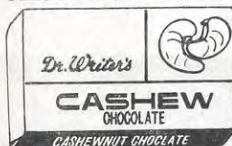
It's a great feeling.

Shirtings by Navari.
The great feeling.



Navari Cotton and Silk Mills Limited

Dr. Writer's CHOCOLATE SLABS



Now in twelve varieties

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

In the News

Dhun D. Karkaria of the Somaia Book Trust was elected president of the Bombay Master Printers' Association at their annual general meeting held in September. He takes over from retiring president, H. A. Guzdar.

The new president noted that the printing industry will have to grapple with declining business, wage negotiations and with the problems posed by the Bombay Metropolitan Regional Plan. He was, however, optimistic about the future on account of the Government's proposed economic programme.

For the first time in Valsad (Bulsar) municipal history, four members of a single family were elected corporators. *Pheroze Shah Rustomji Shroff*, his two sons *Keki* and *Rusi* and his daughter-in-law *Roshan Keki Shroff* were among the 65 candidates who contested for the 25 seats from seven wards, Seven Parsis in all were elected.

Dr. H. N. Sethna, chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, was awarded a "Doctorate of Science" degree at the 13th Convocation of the Indian Institute of Technology held in Bombay.

Gujarat University student, *Sheela Rustom Dalal*, rounded off a string of firsts with a Gold Medal for ranking first in the Bachelor of Arts examination in Economics. Sheela was active in the College Union and the Gujarati student theatre.

"Ms Jhabvala conveys the feeling of India—its squalor, its miseries, its excitements, the enticements of its paradox. It is a restrained indictment of what is lacking in the west as much as a critique of what is present in the sub-continent." So saying, novelist Angus Wilson handed the Booker Prize for fiction to *Ms Ruth Praver Jhabvala* of Delhi. Ms Jhabvala's novel *Heat and Dust* was selected for the prestigious £5,000 award over the works of 83 other British, Commonwealth, Irish and South African writers.

A Polish Jew from Germany, she is married to Cyrus Jhabvala, an architect. They have three daughters, Firoza, Ava, and Renana. Ms Jhabvala's latest works include *An Experience in India*, and *A New Dominion*, and her short stories often appear in *The New Yorker* magazine. She has also written film scripts for Ivory-Merchant productions such as *Shakespearewallah* and *The Householder*.

In the world of Natraj, the God of dance, three young Bharat Natyam exponents have formed a new association, named *Nritya Chand*. *Khurshid Irani*, *Malti Swaminathan*, and *Radhika Narayan*, all of them in their early twenties, state their objective is to make Bharat Natyam socially relevant and less esoteric. They feel the ancient art form is "a luxury which only the rich can afford to patronize and only the trained understand."

The association put up a ballet, *Shanti Path*, in November, which they choreographed, evoking man's deteriorating relationship with his environment. They plan to perform before audiences that normally "cannot afford to see classical dances."

Rustom Bharucha, a Poona entrepreneur, has invented a pulse monitoring device which can detect impending circulatory failure and is useful in all states where monitoring of the pulse is necessary. Called the peripheral pulse monitor, it is reportedly less expensive than the ones presently being imported by Indian hospitals.

Bharucha, a science graduate, is an expert in radio engineering and transistor circuit engineering and has several other electronic instruments on the anvil, including an implantable cardiac pace maker. His firm specializes in repairs of medical and industrial electronic instruments.

A new 256-bed surgical hospital built by Tata Steel in the memory of the late *Sir Jehangir Ghandy*

Please turn to page 51, col. 3

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

What should a first-rate typewriter cost you?



**Only
Rs. 2,451.60***
(for brief size)

It should be a terrific bargain—to buy and to use. Give you unbeatable quality at a reasonable price. And offer a special bonus in terms of resale value, even after years and years of service.

As the AB does. With all its features:

- Perfectly controlled carriage movement and vibration-free design. For rocklike stability, life-long alignment.
- 15-space paper injector-ejector device which lets you pre-set spacing. Simplifies typing of charts and tables, speeds up paper removal.
- See-through design. Both cowl and carriage lift off completely. Makes the AB easier to clean, quicker to service.
- Instant touch control—adjustable to individual needs.
- Interchangeable carriage in 3 different sizes. Only Godrej gives you this choice.
- Choice of nine distinctive type faces.

Plus the excellent Godrej after sales service, which you know is at hand whenever you need it.

For further details, call us, or write for free literature to:
Godrej & Boyce Mfg. Co. Pvt. Ltd., Godrej Bhavan, Home Street, Bombay 400 001.

Godrej AB

—the proof of progress

WAR AND PEACE

With the scars of the last election still to heal, no one wanted another divisive battle for the trusteeship seat vacated by P. P. Khambatta. But few expected the affair to be so tame as to permit Eruch Byramsha Desai to become the newest addition to the Panchayat unopposed. The 44-year old attorney was declared winner without a single vote being cast when his were the only papers on file by the December 3 nomination deadline. All the other candidates had dropped out when it became apparent that the senior trustees were firmly behind Desai.

A partner in the reputed law firm of Mulla and Mulla and Craigie Blunt and Caroe, he is expected to share the legal burden of the Panchayat along with B. K. Boman-Behram, who is also a lawyer. Even before Desai attended the first meeting of the trustees, the ubiquitous black tin valise containing the bulky Panchayat files arrived at his office to mark his initiation to the rigours of trusteeship.

The resignation of his predecessor, Khambatta, came as little surprise to all concerned. It had been predicted at the time of Shiavax Vakil's dramatic departure from the Panchayat and in the stormy months that were to follow. While he would not discuss his reasons for resigning, Khambatta was apparently pained by the internecine battles of the trustees, the latest to date being a squabble between Boman-Behram and Ms Nelie Noble over the sanctioning of a Rs. 5,000 marriage loan. With Ms Noble's faction alleging nepotism and other irregularities in the case and Boman-Behram's side hotly denying it, the issue split into the press and threats of a defamation suit loomed large.

According to the *Bombay Samachar*, *Parsi Tari Arsi* column of 2nd November written by Editor Jehanbux Daruwalla, "the last



Desai: A bolt from the blue

meeting of the Board of Trustees was held in the private office of a Trustee and the absence of Mr. Erach Nadirshaw and Dr. Nelly Noble was conspicuous. It appears that Mr. Khambatta did not approve of this and an on-the-spot one line resignation was the result. Undoubtedly, there were other reasons which had cumulative effect. For instance Mr. K's advice was invariably ignored although he is a senior counsel. Even in petty matters his views were not accepted and outside advice was sought. Mr. K. has to thank himself for some of these things. His absence from Board meetings it is said were very frequent, he never asserted his views.... The path of least resistance never helps. Mr. K. is a good and able man but somehow he proved neither active nor effective." When asked to comment on the *Samachar* column, Khambatta replied with his characteristic sang-froid that he never read the paper.

No sooner had he stepped down, than the hectic ritualistic search for a successor began. Telephones hummed, reportedly all the way to New York, to ask the noted tennis player, Jimmy Mehta, if he would take up the post. Mehta reportedly agreed but many felt his candidacy was not strong enough and he gracefully withdrew in favour of Desai.

"It was like a bolt out of the blue," said Desai when first asked if he would be interested in the trusteeship. Aside from his youth and legal acumen, his being a newcomer to Parsi politics and a non-

controversial figure, made him acceptable to all parties. A middle-of-the-roader, whose election manifesto mercifully made no reference to the disposal of the dead, he campaigned actively for the elections scheduled for December 13. Until the December 3 deadline for filing nominations the only other candidate in the race was Dr. Pestonji Warden, who a few days after issuing his manifesto in the *Jam-e-Jamshed* and holding a meeting in the K. R. Cama Hall where a plea for electoral reform was made, withdrew. Upon being declared the winner, Desai attended the trustees meeting of 9th December in which he noted there was no dissension and much work was accomplished.

But that was not the image of the Panchayat in the public's eye. Daruwalla charged in the *Samachar* that the awarding of translation assignments was being made on a basis other than merit. And the latest annual report issued by the Panchayat is for the year 1970 with the statement of accounts published for the year 1968! Aware that their image was in need of repair, and stinging under the charges that they functioned in secrecy, the Trustees agreed, according to the *Kaiser-e-Hind* to "convene a special conference of some of the well-known closely connected notabilities and particularly the press... after the election of the new Trustee." It was a new tide in the affairs of the Panchayat that augured well for the community.

Desai's Manifesto:

'An Open Mind'

As you may by now be aware, at the instance of several of my friends and well-wishers, I have decided to seek election as a Trustee of the Parsi Panchayat, Bombay, for the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr. P. P. Khambatta, Advocate. I have arrived at this decision after deep thought and consideration, being fully made aware that I can be of service to our community.

I am 44 years of age, and come from a middle-class Zoroastrian family, whose ancestral home near Bulsar had in the past housed the holy Iranshah for a few days on

Please turn to page 53

The Plight of the Priests

Researched
by Sanobar Marker

They once interpreted the dreams of kings and served as prime ministers. Their names were synonymous with authority and wisdom. It was a priest who negotiated the terms for his people's refuge in India and for many years thereafter it was the clergy that governed the Parsi community.

But that largely forgotten, illustrious past eludes the priesthood of today. Shorn of their sovereign power and bereft of any central guiding or ministering body, the priests are fleeing their hereditary profession in unprecedented numbers. "They dislike the work and you can't force or enslave them," says Dastur Khurshed S. Dabu, high priest of the prestigious Wadiaji *Atash-Behram*. "The women don't like to marry a safed-pugriwala" (wearer of the white priestly turban). "In fifteen or twenty years," predicts Ervad Daraius Bagli, head priest of the Delhi *Agiary*, "it will be very difficult to get mobeds."

A mobed's day is long and strenuous. It starts when he is needed and ends when he is not. His duties may require him to shop for groceries or sit cross-legged for seven hours praying before a smoking fire. "Hernia or heart-attack is what a mobed dies of due to many *uth-baiths*" (the ritual rising and sitting required while praying), noted Ervad Sorab Mirza, a practicing priest "and all for the paltry sum of two to three hundred rupees a month. Even a mill-labourer or a sweeper in the municipality makes more."

Besides the economic deprivation, a priest's social life is almost non-existent. No *Atash-Behram boyevada* (priest who tends the sacred fire) is permitted to go to the theatre. Orthodox priests refuse to eat food cooked outside their homes. Ideally, no priest is



Mobeds recessing at Wadiaji Atash-Behram: 'No confidence of the future'

supposed to come in contact with a woman during her menstrual period, nor eat of her cooking or enter through the same door. "He has no fixed timings and a very strict discipline to follow," says Dastur Kaikhushroo JamaspAsa, high priest of the Anjuman *Atash-Behram*.

As for their old age, the priests have to fend for themselves without the benefit of any provident fund or pension. "A mobed is useful so long as his feet, heart and throat function. After that he has to beg," said one priest. And from the most sacred *Atash-Behram* in Udwada, to the fire temples of Bombay, the sight of priests begging in their frayed white robes and pugrees is fast becoming as much part of the worship scene as the rambunctious sandal-

wood vendors. "Time is taxing us," says Ervad Firoze M. Kotwal, Principal of the M.F. Cama Athornan Institute at Andheri. "There is no organization through which we can push reforms to improve our condition. Everybody has fallen asleep." Ervad Rustomji Panthaki, Principal of the Athornan Boarding Madressa at Dadar, feels it is for the community to form an organization and have a constitution for mobeds. But as Dastur N. D. Minochehr-Homji high priest of the *Fasli Atash-Kadeh* prognosticates, "Nothing will be done until there is only one priest or none left."

The problems confronting the priesthood is both of their own making and the community's. Wracked by dissension and weakened by the absence of any effec-

tive organizing body, the priests are totally at the mercy of an increasingly materialistic laity. "Today's Parsis," complained one mobed, "are more interested in sweetmeats and fruits than in prayers. They insist on paying the bare minimum for ceremonies while insisting on the best of foods." As a result a priest has to spend a good deal of his time haggling over prices and serving as a caterer. "Since neither flour, ghee nor sugar is available the mobed has to get it from the blackmarket, so what conscience do they have?" says Dastur Dabu. "They are working under great duress."

As no rates are fixed for performing the various ceremonies, a mobed has to settle for what his clients or the panthaky are willing, or can afford, to pay. A panthaky is a priest who has the right to have ceremonies performed for his clientele in a particular fire temple. "They are like any other entrepreneurs," explains Ervad Peshotan F. Pire, panthaky of the Tata *Agiary* in Bandra. "They invest the money in ceremonies and thus take the risk. Sometimes they are paid after six months or a year and sometimes not at all. As such, a fair share of the profit must go to the panthaky rather than the mobed. But

today the case is different. A panthaky cannot pay less due to the scarcity of mobeds. It is the law of supply and demand."

While the number of Parsis and priests has been steadily dwindling, the number of fire temples has not. "A dozen *agiaries* write to us requesting mobeds," says Rustomji Panthaki, "But nobody wants to go. There is no future in it." And at the Cama Athornan Institute the number of students has declined, says Kotwal. "Formerly, in large families, two or three of the naughtiest children were sent here. Now in families of two, parents wish to keep their children at home. The trust won't allow non-mobed's children though we'd welcome them. Most of the boys from here don't become mobeds—they take the newer opportunities and become doctors and professionals. One just can't get a good mobed—any scope of learning well is here in the institution. We give a subsidy of a hundred rupees a month to anyone who is a *navar* and *martab* and is practising full-time as a mobed. There are ten such mobeds subsidized by the institute. But there is no confidence of the future in this field."

"It's not worth it on a hundred bucks a month," says Pheroze Lashkari, a young accountant at Tata Chemicals who had his *navar* ceremony performed at 16. "I'd take up the profession only if I were out of a job—from economic necessity not any conviction. Most *navars* become mobeds because they are not equipped for anything else." While many have given up the profession completely, there are a large number who work part-time as priests and hold regular jobs elsewhere. Godrej Panthaki of the Banaji *Atash-Behram* is such a person. "I had a liking for the priesthood but I didn't find the profession remunerative. I didn't want to be rich overnight but it wasn't sufficient to make a good living. I decided to join (the law firm of) Vatcha and Company."

Aside from those who turn elsewhere for sustenance, the priesthood also loses members every month due to age, physical incapacity and death. In addition to the shrinking mobeds, the fire temples also lack adequate manpower in



Panthaki : "Everybody has fallen asleep"



Kotwal : Time is taxing us

the gardening and janatorial departments and as non-Parsis are forbidden to enter the houses of worship, the mobeds often have to lend their hand in the menial work as well. "The solution is to reduce the number of *agiaries*," says Dastur Dabu and from the assets create a fund to support the mobeds. Dastur H. K. Mirza some years back had suggested the creation of a central organization where income from all the fire temples could be accumulated. But Dastur JamaspAsa feels in the present set-up the plan is not feasible as the panthakies may not be willing to give up their earnings and the trustees may refuse to join the amalgamation of trusts.

Even if the number of fire temples are reduced, the demand for ceremonies will also have to be curtailed. When the high priests recommended that the *mukhtad* prayers for the dead be reduced from 18 to 10 days, a hue and cry was raised by segments of the laity. Dastur Minochehr-Homji



Dabu : "They are working under great duress"



Mirza (left) JamaspAsa (with veil): A very strict discipline to follow

feels the emphasis should be on the quality rather than quantity of ceremonies. "Instead of five families performing a ceremony five times over it would be better if it were performed once jointly. The payments may be a little less but the quality of the prayers will increase. But will the *behdins* be ready for it or will they quarrel over whose name should be taken first?"

Dastur Dabu feels the laity "will have to take up much of the work. We tell them to recite the *Farokshi* or *Ghe Sarna* prayers but they say no. They are only interested in food." Another alternative which is acceptable to many of the high priests is to permit *behdins* to join the priesthood. "It is for the Anjuman to decide on this," says Dastur JamaspAsa, but in the meantime, he notes, lay people can

perform the *navjote*, wedding and funeral prayers. "It is in the higher liturgical ceremonies that fully qualified priests are required," he notes.

Whether the priesthood should be by birth or choice raises the question as to the role of the priest in Zoroastrianism. Eckehard Kulke in his erudite work *The Parsees in India* notes, "As ... each individual believer bears the responsibility for his deeds and his life after death, there is only very little room in Zoroaster's teachings for the priest as the keeper of secret knowledge and the mediator between God and man." Dastur JamaspAsa says the role of the priest is to "take the message of Zoroaster to the people" but he feels this duty is not being performed by the majority of the priests. "At present there are only three or four speakers and no one else for the diffusion of knowledge," says Dastur Minochehr-Homji. "We want others to take our place. A priest could be attached to some of the baugs and places like that could be made into centers for the dissemination of knowledge."

