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Parsiana

AUGUST-NOVEMBER 1978 VOL. 2 NO. 7

EDITOR'S COLUMN	3
READERS' FORUM	5
EVENTS AND PERSONALITIES	6
MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE BILL	13
WHAT ARE ENTREPRENEURS MADE OF? Dr. John L. Komives	19
THE UNMAKING OF ENTREPRENEURS S. M. Mistry	27
THE ICE CREAM STORY	30
WORLD CONGRESS PAPERS: THE PRIESTHOOD	35
BOOK REVIEWS	40
VEHEMEMT VIRTUOSO	43

Parsiana cover by Manjula Padmanabhan

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Editor's Column



People often ask if the Parsees have a caste system and most often the answer is no. But after having made a deep sociological study of the community, our researcher's main qualification being a college freshman course on the subject, we have come to the conclusion there is a very definite caste structure in the community. We present below some of our findings which were originally published in the **Jehangirnamah,** volume IV, chapter 20.

Firstly there are two main divisions, the *athornans*, the priestly class and the *behdins*, the lay people (Ratan Singara, a copywriter in Everest Advertising has put forward the hypothesis that Esther Williams is a Parsee because she could be referred to as a *Behdin* Beauty). The *behdins* are divided into several subcastes at the head of which are the *Sethias*.

The *sethias* are a dying species and aside from the Editor of *Parsiana* and a few others, are almost non-existent. They are the men, (there are no women *sethias*), who through dint of hard work, shrewd business acumen and some luck attain positions of privilege and power. Their wealth and interest in political and social activities makes them respected in a community where the commercially successful individual rates second only to God.

The *sethias* have their faults: one usually pictures them as strong willed individuals with quick tempers, ambitious and often ruthless. But they possess style, walk where others fear to tread; they are straightforward and outspoken, though not always so in business matters, and their manner of dress, more often than not, traditional Parsi. They build fire temples, hospitals and schools and help people establish themselves in life. They live well and when they die, the *sethia* legacy dies with them.

After the *sethias*, comes the Warrior, or *Mara-mari* caste. Currently this class includes individuals like the trustees of the panchayats, journalists, lawyers and scholars (there are a few women Warriors). A detailed study of this group is not available but one tell-tale characteristic is a quickness to take offence. Any remark can be taken as a slur, the ensuing battle succeeding several generations. Financially the warriors are medium to well-off and usually save their money for one great court case or libellous leaflets. They believe that every generation must have its small wars.

The people who serve and rally around the warriors are referred to as the *Haandas*. The *haandas* (vessels) comprise numerically the largest caste in the community, though exact figures are not available. The leaders of the *haandas* are called *Haanda*-Masters and they in turn owe their allegiance to the Warrior class. While some *Haanda*-Masters aspire to the warrior caste, they find it difficult to do so, the *haanda* traits being so much a part of the person's character that some consider it to be genetic (whether intermarriages would weaken the *haanda* characteristics is not known, but certainly a formal education is no help; it has created instead a sub-category referred to as Educated *Haandas*.)

Speaking of classes, there is one group whose reportedly diminishing numbers is a cause of concern: the entrepreneurs. In every forum after speakers have rend their hearts on the frequency of intermarriage, declining values, increasing prices and today's shiftless youth, the subject turns to the absence of businessmen and industrialists in the community. It is believed that if Parsis took to business they would prosper, money would flow in and new agiaries and baugs would be built (each in their wake creating new problems for future generations).

What many of the speakers do not realize is that entrepreneurs are not made by simply wishing them to be so. A person who does not possess entrepreneurial traits nor manages to acquire them but starts a business can end up becoming an insolvent. (This is what happened to us in *Parsiana*. It could happen to you!).

As Dr. Fredie Mehta, a reputed economist and director of Tatas noted at the Third World Zoroastrian Congress that parents have to inculcate entrepreneurial traits and the work ethic in their off-spring from a young age. What makes for entrepreneurship is a subject we have tried to tackle in this issue.

With this issue, *Parsiana* begins printing at Tata Press. We offer our thanks to the management for the interest they have taken in *Parsiana* which due to its limited growth potential, cannot offer the same returns as larger publications.

We also take this opportunity to thank the directors, especially Mr. Sushil Somani, the management and staff of G. Claridge & Co. for the kind and generous assistance they have rendered us over the last five and a half years. Ever mindful of our limitations, they extended their support and co-operation at a time when it was sorely needed and kept their rates uneconomically low.



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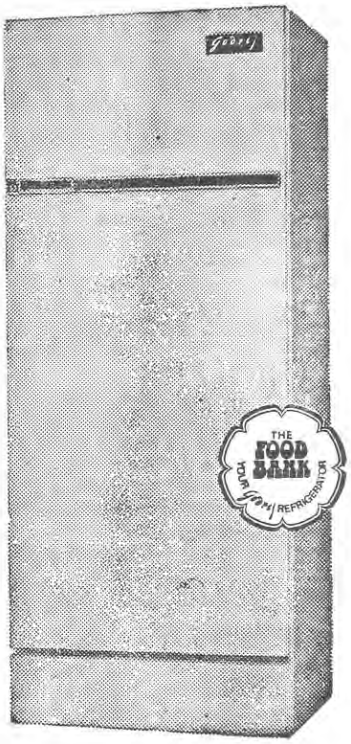
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Readers' views are welcome on any subject of interest to the community and should be sent to the Editor, Readers' Forum, Parsiana, G.P.O. Box 892, Bombay 400 001. Letters are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity.

Rustom General

I read with great interest a letter by Jamshed K. Pavri of Vancouver, (**Parsiana** March 1978) Canada, about Rustomji Dorabjee Patel titled "What's Cooking?"

My grandmother Soonabai had an interesting story about her Great Grandfather the above Rustomji, who she used to fondly refer to as "Rustom General", because it was believed that he had helped to rally the Parsees of Thana, a stronghold of the community in those days, to fight against pirates, who attacked the Portugese Fort at Thana.

She told us of how Rustomji happened to marry his young wife, Pirojai, who along with her elder sister, had been sent from Iran to Surat, in care of a German ship's captain because of the persecution of the Zoroastrians.

The elder sister elected to marry the German captain and went away with him, leaving no trace, while Pirojai was brought to Bombay by her relatives, to choose a suitable husband. She was taken to Bhikha-Behram's Well, to sit quietly watching, though herself unseen, the eligible Zoroastrian swells, who congregated there, of an evening. Her choice fell on "Rustom General", who was a stalwart, good-looking man of 55 years. Her relations were horrified, because she was only 15 summers old. They tried their best to dissuade her, but she was quite adamant. Only him she'd marry, and none other. So they sent a proposal, which was accepted and Pirojai became a bride, spending many happy years with the man of her choice, because Rustomji lived to a ripe old age of 89.

MS PERIN M. R. B. JEEJEEBHOY

Equality Before Death

Recently, at a funeral in Calcutta's Ravangah, after prayers were over, the body of the deceased, while being taken to the hearse, was placed for a while on the verandah outside the Ravangah hall for non-Parsis who wished to pay their last respects. But the body was covered under a shroud since custom forbids those of other faiths from viewing the face of the deceased.

We Parsis are making fools of ourselves and the earlier such a degrading practice is done away with, the better for the community.

T. G. KATRAK
Calcutta

Employment Guidance

Too many youths graduate without specialization or career planning. With the growth of the public sector with its concomittant written and oral examinations, the opportunities of employment are keenly contested—only those who have a degree can hope to land jobs.

Also the centres of employment are not restricted to cities like Bombay. Places such as Nasik, Udhna, Chinchwad and Aurangabad are now growth centres. The sooner our youths realize these fundamental changes in the pattern of employment, the better it would be for their future.

E. CHINOY

Economy First

It is high time our small community gave importance to the problem of the economy of the community and place it in the forefront of all activities.

Our religion teaches us to be always active, to work with faith, hope and charity. In the past, we have been successful due to hard work, an adventurous and broad vision, receiving of favours from our respective rulers and not the least, because of the absence of competition from sister communities.

Times have changed. Competition is severe. We no more receive favours. Except in the case of the old and infirm, indiscriminate doles by the trusts, have contributed greatly to the deteriorating economic condition of the community. The easy availability of doles has snapped the vitality of the recipients. They have forgotten the motto "Self-help is the best Help."

DINSHAW B. IRANI

Mr. Irani expired recently in Bombay.

A Hundred Years Ago

The Parsee hat is such an ordinary object in a Bombay crowd that we are locally too apt to imagine that the Parsees themselves are plentifully sprinkled through all the towns and cities of India. This, however, is certainly not the case, and in any town in India out of the Bombay Presidency, the followers of Zoroaster are quite as uncommon as in London itself, where the members of the little Parsee colony at Highbury daily attract the admiring glances of all true Cockneys. Still the Parsee character is notoriously enterprising, and wherever money is to be made, from Lombard Street to Hongkong, the Parsees come to the front.

Times of India 21-9-1978

A Parsee named Maneckjee Aspandiarjee was yesterday charged before the Hon'ble Mr. Dosabhoy Framjee at the Girgaum Police Court, with assaulting a European woman named Dina Trickee Trackee, residing in the Cursetjee Sooklajee Street. It appears that on the night of the day previous, the defendant, while passing along the street, "made faces" at the complainant and otherwise annoyed her. She came down from the verandah of her house and held the defendant, whereupon he bit her hand. Upon the evidence adduced, the defendant was convicted and fined Rs. 25, or in default to undergo rigorous imprisonment for fourteen days.

Times of India 14-8-1978

Events and Personalities

First Japanese Zoroastrian?

"It pleases me to inform you that a Shud-rah and a Kushti have been bestowed on me on the occasion of my visiting Tehran Anjuman," writes **Kunihiko Matsushima** from Kyoto, Japan. A student of Zoroastrianism, Matsushima notes "the presentation ceremony was held by Mobed Rustam Shahzadi on the 22nd of August 1978" who while making the presentation "instructed me to live the life of good thoughts, good words and good deeds."



Matsushima being handed Sadrah and Kusti by Shahzadi

"It means," continues Matsushima that "he acknowledged me as a co-religionist blessed with Zoroastrianism because I have been studying it for many years under his kind guidance and teaching.

"Taking advantage of (being) the first Zoroastrian Japanese national, I am now eager in trying to cultivate and enlighten the Japanese in Zoroastrianism."

Doctorate for Peer

A thesis on "The Persian Version of the Pahlavi Book *Mino Kherd*" has earned **Ervad Peshotan Peer**, a doctorate degree from the Bombay University. The panthaky of the Tata Agiary in Bandra, examined the Farsi translation of the ninth or 11th century text which according to the noted German scholar, Max Muller consists of "inquiries on subjects connected with Mazda worshippers made by an anonymous wise man. The subjects discussed are of a very miscellaneous character, intended to furnish an outline of the tenets, legends and morality of the religion with which they deal." The *Mino Kherd* which means 'Opinions of the Spirit of Wisdom', was translated into Farsi from an earlier Pazand-Sanskrit version 300 years ago by Dastur Hormazyar and his son, Darab.

A scholar of Farsi, Avesta and Pahlavi, Peer studied for his doctorate under the guidance of Dastur Dr. Hormazdyar Mirza. Born in Navsari, Peer lost his father at the age of 14 and family circumstances required him to give up his formal education and start practising as a priest. As time permitted Peer continued to study, receiving a diploma from The Sir J. J. Madressa after six years of studying Avesta-Pahlavi; he then completed his S.S.C. and subsequently a B.A. and an M.A. both with honours in Farsi, Avesta and Pahlavi.