Kotwal feels a priest should "live a good life and know his

The Maverick Priest

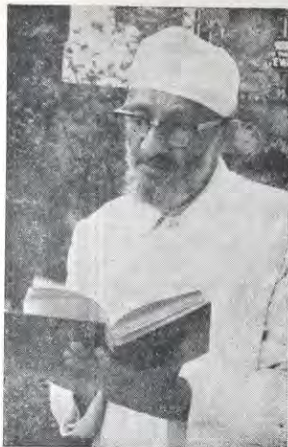
To his admirers Framroze A. Bode is the Dastooran-e-Dastoor, but to his detractors he is not even considered a dastur. His views, his professional and personal conduct are all subjects of heated controversy. In a profession heavily dominated by orthodoxy he is the odd man out.

Though not the head priest of any fire temple, Dastur Bode's services are very much in demand by the more liberal element in the community. He is one of the few priests who will perform the funeral ceremonies for those wishing to be cremated. Below are extracts from an interview with Parsiana.

People consider me to be a reformist but what I preach is about bringing Zoroastrians back to the original *Gathic* religion and to remove from it superstition, dogma and ignorance. We are not

against anybody. We have never inflicted our ideas on others. When Dr. Putlibai Vakil died and her body was to be cremated, I went and prayed and now there are two priests who are willing to perform all the ceremonies for those bodies consigned to the crematorium. Disposal of the dead is according to the time, conditions and conviction of the individual. If anybody is cremated in London, the ceremony is often performed in the *atash-behram* here. So then what difference does it make if someone is cremated here and wishes the prayers to be recited in the fire temple? One day I will challenge this practice. I will perform the ceremony in the Anjuman *Atash-Behram* and if there is opposition I will go to the courts. People must be free to choose their mode of disposal.





Minochehr-Honji: 'Quality rather than quantity'

prayers in order to attract people to him and the religion." As for the priests undertaking social work he feels it is not essential. "If others do social work, why should the mobeds? If a dastur comes and consoles me and reduces my fear, that's fine. But it requires two

Formerly Parsi corpses were viewed by non-Parsis. I don't know why all these meaningless restrictions have come up. People must assert their rights. The trustees are only custodians of the Doongerwadi bunglis. In the original trust it is mentioned that they be used for the disposal of the dead but it does not specify the mode of disposal, as far as I know. People wishing to be buried or cremated should be allowed to avail of them. Basically the priest is broad-minded but he is completely under the thumb of the trustees and the dasturs so it is very difficult to do anything. Until and unless the priests organize themselves or form a union the economic condition cannot be better. But unfortunately in the priestly class there is no unanimity.

things: first the demand by the people and second, the mobed who does it. The Catholic Church is organised differently. If a priest falls ill he is even sent to Rome. We stand on our own feet."

But how long they will continue to do so is debatable. Some note the priesthood has weathered many storms in its checkered history and the present crisis is no more than a passing phase, a time of painful adjustments from which they will once again emerge triumphant. There are others like Bagli who believe that the calling will die out but that the priests are not essential for the survival of the religion. "There will be scholars, those who have studied the Avesta, to keep it alive," says Bagli and to substantiate his point notes there are "small families just about a hundred miles away from any *agiary* who are so orthodox and concerned about the Zoroastrian religion that aside from wearing the *sudreh* and *kusti* and reciting the prayers, they keep a fire burning in their homes three hundred and sixty five days of the year. Even if the religion dies out it will come up again from these roots and one day it will flower beautifully."



Pire: Supply and demand

GOOD SAMARITANS

While the priests have to fend for themselves, a few associations have been formed to see to their well-being. The Poona Athornan Aid Trust (PAAT) founded by the late Mr. Jehangir Sopariwala in 1966 is an organization devoted to the uplift of the mobeds in this growing metropolis. There are around 20 priests working in three *adarans* and one *dadgah*, writes Ms Frannie Boywala, Chairman of the fund. "PAAT pays half their rent and the electricity bill in full... every year on our New Year and Jamshedi Navroz the trust distributes daily necessities like clothes, shoes, chappals, cooking oil, different pulses, tea, sugar, soap etc. worth a good sum." PAAT is supported by public donations.

In Bombay the Athornan Mandal was formed to aid the priests but it is moribund. A few other associations channel some of their aid to the mobeds. The Parsi Vegetarian and Temperance Society subsidizes two young priests in the mofussil area to the tune of a hundred rupees a month and has also started to allocate religious work to the mobeds in the outlying areas, says Homi Dhalla, a trustee of the society.

Aside from the institutions, people can help in their independent capacity by: spending more on the priest and less on the sweetmeats, fruits and loban; buying less sandalwood and instead placing the money in the *boye*. (Other suggestions by readers are welcome and should be addressed to *Parsi-ana*, Post Box 892, G.P.O. Bombay 400 001).

**We have
a growing
interest
in his future**

Today he enjoys so many things that another generation had not even heard of. Many of these have been made possible with NOCIL petrochemicals. For the future, NOCIL promise him an important contribution both to industrial development and to everyday living. For we at NOCIL are conscious of our role in meeting the growing needs of a growing generation.



NATIONAL ORGANIC CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES LIMITED

Mafatlal Centre, Nariman Point, Bombay 400 021.

THE HAPPY MOBED

"As long as I was in Bombay, I was absolutely miserable there," says Ervad Daraius E. C. Bagli, head priest of the Kaikhushru Palonji Katrak *Dar-e-Meher* in Delhi. "But when I came here all my bitterness turned to sweetness and I felt proud to wear my pugri and go out. I got respect from people of other religions also. The Delhi Anjuman has full faith in me. I tell them what is necessary to perform."

Bagli stands independent of the Dasturs. For advice he may refer to the Dastur in Navsari, but he has come to rely on his own judgement. "The trouble is that the high priests don't give their frank opinions," he says. "Just as too many cooks spoil the broth, too many high priests result in too many opinions. No strong and fast decision is made."

Aside from his priestly duties, Bagli participates in a host of other activities. "I play badminton and billiards and I'm very fond of driving," he said,

pointing to his sleek blue car. "I never miss a hockey or foot ball match." He wicket-keeps while playing cricket and once, he recalled, "in the opposite team there was a Christian priest called Father Percy and from that day they called me Father Parsi." Being interested in the theatre he produced a play during the Chinese aggression from which he collected almost two thousand rupees. A play in aid of the Bangladesh refugees brought him a profit of seven thousand rupees. But despite the charms the capital has to offer priests, Bagli found it very difficult to get an assistant mobed for the Delhi *Agiary*. "For four years I actually struggled to get a mobed. I advertised in the papers but got a very poor response—about one or two letters. If a mobed could get a part-time job in Bombay, he wouldn't come here. Really I'm very much afraid to think that if I die, will I get a mobed to pray for me?"

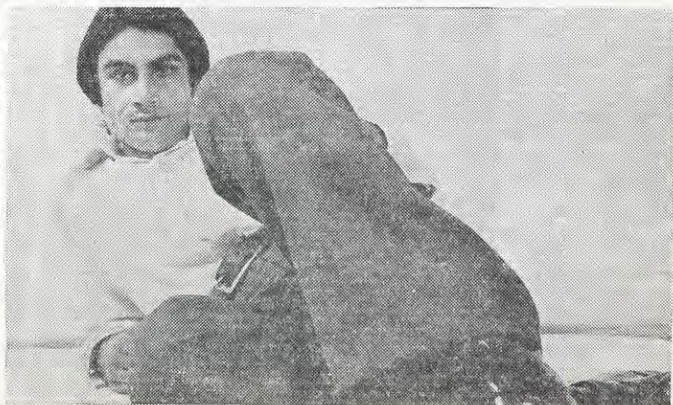
As a youth in Bombay, Bagli had decided against taking up the

priestly calling as he found the mobeds very poorly paid. "They couldn't look after their families. Sometimes I used to see that they couldn't even afford new clothes and I used to think—this is not my correct line," he said. Due to his grandfather's persuasions, however, Bagli became a mobed and performed many important *kriakaamo* under his grandfather and later in the Tardeo Sethna *Agiary*. "The priest in Bombay suffers from such a sense of inferiority that sometimes I felt ashamed to wear my pugri and go outside. When a mobed came forward, they (the community members) felt it was an *apsoogan*. All this I actually experienced in Bombay." In Agra and other small towns like Mathura and Bareilly, Bagli found himself in an "absolutely different atmosphere. Wherever I went as a priest, they gave me so much respect. Today, I am very happy and I don't think there is any mobed as happy as me."

Sanobar Marker

to comfort

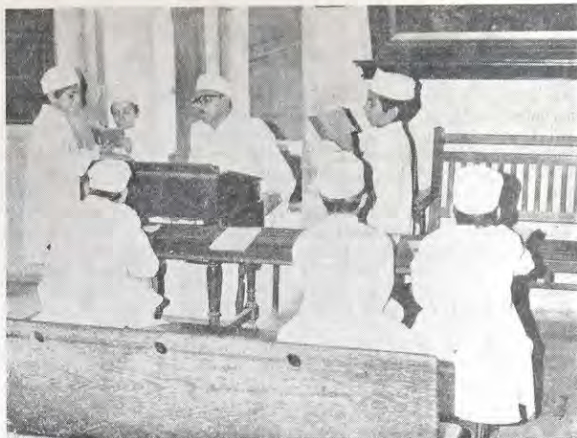
Cross over



in printed tussorees by

TATA Textiles

RITES, READING AND 'RITHMETIC



Religious instruction being given at the Cama Athornan Institute: 'Something constructive.'

When the Rev. John Wilson converted two Parsi students in his school to Christianity in 1839, the community's reaction verged on hysteria. Amid threats of violence and bribes to persuade the initiates to return to the fold, the Panchayat filed a suit in the High Court warning that "if Government would not help, there would be a terrible uprising in the country, and the results would be disastrous."

But the hollow threat of the writ petition slowly gave way to a realization among the Parsis that if they wished to safeguard their religious identity, they would have to do something constructive. The most efficacious measure, it was decided, would be to upgrade the education of the priests. To this end the Mulla Feroze Madressa was founded in Bombay in 1854 and was followed by the Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy Zarthoshti Madressa (Bombay) in 1863, the Nuserwanji Ratanji Tata Madressa (Navsari) in 1932, the Athornan Boarding Madressa (Bombay) in 1919 and the Mancherji Framji Cama Athornan Institute (Bombay) in 1923.

The M. F. Cama Athornan Institute is located in an impressive colonnaded building on a large plot of land in Andheri. Founded by Merwanji Cama with an endowment of 25 lakh rupees, the school can accommodate up-

to 60 boys from *athornan* families. But the present enrolment is only 38, "for whom everything is free," says Ervad Firoze M. P. Kotwal, principal of the institute. "Five of them will be sent up for the S.S.C. this year." Alongside the regular academic curriculum, the students study religion and the scriptural languages like Avesta and Pahlavi in preparation for the *navar* and *martab* initiation ceremonies. Music and voice exercise are part of the training for the priesthood. Religious studies are taught through catechisms initially, and later in the essay style. Technical terms with their various shades of meaning are explained. The students also practise performing various ceremonies.

The boys, ranging in age from six to 17, are housed in one long dormitory. Their day begins at 5 a.m. and is punctuated with meals, studies and games. Parents may visit every other Sunday. On non-visiting Sundays, the boys are taken for an outing or shown an educational film.

The Athornan Boarding Madressa at Dadar, founded by Dastur Darab Pesotan Sanjana, Dinshaw Garda and Jehangir Vimadlal, has a much smaller endowment than the Cama seminary. At one time its financial condition became so desperate that it had to close down for two years. The institute, however, was revived in 1966 with

a small trust fund through the efforts of Erach Nadirsha, B. K. Boman-Behram and other trustees and committee members, notes Ervad Rustom Panthaki, principal of the Madressa. The school has 35 students ranging in age from 6 to 16 years for whom boarding and lodging is free. The children receive their religious education in the Madressa and the regular academic curriculum at the Dadar Parsi Youth Assembly High School (DPYA). "The DPLYA is our blessing, our backbone," says Panthaki. "If we were to teach only prayers who would come to the Madressa?"

The religious education begins with the study of the *Khordad Avesta* and progresses to the Zend script which enables them to study the Yazashna, Visparad and Vendidad. Ceremonies and rituals are performed to familiarize them with the practical aspects of the priestly profession. The students are encouraged to perform ceremonies in the *agiaries* and keep whatever money they earn thereby. The students are taught in two shifts. The older boys attend the DPLYA in the morning and the younger in the afternoon. They are made to wear their caps while attending school so that they may get toughened to the teasing they may be exposed to later in life.

The boys are quartered in two large dormitory rooms. The young-

er ones are on the first floor which is also occupied by Panthaki and his wife, Jalamai, so "that we can look after them," he explained. "My wife is honorary supervisor, mother, matron, or what you will." Though the couple do not have any children of their own, they always tell visitors they have 35. "We feel lost without them." As the Madressa has to operate on a shoe-string budget, they are short-staffed. "Fortunately we have two ex-students who help out, while studying, in college," he noted. A proposal made several years ago to merge the Dadar Madressa with the one at Andheri fizzled out because the Cama Athornan Institute suggested the Madressa close down, says Panthaki. "But we are too well established. We suggested instead that the Cama Institute take over the students training for the *mar-tab* and higher academic studies while the *navar* students study here. But nothing came of it. We both have our difficulties."

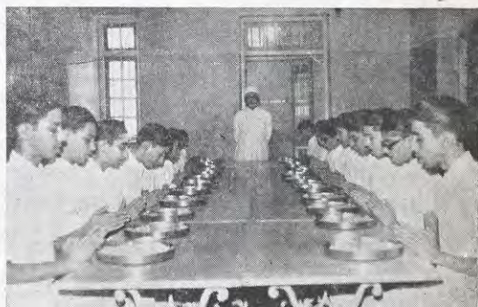
SANOBER MARKER



The Cama Athornan Institute: 'Everything is free.'

1	2
3	4

- 1 Boys queuing for food at the Cama School.
- 2 Prayers before meals at the Dadar Madressa.
- 3 The Dadar Madressa Building overlooking Five Gardens.
- 4 Prayer recital at the Athornan Madressa.



WEST SIDE STORY

By Pervaz Patel

When I arrived in the United States five years ago, I had not the slightest idea that shortly I would be asked to perform the duties of a priest in addition to my regular job as an accountant. I had brought with me from India one pair of a priest's attire with my other clothes. But it was not long before I found to my surprise that I was the only priest in the New York area. Incidentally, I still am the only priest here who performs ceremonies and I do wish a few of my colleagues would

settle here either from India or from other parts of the United States or Canada to assist me.

The first ceremony I performed in this country was at my own apartment. It was a Jashan ceremony followed by a housewarming dinner party where a few Parsi friends had been invited. In these five years I have performed dozens of Jashans in many Parsi homes and have performed marriages and Navjotes as well. Most of the Jashans performed were a one-man ceremony as it is

difficult to get another priest. Philadelphia and New Jersey which are about one hundred miles from New York have a couple of priests from my alma mater, the Cama Athornan Institute, who are always ready and willing to help. Their services are requested on more important occasions like Navjotes, marriages and group Jashans. After the ceremonies, a brief talk is given especially for the benefit of the non-Zoroastrians present, explaining the history and meaning as well as the idea behind the ceremony and the significance of the objects used in it.

My services have been required on sad and solemn occasions too. Having a full time job to attend to, it is not possible to perform all the death ceremonies spread over a period of four or ten days as in India. So we have the most important ones like *Gehsarna* after which the deceased is either cremated or buried according to the family's wishes. This is what we dread most, living in foreign countries where traditional last rites cannot be performed. There have been some stray instances when the dead bodies have been sent by air to Bombay but the cost is prohibitive and the process too lengthy and bureaucratic.

In the last few years, the Parsi population in the United States and Canada has been on the increase, mainly in metropolitan cities like New York, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Chicago, Montreal and Toronto. At first they would meet one another occasionally at parties but as time passed, an urge for uniting themselves was felt. Concerned parties got together and discussed matters of common interest. Get-togethers on Jamshedi Navroze and Pateti followed by dinners and also picnics during the summer months were held. Later, with the relaxation of immigration laws and the arrival of more Parsis, the necessity of forming Zoroastrian associations was felt and in most of these cities they now exist.

In New York, the association works under the name of The Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York and has a membership of about one hundred and fifty in the tri-state area of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. Be-



sides the two annual dinners and picnics, we conduct religious meetings and other activities. The committee members meet regularly and work out plans to bring members together more often and increase its activities, but they are faced with many problems.

Foremost among these is the lack of a central meeting place. As the Parsi population is scattered over a large area, it is not easy for the majority of them to meet often, and whenever they do, a public hall is rented which costs considerable money. Real estate prices are too high to allow us to buy a piece of property, on which we can construct a house or build a hall large enough for two hundred people or more. We have been working on a special fund for this purpose.

The need for an agiary or a prayer hall is felt by most of our co-religionists here. It is also necessary to provide religious knowledge to the younger generation, the children of pre-Navjote age especially. A beginning has been made by recording the necessary prayers on cassette tapes and they are being distributed to parents who wish to have the Navjote ceremony of their children performed here. Navjote classes are being run in a few places, once every month, where, besides the prayers and their meanings, talks on religious subjects and ancient Iranian history are given and even attempts to teach the Gujarati language to the younger generation are being made. These efforts are in the right direction and the response too is very encouraging. It is heartening to note that besides children even the parents are learning many things which they never had a chance to learn before, in India.

The economic, social, cultural and political conditions are very different here. We adults, were fortunate enough to have spent the important years of our lives in familiar surroundings, always having had very close family ties and surrounded by parents, grandparents, relatives, neighbours and teachers who ate the same kind of food, spoke the same language, dressed similarly, went to the same schools, colleges and places of worship; the younger generation here, consisting of those children

who have been born here and those who left India and arrived in America very early in life, definitely do not enjoy the same atmosphere and surroundings.

On account of the scattered Parsi population, these children meet their Parsi friends once a month, maybe twice during summer months. As a result, during these important years, their contact is mainly with the non-Zoroastrian friends at school and in their neighbourhood. These friends belong to various ethnic and religious communities and the child, therefore, is influenced to a great degree by extraneous factors. Even in India with an increase in the number of children attending Catholic schools and convents, the present generation has a distinct tendency to be westernized and to imitate everything foreign and to forsake everything Indian and Parsi. But the plight of the children of our community here will be worse.

At functions and picnics it is rare to hear a Parsi boy or girl under fifteen speaking Gujarati. In my opinion, the education and training of the child should start at home. The parents must be primarily responsible for the upbringing of their own children and must ensure that what they preach to their children is in fact practised by themselves first and then by the children. This is highly essential in a country where it is not too uncommon to hear a boy or a girl (of other communities) say to their parents "why should we do this or that, when you yourselves do not do the same?"

In conclusion, I would repeat that parents play a pivotal role in the preservation of our identity as Zoroastrians. The root cause for the downfall of our religion is the neglect on the part of the individual family which collectively constitutes our community. It is only when parents once again start taking active interest in our religion, learn at least the basic prayers with their meanings, feel proud of their heritage and truly practice and impart the teachings of Zarathushtra that we can expect children to follow the examples of their parents and be good and respected members of our community once again.

Let Us Pray— To Ahura Mazda

2nd Edition — revised
and enlarged

By Noshir H. Vajifdar

Available from :

- **Union Press,
Homji Street, Fort,
Bombay 400 001.**
- **Mr. Sam S.
Choksey,
C/o Eastern
Stores & Trading
Co. Pvt. Ltd.,
115 Nagdevi
Street,
Bombay 400 003.**
- **Parsi Zoroastrian
Association,
1 Saklat Place,
Calcutta 700 013**
- **Mr. Rustam
Saklat, 4 A
Auckland Square,
Calcutta 700 017.**
- **Perina Printers,
77 General Patters
Road,
Madras 2.**
- **Mrs. Mehroo J.
Wadia,
21 LF Tansen
Marg,
New Delhi 1.**

Also available free of postage and packing charges at Ahmedabad, Poona, Bangalore and Ootacamund. Price Rs. 3. For particulars, please write to the author at 'Braemar' Ootacamund-643 001.

Space donated by a well-wisher



The Parsi Priesthood

by Sir J. J. Modi

Below is an abridged and edited version of Modi's paper which was first prepared for Rev. Hastings' Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics. It also appears in The Journal of the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute Vol. 31 (1937) and is published in Parsiana by their courtesy.

The coin depicting two priests tending a sacred fire is from the Sassanian Dynasty (224-651 A.D.)

We find, in the Avesta, two words, 'athravan' and 'moghu,' used for a priest. The common Avestan word for a priest, in popular use, is 'athravan' i.e., "one who venerates and guards the (sacred) fire." This word is the same as the Vedic 'atharvan.' He is so called because like the ancient Roman Flamen (Fire-priest), at first his principal work was to look after the sacred fire. Afterwards the word was applied to all the classes of priests, whether they looked after the sacred fire or not.

In the early Avestan times, three principal professions were known in Iran. They were those of the athravan, i.e., the priest, ratherstar, i.e., the warrior and the 'vastrya,' i.e., "the farmer." Among these three, the priest stood first. Whenever these professional classes are mentioned, they are mentioned in the above order of superiority or precedence. Latterly, a fourth class, that of the "artisans" ('hutokhs')

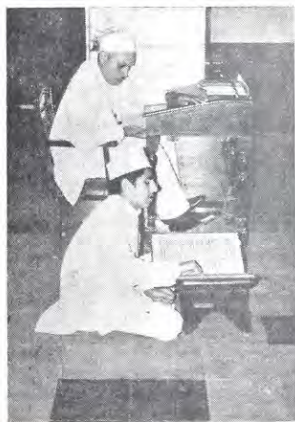
was added. It included all the professions or trades not included in the first three.

Zarathustra, the founder of the religion, is spoken of as the first priest, the first warrior, and the first agriculturist. The whole creation is represented as rejoicing at the birth of Zarathustra as an 'athravan' or "priest."

According to Herodotus, the Magi were the priests of the Ancient Persians. At first they were one of the six tribes of Media. They formed a peculiar race. They chanted hymns at religious services and no sacrifice could be offered without them. They had certain sacred customs and practices of their own. Besides officiating at religious sermons, they interpreted dreams. They had thus interpreted the dreams of the Median King Astyages, the maternal grandfather of the Persian King Cyrus and of the Persian King Xerxes. As they had formed a tribe or race of them-

selves, at times they came into conflict with the Persians as a class, who were to them as laymen are to the clergy. As one of the Magi interfered in political matters and assumed the throne of Persia as a pretender, Darius had, at one time, ordered the massacre of the whole tribe.

Priesthood has been hereditary among the Parsis from very ancient times. It is the son of a priest only who can become a priest. It was so in ancient Persia. However, it seems that in the confusion after the overthrow of the Achaemenian Empire by Alexander the Great, during the regime of the Parthians, this custom of hereditary priesthood was more honoured in the breach than in the observance. So Artakhsir (Ataxxes) Papakan, when he brought about the Iranian renaissance, revived the custom in its entirety. We find the subject referred to in the letter of his Dastur Tansar or Tosar to the king of Tabaristan: "This repartition of men into four classes is a strong guarantee of good order for the world. The passing from one caste into another is prohibited except in the case when one of us shows a particular talent. Then they sub-



He is the real priest, who spends his nights in study to acquire holy wisdom.

mit that (exceptional) case before the king. After a trial and a long inquiry by the Mobads and the Herbads, if they recognize the merit of the candidate, they transfer him into another caste. The Shahansah, by his clear intelligence and by virtue of his genius has reconstituted these disjointed members, (i.e., refound the old divisions or classes). He has restored everyone to his proper place, made him return to his own rank and has arranged that nobody should follow a profession other than that for which God has created him."

We thus find, that the rules introduced by Artakhsir, were rather old, and that he re-established them, and declared that the people must restrict themselves to their own hereditary profession. The priesthood was especially such a profession. But we further find from Tansar's letter, that Artakhsir had intended to make certain exceptions. For example, a man may, by special qualifications or examinations, qualify himself for a profession, other than that of his forefathers. We find such an exception in the case of priesthood, made in Persia; even as late as the seventeenth century, one Dastur Rustam Gustasp Ardastir "is said to have sprung from the laity and not from a priestly family." It is said that in the time of this Rustam Gustasp, the then ruling Muhammadan king of Persia ordered a general massacre of the Persian Zoroastrians, unless they proved that they were monotheists and not idol-worshippers. It was this layman, Rustam Gustasp, who proved this to the satisfaction of the king and he was made a 'Dastur'. But in India at least, during these last few centuries, no exceptions seem to have been made, and it is only the sons of priests or the members of priestly families, who can become priests. The right can be revived by any male member of the priestly family though his immediate ancestors might not have been actually ordained as priests. For example, 'A' was a priest. His son 'B,' grandson 'C,' great-grandson 'D' had not joined the priesthood, but 'E' the son of 'D,' the great-grandson, can, if he chooses, become a priest. It is said that the right can be revived

by descendants upto the fifth generation. It then dies and can no longer be exercised.

It appears from the Avesta that the priests who officiated at the liturgical service were divided into eight classes:

- 1 'Zaotar' "the chief officiating priest."
- 2 'Havanan' "the priest who performs the Haoma ceremony and strains the Haoma juice."
- 3 'Atarevakhsh' "the priest who watches the fire used in the ritual, feeds it and keeps it burning."
- 4 'Fra-berehtar' "the priest who carries and prepares all the 'alat' or 'religious implements' of ritual."
- 5 'Aberetar' "the priest who brings the things required for the ritual."
- 6 'Asnatar' "the priest who washes or cleans the implements of ritual."
- 7 'Raethwiskar' "the priest who, removing dirt and uncleanness, arranges in their proper places all the requisites for the liturgical

like the wandering monks or friars of Europe of the middle ages or like the wandering lamas of Tibet.

On the subject of the duty of an Iranian priest we read the following in the 'Mino-kherad': "The business of the priests is to maintain the religion properly; and to perform the ceremonial and invocation of the sacred beings well and with attention; and to keep true the decrees, decisions, custom, and control, as revealed by the pure, good religion of the Mazda-worshippers. To make people aware of the goodness of good works; and to show the way to heaven and the danger and avoidance of hell." This shows that his duty is two-fold: to perform the ceremonial and to teach and guide his flock on the path of righteousness.

Though the king of Iran had usually a 'Mobadan Mobad,' (a Priest of Priests," an Archpriest or Arch-bishop,) at the head of

In old Iran there were itinerant priests who went from one place to another, preaching and ministering to the spiritual wants of the people.

service. He is also spoken of as 'Rathwi' or 'Raspi.'

8 'Sraoshavareza' "the priest who makes the worshipper act in obedience to the commandments of religion. He was a confessor as well."

It appears that at one time, during the performance of the Yasna and the Visperad ceremonies the eight priests described above were requisite. But in the Yasna and the Visperad ceremonies performed today only two priests officiate: the 'Zoti' ('zaotar') and the 'Rathwi'. All the offices of the seven priests (seven besides the 'Zaotar') are now absorbed in that of the 'Raethwiskar' or 'Rathwi.'

In old Iran there were itinerant priests who went from one place to another, preaching and ministering to the spiritual wants of the people. They expected hospitable treatment from the people of the place where they went. It was considered wrong to entertain them with bad food. They were

his ecclesiastical department, at times, the king himself possessed both the offices, if not in practice, at least in name and in authority. According to Firdausi, King Jamshed of the Pesdadian dynasty, was proud of being a 'Mobad' as well as a king. He said: "I am a king as also a priest."

Upto a few years ago, there were few marriages between the members of the priestly and the lay families. The priests married daughters of the priests. Occasionally they married with the daughters of the laymen ('Beh-dins'), but they never gave their daughters in marriage to laymen. This gave rise to a grave dispute with the laymen upto well-nigh the middle of the last century when Bombay appointed a committee to inquire into the cause of the dispute. The committee decided that it was not proper for the priest to refuse to give their daughters in marriage to the laymen, as they themselves took the daughters of the latter in

La Kozy

**Furnishers & Interior Decorators
And
Faramarzi Gogia Private Limited
(Architects & Designers)**



**Lakozy Mansion, 21-Chowpatty Seaface
Bombay - 400 007**

United Motors (India) Ltd.

Authorised

Dealers for



**TATA
DIESEL VEHICLES**

**BOMBAY-THANE-
KULABA AND
RATNAGIRI DISTRICTS
IN MAHARASHTRA**

Efficiency and good workmanship is the motto of the workshop. Jobs of servicing, repairs, complete overhauling on engine undertaken.

Workshop at:

Arthur Bunder Road, Colaba,
Near Radio Club, Bombay 400 005.

And
39, Nyayamurti Sitarani Patkar Marg,
(Hughes Road), Bombay 400 007.
Telephone Nos.: 357616/17/18.

Spare Parts Sales Depot:

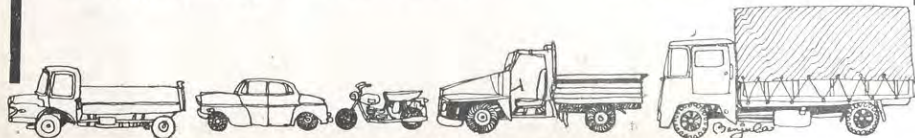
Swadeshi Mills Estate, No. 2,
Tata Road, Opera House,
Bombay 400 004.

Spare Parts, Repair and Service Depots at:

Amar Automobiles, 46, Wadi Bunder,
Opp: Central Railway, Shed No. 11,
P. D'Mello Road, Bombay 400 010.

The Jogeshwari Petrol Supply Co.,
Opp: Post Office, Swami Vivekanand
Road, Jogeshwari, Bombay 400 060.

Auro Petroleum Centre, 305, Sion
Trombay Road, Near Diamond Garden,
Bombay 400 071.



marriage. Even now a priest would like to see his daughter married to the son of a priest. But the original custom is not much observed now.

Though priesthood is hereditary, mere birth does not entitle the son of a priest to officiate as priest. In order to be a qualified priest, the son of a priest has to pass through two initiation ceremonies: the 'Navar' and the 'Murattab'.

The first ceremony for initiation into the priesthood is that of the 'Navar.' The initiate going through the 'Navar' ceremony has to take two 'Bareshnum' ablutions. The first 'Bareshnum' is for 'tan pak', i.e., for the purity of his own body, and the second is for the 'niyat' of the person, in whose memory he becomes a 'Navar.' Thus qualified, the initiate can perform the 'Afringan,' 'Navzot,' marriage and such other ceremonies, except the 'Yasna,' 'Vandidad' and 'Baj' ceremonies. In order to be qualified to perform these latter ceremonies, the initiate has to go through the 'Murattab' ceremony. For this purpose he has to undergo another 'Bareshnum' ablution, at the end of which he has to perform two 'Yasna' ceremonies for two mornings and a 'Vandidad' ceremony at midnight.

The initiating ceremony of 'Navar,' was instituted from the first, as a trial of moral worth, of self-abnegation, self-denial and self-renunciation as in the case of Masonic rites, as originally intended. The candidate is expected to pass his days during the continuation of the whole ceremony, lasting for about a month, in a kind of retreat, so as to be free from worldly thoughts. During the last four days when he is regularly being initiated and performs the 'Yasna' ceremony, acting as 'Zaota,' he has to take only one meal during the day. This also shows that the ceremony is intended as a trial to prove whether he can control hunger and thirst, and hence, other passions.

During the two 'Bareshnums,' i.e., the two early periods of retreat, the candidate has to deny to himself his daily comforts. For he has to make his bedding on the floor and not on a cot, he has to take his meals at stated hours after prayers, and has to



The Navar ceremony... is at the same time, a trial and a test for pious behaviour and moral rectitude.

keep himself aloof from other people. It appears, therefore, that this 'Navar' ceremony, an initiating ceremony is, at the same time, a trial and a test for pious behaviour and moral rectitude.

A good deal of the original lofty ideal seems to have been lost now. In order to avoid the risk of failure in the test of pious meditation, self-abnegation, or control of passions, candidates are made to go through the initiatory ceremony in their early boyhood before the age of fifteen or sixteen. Nowadays not only those sons of priests who are really intended to act as priests, go through the initiation, but others, too, intended by their parents for other walks of life, are made to go through the ceremony with the idea that it is a religious ceremony worth going through. One would not object to this procedure, if even in these cases, the original lofty ideals were kept in mind. The salutary effect would not be lost, if a boy were made to go through the ceremony in an intelligible way. A doctor, lawyer, or merchant, if trained in early boyhood to a little pious meditation,

self-control and self-abnegation, would be a better man in his profession, by this kind of trial and training. What is wanted is that the original high ideal must always be kept in view.

It seems that in ancient Iran, a similar idea of not working as a priest after initiation was contemplated. As the 'Datastar-i-Dini' says it was permitted that "those of the priesthood, when there was no daily livelihood for them from the life of the priesthood, should abandon the priesthood." Priesthood was recommended as making its members "more contented in adversity, more intelligent as regards stability of character in difficulty." But when one did not get his daily livelihood out of it, he was permitted to take to "agriculture, sheep-rearing, penmanship" and even "to bear arms" but he was not to pass his time in idleness.

A priest is nowadays called an 'Ervad,' or 'Mobad.' The son of a priest who has gone through the first initiation ceremony of 'Navar,' is entitled to be called an 'Ervad.' He is, after that initiation, entitled to put on a white turban. In India, a priest can be easily distinguished from a layman, as he puts on a white turban while the layman (the 'Beh-din') puts on the black turban. Some members of the new 'Kadimi' sect of priests, at present, put on a round shawled turban ('fenta'), but generally, about ninety-eight per cent put on the white turban.

All the 'Ervads' who have gone through the first initiation ceremony, do not go through the second grade of initiation. They need not necessarily take up the priestly profession. But having been once admitted into the sacerdotal class, they are entitled to be called 'Ervads' in the religious ceremonies recited for them in their name and honour in their life-time and after death. All who bear the white turbans, therefore, are not necessarily priests. But if they like, they can perform certain priestly ceremonies which an 'Ervad,' who has gone through the Navar ceremony can perform. None can prohibit them. A white turbaned Evrad as long as he continues to put on the white turban, can re-

With Compliments of

Manize'

fully Air Conditioned

Cumballa Hill Fly-Over,

Bombay 36.