113 Votes for Golwalla

The small number of voters that trickled in and out of the J. J. Benevolent Institution building, on Dadabhoy Naoroji Road belied that an election for the Bombay Parsi community's premier body was taking place. In an uneven match **Dr. Aspi Golwalla,** a noted heart specialist and trustee of the Bombay Parsi Panchayat (BPP) was reelected to a second 10-year term with 113 votes. Not only is the figure miniscule when compared to the approximately 65,000 Parsi inhabitants of Bombay that the BPP claims to represent, but it amounted to barely one-fourth of the approximately 400 eligible voters. Golwalla's opponent, Dr. Pestonji Warden, a general practitioner, sandalwood dealer and founder and former proprietor of *Parsiana*, received two votes. But aside from paying to publish his manifesto in the conservative *Jam-e-Jamshed*, Gujerati daily, Warden did not canvas nor did he run to win. As in the past Warden's candidature was to ensure there was an election and to highlight the imperfections in the system. As the 189 "E" Register voters owe their allegiance to BPP President B. K. Boman-Behram and BPP Trustee Nelie Noble no one can become a trustee without their support. As both reportedly favoured Golwalla, he was assured a second 10-year term.

Chief Fire Fighter

Fighting fire may not be in keeping with tradition, **Lovejoy Sicil Dadi Mehervanjee** has made a career excelling at it. As a result of over 35 years of noted service to the Bombay fire department, the 53-year old fireman has been appointed the city's new Fire Chief. On September 1, he assumed the onerous responsibility to save lives and property in this sprawling, crowded and greatly dilapidated metropolis. As *The Bombay Samachar* editorial on his appointment noted that in every major fire, emergency operations and house collapse, Mehervanjee has been "in the thick of affairs" throughout his tenure.

Born in Newchang, Manchuria, Mehervanjee was educated at the Chung Shan Mission High School in Nanking. He came to India in the early years of World War II and joined the Auxiliary Fire Service in Bombay as a Sub-Leader in 1942. He was severely injured in the fire that followed the explosion aboard the ammunition carrying ship, "Fort Stikene" at the Bombay docks in 1944. His face still bears the scars of that day. In 1950 he

New Fire Chief Mehervanjee









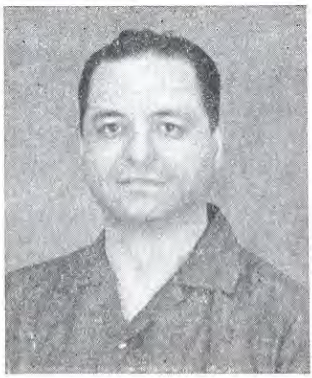
Rescuing women at Sewree house collapse, 1976; at Mahalaxmi Bridge fire; with former Municipal Commissioner B. G. Deshmukh at site of Reay Road timber fire. Photos by Rashid Bamanbehram

joined the Bombay Fire Brigade and was promoted to Deputy Chief Fire Officer in 1972.

His fire fighting skills at a large refinery fire helped save the installations and in April 1974 when he rescued an elderly woman from a residential fire and was instrumental in saving two other firemen engaged in fighting the blaze, Mehervanjee was awarded the Municipal Corporation Silver Medal for "Extra Ordinary Gallantry." The President's Police Medal for Meritorious Service was presented to him on Republic Day 1976. He became Chief Fire Officer, Bombay Fire Brigade, this September.

'Chief' Promoted

Thirty-five years of tracking down thieves, murderers, pick-pockets, dacoits and other criminals, would turn most people into cynics, but



Contractor: 'Dead bodies and desperadoes'

Jal Bomanji Contractor, who was promoted recently to Deputy Commissioner of Police is a congenial, outgoing person. Known as 'Chief' to the Press reporters he briefs every day, the 56-year old crimebuster has received numerous citations for his work as well as a medal for meritorious service.

Among the cases he has helped solve was one of a man who posed as a relative of prominent families and duped the city's diamond merchants of almost eight lakh rupees; another was of a hired killer who had administered poison to his victim whose body was discovered floating in a pond at Chembur; in another murder an elderly Parsi gentleman, Phiroz Dhanjisha was killed by a knife wielding goonda at Dhobi Talao and witnesses were afraid to give evidence, and many more such cases.

In 1969, Contractor was put in

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charge of the newly formed anti-goonda branch of the Bombay C.I.D. Initially meant to surveil antisocial elements, the branch found itself dealing with what is termed as "oddball" inquiries: patching up domestic differences, quarrels between neighbours, romantic entangles and so on.

The law officer is also credited with introducing 'Talk Cure', a technique to bring estranged children and their parents together. "The most important thing is that this branch infused confidence in the members of the public to take the help of the police in their private affairs as well in dealing with the antisocial elements terrorizing them," notes a press release. Today this department is known as the Social Security Branch.

"Dead bodies and desperadoes don't move me," Contractor said in an interview with *The Free Press Journal*, "but restoring a wayward girl to her mother moved me more than anything else."

In other police news, two assistant commissioners of police, **Jal Bejon Jal** and **Cooverji Bhesadia** retired from the force. Jal who served for 36 years and was awarded the President's Police Medal for meritorious service, worked at different police stations in the city, particularly in the industrial belt of the eastern suburbs.

Bhesadia, with an equal number of years in service, was also a recipient of the President's medal and earned over 800 Good Entries. According to a report in *The Indian Express*, he is said to have seized contraband worth Rs. 25 crores from the over 250 cases he handled in addition to his normal duties.

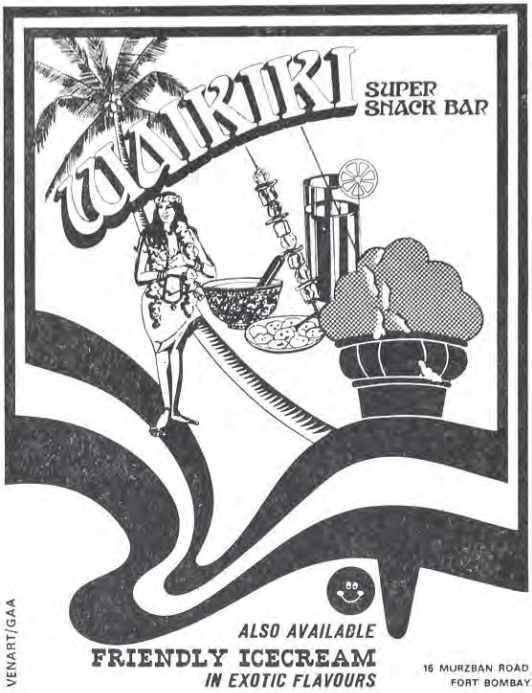
No to housing loans

A worthy effort by the Zoroastrian Co-operative Credit Bank Ltd. to ameliorate the housing problem for Parsis in Bombay was unfortunately turned down by the government. **Rustam Gagrat,** president of the Bombay Bank said in his speech delivered at the bank's 51st annual general meeting; that a byelaw was introduced "to grant housing loans for securing accommodation for residence or business and/or to grant members loans to acquire ownership flat(s)".

"It is a matter of regret," noted Gagrat, "that (the) amendment to permit the Bank to give housing accommodation for residence or business to member(s) is rejected by the Registrar.

"The amended byelaw provides power to grant loans on First Legal or Equitable Mortgage of immoveable property on or securing of ownership flat in Bombay or its suburbs in a Co-operative Housing Society or Apartment of Ownership Flats which was rejected stating that reasons will be communicated separately. Originally advances on First Legal or Equitable Mortgage was permitted but it appears that due to the inclusion of advances on flats on ownership basis this amendment is rejected. The only mode in which a person can buy an ownership flat for residence or business is by owning it as a member of the Co-operative Society or Apartment Owners Society. Government is well aware about the shortage of housing accommodation. Several members of our Community are unable to find residential accommodation or business premises except on ownership basis. The Registrar cannot be unaware of the present situation and yet we find that for one year the Bank is unable to act under the amended Byelaw for want of sanction from the Registrar. Till now the reasons for rejection have not been communicated although repeated reminders have been sent. Our Secretary wrote several reminders and I as your





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President, wrote on 11th September, 1978, to the Registrar to expedite approval to communicate his decision with the reasons to the Bank before today's Meeting but no reply has been received.

"We also amended the byelaws for authorising the Bank to grant loans for establishment of Small Scale Industries. To help such cases, Government is loud in their support. Yet this amendment was first rejected and after some correspondence approved after over a year. This shows to what extent the Registrar's Office is out of touch with the realization of the situation.

"I must say that I was with the assistance of my valued colleagues instrumental to introduce the amended byelaws but we have been disappointed at the gross delay in arriving at decisions and the results."

The Japanese Connection

Noted industrialist **Sohrab P. Godrej** has been elected president of the 1229 member Indo-Japanese Association for the years 1978-80. Amongst the other office bearers is **Ms. Gulestan Billimoria,** a noted social worker and a former sheriff of Bombay, who was elected one of four vice-presidents.

Formed to help "cement links between India and Japan" and to promote economic and trade relations, the Association was inaugurated in 1957 by the late A. D. Shroff, its founder president. It has recently acquired hall and office. The Association conducts classes in Japanese culture in furtherance of its objectives.

Rotary Scholarship

A rotary scholarship to study law at Cambridge University has been awarded to **Berjis Minoo Desai.** A member of *The Bombay Samachar* editorial team, Berjis has a distinguished academic record; after completing his S.S.C. from Bharda High School, he graduated with first class honours from Elphinstone College securing the P.A. Wadia Scholarship for the highest number of marks in politics. Last year, he passed the first year LL.B. examination, standing first class first in the university and bagging four scholarships including a gold medal. His late father, Minoo, was the former editor of *The Bombay Samachar.*

Top Artist

A Delhi artist, **Yasmin J. Wadia** has reportedly topped the list of candidates for the Bachelor of Fine Arts (applied art) examination at the College of Art, Delhi this year. Yasmin, who is employed as a visualiser at Impact Advertising Agency, procured 65.5 per cent results.

Her mother, Mehroo, who has been in the advertising profession for many years, notes that Yasmin's 'love of brush and colour' started when she was a 5th Grade student at the Matre Dei Convent in Delhi; as her interest in the subject developed, she won several prizes, held a solo exhibition of Mughal miniatures in batik and continued to excel academically.

Europe Bharat Natyam Fever

Noted Bharat Natyam dancer, **Rohinton Cama** was scheduled to dance at the India festival in Geneva along with dancer Protima Bedi. The week-long festival that was to begin on September 22 is being sponsored by Air India and Centaur Hotel. After the festival, the two dancers are scheduled to give performances in Paris, London and Frankfurt.



Rustomjee: 'rewarding' profession

Colombo's First

When Colombo's first male Parsi hairdresser set up a salon, many thought it was a harebrained idea. "I was often told that *hajaam noo kaam* (barber's profession) wouldn't pay," says 32-year-old Hoshang Rustomjee. "If you are not a doctor, an engineer or an architect, you are nothing out East."

Today, the sizeable foreign clientele who frequent Apsara ladies hairdressing salon, have won him "respectability" in the city. In the first few difficult years, his parents' support, "faith, in myself and my work, kept me going," says the hairdresser. Hoshang finds enormous satisfaction in his work which he describes as both "creative and financially and artistically rewarding." His Japanese, American, Australian and German customers combined with a sprinkling of Sinhalese, Indians and Parsis have given him the opportunity of dealing with hair of varied textures and hues, ranging from brunette and chestnut to blond, ash blond and redhead. The racial mix has made "work more interesting and also widened my social circle," he says.