Phone 382284

Beauty Parlour

Hair Styling - Facials - Mehendi tinting
Other beauty treatments

JEAN JUNCTION

Jeans - Jackets & Tops - Belts - Sandals

Spin Weave Textiles

Philco Industries - Vimzar Enterprise

**Piramal Mansion, 235 Dadabhoy Naoroji Road,
Bombay 400 001**

Grams: 'Spiwetex'

Phone Office: 261724-265475

Resi: 211929



The Safed Pugree

The most distinguishing feature of a priest is his pugree. Perched conspicuously on his head, it immediately sets him apart from his fellowmen. But though every practising priest must wear the white cotton turban, not all have mastered the intricacies of tying one. Below, *Parsiana* Senior Editor Feroza Paymaster interviews one of the few specialists in the field, Ervad Maneck Bhadha of the Vachagandhi *Agiary* on Hughes Road:

"It's an art," says the bespectacled mobed who has been tying priestly pugrees professionally for the last 30 years. "Previously *navars* were taught how to tie the pugree in the course of their training but now they are not. Among the practicing mobeds some don't know how to and some are unable to due to arthritis or other handicaps. I tie on an average fifteen to twenty pugrees a month. During the *muktad* season the figure can go up to two hundred. Initially I did not charge, but the price of the paper used in making the pugree has be-

come so expensive, I have to levy a fee of two to three rupees. A bridegroom might give eleven rupees; for the poor people I do it free. I never ask for payment but people usually give." It takes twenty to twenty-five minutes to tie a pugree. A starched *topi* and four to five meters of starched cambric cloth with a width of three to four inches are some of the basic ingredients. The *topi* is placed on the head and the rear portion of it is made wet, so as to stick to the cloth. The material is then wound from the right hand side, nine times for a small pugree, 12 to 13 rounds for others. To give it shape, paper is placed in the last or penultimate round, the former affording greater protection from the rain. The folds are then evened out with a *chinp* (a rectangular piece of silver). It takes two days for the pugree to dry.

"Often the mobeds who also work in offices feel shy to wear the pugree while it is still wet so they request me to tie it on my head and wear it," said Bhadha. "I tie it and then travel in the upper deck of the bus so that it dries quickly." He bought a mould once but the result was not satisfactory. "If my size fits then I tie it on my own head," he noted.

Bhadha learnt the skill of pugree tying from Ervad Dorabji Pestonji Mogol, his tutor for the *navar* ceremony. "He showed us how to take the twists, how to arrange the folds and so on. When I came to Bombay I saw that the youngsters were not able to tie their pugrees, so I used to tie it for them. I practiced and became proficient and people began to prefer my work. Then I published handbills and distributed them all over, at the *agiaris*, *doongerwadi* etc. I advertised in the *Kaiser* and *Jame* as well and got a good response. Since the last fifteen or twenty years the work has increased greatly. There is nobody else who ties it professionally in Bombay. Dastur Dabu knows of me and sends people who want their pugrees tied. *Mara hathma art avi gayelo che.*"

vert at any time to his priestly profession or is permitted to officiate at certain ceremonies, even though he has taken up another profession. But if he ceases to put on the white turban and puts on the black turban he cannot perform any religious services.

While the word 'Ervad' is used as the appellation of a priest who has gone through the first initiation degree of 'Navar' the word 'Mobad' is generally used of those who actually follow the profession. An 'Ervad,' who has changed his professional white turban for a black one, may continue to be called an 'Ervad' but not a 'Mobad,' though he may belong to a 'Mobad' family. It is much more a professional than an honorific appellation.

Another term for a priest, also used in India rather as a professional or class appellation than as an honorific or personal appellation, is 'Andhyaru.' While 'Ervad' and 'Mobad' are old Iranian words, the word 'Andhyaru' is derived from the Vedic 'Adhvaryu.' The term is used before the name of a member of the priestly class, even if he has not gone through any of the initiation degrees.

A person of the priestly class who has not gone through the 'Navar' initiation is called 'Osta' in religious service. The appellation 'Osti' is prefixed to the names of women of priestly families, in religious recitals.

The religious services of the Parsis are divisible into two classes: (1) those ordinarily performed at any place, even in one's own house, and (2) those performed at consecrated places such as the 'Dar-i-Mihir' or the Fire temple. In the first class of services can be included social or domestic services, i.e., services connected with the domestic events of a man's life such as birth, Navzot, marriage and death. They can be termed the outer services. The second class can be called the inner services, performed in the inner circle of the temple, the liturgical services, such as the 'Baj,' 'Yasna,' 'Visperad' and 'Vandidad.' Of these two classes of services, the latter are of a higher rank. While the first set of services can be

Continued on page 57



Call for National Unity and Discipline

"This is a time for unity and discipline. I am fully confident that with each day the situation will improve and that in this task our people, in towns and villages, will give us their full support, so that the country will be strengthened".

—Prime Minister Indira Gandhi

The Rise and Fall of the Clergy

Extracts from Eckehard Kulke's *The Parsees in India*

Traditional Role of the Priests

The Parsees who had migrated to India had no fixed written code of laws at their disposal which would have determined the internal organization and order of the community. As they, as a minority, did not have their own autonomous political organization, they were, with regard to criminal law, actually subject to the jurisdiction of their respective ruler. The regulation of internal, civil as well as religious disputes was left, on the other hand, to the Parsees themselves, whereby the administration of justice for centuries lay in the hands of the clergy. Since a Dastur as leader or speaker of the group of refugees had negotiated with the Prince Jādī Rānā in Sanjan and thereby made the settlement of Parsees in India possible, the leading role of the priests was undisputed. In Sassanian Iran, Dasturs had already held the highest civil offices so that it was only too natural that the Dasturs should function as head of the community in a situation in which political leadership was lacking.

In each region or city of Gujarat in which a group of Parsees settled, a leading Dastur family functioned as speaker (externally) and mediator (internally). The priests of Sanjan, the temporary home of the Iranshah, were acknowledged to be the top leaders of the community. In order to avoid overlaps in the sphere of priestly jurisdiction, Gujarat was divided in 1290 into five panthaks with strictly defined and geographically limited jurisdiction.

In disputes in which no agreement could be reached in spite of the priests' authority, or in which the clergy itself was divided, there was a choice of two alternatives:

1. Starting with 1478, (a total of 26) inquiries—partially of a religious and partially of a secular nature—were sent to priests who had remained in Persia and whose replies were accepted as verdicts of a superior authority.

2. In three serious cases which brought the community—partially under violent circumstances—al-

most to the verge of a split, the civil authorities' arbitration was requested, which for their part, had no interest in the matter itself, but certainly in peace within the community:

- a) After the holy fire had been brought from Sanjan to Nausari, a controversy about the priestly jurisdiction in Nausari arose at the beginning of the 18th Century between the priests who had fled from Sanjan on the one side and the priests living in Nausari on the other side. The disputes were submitted to the local Hindu Prince Damaji Rao, who decided in favour of the Nausari priests, upon which the Sanjan priests moved to Udvada by way of Bulsar with the holy fire, to the site where it is still kept today.
- b) In 1785, the Governor of Bombay, Bodham, appointed, after being urged by the Parsees, a commission that intervened in the marriage dispute between laymen and priests and confirmed the right to intermarriage.
- c) The conflict smouldering between Kadmis and Shehen-shahis since about 1740 engaged a British court in Surat in 1822 that had to decide whether two Atash-Behrams (fire temples) may coexist in one city.

Since the 18th Century, no authority existed any more in the Parsee community that could decide internally, as the superior authority, on law and order. The clergy's loss of authority is the result of a beginning emancipation of the Parsee laity due to its rising economic prosperity. This laity was no longer willing, with its newly won self-consciousness, to subject itself to the jurisdiction of the—frequently uneducated—priests.

Changing Role of the Clergy
Social change and secularization had led, in the 19th Century, to the Parsee clergy's having lost on influence and prestige in spite of its numerical strength. After it had been relieved of traditional secular functions by the laws of

1865 and by the Panchayat dominated by laymen, it limited itself only to its ritual tasks. With the establishment of an educational system that took place without participation or the influence of the clergy (the clergy had actually never practised the function of transmitting knowledge to the laity), the clergy was surpassed in the field of education and pushed into a position in which it was hardly taken seriously any more intellectually. It had to endure sarcastic articles in Parsee newspapers that overwhelmed it with mockery of its uncultured state and "parasitic existence."

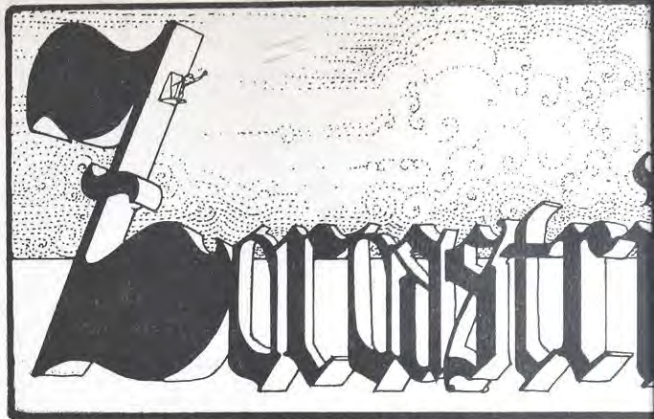
While the majority of the community prospered economically, most of the priests had to be content with the earnings that corresponded to their lesser reputation. The most intelligent and enterprising sons in clerical families took up, to an increasing extent, civil professions that were not closed to them by taboos. As, around the middle of the 19th Century, a movement set in toward reforming and purifying their religion, the Parsee priests played a relatively subordinate role; the movement was chiefly initiated and supported by laymen. Progressive Parsees registered with satisfaction that the Parsee priests had no possibility of checking the reform movement in the community or of influencing the community's generosity in conformity with their own interest. Through the weakness of the clergy in Bombay (in Gujarat the priests' influence remained stronger), the only social factor that could have checked the enormous dynamics of the social change in the community was condemned to ineffectiveness.

The situation, so far as it concerns the clergy's degree of education, has changed, however, in the past decades. On the one side, some seminaries for priests were founded in Bombay, partially with active support from laymen, and on the other side, a number, even if small, of academically educated priests has at least rehabilitated

Please turn to page 59, col. 3

Essay Competition

The Lost Generation



I am a Parsee—but unfortunately know little or nothing about my religion. I know, as someone recently said by osmosis—from the conduct and general behaviour of my parents and older relatives—a sort of Code of Conduct. I can also pull out from the cobwebs of my memory, a phrase here and there, such as ‘I am a Zarhosti—I can’t do this’ or ‘I am a Zarhosti—I’ve given my word and shall keep it’.

My children here know a little and my son, beyond having a Parsee name, knows less. If then, this is the general condition of us Parsees, then what is the difference between a Parsee and anyone else of another race? What if all the 85,000 Parsees pass away and we become just a pleasant memory—for the essence of what was a Parsee—a true Zarhosti is already all but gone and forgotten.

The Parsees, as I see them now, are empty shells. We have not even wept or shed a tear at the passing of the Zoroastrian flame within us and it confounds me that we lament at the thought of the anticipated passing away of the casket (and an empty one at that) and now even agitate ourselves to such great lengths as

to how this immaterial object is to be disposed of.

There must be many with a son or daughter and grandchildren abroad and even doing well. But somewhere in the secret narrows of their heart, somehow a silent anguish lies, that for all intent and purposes, their children are lost as Zarhostis. Others with children right here, close to them, feel no different.

To these and others, who know more about our religion and our past, I direct my words. Turn around from looking at the dead. Look at the living—look at the wider scope of the future—look at the children and the young people—they are the wealth of the community—but without doubt, a Lost Generation.

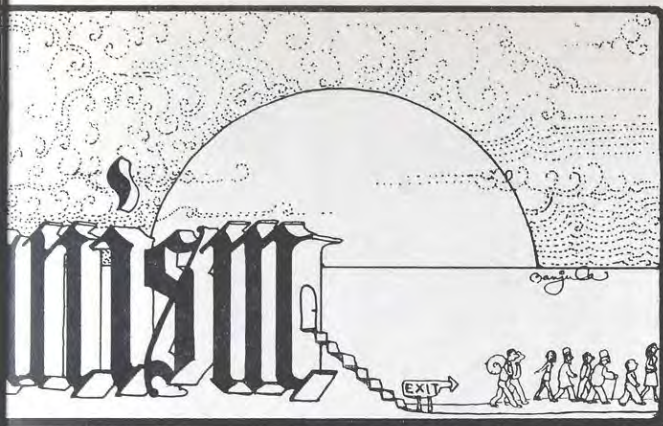
That is a tragic indictment for a community which from a very small, shabby, frightened, hungry, motley crowd, that came swarming on to the shores of this land in country crafts and little boats has developed into what the world proclaims to be the ‘cream’ of this country’s statesmen, industrialists, scientists, doctors, lawyers, artists, soldiers, sailors, airmen and even forming an

aristocracy within itself.

Once upon a time, our community was young, fresh and prepared to face a challenge. Now it mainly forms the old and the tired, the complacent and the indifferent and the ‘I am alright, Joes’.

As regards our families: Oh! Dad is at the office—his meetings—his business and his money. Mother! Well, she’s at the club or maybe involved in a fund-raising drive for prevention of cruelty to animals. The children go their different ways. Till tragedy strikes, then Dad with his skin deep religion runs the frantic rounds of Saints and Shrines. This is very much so with Parsees. Visit most homes and you’ll see such pictures plastered all over the walls, looking for solace and hope from others.

I have no wish to raise a controversy—we are a great community, but our strength is tied up in controversies and dissipated by indifference. Can we not put all this in abeyance? Can they not wait? Surely, all our controversies together cannot weigh against the very future of our community. The young ones and children are the future and the wealth of our



The following will be the final judges:

Lady Hirabai Cowasjee Jehangir,
President, Board of Trustees,
The Parsi Panchayat;
Jehan Daruwala,
Editor, The Bombay Samachar;
Jal Heerjibehdin,
Editor, The Kaiser-e-Hind;
Jehangir Patel,
Editor, Parsiana.

Last date for submitting entries March 31, 1976

community and therefore, a matter which concerns them should bind as well as touch every one of us to the quick. The subject should unite the community and goad it to total action to save the young for the future.

The Lost Generation needs all our thoughts and care. The question of the hour is how to save its members?

How to give them a sound knowledge of the Zoroastrian ethic? How to give them a clear picture of their rich heritage? How to inculcate in them a pride in being a Zarthosti?

While I have said all this, I do understand this question must have come up before and many worthy men must have made an approach to solve it. But the problem still persists and a new dimension has been added by the great number of young people moving to far off countries.

Therefore, inspite of all that has been done, the problem is increasing and should occupy the thoughts and minds of our intellectuals, our elders and our community... or else, a time will come, when there will be none left to place in the Dokhma.

The above subject is worthy of the attention of the entire Parsee community. Besides a great debate being possible, it can also focus the attention on a cause which can bind the community instead of dividing it. Without doubt, we believe the elders have a positive role to play because of their knowledge, wisdom and experience. The youth have their intelligence, their strength and their capacity to take up a crusade and see it to its final conclusion. Together 'The Lost Generation' can be transformed into 'Resurgent Youth' and if, they so will it, lay the seeds of a Zoroastrian Renaissance.

We invite all readers to take up the invisible challenge and participate in a matter which so widely affects our community. We fully realise and appreciate that the effort from the community will come spontaneously and willingly but inspite of this, we take pleasure in announcing that prizes will be awarded for the best papers submitted on the subject.

For the best paper on the religious and ethical void, frustrations and other related problems caused to Zoroastrian youth and how best these can be remedied and what are the many forms of action required to make a sustained effort Rs. 500
For the next best paper Rs. 300
For the third best paper Rs. 200

If the response is in keeping with the measure of the subject, we are prepared to double our award and give a set of awards as mentioned above to the elders and another similar set of awards for the youth.

Essays should be addressed to:
The Lost Generation

1. C/o The Editor, Parsiana,
Post Box 892,
G.P.O. Bombay 400 001.
2. C/o The Editor, The Kaiser-e-Hind,
Old Sassoon Building,
Horniman Circle,
Bombay 400 001.
3. C/o The Editor,
The Bombay Samachar,
Horniman Circle,
Bombay 400 001.

"Jamshed divided all men of the world into four classes and he said, 'Let every one do his work and not occupy himself in another vocation.' If anybody deviated from the rules which he had established, he would put them to death." (Tabari Zotenberg). Times have changed since Jamshed's days. Today members of

priestly (athornan) families seek other professions and there is a growing body of people who feel that the laity (behdins) should be permitted to take up the priesthood if they so desire.

Even though in ancient Iran there are recorded instances of lay individuals being absorbed into the priesthood, at present

only the male off-spring of an athornan family can enter the profession after undergoing the navar initiation ceremony.

As those interviewed below are not a random sampling and the number is small, conclusions as to what opinion the majority of the community does or does not hold, cannot be made.

SHOULD PRIESTHOOD BE BY CASTE?

Interviews by
Feroza Paymaster

Photographs by
Manjula Padmanabhan



Rupy Gai, 50, Housewife

"I feel our community is too small to be split into so many divisions. Even behdins are divided into Fasli, Kadmi, Shenshahi. We can't be so divided." Ms Gai, who comes from a behdin family, opposes the practice of priesthood by birth. "We should do as the Christians do. They become priests because they have a liking for it and devotion. Not because they are born into the priestly family."

"I never gave much thought to whether women should be priests. I think women should be allowed to become priests. They would have a more beneficial effect on

children. Nuns are a devoted group and serve the community. I wouldn't mind my son marrying an andhyaru girl. I don't believe that *andhyaru ni dikri le to gherma andharu ave* (marriage to a priest's daughter will bring darkness to your home).

"Many of our priests are priests because they are not qualified to do anything else. Do *mobeds* understand what they are praying? Prayer is said in earnest from your heart. Priests should be educated in order to impress the community and present their views. A priest should practise what he preaches and serve the community."



Homi Contractor, 23, Student, H. R. College

"I suppose we should have a priestly class. Otherwise, who would say the prayers? If there are sufficient priests to take up the work, you don't have to tap other sources. Besides, priests are poorly paid and if behdins became priests, then they would get paid even less." By keeping the priesthood hereditary, Homi feels an aspiring priest has the advantage of being "groomed right from the start, by his father who would be a priest himself.

"Women should not be priests. They have never been priests before; they stuck to preparing the *malida*. It is too late to change now. Moreover, women have to be

clean when they pray, which is not the case all the time. So you don't have a continuous source praying for you and people usually want the same priest."

Homi, who is a behdin, feels there is "nothing wrong with intercaste marriage. It is said that if you give your daughter in marriage to a priest, seven generations go to heaven; and that if you take a priest's daughter, you bring darkness into the house. There should be no bars either way.

"A priest should be educated and able to impart his knowledge to lay Parsis. Priests deserve respect. Isn't praying a social service?"



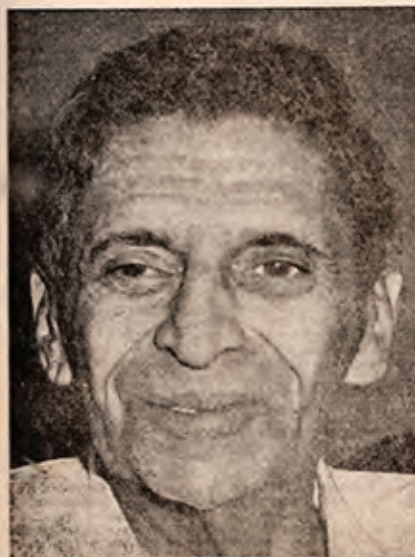
Farida Kanga, 19, Steno-typist cum telephone operator and receptionist, Pest Control (India)

"No, it causes a lot of problems. It gives you a complex of caste and religion," says Farida who comes from an athornan family. She feels there is no hereditary, genetic factor of priestliness that is passed on from father to son. "If females became priests, I would not mind.

"I would marry into a behdin family but not into an orthodox athornan family. There are too many restrictions. You can't do this, you can't do that. If an athornan girl marries into a behdin family it is considered unlucky. They will take the girl into the house only after midnight or some auspicious time. It's all humbug.

"We treat the priests well but they take advantage of it. First

and foremost religion does not ask for money to be paid. Do the priests know what they are praying or do they just mug up and pass their so-called diplomas? A priest should be very devoted to his profession, very religious. They should wear special clothes. Today they wear the priestly clothes in the morning and ordinary ones in the evening. My father is a navar but not a practising priest. If he were really interested he would have become a priest. Among Parsis, to be a priest is considered very prestigious. That is why they have chosen to divide themselves into athornans and behdins."



Jal Daruvala, 73, Retired Professor, Wilson College

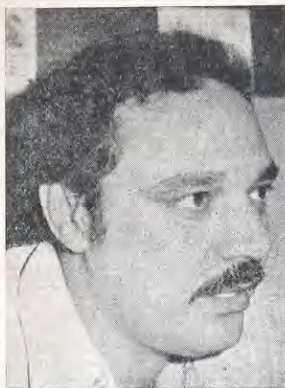
"It should be open to all. I think in the year 1975, it should also be open to females.

"Men and women were considered equal among Jains and Buddhists; they accept females as monks. But in most communities priesthood is not open to females. In our community among the older generation, they are not equal."

Daruvala, a behdin, is not opposed to intercaste marriage. "There is too much in-breeding. People are willing to accept an andhyaru girl into their family because she

is hardworking and industrious. But they don't want to give their daughter to a priestly family because she may be treated like a house maid.

"A priest should have a thorough understanding of the religion. He should be educated and capable of advising others. He should have a practical knowledge of life. The training our priests are given is obsolete and antique. The community does not respect the priests. Most of them don't deserve it. A few do."



Khusrow Mubed, 41, Partner, "Cafe Oval"

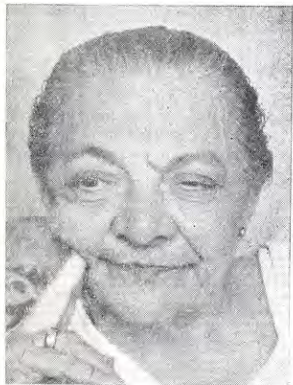
"No, there should not be a priestly class. As long as those who want to be priests are Zoroastrians, it is enough. Because the priesthood is restricted, there is a shortage of priests; for instance there are very few dasturs in Iran. This division has come down from olden times, so that priests could earn their livelihood without anyone taking their place.

"In the cause of cleanliness only men should be priests. Besides women fight and there will be no peace in the agiary." Though from an athornan family, Mubed says, "I would marry a behdin and let my daughter marry one too. If there are intercommunity marriages, then what is wrong with

intercaste marriage? At least they will be marrying within the faith. Science has advanced so much, who bothers with these trivial superstitions regarding an athornan marrying a behdin?"

As for qualities essential in a priest, Mubed expects priests "to be clean. If he eats in a restaurant, wears laymen's clothes, it is all right. Just so long as he does not charge heavily for his services.

"The community gives respect to the priests and they serve the community. For Christian priests, it is easier to serve the community; they get expenses from the Church, while our dasturs do not. If our dasturs were backed financially, then it would be good.



Tehmina Palia, 75, Housewife

"There should be a priestly caste. Behdins cannot be priests. A behdin can perform the *satium* and the *afargan* and other small ceremonies, but not the big ones. We don't know the reason for having a separate caste, but we are shown the way and we follow.

"Women menstruate and so they can't be priests," says Ms Palia who is an athornan. She is not against marriages between behdins and athornans: "People who are all set to get married don't because of superstitions about intercaste marriage. Certain tragedies may have taken place, but only by coincidence."

She feels, "A priest should be

willing to take responsibilities, and be able to perform ceremonies. If he is not willing to do this, then he should be a priest merely in name and not do mobedy. He should follow all the customs: Touching only certain things, wearing socks while performing ceremonies and not drinking certain water.

"In my time priests were respected. We don't treat them well today. Mobeds cannot live from the money they earn and are not able to practise. Therefore, mobed's children don't want to learn the profession now. We should treat them better."



Phiroz Amaria, 38, Textile Technician, Bombay Dyeing

"I am against a separate priestly caste. Priesthood shouldn't be by birth. Whoever is devoted should be allowed to become a priest, as among the Catholics.

"I don't mind female priests," says Amaria. "I don't believe menstrual taboos can be observed today." He is not opposed to athornans marrying behdins, "I am against a caste system, so there is no point in my objecting.

"The main thing is a priest should be educated. He should be able to preach. Our priests should

explain the religion to the community. At present they just perform the ceremonies. The Catholic priests work for hours together in remote parts of Africa.

"Priests are not treated well because people feel they are after financial gains. Being a priest should not be looked at from a business view point. There must be a separate fund, compulsory or voluntary, from the community to support them and free them from financial worries."

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.)



Like prayers and epic poetry, recipes for Parsi food have always been handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation. If Parsi cookbooks were available at all, they were ancient Gujarati manuals which might be of value as antiques, but their language itself was, increasingly often, a barrier. The methods and quantities they recommended were certainly outmoded; while the novice cook did not know exactly what was meant by a *seer* of cream, she knew that she could not afford it.

But times have changed, and three new cookbooks in English have appeared recently. *Favourite Parsi Recipes** by Yasmin and *101 Parsi Recipes** by Jeroo Mehta deal exclusively with Parsi cuisine, while *Traditional Recipes of India** by Bhicoo J. Manekshaw provides a cross-section of over 800 recipes from every state of India and several smaller districts like Goa, Bulsar and Coorg, including a long chapter of 85 Parsi recipes. All

JAMVA CHALO

By Pervin Mahoney

three books are well planned, with instructions that are clearly written and easy to follow. The recipes range from simple dishes like *akuri* and homely staples like *papeta ma gos* to the classics like *dhansak* and festive wedding food. The authors show a refreshing attention to details—such as how to extract coconut milk and tamarind water—so that even the novice will not be confused. So Yasmin tells the tyro how to buy and grind spices; Ms Manekshaw explains how to grow coriander and *methi*; and Ms Mehta helpfully provides imaginative substitutes to use in places where the original ingredients are not available.

Within their price ranges, the books are also well illustrated. Yasmin has wicked sketches by Mario of Parsis with glints in their eyes at the thought of the coming feast; wedding guests and *babarchis*, *mava ni boi* and *jalooda* all combine to signpost the way to a Parsi's heart. Ms Mehta has the advantage of photographs and four pages of colour plates to show the non-Parsi reader what the finished product should look like. For Ms Manekshaw's book, the architecture, people and staple food of each region are blended by Deb Mahalobnis into illustrations which are stylised and stylish, slightly

*The Books:

1. **Favourite Parsi Recipes** by Yasmin (published by Yasmin Sibai, Bombay, pp. 144, Rs. 8)
2. **101 Parsi Recipes** by Jeroo Mehta (Vakils, Feffer & Simon, Bombay, pp. 146, Rs. 25)
3. **Traditional Recipes of India** by Bhicoo J. Manekshaw (Nachiketa, Bombay, pp. 242, Rs. 52)

surreal and extremely contemporary. The range covered in *Traditional Recipes of India*, which took 25 years to compile, is huge. "Indian cuisine is so varied that even our own countrymen do not know much about the food of different parts of our vast sub-continent," explained Ms Manekshaw, who was able to collect and try out recipes because her husband, Air Vice-Marshal Jamshed H. F. Manekshaw, as Director of Medical Research of the combined Armed Forces, has been posted all over India. Now based in Delhi, she runs private classes and plans the menus and trains the chefs at the India International Centre. Her previous assignments included training the chefs at Bombay's Taj Mahal Hotel, supervising and co-ordinating menus at Bangalore's West End Hotel, and helping to look after the catering at Mysore's Raj Bhavan. "For my *magnum opus*, as I sometimes call it, or sometimes sentimentally my third daughter, I collected recipes from people from all walks of life," said Ms Manekshaw, "including my *kallainoala*."

Anyone who enjoys Indian cooking can see that Ms Manekshaw's large selection of recipes is sound and authentic, but her book has an added seal of recognition—a foreword of appreciation from the principal of London's Cordon Bleu School of Cookery. The Cordon Bleu originated one day in the year 1760 when Louis XV called for the chef to compliment him after a particularly fine meal. He was surprised to find a woman in this male-dominated preserve, and honoured her with a special award—the Cordon Bleu. Paris's *L'Ecole du Cordon Bleu* has given the right to some of its star graduates to open two schools in London and New York, and Ms Manekshaw is the first Indian to be awarded the Advance Course diploma from the London school. Admission to this course is fiercely selective, and candidates are expected to have a sound knowledge of cookery before they join. After Ms Manekshaw had been told that admission was booked for months in advance, the Director read her manuscript. She was

immediately given a place, and even asked to give a demonstration of Indian cooking. Now the Cordon Bleu correspondence course includes some of her recipes, and hers is the only Indian book to have gained the Cordon Bleu seal.

Ms Manekshaw's Cordon Bleu experience is evident throughout the book. She explains exactly how to chop onions; she evokes whiffs of our rural past with almost-forgotten dishes like *oobieru* and *undhyu*; and she includes little telling details and anecdotes. Under "*Lime*", for instance, she not only describes how to make *limbu pani*, but mentions the uses of lime as skin-whitener, dandruff-curer, sunburn-remover and teeth-cleanser. To illustrate exactly how thin and elastic *chokha ni rotli* should be, she ends with this challenge: "When my mother-in-law made them, a pile of a hundred would not be higher than two or three inches, and if a rupee coin was placed on top, it would sink to the bottom!"

101 Parsi Recipes, which shows the same meticulous concern for detail, perhaps bears this title because it was conceived of as a gift for brides. With its clear, numbered instructions, its attractive colour photographs, and spiral binding which makes the thick, hardwearing pages stay completely flat for easy reference when open, it provides a thoughtful alternative to the traditional envelope of cash.

"Since I learnt cooking the hard way, I knew I should include details like how much water to put in and what substitutes to use when Indian ingredients aren't available," explained Ms Mehta, who herself started cooking only after her marriage. "When I first began to cook, I would have the cookbook open perennially. Even after the guests arrived, I would go into the kitchen and stir faithfully every ten minutes. But cooking should never be a chore. The results should be tasty, but the methods should be quick and simple," notes Ms Mehta, who is obviously a perfectionist—she even teaches a new cook how to cut and chop ingredients.

Please turn to page 61

give a gift from



the gift shop at
Bombay
Swadeshi
Stores Ltd.

Sir P. M. Road
Bombay 1

Tel: 253443



for wholesale &
export
enquiries call at

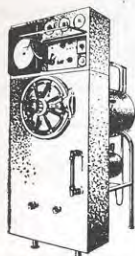
Things

9a, Ash Lane
Fort, Bombay 1

Tel: 257977

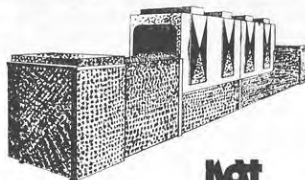
MEET YOUR NEEDS THRU'

Nat



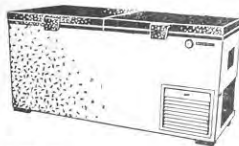
Nat

Hospital, Pharmaceutical, Laboratory, Research, Chemical and allied equipment such as Sterilizers/Autoclaves, Water Stills Jacketed Vessels with Stirrers etc



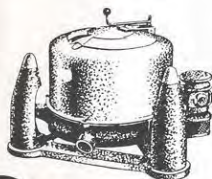
Nat

Heavy-duty Industrial Kitchen equipment, including all types of Dishwashers for Hotels Restaurants, Hospitals, Industrial Canteens, Hostels etc



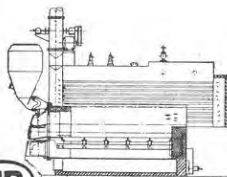
KRISPCOLD

Refrigeration equipment such as Walk-in-Coolers, Deep Freezers Bottle Coolers, Refrigerators Blood Storage Cabinets, X-ray Developing Tanks etc



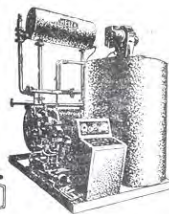
ILDE

All types of Industrial Laundry machinery including fully automatic dry cleaning units



JB

Steam & Hot Water Boilers in various capacities up to 5000 kg/hr for pressures up to 20 kg/cm². Fuel of your choice



HEIZA

Liquid Phase Heaters up to 1,000,000 kcal/hr. Oil and electrically heated units currently being offered. Solid fuel firing will be offered soon

Pre-sales service includes design layout and planning in close consultation with architects & experts

Excellent after-sales service and supply of *spares* available through offices all over the country

Nat Nat Steel Equipment Pvt. Limited

(Incorporated: National Steel Equipment Co.)

G.D. Ambekar Marg (Naigaum Road), Dadar, BOMBAY-400 014

Bombay • Delhi • Calcutta • Madras • Ahmedabad • Bangalore • Goa • Hyderabad • Lucknow • Nagpur

Hieroglyphic Confusion

In the beginning there was the gesture, then the grunt, and finally the word. Behram D. Pithavala's book*, like most treatises on the evolution of language starts at this point. Conceding at the outset that in ancient times "all languages were at first used only for oral communication," and that "people were averse to writing," Pithavala goes on to the time when the ancient races started evolving their scripts. After an introduction far too cursory to do any justice to the fascinating panorama of the 'Evolution of languages' or the 'Invention of writing', the scope of the booklet narrows down to a discussion of the premise set down in the title—the Iranian basis of the Devanagari Sanskrit alphabet, the numerical signs, and the sacred word 'AUM' and its symbol.