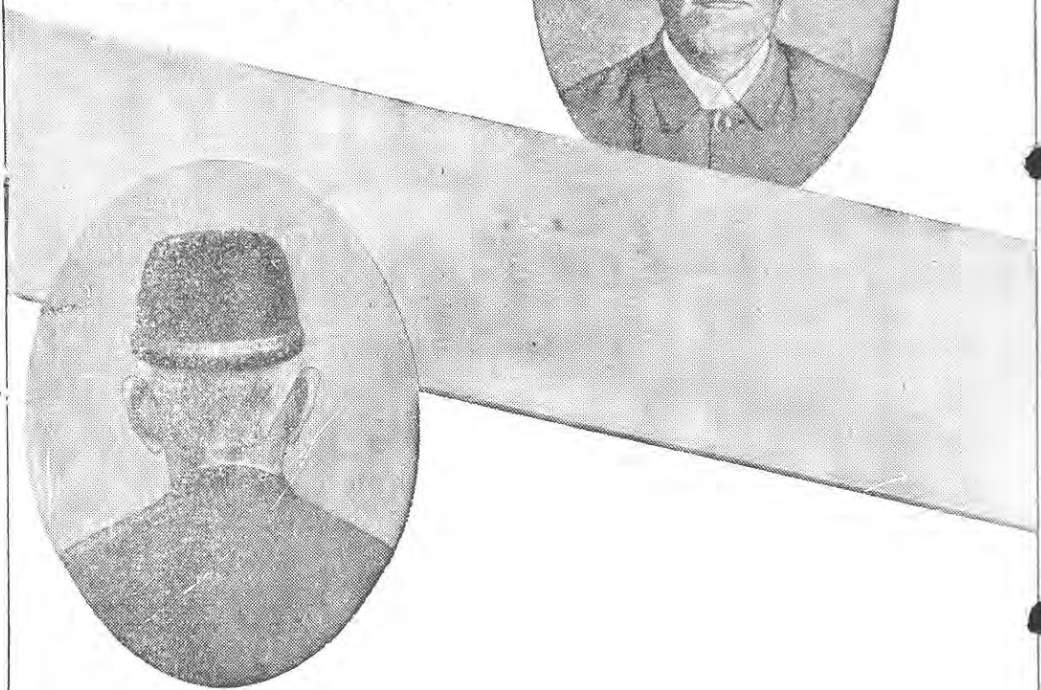
The product of the prestigious Richard Henry Training School in England, Hoshang says he is in his element when cutting and styling a lady's tresses. "It is an act of complete creation; for cutting is the basis of having a good head of hair. Without the basic good cut, not even spray or a set will help," he says. The secret of glossy hair, notes the hairdresser, is a regular intake of vitamins and massaging the scalp with olive oil. Shampooing too often is harmful, so is frequent dyeing and perming. "A balanced diet is also very important," he says. "Parsis eat too much meat."

Hoshang who has spent most of his life in Sri Lanka, barring the five-year training-cum-work stint in England, feels the miniscule Parsi community in Colombo is "clannish and live in a world of their own." The older generation looks upon Iran rather than India as their home, he says and "they don't want anything to do with India. But I consider myself to be an Indian first." Many of the younger generation, on the other hand, have married outside the community and have completely adapted to the Sinhalese way of life—to the extent that the children speak in Sinhalese rather than Gujerati, according to Hoshang. The hub of community life in Colombo, is Navroze Baug where *jashans* and *gahambars* are regularly held and the Parsi Club. The community is reportedly well established. "We have no millionaires but there are Parsis who are considerably rich," says the hairdresser.

Colombo Parsis who 20 years ago numbered 150, are today diminishing and the families are largely fragmented, according to Hoshang. With more and more young people immigrating in search of greener pastures, the hairdresser feels the death rattle is already audible. "In another 20 years there won't be any Parsis left on the island," he predicts.

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ASP/1575/30

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE Reforms Bill

Divorce by mutual consent following an "irretrievable breakdown of the marriage" and alimony for either husband or wife are some of the new amendments proposed by the Committee for the Reform of the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, 1936, appointed by the Bombay Parsi Panchayat (BPP). Other amendments include insanity subsequent to marriage as a ground for divorce, fixing the minimum age for marriage at 18 years while requiring those under 21 to obtain the written permission of their parents, and reducing the number of delegates or jury members on the matrimonial court from seven to five with a minimum of three.

The reforms suggested by the Committee consisting of three noted jurists, P. P. Khambata, Chairman, former Justice Jal Vimadalal, Eruch Desai and a noted businessman, Jamshed N. Guzder, have reportedly been sent to the "various Associations, and Mandals and Mofussil Anjumans as well as certain individuals" for comment. According to the Committee's honorary secretary, Gustasp P. Antia, the Amendment Bill is to be subsequently introduced in the Lok Sabha. As the committee has been appointed by the BPP, it will not bear the stamp of an all-India Zoroastrian body, leaving open the possibility of other anjumans submitting their amendment bills to the Lok Sabha.

It ought not to be left to the sweet will of the parties to have the marriage tie severed merely by consent.

The highlights of the BPP bill and the 'reasons' include :

No marriage shall be valid if either the bride or the bridegroom (whether he or she has changed his or her religion or domicile or not), has not completed the age of 18 years; and in the case of bride or bridegroom who has not completed the age of 21 years, the written consent of his or her father or guardian has not been previously given to such marriage.

Reasons : This is desirable having regard to the fact that under the general civil law the age of majority is 18.

● The number of delegates on the matrimonial court should be five instead of seven. As a consequence of this amendment, each party to the suit will have a right to challenge, without cause assigned, any two of the delegates whose names are called out for serving on the panel; a minimum of three instead of five delegates will have to attend throughout the trial.

Reasons : This reduction in the number of delegates assisting at the trial has become necessary, as it not infrequently happens, particularly in the mofussil, that a sufficient number of delegates is not available for the trial, especially when a number of delegates are challenged by the parties in the case or cases on Board. In one of the mofussil courts, we are told, a case had to be adjourned 12 times for that reason.

● Any married person may sue for divorce on the grounds that the defendant has been incurably of unsound mind for a period of two years or upwards immediately preceding the filing of the suit.

Reasons : In the Act, as it stands today, there is provision for relief on the ground of insanity, if the defendant at the time of the marriage was of unsound mind and has been habitually so upto the date of the suit, provided that the plaintiff was ignorant of the fact at the time of the marriage and the suit is filed within three years of its solemnisation. There is, however, no provision for relief if insanity supervenes the marriage.

Such a state of affairs is neither in the interest of the parties, nor does it do credit to the institution of marriage itself. It is, therefore, desirable that either spouse should have the right to seek divorce, on the requisite time having elapsed after a decree for restitution or for judicial separation. It is also felt by the Committee that the period of three years laid down is too long and should be reduced.

● Divorce by mutual consent : Subject to the provisions of this Act and the rules made thereunder, a suit for divorce may be filed by both the parties together on the ground that they have been living separately for a period of one year or more, that they have not been able to live together and that they have mutually agreed that the marriage should be dissolved.

The Court shall, on being satisfied, after hearing the parties and after making such inquiry as it thinks fit, that a marriage has been solemnised under this Act, that the averments in the plaint are true, and that there has been an irretrievable breakdown of the marriage, pass a decree declaring the marriage to be dissolved with effect from the date of the decree.

Matrimonial matters present human problems, and technicalities should not come in the way of justice.

No suit for divorce shall be filed unless, at the date of the filing of the suit, one year has passed since the solemnisation of the marriage.

Reasons : Mutual consent, as a ground for divorce is of recent growth, having been first introduced in the Special Marriage Act, 1954, and thereafter in the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, in 1976. The Committee, whilst recommending the introduction of the same in the Parsi Marriage & Divorce Act, however, feels that it ought not to be left to the sweet will of the parties to have the marriage tie severed merely by consent and on living apart for a year. A further requirement has therefore been added in the proposed amendment that the court, before dissolving the marriage, should be satisfied that the marriage has, in fact, irretrievably broken down. The phrase



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"irretrievable breakdown of the marriage" occurs in the present matrimonial law in England and English decisions in regard to the construction of that phrase will, therefore, be of assistance. The safeguard in the proposed sub-section is meant to ensure that the parties have given a fair trial to the marriage before they decided to break it up.

● Admissibility of unstamped or unregistered documents : Notwithstanding any enactment to the contrary, no document shall be inadmissible in evidence in any proceeding at the trial of a suit under this Act on the ground that it is not duly stamped as required by the Indian Stamp Act, 1899, or registered as required by the Indian Registration Act, 1908, or any statutory replacement or modification of the said Acts.

Reasons : Situations do arise in which one spouse squeezes out money or property from the other spouse, or his or her parents, and passes a promissory note or other writing which is not stamped or registered in accordance with law and would therefore be inadmissible. This would work injustice in matrimonial cases. Matrimonial matters present human problems and technicalities should not come in the way of justice as when, for instance a promissory note is unstamped.

● Alimony : In any suit if the wife or the husband shall not have independent income sufficient for her or his support and the necessary expenses of the suit, the Court, on the application of the wife or the husband, as the case may be, may order the respondent

"How is a party to prove that there has been an irretrievable breakdown...?"

to pay to the applicant, monthly or weekly during the suit, such sum not exceeding 1/5th of the respondent's net income, as the Court, considering the circumstances of the parties, shall think reasonable.

Any Court exercising jurisdiction under this Act may, order that the respondent shall pay to the applicant for her or his maintenance and support such gross sum or such monthly or periodical sum for a term not exceeding the life of the applicant as, having regard to the respondent's own income and other property, if any, the income and other property of the applicant, the conduct of the parties and other circumstances of the case it may seem to the Court to be just, and any such payment may be secured, if necessary, by a charge on the immoveable property of the respondent.

If the Court is satisfied that there is change in the circumstances of either party at any time after it has made an order it may, at the instance of either party, vary, modify or rescind any such order in such manner as the Court may deem just.

If the Court is satisfied that the party in whose favour an order has been made under this section has remarried or, if such party is the wife, that she has not remained chaste, or, if such party is the husband, that he has had sexual intercourse with any woman outside wedlock, it may at the instance of the other party vary, modify or rescind any such order in such manner as the court may deem just.

In all cases in which the Court shall make any decree or order for alimony, it may direct the same to be paid either to the party, or to any trustee on behalf of such party to be approved

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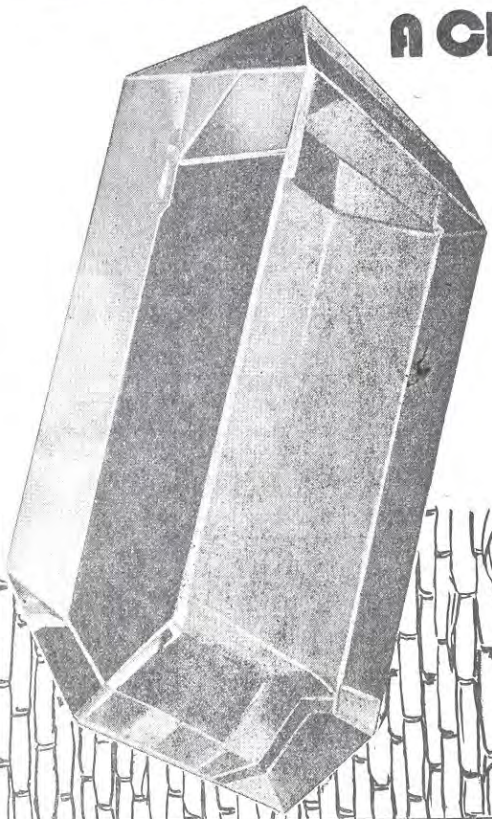
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by the Court, and may impose any terms or restrictions which to the Court may seem expedient, and may from time to time appoint a new trustee, if for any reason it shall appear to the Court expedient so to do.

Reasons: Women have now independent sources of income and there is no reason for destitute husbands not being provided for.

Dissenting Notes

Both B. K. Boman-Behram president of the BPP and Vimadalal submitted notes for consideration on the reforms. Boman-Behram attacked the clause requiring parental permission for those over 18, but under 21, who wish to get married and the "two onerous conditions" governing divorce by mutual consent. "If a Parsi can qualify for marriage at the age of 18 years, then why should he wait for the consent of his or her parent or guardian?" asked Boman-Behram. "My view is that if the age for marriage is fixed at 18 years, then no consent of the parent or guardian should be necessary...It may be noted that the modern trend is to lower the age, not only for the purpose of marriage, but also for the exercise of civil rights... It is now well known that the later the marriage, the less the fertility."

As for the clauses pertaining to divorce by mutual consent, "I feel that leaving such matters to the satisfaction of the Court is merely to prolong the agony of the parties. How is a party to prove that there has been an irretrievable breakdown of the marriage if the other party denies the fact? No doubt, the present matrimonial law in England has employed the phrase 'irretrievable breakdown of the marriage'. But the English judges have a sensible approach to such cases. Recently, the case for divorce by consent of Princess Margaret was disposed off in just two minutes. The judge did not pause to inquire into the factum of the irretrievable breakdown of the marriage".

Vimadalal's note suggested a clause be incorporated clarifying that a couple having a registered marriage followed by the *Ashirvad* (blessings) ceremony, would not be governed by the Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act nor the section of the Indian Succession Act pertaining to Parsi Intestates. The other committee members however rejected the proposal on the grounds that the amendment would be "detrimental to the religious faith of persons who desire to go through an *Ashirvad* ceremony for sentimental reasons". Vimadalal argued it would not "have any such effect".

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WHAT ARE ENTREPRENEURS MADE OF?



by Dr. John L. Komives

A modest little workshop, a few coins rattling in a lean pocket, and a person with an audacious dream—of such humble stuff is the soaring, booming industrial complex built. That person, the all important entrepreneur, is the hub on which all modern industry revolves, without whom there could be no science of economics nor any history of commerce. Entrepreneurs are mercurial characters who, against the odds, will take risks, invest money and trade in dreams until the impossible is achieved and an industry is launched. Without them a country's economy cannot be vital and creative, because no amount of incentives and contingency plans can replace the elusive qualities of entrepreneurship—the will to succeed and the idea which sells.

Dr. John L. Komives, director of the Center for Venture Management, U.S.A.—a non-profit research and educational organization dedicated to the study of the entrepreneur, the process of enterprise formation and the setting in which it occurs —explores in the following article condensed from the U.S. magazine, "Chemtech", the subtle combinations of inventiveness and shrewd business sense which go to make a Henry Ford, a Jamshedji Tata or a Helena Rubinstein.

Let me define an entrepreneur. An entrepreneur is a person who starts a business, usually where one has not existed before. Now, how about a lawyer or a physician or an accountant or a consultant who has his own practice? I suspect that many of these people are entrepreneurially inclined; in fact, my personal observation is that physicians are entrepreneurs first and they happen to practice medicine as a result (and I don't mean that in a derogatory manner).

How about the person who buys a company? A person who buys a company with the motivation that around it he is going to build his enterprise is obviously much more entrepreneurial than a person who buys a going business with the thought of retirement income. I don't think that this is entrepreneurial. Entrepreneurship really refers to the person who wants to get a new venture underway and to build on that. Later I will discuss managership, which I consider a different form of this kind of thing. But now let's look at an entrepreneur.

Family

The fascinating part about entrepreneurs is that they come from entrepreneurial families. I think this is a significant insight. Fully 70 per cent of all entrepreneurs come from families where there is a family heritage of independent business. Entrepreneurs beget entrepreneurs. Doctors beget future doctors, lawyers beget lawyers, and army officers also beget future army officers, way out of the random chance that you would expect.

If you include in that definition of independent business heritage the preacher who has his own congregation in the small town and the independent farmer, where the person owns the farm and runs it as his own business, the 70 per cent goes all the way up to 85. Family heritage is thus a strong indicator of potential. Also we find that it is the oldest son who carries on the entrepreneurial tradition.

We don't have very good data on female entrepreneurs, though there is a term for it: "entrepreneuse". There is a grand total of three articles in English on entrepreneuses written between 1960 and 1970. One of those articles explores female entrepreneurship in Germany relating to the dearth of males in Germany as a result of World War II.

Now I don't mean to imply by family background that there's anything genetic here. Usually the father or an uncle or somebody else in the family had this independent business and the future entrepreneur we are talking about had some intimate contact with that family business. He usually worked in it in the summers or during the holidays or during his growing-up days. Such a person knows that if he doesn't make it as an employee, that somewhere latent in his background he might make it as an employer; and I think that this is significant.

Early work history

When you get into the biographical backgrounds of these people, you find that this person has had summer jobs like every other kid; but with a difference—he starts earlier than other kids, either peddling papers or cutting grass, or something like that. But what you find is that if he starts his summer cutting grass, by the end of the summer he has got other kids cutting grass and he is managing the enterprise, collecting the money, sharpening the mowers, handling sales, etc. Or by the end of the summer, this kid's paper route is the biggest in the district and he has his father delivering the papers, and he is out collecting, etc.

Speaking of the father, it seems (I am less sure of this bit of data) that the relationship between this son, who is going to become the entrepreneur, and the father, is not the healthiest or warmest. That is, you don't find the kind of pal relationship that seems to be the ideal we talk about. We find something a little less. But I am not sure whether that is a contributory factor to the kid's becoming an entrepreneur. It might be that the kid has to become independent sooner—or it might be that he *is* independent sooner.

Schooling

Now let's look at schooling. First you find that the entrepreneur is usually at the average of the population. You don't find the entrepreneur, as a class, having more formal education, than you would expect of that population sample for that era. The fascinating part is that when you get to interviewing the entrepreneur and ask him about his schooling, you find an incredible incidence of 65 per cent who were thrown out of school sometime during their schooling days. The cause seems to relate not to vandalism nor to retardation. It seems to be related to the fact that the kid got bored in school; and he begins to mess around, and sure enough gets thrown out. Sometimes they go back; sometimes they don't. Thus if you are going to paint a picture of the entrepreneur, you would have to say he was thrown out of school; it is one of those benchmarks that I have come to rely on, and it occurs with such frequency as to be reliable.

A great social need is to find some graceful way to purge the entrepreneur when he is no longer needed.

We also find in schooling, entrepreneurs like those elements that relate to the concrete as opposed to the abstract. They like to work with their hands. Mechanics and laboratory work seem to have been pleasurable; abstract things such as Shakespeare or philosophy, or just reading and writing do not appeal to the entrepreneurial kind of person, on average.



Now while we are on schooling, let's for a moment get involved in organizational entrepreneurs who fall into a class of entrepreneurs who are highly educated. First, there are the high technology companies started by multiple entrepreneurs.

There are a couple of bits of information generated primarily by Ed Roberts at M.I.T., a famous man in entrepreneurial research, corroborated by Arnold Cooper, who found items that were quite consistent. First of all, the high technology entrepreneur who is most successful is a person who has his master's degree, not the person who has his Ph.D. If I am the venture capitalist and you come to me for a deal and you have a Ph.D., I am going to look at it three times and walk around two more times and finally turn you down. That is my first instinct (again, you have to be careful). There are variations to this theme and obviously some very successful variations to it, but as a rule the Ph.D. does less well as an entrepreneur than the M.S. does because the Ph.D. is in love with his research and as a rule he is not the person you want exploiting that research for profit. It is closely akin to the inventor. If you have ever dealt with an inventor on a business deal, you realize that you run into trouble because he can only see the thing that he has invented. He can't see the building of a business firm and the building of an exploitive kind of system around it.

Henry Ford is a good example. He didn't invent a thing. He plagiarized and bootstrapped every idea that went to putting together the automobile assembly line. All were well-known techniques used in other industries. He was an innovator; he brought the assembly line to the automobile industry but he did not invent it. He was not in love with that process; he was in love with that Model T. On the other hand, Thomas Edison went bankrupt once and though he recovered somewhat, he did not die a rich man. Now Thomas Edison was the inventor; he was not the entrepreneur.

A good case today is Dr. Land at Polaroid, who invented the Polaroid Camera and had enough insight to notice that "his bag" was not managing the Polaroid Company; he is over to the side doing research, only occasionally meddling in the management but not too much, not enough to be in trouble. He allowed others to manage the firm and he stuck to his last, which is Research and Development.

So, one of the notions about schooling is that a person with a Ph.D., at least the data suggest, does not do well as an entrepreneur.

A second bit of information (I am getting ahead of myself for a moment) from the same Roberts and Cooper studies pointed out that multiple entrepreneurs, in the founding team do better than the single entrepreneur, absolutely and in time. That is, two entrepreneurs forming a company do better than one entrepreneur, and three do it quicker and better than two, and four entrepreneurs seem to do it better than three. (We don't have any data for five or more.) That suggests something for you whenever you are thinking of investing—look at that entrepreneurial team. We'll come back to this in a moment, but this observation doesn't imply that all members of the initial team are entrepreneurs. What I want to say is that the team itself becomes the entrepreneur. There is usually a team leader, however.

By the way, if you look at it very carefully, that leader by himself may not necessarily make a good entrepreneur, but in concert with one, two, or



three other people he makes a very interesting and potentially viable kind of team entrepreneurship. That does not mean that if the team breaks apart after the first year or the second year —and they frequently do in the normal course of human events; somebody dies or gets sick or loses interest, or whatever—it will affect the performance, at least on the data we have. Success is evidently related to having that cluster at the start, which seems to be the important ingredient.

Getting fired

Let's go on to the nature of the last employer of the entrepreneur-to-be just prior to his starting his firm. There are several items here.

The odds are that the kind of firm the entrepreneur is going to start is closely related to the kind of firm he has just left. That's obvious, because you look for experience if you're going to invest, and it is usually the most recent experience you value most.

As a rule the Ph. D. does less well as an entrepreneur than the M.S.

There are some less obvious items about that last employer, though. Data we have on some high technology entrepreneurs, M.S. engineers, say that one-third of all entrepreneurs started their business just after they were fired, or laid off. It is interesting that we used to look down our noses at a person who got fired. There was some problem with a person who got fired. "What does that employer know that we ought to know," kind of idea. I suspect that being fired is a pretty good license to become an entrepreneur. By and large, I find that the reason for being fired was that "He didn't fit in," not because he stole something from the company, or destroyed something, or abused the supervisor, or was lazy, but rather, "He did things his own way and that didn't fit in with the way we wanted the job done and therefore we just got fed up with him and when this opportunity came, we fired him."

One more item about the last employer: We are finding in high technology areas that the rate of (new firm) formations increases the year following a general decline in the economy. The question is, why is that true? Well, if you talk to the entrepreneurs, what you find is as follows: An entrepreneur is a strange kind of guy and he has lots of ideas and is hell bent for leather and wants to get on with the job; so he is constantly pestering his boss for new things, new markets to get into, new kinds of businesses, and so on. When the firm has reached the top of the economic scale, this is the time when he is pestering the boss, and suddenly the firm is on hard times and it says, "You know we have a hard time surviving, much less engaging in your kind of frivolous activity and your kind of deals; we can't afford it." The guy gets frustrated and leaves, or is asked to leave.

During the upswing cycle, people are so busy trying to meet demands of the marketplace that nobody gets bored and there is a commitment to the activities of the firm. That seems to be one of the reasons why new firms are formed following the decline in business rather than during the upswing.

Age

The age of entrepreneurs in the U.S. when they start businesses seems to cluster around 34, and it is dropping gently. What you find is from age 21 to 30 business formation rises slowly, climbs rapidly at age 31, reaches its peak at age 34, and begins to decline gently until about age 40. Then it drops off quite a bit and floats along until about age 55 and picks up again. Evidently that age 55 increase is related to the fact that the kids are out of the house, the old man has saved some money, is "vested" and eligible for early retirement. He is thinking about post-retirement and a career change is going through his mind. So you begin to find registrations of all kinds of interesting businesses started by 55-year-old proprietors.

The early company

The early company is very interesting if you get into it with the entrepreneur. This is the point that separates the entrepreneur from the manager, because the entrepreneur is carrying the whole set of activities of the business in his own mind and heart. He is running down to the store to buy one drill bit, and he is kiting cheques over here because there isn't enough money over there. (But he knows that the cheque from a customer is coming in tomorrow.) This is what he houses in himself and this is the thing for which he gets the entrepreneurial reward—that is, if he keeps the bootstraps together and husbands his resources carefully until this machine begins to generate a more normal cash flow. This is what rewards him and drives bureaucrats, people of the managerial orientation, right up the wall. It is at this point that you separate the men from the boys in terms of being able to do just the right thing at just the right moment, no more, no less.