In a nutshell, Pithavala's theory asserts that the Devanagari script used in the writing of Sanskrit, Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, and other North Indian languages, is almost entirely derived from the Avestan script of Persian. According to this theory, the Sanskrit scribes took the basic forms of the letters of the Avestan alphabet, turned them upside down or round and about in one or more of five different ways, added to them the vertical stroke representing the inherent short vowel 'a', and thus coined a whole new alphabet for themselves. His contention is based on the accidentally discovered fact (as he himself admits) that almost all Devanagari characters resemble, with certain modifications, their Avestan counterparts. The question of which came first, the Devanagari chicken or the Avestan egg, and the testimony of other scientific researchers, which would have given the argument considerable force, is treated deliciously vaguely so that the reader, both lay and specialist, has nothing

more solid than his own particular prejudice to judge by. Matters are made worse by the opposition of this theory to many of the conclusions of Comparative Philology. The consensus among most modern phoneticians points towards the common ancestry of the whole group of Indo-European languages, both living, like Hindi or French, and dead, like Classical Greek or Sanskrit.



For all his efforts, Pithavala has only succeeded in reiterating the close relationship between the Devanagari script of Sanskrit and its derivatives on the one hand, and the Avestan script on the other. Such a relationship, however, need not mean that one is borrowed from the other; it might also point to a lively intercourse between the two peoples, which inevitably leads to a mutual give-and-take rather than the "one-way track" suggested by the author. If we still maintain that the relationship is one-sided, then it might also hold true

in the reverse direction. Pithavala argues, "it is quite impossible to prove that the Avestan script was derived from Devanagari". The reason is that the Avestan script is written from right to left which is a much older way, according to the evidence of extant inscriptions than the relatively more modern left to right way used by Devanagari. Besides, some of the salient features of the Devanagari script have no counterpart in the Avestan, leading one to believe that they were the innovations of the Hindu scribes. He seemingly clinches the argument for his Zoroastrian readers at least, by referring to the testimony of the Arab historian Masaudi that the Avestan characters "were specially invented by Lord Zarathushtra himself for recording his teachings. Our own tradition speaks of Jamasp Hakim taking down and recording our Master's words on parchment in letters of gold." It is this 'our-their' attitude which runs throughout the book that leaves one wondering whether Pithavala has indeed approached his subject as a detached research scholar rather than as a staunch Zoroastrian. The booklet is curiously schizophrenic on this account—an ability for painstaking research and erudite technical jargon complete with detailed charts are mixed with a peculiar though not uncommon 'Zoroastrian bias.'

Running parallel to the theory about the alphabet is the elucidation of the evolution of the numerical signs. The discussion of the three theories concerning the development of figures to express numerical quantities is one of the most attractive parts of the book. The first of these theories traces the origin of the science of numbers to the peculiar arrangement of the sacrificial sticks of wood in the *Yagnakunda* or the fire receptacle. In the second theory, a distinct value is allocated to every letter of the alphabet, whereas the third theory divides the alphabet into groups and assigns the letters in each group, values of upto nine.

Please turn to page 63, col. 1

*The Iranian Basis of the Devanagari Sanskrit Alphabet, The Numerical Signs and The Sacred word 'AUM' and Its symbol: Bombay; Rs. 4 (pp 60).

L&T shares are an example. For the wise investor the sum total of these multiplying factors is security. The security rests in the knowledge that L&T has never missed a single dividend since its inception. In fact it has never been less than 10% in the last twenty five years. And in fifteen of those years L&T has declared an 18% dividend twice and 15% six times.

Facts about L&T make the figures possible. 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 vast industrial plan.

**Anything
that promises
richer dividends
deserves
undivided
interest**

**LARSEN & TOUBRO
LIMITED**



P.O. Box 278
Bombay 400 038





IN FOCUS, OUT OF REALITY

In the golden age of abstract art, artists could shoot at paint-filled balloons strung on canvas to gain instant fame, and chimpanzees monkeyed round with tubes of oil paint to earn a fast buck for their keepers. Since then of course many more zany forms of art have taken centre stage, leaving the abstractionists staid and intelligible by contrast. Among those still dedicated to capturing fleeting thoughts on canvas is Firdaus Dadabhoy, a thirty-year-old architect whose first exhibition was held recently at the Jehangir Art Gallery.

The show consisted of ten large canvases, mostly in sober, muted colors. A viewer is immediately moved to ask for a list of names only to find there isn't any: the artist believes, "Someone looking at my paintings should be able to feel the image I want to project on his own." Rather than guide the ignorant bystander across the rugged terrain of each painting he feels each person must be left to come to his own conclusions as spontaneously as possible. Yet, when the viewer is confronted with swirling masses of paint and nothing but a mute serial number for a guide, the journey is not an easy one.

For instance, painting number four is a large, squarish canvas filled with mellow flesh tones merging and thrusting, rather like one square inch of a Michelangelo fresco blown up to wall-size. It is pleasant in its fleshiness, in its apparent portrayal of healthy, pink bodies basking in the afternoon sun, but tickling the back of one's mind is the uneasy thought that far from being a friendly hunk of meat it is instead a deep, philosophical statement. Thus the viewer's mind is anyway not free to roam at will. Similarly number six immediately evokes some sort of flower, vivid slashes of deep crimson offset by a freak streak of

chrome yellow. If only one could be sure that it was intended to be a flower then one could comfortably react to its vitality; but as long as the suspicion lurks that it may just be a phallic symbol in mufti, one's appreciation is understandably restricted.

Ignoring this niggling sensation, however, the paintings are refreshingly undisciplined. Not having been through the wringer of a formal art education, Dadabhoy's work is free of the self-conscious and sterile clichés so frequently put out for the public purview. It is so rare to find "modern" paintings which are not weighted down with heavy symbolism—either Tantric or Freudian—that one can even appreciate the freedom offered to interpret the paintings as one pleases, instead of having to follow the tortured course of "inner meanings". For instance, number ten is a striking painting, blackish brown, broken by a few rough irregular panels in ochre-drab enamel paint which dribbles sluggishly down the canvas. It could represent tall, yellow buildings seen through blackened and rain-lashed windows or it could be an illustration of a dark and melancholy mood, cut across by a few less sombre thoughts. When the artist explains that it is in fact meant to be a Siva-figure being danced to or venerated by three other figures, one's perspective shifts to allow for this too, without intrinsically affecting the initial focus.

While the strength and decisiveness apparent in the paintings are their main virtue, in a couple of the group displayed, that quality seems to have been overplayed. Painting eight for instance, is a large and somewhat messy canvas filled with erratic strokes and patches. This was intended to symbolize creation, "creatures rising from the original slime," Dadabhoy explains, and is thus consci-

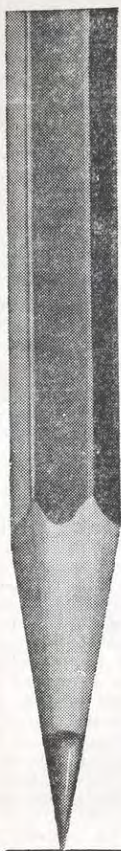


Dadabhoy: Obscure images

ously chaotic. Perhaps it illustrates the point that by not painting realistically, the task of the abstract artist is made that much harder: it is obviously more difficult to depict a feeling or mood than something which is sitting in front of you waiting patiently to be duplicated. The line between a scribble and art becomes really fine. In a painting like number eight it is that fine line which despite the best intentions of the artist gets blurred.

A certain quiet vitality distinguishes Dadabhoy's canvases from the work of hesitant newcomers. "I like to see images which are very obscure," he notes, explaining his involvement with abstraction. By painting in the abstract one is not bound down to copying merely the physical outlines of one's subject, but can bend them and fashion them to suit one's will. The artist builds each of his paintings starting with a certain definite image in mind and then improvising as he goes along. To record life as he sees it around would present no challenge to him. "After all," he says, "I want to have my personal fun too when I paint."

Manjula Padmanabhan



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

comment

The Economics of Dokhmenashini

Prof. P. D. Sunavala



With the Arab oil embargo and the almost sixfold increase in oil prices, the energy crisis spread to India, Europe and the U.S.A.

With the spiralling increases in the price of oil, the demand for solid fuels like coal and wood also escalated. For example, the pithead price of coal in India now is Rs. 60 a ton, whereas it fetches Rs. 300-400 in the export market. And fuel being a basic necessity for giving heat and light in homes and industries, this all round increase in the price of energy has been chiefly responsible for inflation and the high cost of living today.

We Parsis, with our ancient practice of disposing the dead, without fuel, have, and are contributing greatly to the economy of fuel in this respect as compared to those communities disposing off their dead by cremation over a wood fire or in an electric crematorium. But we are also extravagantly burning wood and sandalwood day-in and day-out in our innumerable agiaries and atash-behrams.

Most modern crematoria are

oil fired, though L.P.G. (Liquid Petroleum Gas) is also used in some cases. With the oil crisis, there may be a reversion to the early coke fired furnaces or to electric crematoria.

The energy costs in oil fired cremation furnaces will comprise the cost of coffin plus fuel oil costs. A full size wooden coffin at present costs about Rs. 300. Further, for Parsis, when the committals are few and far between, the fuel oil consumption per cremation is likely to be 30 to 45 litres. With diesel oil costing Re 1 per litre, the total energy costs would be Rs. 340 per cremation.

Open air cremation is extremely wasteful. The fuel consumption is much greater (about 400 kg. timber) and incomplete combustion causes a lot of smoke. In these days when pollution legislation is becoming more stringent the world over, this practice should be prohibited.

Apart from the energy cost factor, as K. B. Shah points out in the September 1974 issue of *Parsiiana* that if Hindus adopt the Parsi practice of disposal, thou-

sands of tons of timber and thousands of litres of kerosene will be saved every day in India.

Electricity on a heat basis is about three to five times as expensive as fuel oil. At the Chandanwadi Electric Crematorium, the body is placed with or without the coffin on a wooden stretcher and inserted into the electric furnace. The charges are Rs. 25 plus costs of the coffin, if any, at one's own expense.

Even if the coffin is eliminated, and taking the minimum additional fuel requirements for isolated cremations equivalent to 157.5 kg. of timber, then assuming the power cost as Rs. 0.25/KWH, the cost of electric cremation works out to Rs. 173. Further, even if the power rate was 12 p/KWH for heating purposes, the cost would be Rs. 83. The Municipal levy of Rs. 25 per cremation could therefore only be possible by subsidization. In the light of rising power costs, the prospects of electric cremation becoming more expensive are always there.

The above figures may be compared with Rs. 10 charged at Doongerwadi for the Lower Bungli (plus minimum charge for hearse transportation Rs. 15).

In burial, the cost will be essentially the manual charge for grave digging, together with cost of coffin and tombstone, if any. If the coffin and the tombstone are eliminated, burial costs will probably be as low as with our mode of disposal in the Towers of Silence. However, there crops up another problem. Burial always poses the problem of apportioning suitable lands in congested cities. Besides, when graveyards have reached their saturation point, the land thereafter is practically sterile. Local sentiment often prevails to

Please turn to page 47, col. 3

From The Team That Gave You Award-Winning Screen Classic 'ANKUR' Comes Another Motion Picture Destined To Take Its Place Among The All Time Greats!

Recipient of
unprecedented
acclaim
from packed houses
for over
63 weeks
in practically
all the major
cities including
DELHI
BANGALORE
BOMBAY
POONA
MADRAS
CALCUTTA
and
AHMEDABAD.
Releasing shortly
at
BARODA
and
HYDERABAD.

BLAZE FILM ENTERPRISES
May Well Add New Award
Laurels To The Long List
It Has Won From Their Screen
Classic 'ANKUR.'

For Adults Only

"NISHANT is Shyam Benegal's film... he has progressed... he has become more professional"—**Busybee—Evening News of India.**

"NISHANT another classic film"

—**Trade Guide**

"NISHANT is a fine production. Shyam Benegal has scored again as a forceful story teller, technically and cinematically it is richer and more spell-binding than its award-winning predecessor ANKUR."

—**Deccan Herald, Bangalore**

"NISHANT does establish Shyam Benegal as one of the very important and socially committed film makers of our day."

—**Sunday Standard, Bangalore**

"Benegal has gathered together a vast and talented cast, Girish Karnad puts over an excellent portrayal. Amrish Puri, is every inch the bade sarkar of feudal times. Shabana once again reveals her mastery over facial expression but finds her match in very attractive Smita Patil."

—**The Current**

"Benegal shows his class. Nishant is another feather in the cap of Director Shyam Benegal. It is one of the most powerful movies to hit the Hindi screen."

—**Sunday Standard**

"Adds a touch of class to our Hindi cinema. One more jewel in the crown of the people who had earlier made Ankur."

—**Films & Filming**

BLAZE FILM ENTERPRISES PVT. LTD. PRESENT



Nishant

(night's end) EASTMANCOLOR

PRODUCED BY FRENÍ M. VARIAVA • MOHAN J. BIJLANT

DIRECTED BY SHYAM BENEGAL

Starring :

GIRISH KARNAD, SHABANA AZMI, ANANT NAG, SADHU MEHER, AMRISH PURI, SMITA, NASEERUDDIN SHAH, MOHAN AGASHE, SATYADEV DUBEY

TOO YOUNG

GOOL K. S. SHAVAKSHA

"It is a normal trait in a youngster that he thinks he is smarter than his father. He has to reach the age of 40 before he finds out that the old man was smart enough to raise him—I don't know why the next generation cannot learn from the one before until they get knocked in the head by experience."

Harry Truman

We are at fault: but we have also given the younger generation a chance to have and to do. We thought out the "foundations" and saved them so that the next generation got the chance to have these scholarships and use them. We of our age did not have the opportunities to learn nor enough education to criticise our elders. Today's youngsters have that advantage. Why? Because of our thrift and foresight, our hard work and money. We laid the foundations of all this great knowledge for others to reap. Now we are asking them to take advantage of it in a spirit of goodwill so that our sacrifices will not be in vain. We may be old and we have our faults but so do the younger folk. There should be a shade of kindness, of give and take and thanks for what we did. If scientists of our age had not discovered what they did others would not have had the ladder ready to climb! We were the ones who made the struggle easy. Think about what we did and be more lenient towards our dogmatism. Youth should be gentle towards old age.

The aged too should be lenient to youth. So, we must start to like one another. If each generation is tolerant towards the other, the gap can be filled and much knowledge exchanged and both generations benefit. Remarks like "that old duffer" and "that young loafer" will disappear with consideration of each others' faults.

"Listening" with attention to the other man's view is better than all help; more than money or learned lectures. So let us be kind to each other and "listen" to each other.

The Great Teachers have left some good examples of thought. Zoroaster said: "Truthful Justice with consideration is the Best Justice—it is Righteousness."

"When difficulties arise have faith in man: Be true to self and do the best you can" (Yas 44, verse 11).

Jesus said: "Let the man without fault cast the first stone".

Buddha said: "Man is man's helper not his keeper."

Mohammed said: "If you are truthful to yourself, you will be lenient to others."

Years later Shakespeare said: "To thine own self be true and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man."

A lot of grown-up people were very kind to us when we were young and gave us sound advice and we try to be kind to those younger than us. I met Gandhi for the first time when I was young. I asked my father to get his signature for my autograph album. Gandhi consented but on condition that I wove 1,000 yards of yarn and said I must say "Ram-Ram" as I wove. After a month when he visited us, he said, "Beti, have you spun the yarn?" and I said "Yes Sir". He asked "Did you say 'Ram-Ram'?" and I cheekily replied, "No, I said D... D...!" I felt he would be annoyed, but instead he laughed heartily and said "At least you are honest and not a hypocrite."

Sarojini Naidu was another person who would seek the opinion of youngsters. She once asked us, "I have told Mousy (she always called Gandhi 'Mousy') that students should not be asked to fight the Government as they have not had experience and cannot make up their minds which side they should take; what do you youngsters think?" Now I feel that she was right. Experience is more important than impulse.

Jinnah too was always kindness itself and would try to make us

understand what was happening. S. R. Das was another grand man. He was the founder of the Doon School and he loved talking and discussing ideas with young people. None of these spoke down to us; and I feel we old ones now should never "talk down" to the younger ones.

The old and the young need each other. How and why they grow necessary to each other is in the nature of their own relationship to one another. It will be forever and is undefined. The older generation is always there to help the younger if needed.

Ms Shavaksha, a septuagenarian, is president of the Time and Talents Club one of the leading voluntary women's social service organisations.

Economics (Continued from page 45)

resist any attempt to convert them to some appropriate use such as gardens. Though there has been a persistent demand for the conversion of old disused cemeteries, the fact that several of the disused cemeteries are still in existence, reflects the difficulties involved in such conversions. Even when more than one burial is permissible in the graves, a stage may be reached when further burials are not desirable. Cemeteries in this category may take a period of years before they reach their saturation point. In respect of Jewish burial, it is possible to estimate when the saturation point would be reached, as the Jewish faith permits only one burial in a grave. Though the Towers of Silence were originally built with the idea that thou shalt not pollute air, water, and land, in these inflationary days when even the pound sterling has lost its sterling qualities and Britain and other members of the European Common Market have to devise new means to regain their petro-dollars from the oil rich Arabs, our archaic practice of disposing of our dead to the cultures has come to stand us in good stead. When world economies are being shattered by the energy crisis, we are contributing our mite to overcome it.

References: 1. Sergeant, G. D. "The Disposal of Human Bodies" The 1971 Australian Waste Disposal Conference, held by the Dept. of Fuel Technology, Univ. of New South Wales, Sydney, from 17th to 19th February 1971. Paper 18 pp. 93-96.
2. Report on the Development Plan for Greater Bombay, Bombay Municipal Corporation, 1964.