I think this is an important learning process for the entrepreneur because—and I have been condemned for this but I'm going to stick to it—the problem with large companies forming spinoff companies is that they endow the new firm with too much money. He has got to go "through the eye of the needle". He has got to test his mettle in bootstrap fashion. How long that takes I do not know. It could be weeks; it could be months; it could be years before he has gone through this process of putting it together. If you

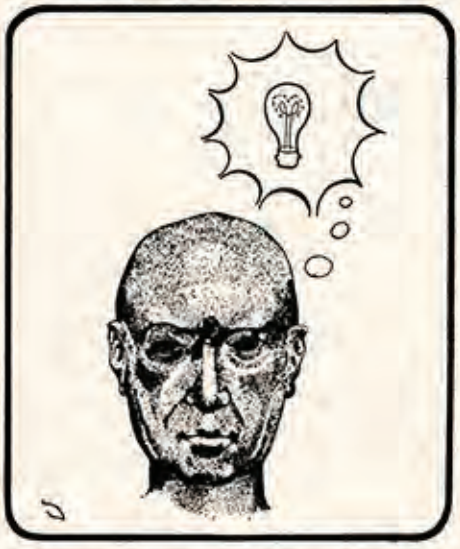
give him all the money at the start, or you assure him of that money at the start without benchmarks to take him along the way, you reduce the chances that he is going to make it.

Risk

We are often asked about risks. Now this question is usually asked by bureaucrats, and I don't use that term in a negative sense; I am talking about a bureaucrat as a person who is a member of a large-scale, established organization. "Gee, isn't it kind of risky what these people do?" When you talk to the entrepreneur, you find that in the early stages there is no risk. He never senses a risk.

Viewpoint

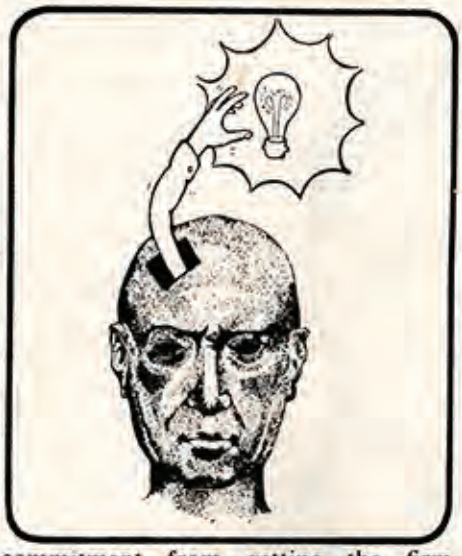
We got two items back from a customer —significant items; and they were returned because we didn't fulfill our part of the contract and the customer was no longer willing to dabble with it.



So the two items are back in the shop, and we have a board meeting and we inquire about this. Our entrepreneur's response is not, "Well, we made a terrible mistake in our agreement with this client," et cetera, et cetera. No, that did not enter his head. What did, was, "we now have two items in inventory, so the salesmen can get out there and make immediate delivery to the next client."

That is a part of the perception process. I have discovered that among entrepreneurs truth is a very strange beast. Their perception of truth is, when the factory is burning down it is increasing in value because you don't have to heat it.

The entrepreneur has this tremendous belief and this tremendous commitment, usually at least at the early stage of getting under way so that nothing will dissuade his interest or



commitment from getting the firm under way. Unless you find that commitment, you are in real trouble. Otherwise, you are ending up with a person whose will to make the damned thing succeed is questionable. It isn't that he is going to walk away from it; he just may not give it that extra oomph and, as old Vince Lombardi (noted football coach) said, "It is that second effort," which wells up somewhere deep in his being at that crucial moment when the whole damned thing is collapsing around him and he gives it that extra oomph to make the thing take off and go. That is what you have to discover with these people at least in the "start-up entrepreneur".

Transition to managership

The function of a manager, a business manager, is to communicate and coordinate. As the firm gets under way, the entrepreneur has everything in his mind. If you have ever worked for an entrepreneur, you will have found that they are terrible to talk to. They don't communicate; they don't tell you things. It is not in the ability of entrepreneurs to communicate easily. It isn't willful withholding of information; it is the fact that it never enters their minds that the right hand has to know what the left hand is doing in order to make things function smoothly. The entrepreneur, by and large, is a person who is counter-productive at the point when the firm becomes a large-scale organization, in the sense that you now have two or three people with whom you have to communicate, so the production manager knows that the sales manager has sold that item and it is due for delivery on Friday, and you are trying to find out before Friday afternoon that this event took place two weeks ago.

Somehow the entrepreneur is a human being who can't keep everything straight in his mind all the time. Even though he may make checklists, and sit down and work it out, he fails to communicate. It isn't his habit to sit down and have a committee meeting—to make sure the right hand and the left hand know what is going on.

It is at this point that I suggest to you we have a big problem: I think a great social need is to find some graceful way to purge the entrepreneur at the instant that he is no longer needed as an economic instrument because very few entrepreneurs go on to become managers. Some do, but it is a terrifying and traumatic experience for many of them. Most of them fail, and I would say the vast majority of entrepreneurs —on the order of 60 to 70 per cent— never make that transition to becoming good business managers.

This is particularly true in those firms where there is a single founder. Here we get back to the multiple founder. One of the things you have in the multiple founder is that at the start, at the instant of conception, the entrepreneur has to communicate with others because they are co-founders; the co-founders demand it. They are going to insist on being part of the team. Already the nature of the entrepreneur in the multiple-founder situation differs from that of the entrepreneur in the single-founder situation. Already the ingredients are present for starting a managerial organization.

That this rustication of the entrepreneur is a real problem is attested to by the finding that at the end of three years, 54 per cent of all the entrepreneurs in one sample invested in three years previously were purged from the firm, usually by the venture capitalists. We don't usually have a very good way of handling the situation.

Some people do make the transition, but they tend to be in the minority



and I guess that is as it should be. We already have a managerial class; turn the firm over to them and let the entrepreneur go back to doing what he is very good at doing.

Succession

I have a couple of observations about entrepreneurial succession. The entrepreneur built that firm and the family was going to live off that firm well into the future. But entrepreneurs get bored after 10 or 15 years with a firm and they want to get rid of it. They usually find that the son is not at all interested in the firm. He has gone off to professional school or something like that, and that the firm is not his bag.



As we've seen, he too may well be an entrepreneur looking for his own "nut". So what happens? We don't have good data, but we have some bits, suggesting that the son-in-law is the preferred successor. "Why?" It turns out that when you begin to analyse the relationship of the entrepreneur to his firm you can use various analogies. I like to use the mistress. That business firm is to the entrepreneur what a mistress is to a "normal" man. If you want to indulge in Freudian analyses and things like that, you can, to see why the entrepreneur has the kind of feelings he has toward his firm and why it might be easier for him to hand that firm over to a son-in-law. Think of it. You have a mistress; you are getting too old for that mistress. The successor comes down the line. Whom do you hand your mistress over to—your son or your son-in-law? I submit that it is easier to hand her to your son-in-law.

You see very good evidence of this relationship of the entrepreneur to his firm at the time the firm is threatened with a union. Talk about irrational behaviour: just study the entrepreneur when he suddenly finds out the union is outside his door collecting signatures to hold an election to decide if his "mistress" is going to unionize.

There is no recent history in minority groups of entrepreneurs. Therefore, what we have to do to solve this problem is to create an entrepreneurial class among minorities and have them beget sons and turn the sons loose. You will find that quite often successful minority entrepreneurs are sons of street hustlers and others involved in various kinds of illicit activity, including Mafia-type activity, because that is an expression of an entrepreneurial activity that is being translated as a heritage of independent enterprise and now manifests itself as a legitimate enterprise undertaken by the son. We have to change that, and I don't think there is any simple way. We just have to go through the generational cycle of creating entrepreneurs.

We are following some very interesting data on the matter of immigration or emigration. It is interesting to note that immigrants have a much higher entrepreneurial rate than do people who stay in the establishment or in the community. You can cite it time after time. When the Chinese leave China and go to Singapore or Hong Kong, it results in an incredible amount of entrepreneurial activity. When the Persians went to India as Parsees, they became the entrepreneurial class. The Jew in Western civilization has been the perennial permanent immigrant class, professional immigrants. The Jew has never found a home. The Jew has now gone back to Israel. If the data are correct, they suggest that the second generation of Jews going back to Israel—should have a low entrepreneurial rate.

Parting shots

Entrepreneurs need security and independence. Now that sounds silly. "What do you mean by security? The entrepreneur is the person who takes risks; he is not interested in security." One of the reasons he is interested in security is that he previously got fired from a job and realizes that he has no security unless he has his own firm. That is why many entrepreneurs insist on maintaining control over their firms. His whole reason for starting the firm was to gain control over his own destiny. A need to dominate the situation is another expression of this. Entrepreneurs tend to be either paternal or autocratic. They are never in the middle. It is the manager who is impersonal and down the middle.

When I say autocratic, I mean someone who says, "You will do it this way because you work for me, and if you want to continue to work for me, this is the way you will do it."

You also see fascinating expressions of paternalism. A friend started and operated a successful international firm, a very intelligent person—the last person in the world from whom I would have expected this kind of behaviour. One of his technical people had to make a technical call to help a client out. The client had bought a lot of stuff and was having trouble. In the process of the on-site work, the technical man sold a big package deal to the client. Evidently what he had done was to say, "Look, you are already into this thing deep; for another $50,000 you can do all of this with it." The client was so impressed that he bought the package. So the technical man comes home beaming because he had also made a substantial profit for the company. The entrepreneur was overwhelmed, and in his generosity thought to himself, "How do I reward this guy; he is not a salesman and this is an accidental by-product of his technical call out there." So, he turns to the technical man and he says, "Say, do you have any pressing debts outstanding?" The technical man replies, "I owe about $800 of which $100 is

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past due." The entrepreneur said, "Okay, bring me your bills and I will pay them and that will be your reward."

Now, if he had paid the man $800 and said that is the normal commission for this type of sale, that is not paternalism; that is managership. But to go at it this way, that is paternalism of the highest order. This entrepreneur is going to get into real trouble because everybody in the plant knows that if you can't pay your bills you just massage the owner's ego a little and he will pay them for you.

The entrepreneur will tell you what is going to happen and then he will go out and make it happen.

Now how about the risk that goes with the security? The entrepreneur is a moderate risk-taker. He is not a speculator. An entrepreneur is a guy who builds a business. A speculator is guessing on some future course of the marketplace. Entrepreneurs like to have some assurance that what they are doing has a reasonable chance of success. You will find that the entrepreneur is not a plunger.

Clusters of entrepreneurs form because entrepreneurs like to talk to each other and they respect each other. Although they're poor organizational communicators, entrepreneurs are highly verbal. They don't read and they don't like things in writing; they are not comfortable with books and abstract data and reports. There are exceptions, but as a rule you have to talk to him and he has to talk to you, and if you want to communicate with him, "write" him a tape cassette. He will listen to you that way.

These are strange people. You cannot behave with them the same way you behave with a professional manager who likes to see the neat memo, the neat document that lays the whole thing out and documents what is going to happen. The entrepreneur will tell you what is going to happen and then he will go out and make it happen.

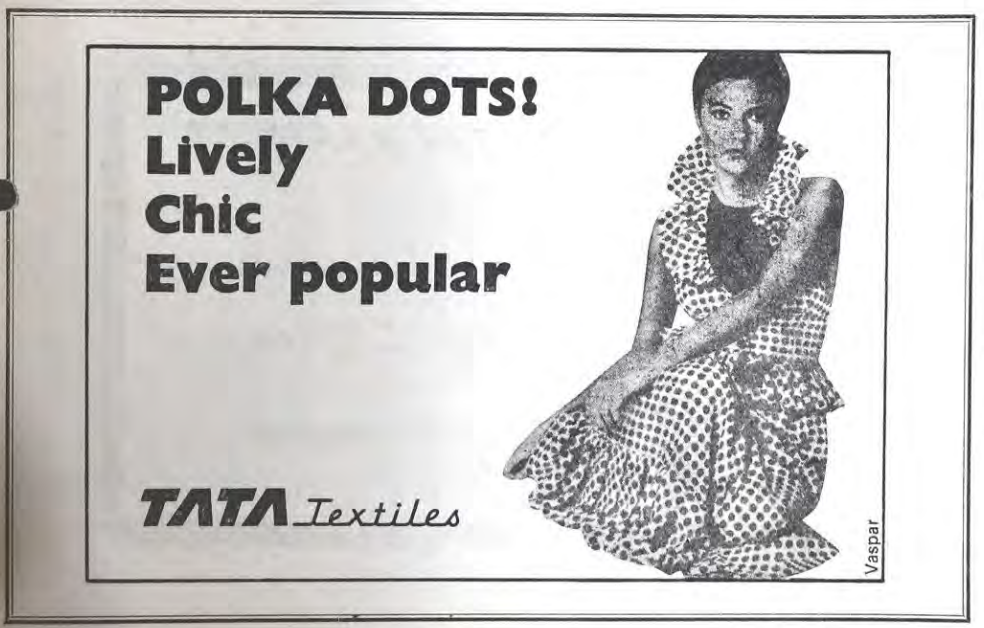
He has a high need for feedback but it has to be verbal and concrete feedback. To him profit is the indicator that tells him that what he is doing is socially useful and he is getting on with the job. He doesn't work for profit directly. You can, in fact, eliminate the profit motive if you substitute a feedback system just by whispering in his ear every half-hour, "What you are doing, Joe, is great; you are getting on with the job." Rulers have found ways of doing this in Russia and in other socialistic countries by rewarding the entrepreneur-manager in the socialist state by giving him whispered accounts of how well he is doing, and how he is rising in the hierarchy and in prestige because he has been successful.

He responds to concretes rather than abstracts. You show the guy a piece of metal and say, "This is what it has to look like after you are through," and he understands.

He also has a very high energy level, almost compulsive. He thinks he should work ten hours a day, seven days a week. While the work may not all be productive—he may be better off if he worked fewer hours and concentrated on other things—to him this compulsiveness to work hard is an integral part of his personality.

So who wants to be an entrepreneur? Well, that's really not the question—either you is one or you ain't. What is important is to know one when you see one.

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The Unmaking of Entrepreneurs

The decline in the community's entrepreneurial tradition and consequently its fortunes is a cause of concern. While the reasons for the decrease are varied and complex, an important factor is the attitude of the government towards entrepreneurs. S. M. Mistry, managing director of Ahura Chemical Products and past president of the Indian Chemical Auxiliaries Manufacturers' Association (ICAMA) mentions some of the obstacles entrepreneurs face in an article titled "Production Constraints In Small Units" which was published on the occasion of the ICAMA's 25th anniversary in March this year. We publish below an extract from his paper.



S. M. Mistry

Why entrepreneurs do not rush in to start industries in spite of the many incentives given for establishing industries in backward rural areas, is a matter troubling many political leaders. There are certain misconceptions amongst politicians about industrialists/entrepreneurs. One such is that there is a long line of persons ready to start a factory and commence making money by exploiting the labourers, defrauding the government of taxes and black-marketing their produce.

This notion has arisen from a few, stray incidents during the so-called boom period of the late 60s and early 70s. Then, there was a great demand to start industries and to obtain import licences or quotas for scarce raw materials, which had black market value. Instances are known where import licences and quotas were granted though no factory or even a shed was in existence. The conclusion is obvious.

After 1973, things have changed. There is no longer a rush for raw material quotas and even import licences are not fully utilized. There is no single cause for this situation and hence there cannot be one, simple remedy. Let us consider the so-called incentives offered by the government. All incentives are based on the assumption that the new industry will start earning a profit.

The time limit fixed for such a fortunate happening is so narrow that by the time the industry earns some profit, the incentives are time barred. In a highly competitive buyer's market it is difficult to make a profit large enough to be able to take advantage of the incentives and the future being uncertain, the reticence of the entrepreneurs is understandable. The politicians expect noble sentiments of social justice, patriotism and goodwill toward our fellow men from others which is to say the least, unfair and improbable.

Now let us put ourselves in the place of a young man, a brilliant young man imbued with all the above mentioned good intentions and who wants to start an industry. Being a chemist, let me visualize the starting of a small chemical unit. The government has laid out and earmarked certain areas, in places with few inhabitants and no services worth speaking of, where the man has to operate.

First, he has to make an application for an N.O.C. (No Objection Certificate) to the Industries Department, giving details of his scheme and justifying his starting the factory. Having obtained the N.O.C. after some delay, he has to approach another government department to secure a plot in a suitable area. Being fortunate enough to get through this hurdle after a reasonable lapse of time and if he is lucky to have some ready cash, he can secure a small shed. If he has Rs. 10,000 given to him by his parents for this purpose, then he has to pay it to the agency selling him the shed and on which he loses all legal control due to a mortgage. At this stage, he loses half his enthusiasm but being an obstinate person, he pushes on. Now he has to approach a bank for both working capital and machinery capital.

The machinery capital also entails a personal, monetary outlay which his parent may be able to fork out. A factory whose total cost, including the building, works out at say, three lakh rupees would entail about Rs. 40,000 of his own capital on which he loses all legal control to the government institutions and the bank. On a capital of three lakh rupees a turnover of Rs. 10 lakhs is possible and the gross profit, after deducting local and other direct taxes will hardly come to Rs. 60,000 if he is not running into bad debts. After deducting depreciation on the building and plant, the sum is further whittled down to say Rs. 40,000.

This profit is possible only after three or four years of hard toil whilst in the earlier stages he will run into a loss in paying various interest amounts to the lending institutions. So even if he is exempted from income-

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tax and sales-tax, the profit will be eaten up by the lending institutions. In other words, such an advantage with such high rates of interest prevalent can never be profitable for items having a reasonable margin of profit and sales in a buyer's market. A young man with a capital of Rs. 50,000 would rather earn 12 per cent interest by putting his money in a fixed deposit account than lose all control on his capital by starting a factory.

Now let us study some of the legislative constraints. The plethora of labour law and welfare enactments are most irksome. A young man prefers to work in a bank or a factory because he joins the ranks of a highly protected, well-paid band of people whose only aim is to find more and more items to use for agitation and demands. Today, starting an industry is the last resort of a young man.

The biggest handicap in industry is the impossibility of discharging a bad workman. He becomes a permanent liability and the only remedy is to close down the unit completely, a step which is being taken by many. Today, many old small-scale units are so overburdened with debts and accumulated losses that the lending institutions will not be able to recover their loans. When old units are going abegging, how can there be an expectation of new units coming up?

A Hundred Years Ago

WE have been shown some samples of dyed cotton by a new process said to have been invented by Mr. Dadabhoy Jeevajee Soonawalla of Surat. The samples before us are of yarn dyed yellow, orange red, pink and various shades of green. The dyed samples were submitted for the opinion of Dr. Lyon, Professor of Chemistry, Grant Medical College, and Chemical Analyzer to Government, who found on examination that the colouring matter of the first two samples consisted entirely of compounds of lead. The colouring matter of the three green samples was found to consist of a mixture of indigo and a compound of lead. Under the microscope each fibre of the yarn seemed to be thoroughly stained, and no detached particles of colouring matter could be seen. Dr. Lyon is therefore of opinion that all the samples are dyed in such a manner as to make it highly probable that the colouring matter will remain fast under any ordinary circumstances.

Times of India, 13th October, 1978.



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The Ice Cream Story

Despite the security of a steady income that employment assures, many Parsis still turn their hand to business. Why do they embark on it? How do they finance themselves? Do they have formulae for success?

Below, Parsiana carries a feature on Nozer Daroga, proprietor of Waikiki Super Snack Bar and Farrokh Ghandy owner of Kentucky Icecreams. Both their enterprises are fast becoming household words in the Bombay community.

Though briefly linked in a business partnership, the two now pursue their independent businesses separately.

Manjula Padmanabhan and Ruzbeh Antia recount how Daroga found his way to the Bombayman's pocket (and his waistline) via his stomach while Ghandy recounts his own story : how his undertaking paid off—by exploiting the sybaritic palate of middle-class Bombay with a new line in icecreams.

A leaky faucet does not normally spurt sheesh kababs and icecreams unless the plumber happens to be Nozer Daroga. The 36-year-old entrepreneur who started his business career at the age of 18 with Rs 75 to his credit, today, runs Bombay's popular Waikiki Super Snack Bar, Waikiki Coffee Shop, Friendly Icecream, and a growing sanitation concern.

'When I see a good thing going I like to make the most of it,' says the hefty, soft-spoken businessman who has the credit of making more people in Bombay associate Waikiki with a place of *pav bhaji* (special vegetable puree with hot buttered bread) than with the golden sands and swishing grass skirts of the Hawaiian beach. His self-service Super Snack Bar situated in the heart of commercial Bombay, close to three cinema houses, is always crowded with office-goers looking for a quick bite and blue-jeaned teenagers meeting for a more leisurely drink and smoke.

What originally made for the fame of Waikiki, however, was not pizza and *pav bhaji* but the rum and raisin icecream, one of a range of 20 flavours now manufactured by Friendly Icecream and sold at 11 outlets all over Bombay.

Daroga's success story starts when he went into the plumbing business immediately after his S.S.C. His father being an engineer in the water department of the Bombay Municipal Corporation, he had several opportunities to watch plumbers at work. 'That decided it,' he says. He started Nozer Sanitation in 1960 with a couple of men doing small jobs 'like fixing wash basins and pipes'. Within two years, he had his own house and car and more important contracts coming his way.

About a decade later, he found business becoming slack due to dwindling construction activity and stiff competition. 'So I decided to branch out and start a snack bar,' Daroga says. The idea occurred to him during his holidays abroad, where he saw several eating places doing profitable business. He obtained a licence to set up Waikiki in April 1974, on a stretch of pavement outside the Breach Candy Hospital. 'When we started I used to open coke bottles myself' he recalls. Though he no longer finds time to sit at the counter, he often stands on the pavement and watches during peak hours. He once saw a boy throw a hot-dog away after just one bite. 'I discovered that he was a vegetarian tasting meat for the first time. So I told him to try something lighter like chicken,' he added. Daroga feels that personal attention of this kind, the location, atmosphere and the novelty of the idea of a self-service snack bar all contributed to the popularity of Waikiki.

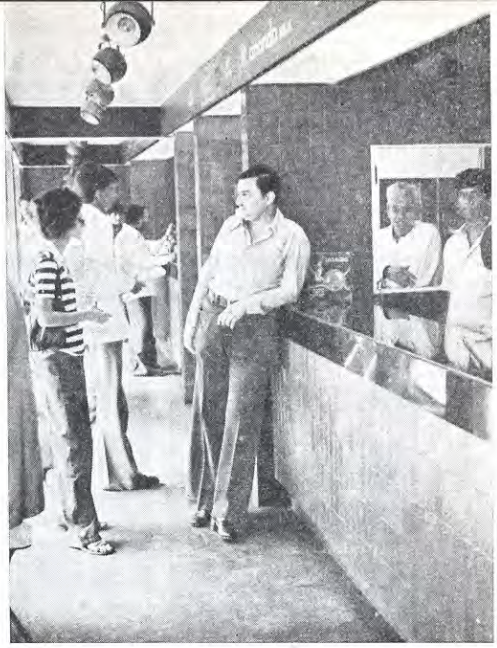
At the outset, Waikiki sold snacks supplied by reputed restaurants, but later, foodstuffs prepared by residents of the vicinity were introduced. The icecreams were supplied by Farrokh Ghandy who made them in small hand-churn moulds. Daroga entered into a business partnership with him and Friendly Icecream was launched at the end of 1975. The partners however soon decided to part ways; Ghandy went on to start his own venture, Kentuky Icecream, and Daroga continued managing Friendly Icecream with the help of his two brothers, Pervez who looks after the delivery and Vispi who supervises the actual production.