IN MEMORIAM

*Davierwalla with one of his works
in New York*

His 25-year long career as one of India's leading sculptors, ended at the age of 53 with cancer. But the stark metal and perspex creations of Adi Davierwalla continue to bear testimony to his prodigious contribution to art. As the Lalit Kala Akademi monograph on him noted as early as 1971, "Even should Davierwalla stop working at this point ... he has rendered to modern Indian sculpture the service of two or three artists."

A self-taught sculptor, Davierwalla's work was exhibited exten-

sively in India and the galleries of Europe and America. A few months before his death in October his sculptures were on display at the Asiatic Biennale held in Middelheim, Belgium. Among the notable awards he won were the Gold Medal of the All India Sculptors' Association, the Bronze and Silver Medal of the Bombay Art Society, first prize in the Bombay State Art Exhibition and the prize for sculpture at the annual exhibition of the Lalit Kala Akademi in 1965. He was selected also for a one year John D. Rockefeller Fellowship.

Shy and extremely sensitive, Davierwalla gave up an earlier opportunity to try for the prestigious fellowship due to the tragic death of his great patron, Homi Bhabha in an air crash. "Adi was very loyal to him," recalled Pilloo Pochkhanavala, the noted sculptress and long time associate of Davierwalla. "A representative of the Rockefeller Trust came to meet Adi but he was so upset, he couldn't meet the man. Fortunately he got the grant later, for the year in the U.S. was very fruitful to himself and the family." As Art Critic Dnyaneshwar Nadkarni noted in his tribute to the sculptor in *The Times of India*, "Mr. Davierwalla's visit to the U.S. in 1968 as a Rockefeller Fellow was almost a traumatic experience for him. There his inventive mind was fascinated by the discovery of a new material: perspex. Already, his work had taken a highly cerebral direction, away from his beginnings, and one waited for him to settle down and project the new insights he had gained abroad. He had not had a show for quite some time before death struck him down in Pune where he had spent some of the happiest years of his youth."

Davierwalla spent his youth qualifying as a pharmaceutical chemist and then working for 15 years in a pharmaceutical factory. But his love for sculpture was apparent from his college hostel days when he would whittle away wood and carve heads with a pen-knife. He experimented with a wide range



of materials and techniques—carying, casting in lead and bronze, welding ("We barged into VJTI and learned it," recalls Pochkhanavala) and working in plastics. Davierwalla hesitated a long time before forsaking the cloister of the pharmaceutical world for his great passion but with his wife, Melba's encouragement he made the switch in 1959.

Writing in *The Economic Times*, Critic Eunice de Souza noted, "Like many artists and sculptors in our post-colonial society, Adi began to work in a virtual vacuum. He once told me that when he first began to exhibit there hadn't been a sculpture exhibition for twelve years." Though he was familiar with traditional Indian sculpture, he did not feel he could use it as a vantage point. "I have looked into it," he once remarked to his artist friend Gieve Patel, "but no ... our traditional sculpture is complete in itself. We should leave it alone." Davierwalla turned for guidance to the western masters like Arp and Brancusi and his earlier works were given names like *Crucifixion*, *Flagellation*, *Oedipus* and so on. But he soon acquired the fluency and verve to create his own metaphors and even occasionally took a playful shot at the standard motifs of ancient Indian temple sculpture. His last work of welded sheet metal called *The Great Indian Torso* harked back to Indian traditions.

Davierwalla belonged to a generation of artists, who walking through the chasm where there was no tradition at all, had to create a path for themselves. But once he trod that path, he helped others along it. A visiting lecturer at the Sir J. J. School of Art, he felt the growth of Indian sculpture depended on how many young people took it up. He was keen that Bombay have a sculpture workshop.

Till the end he continued his search for an ideal form of expression and this perhaps is what gives his work a restless quality, a feeling of swift concentrated experimentation within one genre, only to reject it and seek another. Even when holidaying in Sanjan where his family had property, some of his happiest hours were

spent forging in the local blacksmith's shop.

He leaves behind his wife Melba and daughter Zarine.

Geeta Doctor and Pervin Mahoney

Forum continued from page 9
riages and other functions of joyful nature are held, and a large hall for performing religious ceremonies.

There is a big compound for outdoor functions. In a spacious corner is Yeganegi Library. At the side of the main building are two sizable halls reserved for women's activities. Women meet regularly for gatherings, lectures and are active in industrial activities. There is also an *agiary*—where people come regularly for prayers. Adjoining the *agiary* is the Firoze Behram School. What a pity that we Parsis in India do not have such a central place of our own.

I was invited to a gathering at the Shah Behram Shrine at Amirabad, Tehran. A *Jashan* is held. People who come there have great faith. After the *Jashan* ceremony, the reception starts and food is cooked and served. On departing, visitors are given a handful of *lor*, a mixture of dried fruits.

Like Parsis in India, Iranian Zoroastrians have the *Uthamna* and *Cheharom* funeral ceremonies, but great importance is attached to *Porsa*, the condolence meeting. In the spacious hall on the ground floor of the Anjuman building, which accommodates 400 persons, the relatives, friends and acquaintances, even non-Zoroastrians gather from about 4 to 6 p.m. The religious ceremony consists of prayers by a *moted* and a sermon by a religious head. The members of the family of the deceased, in whose honour the *Porsa* is performed, stand up and greet each visitor with a bow at the time of arrival and departure.

Each family performs religious ceremonies in the *agiary*, and on Fasli Hormuzd Roj, Tir Mah, they have mass prayers for the departed souls when hundreds of persons come from 8 to 11 a.m.

Marriage ceremonies are very colourful. Guests assemble in a big hall; the arrival of the bride and the bridegroom is heralded by clapping. The couple take a seat behind a well-decorated table, with their respective family mem-

ASIAN METAL AND WIRE INDUSTRIES

On Approved List of
Government of India

Grams: Metoolcorp

Phone: 338186

Our Products:

- **Rolling-Drawing
and Coating
as per I.S. and B.S.
Specifications
Copper—
Aluminium—Brass**
- **Wire-Strip-Rods
Square and Round,
Sheets, Plate,
Copper Tubes**
- **Refrigeration and
Electrolytic quality**
- **Enamelled
D.P.P. and D.C.C.
Wire of Copper
and Aluminium**

**(Fabrication Job Also
Undertaken)**

Office: 50, Nagdevi St.,
Bombay 400 003.

Factory: Rai Village,
Bhaynder, Thana.

ORIENTAL METAL WORKS

Manufacturers of :

**Amplifier Chassis, Transformer Covers,
Allied Products & Spray Painting Etc.**

Phone : C/o 61514

Seth Maruti Tariwala Chawl

Sewree Cross Road

Bombay 15



bers seated on each side. The arrival of *moheds* is also heralded. The religious ceremony is performed by the *mohed* sitting opposite the couple. After the ceremony, the couple signs the Marriage Register and then the reception begins. Well-to-do people have a grand dinner at a posh club or hotel later on.

As far as religion and its ceremonies are concerned, the Zoroastrians of Tehran are united.

Dinshaw Behram Iram

Minimum Efforts

Our religion is supposed to be scientific and pure. We have scholars who feel that acquiring M.A.'s and Ph.D.'s gives them the authority to write books on the religion. If such books are unbiasedly scrutinized, we find that one book contradicts the other.

If the Zoroastrian religion is to be imparted to our children and the present generation of hippies and astronauts, how are we to proceed? Do we just thrust it down their throats, as has been done since time immemorial, or discuss it with them when we know practically nothing about it?

Our Panchayat has lakhs of rupees and is busy trying to double the amount. But the Trustees fight amongst themselves, with the re-

sult that the poverty of the community is forgotten. If this is the state of our community, its leaders and the Panchayat, how are we to prosper? We are living on our past glories. Our boys today want cushy jobs where they can have maximum benefits for minimum effort. If they wish to live on their father's money, how do they expect our community girls to marry them? How can you blame the girls if they prefer boys outside our community?

The solution lies in our scholars and Panchayat getting together to discuss and explain our religion, not in Avesta or Pahlavi but in a language which the common man understands.

The questions that ought to be answered are: How many ceremonies do we have? What is their significance? Is our method of disposal of the dead, scientific and modern? Why is intercaste marriage not allowed? Why do we not change with the times? In which books do we read about our religion?

If the Parsis of today are to flourish as the Zoroastrians of yesterday, they have to pursue new glories, which if not better, at least equal the past ones.

LOVEJI S. SHAW

News (Continued from page 11) was inaugurated in Jamshedpur in December.

Russi Mody, managing director of the company, noted in his inaugural address that the Rs. 1.5 crore, six-storey structure constructed adjacent to the existing 600-bed Tata Main Hospital would in addition to increasing the bed strength, also improve the quality of treatment.

Among others who participated in the function were Lady Roshan Ghandy, H. P. Bodhanwalla, general manager (services) and director, D. P. B. Bharucha, superintendent, Tata Main Hospital, R. N. Master, chief architect and town planner and Michael John, president of the Tata Workers' Union.

* * *

Dr. Khurshid M. Pavri, deputy director of the Virus Research Centre, Poona, was honoured along with eleven other medical researchers by the Indian Council of Medical Research at a public function in New Delhi. The award cited Pavri's contribution in the field of viral infections, including the discovery of a vaccine for the Kysanur forest disease and separation of a new virus in para influenza.

The Bank that gets things done

AMERICAN EXPRESS®

American Express
International Banking Corporation
Bombay □ New Delhi □ Calcutta

OBM 2374

SUN-N-SAND

The 5-star luxury Hotel on the beautiful Juhu Beach wishes its patrons a Happy & Prosperous New Year, thanks them for their patronage in the Old Year and offers them impeccable services for the future.

We specialize in detailed arrangements for Parsi Weddings, Navjots, Wedding Anniversaries, Birthday and Engagement Parties at reasonable rates. For reservations or enquiries, please call GENERAL MANAGER MINOO KATPITIA at 571481, who together with his expert staff will take the botheration out of your party and make satisfactory arrangements for menu, drinks, flowers, illumination, music, etc. to make it a memorable occasion.

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.

It also eliminates many municipal and industrial water treatment problems and acts as a pollution control product.

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.

It is specially useful for removing yellowing of nylon and other synthetics.



National Peroxide Limited

Neville House, Ballard Estate, Bombay-400 038.

Manifesto continued from page 13 its way from Navsari to Udwada. I am a firm believer in our Zoroastrian faith, traditions and practices, and in the preservation of our tenets, heritage and culture. At the same time, I have an open mind, and it shall always be my endeavour that the efforts of our illustrious ancestors, to retain our identity and prominence as a community in this changing world, shall not have been in vain.

In the present day world there are many problems facing our community which, if not solved expeditiously and with firmness and determination, shall be of danger to the preservation of our ancient heritage. The main problems which require solution, may be enumerated as follows:—

Those who have preceded me, and those who are to follow, cannot leave untouched the question of acute shortage of housing accommodation faced by the community. With my experience and contacts in the world of business, I shall utilise all the resources at my disposal to raise funds so necessary to solve this most important problem facing the community. Effective implementation of any scheme at hand in this direction, and the speedy removal of impe-

diments retarding its progress shall be my immediate aim, and this, preferably with the co-operation of other Parsi Charity Trusts by pooling our common resources.

It is a sad spectacle to realise that our once prosperous community no longer retains its previous position. The plight of some members of our community living from hand to mouth, and the once never imagined sight of Parsi mendicants on the streets, is positively heart rending. Immediate steps have to be taken to explore avenues for the better utilisation of our funds, so that this parlous state of affairs is put to an end. The goal in this direction is not to provide cash assistance alone, but to ensure that the young and able bodied are provided means to earn their livelihood, and the old and infirm are adequately provided for.

Coming from a family associated with agriculture, I am mindful of the vast tracts of land at one time owned by Parsi families, specially in the Western Region of our country. Apart from the attractions of city life for our youth, the present day land legislation has also led to a situation whereby these valuable lands have been lost to these Parsi families, and therefore to the community. There are cases where others unconnected with the owners have made capital out of this situation. Being aware of this position where benefits from the lands have gone elsewhere, it shall be my endeavour to assist the members of our community to best preserve their lands for their own welfare, just as my family has preserved its own. The youth of the community should be encouraged and diverted to this now prosperous avenue of agricultural operations. The need therefore is to set up a service establishment, so that all assistance, legal and otherwise, necessary for agricultural operations, are accorded to those who need them.

Nowadays we hear so much of free legal aid. In the practice of my profession, I have come across several cases where poor Parsi families had to spend huge amounts for unnecessary litigation. I have in my own way given free and timely help to several members of our community when occasions arose. It shall be my

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. Modest Fees. Concessions to Deserving Students.

APPLY TO THE MANAGING TRUSTEE

P. N. Mehta Education Trust
Cooks Building, 324 D. N. Road
Bombay 400 001 or to the
Principal,

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





Ardeshir B. Cursetjee & Sons Private Limited

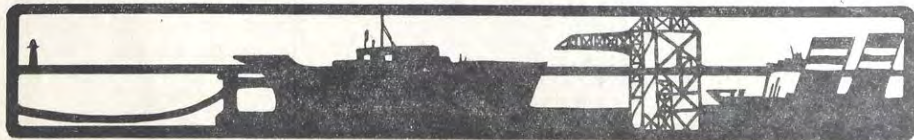
(Established 1810)

6, Kaikhushroo Dubash Marg, Bombay-400 023

Telegraphic Address: "Greyhound" Bombay. Telex No. 011-4298

Telephones: Bombay 252543/255729 Goa. 798

- ◉ Master Stevedores, Dubashes and Ship Chandlers; Clearing and Forwarding Agents;
- ◉ Towage, Lighterage, Landing and Victualling Contractors; Builders and Owners of Barges and Tugs and a Fleet of Self-propelled Ore Barges;
- ◉ Contractors for handling, pumping and transporting Bulk Liquid Cargoes by Road and Sea;
- ◉ Suppliers of fresh water to vessels in the Port of Bombay;
- ◉ Sole Government Contractors for the Fumigation of Imported Cotton of Bombay;
- ◉ Contractors for lightening fertilizer and grain cargoes from ships in stream in the Port of Bombay.



endeavour to devise a scheme whereby, the poor and the deserving of our community are able to avail of legal advice with the minimum of costs, and with no profit to those who are in charge of the scheme.

One important section of the community which is neglected is the priestly class. Along with this is tied up the need to educate our youth socially and morally, and inculcate in them faith and zeal for our religion. I firmly believe that this very important section of our community should be well looked after, so as to enable the priests to have a decent living, commensurate with the dignity of their calling, and with the ultimate objective of its preservation and continuity.

Last but not the least of my important goals is to ensure unity in the community. I belong to no group or faction, and have no affiliation with any particular section. Being well experienced in solving amicably several disputes of different litigating groups, I can hopefully work towards promoting unity and cohesion amongst our community.

I graduated in Arts and Law from Bombay University and started my career as a solicitor

with Messrs. Mulla & Mulla and Craigie Blunt & Caroe, who are also the Solicitors to the Parsi Panchayat. By dint of industry and devotion to duty, I am today one of the senior partners of the firm, and a Director and/or legal adviser of several public companies in India, including The Century Spg. & Mfg. Co. Ltd., Gwalior Rayon & Silk Mfg. Co. Ltd., Hindustan Aluminium Corporation Ltd. (Birla Group of Companies), Gaekwar Mills Ltd., Murphy India Ltd., Uni-Abex Alloy Products Ltd., Lakhnapal National Ltd. and many others. Having handled professional work for several industrial houses both in this country and abroad, and also having handled work relating to Trusts, Educational and Charitable Institutions, Hospitals, Research Centres etc., I would submit that I am well qualified to discharge the duties attached to the office of a Trustee of the Parsi Panchayat. If asked whether I shall be able to spare the time for the purpose, my reply would be, that not practising independently, but as one of the several partners of the above firm, and having a number of qualified assistants, I have full control over my time. My partner Nadirsha R. Mulla, whilst being very active in the profession, served the community for full thirty years as a Trustee (the last twelve years as a Chairman of the Board). His work as a Trustee was in no way affected by reason of his diverse professional activities. Further, my age and providential good health are in my favour, and all these have prompted me to offer myself to the service of the community. The obligations of my new office will prompt me all the more to best utilise, my connections with the industry, and my professional experience, to create avenues for employment for the members of our community, and secure facilities for their education, to a greater extent than has been done by me in the past.

In view of what has been stated above, should I not be given an opportunity, to more fully serve our community. I am looking forward to your co-operation and support.

(Text slightly abridged and edited)

RAMESH ELECTRONICS CORPORATION

**CONTRACTORS
AND
SUPPLIERS**

Dealers in:

-
- Radio
- Transistors
- Television
-

**Electronic
Parts and
Testing
Instruments**

**32/1128, Multi Storey
Bldg., Chembur Colony
Bombay 400 074**

Phone: 263432

Children Learn through play

Parents can be the best teachers of their children. Through Playgroups you can keep your children entertained and educated. For further details on how to start a Playgroup in your neighbourhood, contact:

**The Hopeful Playgroup Center,
Ground Floor, Parsi Lying-in-
Hospital,
Opp. Cathedral School,
40, Bastion Road,
Bombay 400 001.**

WELLCOME PLASTICS

**A company
specialised in
manufacturing
Plastics
&
Metallic
parts for Radio
&
Electronic
Components.**



Associated concern PLASTI PHARM



**52, Ramchandra Lane
Malad
Bombay - 400 064**

**Priesthood was recommended as making its members
"more contented in adversity, more intelligent as
regards stability of character in difficulty".**

Priesthood (Continued from page 29) celebrated by any priest who has merely gone through the first initiatory grade of 'Navar,' the second class of services can only be celebrated by one who has gone through the second 'Murattab' grade. The priest performing the higher services must observe certain restrictions imposed on him as being in the possession of priestly purity after the 'Bareshnum' ablution was undergone along with a particular code of abstinence and temperance. Such a priest, who has gone through the 'Murattab' ceremony and performs the services of the inner circle observing the rules of 'Bareshnum' is called a 'Yozdth-ragar,' i.e., a purifier, because one of his functions is to purify those defiled by coming into contact

with the corpses or other contamination.

The high-priest of a town, city or place is called 'Dastur.' The word is derived from the Pahlavi 'Dastobar,' i.e., "one who carries ('bar') the hand ('dast') over others," i.e., "one who exercises authority." In Sasanian times, the 'Dastobars' or 'Dasturs' were high functionaries. They were prime ministers. For example, Dastur Tansar of the court of Artakhsir-i Papakan (Artaxerxes), and Dastur Atarpat Maraspand of the court of Sapor II were such Dasturs who were prime ministers.

The head-priest or high-priest of small towns, is called a 'Panthaki.' The head-priest in charge of a fire-temple and the family-priest of a lay-family are also so named. The term 'Pan-

thaki' means "the priest in charge of a 'panthak,' which is a sphere of ecclesiastical office or jurisdiction."

According to the Pahlavi books, a 'Dastur' is expected to possess five good qualities or traits of character: (1) innocence, (2) discreetness in thoughts, words and deeds, (3) the preaching and teaching of religious truths, (4) regular celebration of the worship of God, and (5) diligence in his profession.

According to the Vandidad a good priest must be a moderate eater, contented, patient and steady. He must always be busy. He must not waste his time. He must spend it in reciting the Yasna prayer in honour of God, in teaching others and in adding to his own stock of knowledge. These traits alone would bring him salvation. He is the real priest, who spends his nights in study to acquire holy wisdom, which leads to the path of virtue that relieves man from distress, that helps him to cross that Chinvat bridge easily, that brings happiness, that makes him attain to the spiritual world, and takes him to the path of righteousness and to heaven.

SHAPOORJI PALLONJI & CO., PVT. LTD.

Building Contractors & Civil Engineers

Registered Office:

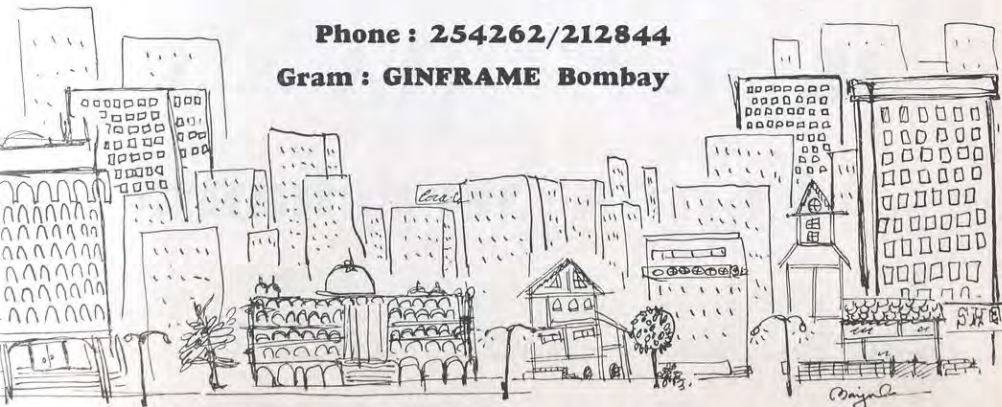
**70, Meadows Street,
Fort, Bombay-400 001**

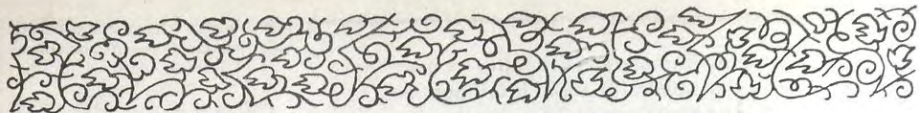
Administrative Office:

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

Phone : 254262/212844

Gram : GINFRAME Bombay



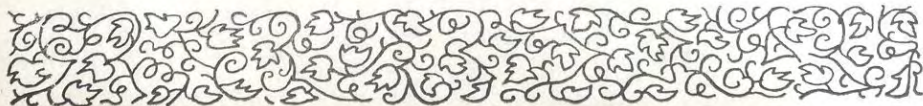


With the Compliments of :

N. S. GUZDER & CO.
PRIVATE LTD.

NEVILLE HOUSE, BALLARD ESTATE
BOMBAY-1.

With Compliments
of
H. M. MEHTA & CO.
Cotton Merchants



Next two issues of

Parsiānā

contain list of over 1500 Parsi names, male and female as a special service for the community. All existing publications with lists of names are out of print. A limited number of copies is being printed. Book your orders early to avoid disappointment. Rs. 3 an issue. Or better still send in your subscription; Rs. 16 for one year (six issues).

Write Parsiānā, G.P.O. Box 892, Bombay 400 001. Phone 262624

Clergy (Continued from page 31) the office of the Dastur again. In 1727, the Parsee priests of Surat decided to accept the daughters of laymen as marriageable women, but not, however, to let their own daughters marry into the laity. When they tried to implement this ruling in Bombay, the laity involved decided at a public meeting in 1777 not to allow any intermarriages at all, which was not accepted by the priests. The dispute was brought before the Governor of Bombay (Bodham) in 1785, who appointed a commission which decided in favour of the laity, refusing the priests the right to make such discriminatory demands. Since then, the priests have married, as a rule, among themselves, but there have often been intermarriages which have not caused any disturbances.

Advertiser wishing to add to little knowledge about Chinese embroidered garas, jhablas, saroes borders, would appreciate/reward more information through books/publications/conversation etc. Authentic parties kindly write to The Advertiser, G.P.O. Box 892, Bombay 400 001.



**for surer
faster
delivery**

**use the
Pin Code**



From experience comes faith...

To shield her baby forever...to guard him from childhood hurts...to save him from the troubles we all must suffer... what mother does not have this wish?

But motherly wisdom tells her this cannot be. Only hard-won experience will protect him. A cut finger brings respect for the knife...the childish quarrel mended can lead to lasting friendship.

Knowledge gained for himself will be his most useful guide. It will help him to see behind the faces of men...beyond the surface of things...and to judge them for their honest worth.

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

SQUIBB®



A Century of Experience Builds Faith

SARABHAI CHEMICALS Ltd.

WADI WADI, BARODA

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

ECF 5/74

***Compressed Asbestos Fibre
Jointing sheets, Gaskets and
Metallic Spiral Wound Gaskets***



Manufacturers :

**Asbestos & Jointings Mfg. Co.
Private Limited**

Andheri (East), Bombay-400 069

Gram: CAFJOINT • Tel: 575511

Manufacturers of:

**ASBESTOS YARN
ASBESTOS TEXTILES
ASBESTOS PACKINGS**



Asbestos Packing & Mfg. Co.

Private Limited, Andheri (East), Bombay-400 069

Gram: Ferrylight

Tel: 575511

Recipes (Continued from page 39)

A journalist by profession, she first noticed the popularity of Parsi food when she was a student in the USA: "My school held a fete at which there was a stall of food from different countries; the Chicken Vindaloo which the school cook prepared from my mother's recipe disappeared in less than an hour while the stall was still well-stocked with other dishes!" Later on, Navy life with her husband, Commodore Dorab Mehta, meant having to entertain visitors "from dozens of countries. I noticed that guests always went for Parsi dishes and asked me for the recipes," she said. "Perhaps Parsi food is liked by non-Indians because it has less *garam masala* and chili. It's quite similar to Armenian and Southern Russian food—more so than Iranian food nowadays, which is more like Muslim food, and uses a lot of sugar in pulao, for instance."

Believing that colour photographs were necessary if Parsi food was to become popular outside India, Ms Mehta noted, "We had to go into the technique of

cooking for photography in great detail. Certain things have to be underdone to look right—eggs, for example, get very dried-looking under hot lights."

Of the 101 recipes Commodore Mehta's favourite is *potato rus*—"try it," he enthused. When asked whether he had helped his wife with the book, he smiled, "I broke the occasional egg—by accident. And, of course, I tasted everything."

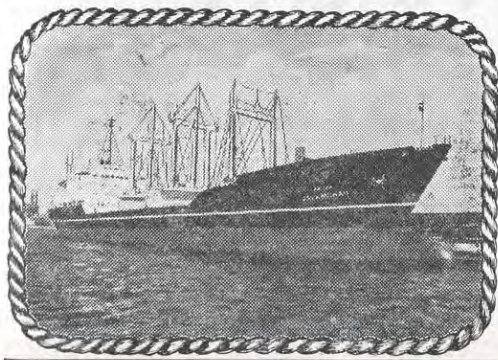
Like most women, the author of *Favourite Parsi Recipes* discovered cooking after marriage and a subsequent move to Delhi. "Away from the Parsi stronghold of Bombay... I realized that if I was to enjoy 'my food' I'd have to learn all about it, from the start," writes Ms Yasmin Sibal, whose style is racier and more fun than that of the two other, more classical cookbooks. "I started by looking for a basic Parsi cookbook, giving everyday things in English," she recalled. "There was none available. Mother sent me from Bombay one written in Gujarati, of which I had a rusty knowledge. However, after

constantly coming across some baffling instructions like 'How to iron woollen vests' (after the fried fish) I gave up. The book had been in print since 1837. No doubt the housewives of that age appreciated such information on the side. Short of kidnapping my parents' cook (as indeed he was, later, by a famous actress) I could not do much." After finding she had to ask ten people in order to get hold of one Parsi recipe, she thought of writing the book.

Ms Sibal's racy style leads to a few hyperboles: "I learnt the secrets of the fabulous Wedding Dinner" is one. But generally it results in a more vivid book, which attempts to evoke the place of food and festivals in Parsi life: after the recipe for *dhan da ne patio*, it describes a birthday *ses*; after the recipe for *lagan nu achar*, it relates the way a wedding dinner is served; and after the recipe for milk puffs, in these days of refrigerators and mixers, she recalls: "My mother used to cover the milk with a tight cloth cover, and leave it out in the garden suspended on a pole.

SCINDIA'S INTERNATIONAL SERVICES

Scindia's fast modern ships deliver your cargo with safety, efficiency and speed



COASTAL SERVICES:

India-Bangladesh-Pakistan-Burma-Sri Lanka

OVERSEAS SERVICES:

India-Bangladesh-Pakistan-U.K.-Continent

India-Bangladesh-Poland

India-Bangladesh-Straits-Mediterranean-

Adriatic

Mediterranean-Adriatic-West Asia (Gulf)

India-Bangladesh-A.R.E.-Red Sea

India-Bangladesh-West Asia (Gulf)

India-Bangladesh-Black Sea Ports

India-Bangladesh-U.S.A.-Mexico (via

Colombo-Cochin-Caribbean Ports)

India-Bangladesh-Indonesia-Straits-

Colombo-Cochin-E. Canada-

U.S. Great Lakes

India-Bangladesh-Indonesia-Straits-

Hong Kong-Taiwan-U.S. Pacific-

W. Canada

India-Bangladesh-Indonesia-Straits-

Hong Kong-Taiwan-U.S.N.H.-Gulf-

Mexico (via Panama)

India-Bangladesh-W. Africa



ESTD-1919

THE SCINDIA STEAM NAVIGATION CO., LTD.

Scindia House, Narottam Morarjee Marg, Ballard Estate, Bombay-400 038

Telephone: 268161 (12 lines)

Telex: 011-2205 & 011-3519

15 Park Street, Calcutta-700 016

Telephone: 243456/57/58 Telex: 021-7305

AS

Chemicals & Ferro Alloys Private Ltd

LIBERTY BUILDING, NEW MARINE LINES

BOMBAY 400 020

Phone: 256823
256866

GRAM: NONIONIC

TELEX: UNIFERO 011-3222

STARLITE ELECTRICAL WORKS

Electrical Engineers & Contractors

Tel. No. 213972

FERN HOUSE, 13, ORMISTON ROAD, BOMBAY I.

All night the dew and chilly winter air would frost the milk enough for it to be beaten into puffs."

Ms Sibal not only wrote *Favourite Parsi Recipes*—which would be improved by an index and careful proof-reading—but also published and distributed it. She secured a loan, learnt about printing and distribution, and took copies to the bookshops herself. The book is already well into its second enlarged edition, with more recipes and a whole new chapter on mango preparations. Now she hopes to send it abroad.

The book is dedicated to her two daughters because she hopes that the younger generation will not allow Parsi food, which is a part of the Parsi way of life, to be forgotten. The goal has not eluded her. "One of the nicest responses I got was a letter from two young boys in Birmingham, which said: 'It's a real riot out here!'"

Hieroglyphic (Contd. from page 41) The last two theories mark an intermediate stage in the transition between writing numbers in words and the use of figures.

The last part of the booklet sets

out to demonstrate that the Supreme Word of the Sanskrit Scriptures, 'AUM', was derived from *AHUN*, the word Ahura Mazda pronounced before Creation. There is a striking similarity between the two concepts. In both cases, the word symbolises the beginning of the Act of Creation by the release of the cosmic energy. "The Word was before the Earth, before living beings, before trees, before Fire, the son of Ahura Mazda, before the Holy Man, before the demons, before all bodily life, even before all God's good creation which holds the seeds of righteousness". (*Yasna* 19). Much confusion sets in at this point, primarily as to whether the source of *Aum* is *Ahun* or Ahura Mazda. Judging merely from the amount of space Pithavala devotes to the discussion of the two hypotheses, the one about Ahura Mazda seems to be more correct.

Coming to the familiar symbol of *AUM* Pithavala declares, "the very basis thereof is intrinsically Zoroastrian... for it is nothing else but a picturization of the first line of the Yatha". According to him, the symbol was arrived at by a synthesis of the Avestan

alphabets M (for Mazda) and A (for Ahu). This conclusion is tenable only if the earlier theory about the Avestan origin of the Devanagiri alphabet is accepted.

The Avestan counterpart of the symbol of *AUM* is the Farohar, which pictures the concept of Creation. Here too we see the merging of the letters *A* and *M*; once again it is a case of the close relationship between the two civilisations, and it is in passages such as this one, and others where he is expanding on some basic concept of Zoroastrianism, that Pithavala is in his element. It is in his forays into the field of linguistic theories and Hindu philosophical myths that he betrays a naivete that is often disturbing. His final realisation that "our purpose in life is to bring about a union of our soul with the Divine Essence" touches the underlying unity of all religions and philosophies. But it is lost in the overall impression that the book leaves of a child-like obstinacy which though relieved by occasional flashes of sharp insight, simply hides a state of confused hieroglyphic and mystic thinking.

RUIZBEH ANTIA

MAKE YOUR CAREER WITH DAVAR'S

WE OFFER A WIDE RANGE OF COURSES

- Personal Secretaries Course
- Personal Assistants Course
- Punch Operating Course
- Shorthand & Typewriting Course
- Personality Development Course
- Hostessing Course
- English Course
- Business Correspondence Course
- Rapid Reading Course
- Special Ladies' Course
- Conversational French



Inquire Today

DAVAR'S COLLEGE

51, M. G. Road, Bombay 400 001. Tel: 251634



For Pure Diamonds

K. WADIA

JEWELLERS

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

'Absolutely' First Class!

There's class about Air-India

Come and belong to the most exclusive club in the air. You could be sitting next to men who move big business, or a famous Nobel prize winner you've been reading about. You could be saying "Kanpai" (Cheers!) in sparkling Japanese style, or discussing behind the scenes with a lovely, French starlet!

Air-India's First Class

Our air hostesses speak five languages very fluently: Hindi, English, French, Foods and Wines.

You'll discover the sensual pleasures of eating when you plunge your fork into a luscious 'Poulet Chasseur' or discuss Plato over a plate of exotic caviar. And when you lift your frosted glass of champagne and look into the warm eyes of a beautiful air hostess, you'll know you have really lived. (There's enough to get you high and happy!) Later, when (if) you leave your super cushioned throne, you can saunter up to the suave Maharajah Lounge, our plush 747 clubroom. Play a round of bridge, make important contacts, clinch a deal.

Or do something you've always wanted to—nothing!

You haven't really flown if you haven't flown Air-India first class.

**Be a first-class
Air-Indian**