'The icecream is made exactly as you would make it at home,' says Daroga. It contains neither stabilizers to make it last longer nor butter and other fats to maintain the mandatory eight to ten per cent fat content. 'The fat content is increased naturally when the milk is heated for thickening,' he explains. The icecream is mixed in hand churn moulds to give it a satisfying heaviness and 'so that we can experiment constantly with new flavours, like the addition of different fruits and nuts,' he adds. Daroga however plans to expand very selectively. 'We never keep our icecream for more than two days which is why we are wary of giving it to other restaurants for resale. I prefer to own the places where I sell,' he says. He plans to start a factory in Poona to cater to the city and surrounding areas like Lonavla and Panchgani.

The New Waikiki Super Snack Bar was opened after the original Waikiki of Breach Candy had to close down when it got into trouble with the Bombay Municipal Corporation headed by a new commissioner. 'Though mine was an authorised structure and I had a proper licence, I was asked to close down,' he stated. Even a recourse to the law courts only gained an extension of the deadline to 15 April 1977. The only alternative being to move to less troublesome pastures, he bought the premises where the Super Snack Bar now stands. The new site was chosen with the already established clientele in view. 'I thought the Warden Road crowd would be most likely to come and see English movies in the theatres around,' says Daroga. At the new Super Snack Bar all snacks are made on the premises, in certain cases, before the eyes of the customer, because Daroga found that the sale of home-made preparations resulted in considerable wastage. 'We select from among the people who approach us. Everybody wants to make *pav bhaji* but we give a counter and kitchen facilities to the man who makes it best,' he explained.



Ghandy at Colaba outlet



Daroga at Waikiki Super Snack Bar

Daroga opened the Waikiki Coffee House next door to the snack bar, serving continental food and snacks. His plans for the future include a first-class, air-conditioned Chinese restaurant above Waikiki Super Snack Bar, a supermarket on western lines, a franchise for icecreams, a new Waikiki in the suburb of Andheri is underway. 'We will have four to five Waikikis like this,' declares Daroga whose ambition is shared by his daughter Perlene 12, and his 9-year old son Porous who, he says, 'plans to make me a millionaire'. □



When I first began to experiment manufacturing icecreams, it tasted of salt and kerosene; but my brother said it was excellent. Little realizing his poor sense of taste, I gave it to all my friends. The consequences were of course, disastrous.

This ignoble start fortunately, was not a portent of things to come. In 1968, I had given up my job at a bank to set up business, manufacturing envelopes; however, it required immense effort and the pleasure and returns derived from the business were not adequate. So I began looking for new ideas for a business which would not require too much capital. Why not, I thought, go in for special icecreams, better than the run-of-the-mill stuff?

The first thing was to approach major icecream producers to find out more about the business. Going round icecream factories helped me to understand the background of the business. I also came across an excellent magazine, *Icecream and Frozen Confectionery*, the official journal of the Icecream Alliance and the leading magazine of the British icecream industry, which gave me insight into icecream manufacture.

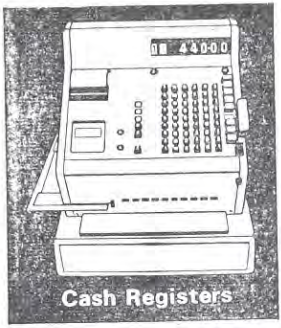
I purchased a small *sancha* (icecream churn) for Rs. 75 and began experimenting at home, working mostly by myself with the help of a servant. Soon, I was able to keep out the salt and kerosene from the icecream but the consistency was still unsatisfactory and the icecream, quite tasteless. Disappointed and feeling helpless, I went around all the bookstalls of Bombay till I had collected many excellent books and journals on making icecream. I also got in touch with the famous Taj icecream shop at Bhindi Bazaar. The icecream began improving and I was confident enough to start selling it at Swapna, a snack bar I had opened at Gowalia Tank.

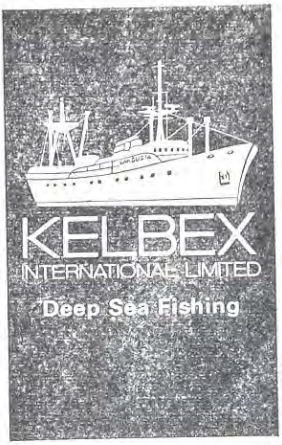
I now, invested in a large *sancha* for Rs 150 and started producing the icecream at Gowalia Tank, trying out custard apple and fresh strawberry flavours. The new fresh fruit icecream was a hit at Swapna though the snack bar itself, proved a failure. It ran for three months without sales rising beyond Rs 100 a day and I was only able to sustain my losses by selling the icecream to other private customers as well.

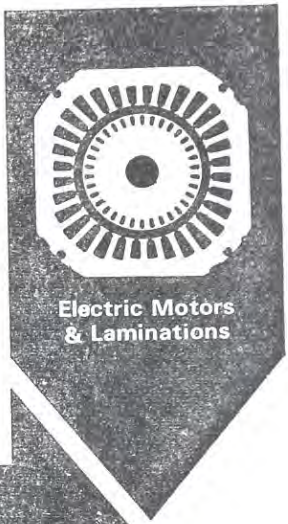
I got my big break at my club, the Willingdon. It agreed to stock my icecream and it went down very well with the other members, gaining me much publicity for my product. A few months later, I began to supply Regal theatre whose owner, Dhanji Sidhwa, I knew. This was a further boost to the icecream's increasing popularity, and I was soon supplying it to the Waikiki snack stall at Breach Candy.

Now that things were going well, I received many offers for partnership, which I needed, as I intended to close down Swapna and required a new place to manufacture the icecream from. I teamed up with one of the partners of Waikiki, Nozer Daroga, who had space to spare at his business premises.

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The icecream gained further popularity and we were able to set up stalls in many parts of Bombay. But in business as in anything else, it is rare that two will see eye to eye in everything—a major problem in any partnership. About a year later, I found it more expedient to leave the partnership and be free to produce as I liked.

To set up business all over again and to re-enter the market from scratch was extremely difficult and required an intense publicity campaign, from advertisements in newspapers to sponsoring shows in the icecream's now new name, Kentucky.

Fortunately, the new icecream caught on within a month, and I soon, was able to get sales outlets all over.

I have now introduced a refrigerated icecream van which travels to many parts of the city selling the icecream, and am now negotiating with sheikhs in the Middle East who have shown great interest in importing the icecream. However, inspite of the increase in business, to maintain the high quality of our product, my brother (and I) taste the icecreams daily!

A Hundred Years Ago

YESTERDAY evening a meeting of Parsees was held at the Allbless Baug, being convened by the trustees of the Punchayet in response to a requisition signed by upwards of a thousand Parsees to commemorate the memory of the late Sir Cowasjee Jehangir, Knight, C.S.I., by recording his numerous charities and other acts of benevolence in the books of the Punchayet. About four hundred Parsees were present, and the chair was taken by Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, Bart. The chairman, in opening the proceedings, briefly referred to the charities and benevolent acts of the late Sir Cowasjee, and afterwards read a long memorandum relating to his benefactions to be recorded in the books of the Punchayet. Resolutions were passed adopting the memorandum, and requesting the trustees of the Punchayet Funds to insert it in the records. It was also resolved to forward copies of the memorandum to the mother, brother, and the adopted son of the deceased knight. Thanks were passed to the trustees of the charitable funds of the Parsees for convening the meeting to owners of the Allbless Baug for the use of their building, and to the chairman for presiding.

Times of India of 6th October, 1978.

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World Congress Papers

The Zoroastrian Priesthood

Dr. Ervad Peshotan F. Peer

The plight of the priests has conventionally been a subject of lengthy discussion but little action. At both the Second and Third World Zoroastrian Congress, the topic featured prominently; at the Third Congress held in January, it was the first subject for discussion. That the uplift of the priesthood has been attempted so often without success, implies that the underlying causes are vast and complex.

Parsiana carries abridged and edited versions of the three papers read on "The Priestly Class—Its Present Condition and Future Uplift" by Dr. Ervad Peshotan Peer, a Zoroastrian scholar and panthaki of the Tata Agiary in Bombay, Peshotan Nargolwala, a member of the 'Working Group of Mobeds' (a private group of social workers) and one of the joint honorary secretaries of the Third World Congress and Dr. Bouzardmehr Mehr, a member of the Iranian Parliament, a professor of pathology of the Teheran Medical College and a person active in the affairs of the Zoroastrian Community and anjumans of Iran. The session was chaired by Burjor H. Antia, a noted Bombay lawyer and the Rapporteur was Ervad Godrej Sidhwa, an active member of the Karachi Zoroastrian community.

In the Aryan culture and scheme of life the priest was always to play a pivotal role. On account of the purity of their life and their vast learnings and erudition, priests were highly esteemed and formed an influential section of the society. In ancient Iran [illegible] kings themselves came from the priestly class.

The Zarathushtrotemo or the chief priest of the land was the most respected person in the king's court, so much so that the persons aggrieved by the king's own judgement, had a right to appeal to Zarathushtrotemo who had the power to reverse the judgement if he thought fit in higher wisdom. Other high offices of the state were also assigned to members of the priest class and thanks to their integrity and competence, the tone of the administration remained lofty throughout the tenure of the Zoroastrian kings in Iran.

When the Parsees had to migrate to India, the priest class kept up its high traditions and maintained the leadership of the society. Time and again, great priests arose in the community [illegible] names like Nairyosang Dhaval [illegible] Meherji Rana are revered to this day. The priests rendered a selfless service to the community by copying the manuscripts of the Avesta, Pahlavi, Pazend and Sanskrit texts.

Besides their priestly duties, for years they conducted religious classes for the young. Thus they educated the Zoroastrians, particularly the sons of mobeds. With the spread of the British system of education in India, the study of our ancient religion and culture came to be neglected even by the priest class in general. It has also to be sadly admitted that the behdins gradually grew less appreciative of the services rendered by the priests. Many of the talented members of the priest class were, therefore, attracted to other more lucrative professions. The priest class gradually became indifferent to the profession, so much so, that the practising priests hesitated to take their sons into



Whatever may have been our lapses in the past, let us do honour where honour is due.

their own profession and the sons were reluctant to follow their fathers' occupation.

According to Count Angelo de Gubernetis, Ervad Dadabhoy Khursedji Dordi observes: "At present (in the year 1874) there are 865 priests amongst 48,000 Parsees in Bombay." It is estimated that now there are only about 250 priests amongst 65,000 Parsee residents in Bombay and about 350 to 400 priests in the whole of India. The fall in the number of practising priests is a cause of grave anxiety for the community. Indeed the problem deserves to be tackled on a very urgent basis.

The Madressas

In the beginning of this century it was felt that there should be a training centre for the sons of priests in Bombay and thus with the initiative of Dastur Dr. Darab P. Sanjana and Mr. Jehangir J. Vimadalal, the Dadar Athornan Boarding Madressa was founded under the auspices of the Athornan Mandal in 1917. Though the Institution faced severe financial difficulties and the trainees were in a limited number, they produced a good number of trained priests.

In 1923, Seth Mehrvanji M. Cama, established the M. F. Cama Athornan Institute at Andheri by donating a princely amount of Rs. 25,00,000 to educate the boys of the priestly class. For the first two decades, a large number of trained priests set themselves up as (practising) priests. They were educated specially in Avesta Pahlavi, Iranian History etc.

After World War II more doors of employment were thrown open in Bombay. The educated and intelligent sons of the priests were unwilling to continue their forefathers' lofty profession and entered into other fields.

It has been noticed from the records of the Cama Athornan Institute that the Institute brought out seven to eight qualified priests every year between 1955 and 1975. Hardly a few have adopted the priestly vocation. On the other hand old qualified and devout priests left (and leave) this world year after year, with the result that the large numbers of yozdathregar mobeds in the whole of India has come down to about 65. Till the beginning of this century, the ceremonies were performed in the laity's residence, as religious tenets were strictly observed by the laity. In those days the priests were paid very low charges for their services. For instance, two annas (12 paise) was paid for the afringan and fravashi, and one anna for the baj ceremony. It was an egregious fault on the part of the behdins that they underestimated the worth of the priestly class and paid them so poorly. In fact, the behdins were in a position to pay sufficient charges if they wanted to. As such, the behdins are greatly responsible for the present, acute shortage of priests.

For the various reasons, the laity then entrusted the ceremonies to their panthakies (family priests) who performed the ceremonies in the fire temples. Looking to the present economic condition, the amount received by the panthakies is quite inadequate to pay the assistants sufficiently. Under the circumstances the economic condition of the priests is barely sufficient to cover daily necessities. The priests hesitate to get married for lack of financial wherewithal. Another reason for remaining a bachelor is the housing problem.

Future Upliftment

The economic condition of the priestly class must be raised. The elders of the community should evolve certain schemes for the betterment of the class such as a substantial central fund to which every Zoroastrian family would contribute every year; upward revision of rates for the various ceremonies; benefits such as provident fund, medical and educational aids should be extended.

Recently the Cama Athornan Institute has adopted a very commendable practice to offer a handsome monthly stipend to the sons of the priests who may join the aforesaid institute and learn the priestly profession. The scheme is that when a boy is admitted to the Madressa, Rs. 100 will be deposited with a bank every month in the joint names of the boy and the trustee. When the student completes the course after about a period of seven years and leaves the Madressa, then the amount accumulated would come to more than Rs. 10,000. Thereafter, the boy would be required to work as a priest for 15 years, at the end of which a sum of Rs. 54,000 will be handed over to the priest.

Even after having completed the prescribed course a new qualified entrant will definitely entail difficulty in obtaining a fair livelihood while practising. It is necessary to extend a stipend to the new-comers. Besides, those priests who are highly educated in the religious subjects may be given a sum in appreciation of their work.



Praying before meals at Cama Athornan Madressa
Photo Noshir Marker



Priest Selling Sandalwood in Udwada

The life of a priest is always the life of penance and sacrifice. Before a boy is qualified to practice as a priest, he is called upon to spend years learning the scriptures and the prescribed ceremonies. If at the end of it all, he is left high and dry, it is quite understandable that few will be attracted to tread this difficult path. It is heartening to find that the community has started to be aware of its responsibility towards the priest class. The Zoroastrian community in India has faced many challenges in the past and has faced them bravely. The problem of the dwindling priest class may also be accepted as a challenge to the community.

In every cultured community, a section dedicates itself to acquire spiritual knowledge and wisdom so that it may serve the higher needs of the community. This section remains well cared for and honoured by the rest of the community. Whatever may have been our lapses in the past, let us do honour where honour is due and translate our sentiments in worthy acts of sacrifice by contributing our mite to the cause of the amelioration of the priest class who has served us well and who cannot be neglected without destroying the very plinth of the religion given by Zarathushtra.

Peshotan Nargolwala

The mobeds form a small part of the Zoroastrian community. A mobed has not only to be born a Zoroastrian, but he has to take birth in an athornan family. When our community as a whole is dwindling, the problem is more acute when applied to the mobeds who constitute a restricted category within the community.

I classify priests into four functional categories—Ervads, Yozdathragars, Dasturs and Religious Scholars.

The ervad is an athornan who has passed the basic navar/martab tests which qualify him to practice as a priest. He generally performs the afringan, fravashi, baj and satum ceremonies.

The yozdathragar belongs to a higher, more experienced and competent category. He is capable of performing the more difficult vandidad, nirangdin and yajashne ceremonies, apart from the ceremonies listed for ervads. There are only 15 pairs of yozdathragars today in Bombay and approximately 30 in the whole of India.

Dasturs are those to whom the anjumans or the priestly class have presented a 'shawl' on the basis of sterling services rendered. While it is a symbol of high status in the priest class to be called a Dastur, the title also presupposes a mastery of the scriptures, ancient languages and specialised rituals. (Some people consider only those who are the head priests of atash-behrams to be dasturs —Editor).

Religious scholars are well qualified persons capable of undertaking teaching, preaching and independent research pertaining to the Zoroastrian religion. They are specialists in ancient languages and scholarly students of our scriptures.

The yozdathragar and the dastur is expected to lead a life of piety. His personal life has to be exemplary and in line with the highest principles of personal purity laid down in our religion.

Education of Priests

There are two basic teaching institutions, both offering residential accommodation, the Athornan Boarding Madressa at Dadar and the M. F. Cama Athornan Institute at Andheri. The Cama Athornan Institute from this year onwards, has started a 'Mobedi' oriented curriculum which replaces the standard S.S.C. course. The total number of pupils is 14, including four pupils in the 9th and 10th standards, to whom the old S.S.C. curriculum applies. However, it may be noted here, that owing to the mobedi-oriented curriculum, the Cama Athornan Institute will find it difficult to produce scholars. The Athornan Boarding Madressa at Dadar follows the S.S.C. curriculum. They also teach religious subjects. The number of pupils is 38. A third institution The Sir Jamshedji Jijibhoy Madressa prepares graduate and post-graduate scholars in Avesta and Pahalavi.

The proliferation of agiaries did not arise out of the spiritual needs of the Parsis.

Places of Worship

We have nearly 85 fire temples spread all over India, of which 42 agiaries and four atash-behrams are in Bombay. Apart from the great reverence in which fire was held, our forefathers built fire temples to commemorate the memories of their departed ones; it was considered thrice blessed to donate an agiary; also one could build a fire temple at a cost of Rs. 50,000 only and the maintenance was negligible. Supporting the priest and his family was not considered a major financial responsibility for the donor or the trustees.

But the reasons mentioned above, could not explain or justify the proliferation of agiaries and atash-behrams in Bombay during the last two centuries. At its peak the Parsi population in Bombay has been 70,000 not justifying the construction of 46 houses of prayer roughly one for every 1,600 Parsis. Two atash-behrams are within 200 feet of each other. In a square mile, there are more than a dozen agiaries. The proliferation of agiaries did not arise out of the spiritual needs of the Parsi but was more often based on sentiment and Godly beliefs.

Challenge

In olden days the priest had a deep-rooted faith in his holy vocation. When he prayed it was to invoke divine help and blessings. The behdins prayed with similar faith. However, after the turn of the century, the faith of the behdins in the efficacy of prayers was greatly shaken owing to the spread of westernized, secular education.

Over the last three decades, attempts were made to revive the faith in religion and prayers by establishing religious classes. A number of such classes are run in the city of Bombay. If the faith of the coming generation in the efficacy of prayer and belief in Zoroastrian tenets is restored it will ultimately go a long way to mitigate the problem

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of mobeds. A behdin, who understands the principles of his religion, is the best guarantee for the success of the mobed profession.

When we left Iran 1,400 years ago an athravan, Dasturan Dastur Nairiosang Dhaval was our leader. In the centuries to follow, the athravan guided the destinies of the community through a multitude of vicissitudes. When occasion demanded, the athravan sacrificed his flesh and blood for the survival of our religion and our community. Today when we are asked to repay this age old debt to the athravan, let us make it our bounden duty to do so.

Dr. Bouzardmehr Mehr

First of all, we must pay attention to what our definition of a "Priest" is. In my opinion it is insufficient to say that a priest has only the function of performing rituals. Priests should have an educational function. They should be expected not only to perform ceremonies but they should guide members of the community in ethics and morals. Every intellectual Zoroastrian is interested in knowing the theological concepts and would like to seek explanations regarding certain ideas and ideologies that the religion propounds. The priests must find a vocation in religion, and not treat it merely as one of the ways of making a livelihood.

The second topic of utmost importance concerns the salary of priests. The priests and their families should be safe-guarded. If we neglect to consider the priests and their families now, we will be deprived of any priests in the future. In Iran, there are many cases where the children of priests have become successful professionals in various fields, but naturally, they cannot carry out their duties as priests. I may can state that a priest who is economically depressed, is, in general, little respected. We have an obligation to teach the new generation to respect priests, and those people who assist in religious ceremonies. If poverty and disrespect are a part of becoming a priest, certainly no one will desire to fulfill this vocation.

There are in Iran a few young Zoroastrians of priestly families from India, in different fields of work. As they are qualified priests, they are of great help to Zoroastrian families in Iran, performing various duties of priests, and also conducting religious classes for the young and old. All this they do after their daily work, and on holidays. I have found they are greatly respected by all. Of course, this is "helpful" for a town where there aren't any priests available, but it is not the solution to the problem. In cities and towns where priests are lacking, we are obliged to provide and train assistants to substitute priests, in order to perform vital rites. If the priests in India consent, we can use them in Iran for various religious ceremonies and training purposes. Fortunately, the conditions of society in Iran offer an opportunity for Zoroastrian priests to live comfortably and prosper. .



Performing jashan ceremony

A priest who is economically depressed, is, in general, little respected.

The cultural heritage of a people can only survive if it be transmitted from generation to generation. Over the centuries, however, the oral transmission of religion has dwindled to the reading of a few prayers, which are difficult to comprehend. Most families are only able to recite a few prayers, and explain Zoroastrianism in terms of Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds. This transmission is so weak in content, that it leaves behind an intellectual vacuum and a cultural lag or gap, which must be filled if the Zoroastrian cultural heritage is to survive in the modern world.

Zoroastrian scholars, theologians and priests must come together to produce adequate literature in the languages known to the younger generation. Research on Zoroastrianism must be carried out, and the findings of this research must be carefully incorporated in the new literature that needs to be produced and compiled for disseminating the knowledge of Zoroastrianism.

Zoroastrians outside India and Iran find themselves isolated in the midst of a large number of diversified cultural influences. It may be suggested that for some children, it would not be a bad idea if any individual or individuals, who have a deep grasp and understanding of Zoroastrianism, volunteer as teachers in their spare time so that our children do not feel lost in an alien country, because they have not had the opportunity of knowing and understanding their religion.



Teacher and Pupil at madressa
Photo N. Marker

Minus into Plus

Out of the Night, by Banoo S. Tarapore. The National Association For the Blind, India, 86 pages.

Out of The Night is the story of 40 blind people who, despite their handicaps have demonstrated their ability to "turn a minus into a plus". We publish below the story of two such people from the book written by Banoo S. Tarapore.

"Feroze Karkaria, Packing Department, Tata Mills, Bombay. Valiant indeed is his spirit, as great in inverse proportion to his diminutive height which is perhaps a little above 3 ft. for though Feroze Karkaria is blind, deaf and crippled he has stood up squarely to the blows of fate.

"Feroze entered the world with his two legs joined together. When he was five, a major operation set him on his feet, but the weight of the encasing plaster was so excessive that it affected his hearing and caused him to be stunted for life. Walking remains for him a major exertion.

"As if this was not enough, in his teens he lost his vision, first in one eye due to a cataract and later in the other due to a flying cricket ball.

"He had elementary education at St. Helena's School, Pune, upto the second standard after which he attended a class for the blind, run by two English ladies. Here he picked up English Braille and music. Later on he joined the Pune School for the blind, learnt caning of chairs and weaving plastic bags and undertook orders from friends and neighbours.

"Then in 1957 he joined the M. N. Banajee Industrial Home for the Blind at Jogeshwari, Bombay, where he received more elaborate training and where he has been living ever since.

"In 1959 Feroze got a job in the Tata Mills at Dadar in the packing and folding section on daily wages. He makes around Rs. 400/- a month. He is a conscientious worker and according to Mr. S. N. Roy, the Personnel Manager, his work is entirely satisfactory. Mr. Roy says that it is his experience that blind workers are in no way inferior to their sighted colleagues, in fact they are often much better. As if to prove his point, Feroze won the award for the best physically handicapped employee of 1967-68.

"How much this reflects to his credit is clear when you stop to consider the amount of effort daily required of him. He reports to work all the way from Jogeshwari by train, returning home after a full day's work, pushed and jostled by the uncaring throng. But back home, he never sits idle. He is busy making plastic bags, very often just to present to friends and acquaintances.

"He refuses to be overwhelmed by his misfortunes as any one would be even with one handicap, let alone three. He is full of life, full of fun and loves to hold long conversations with the help of his hearing aid. He even has time to think of others in trouble and has donated his blood to the blood bank. All of which goes to show that though Feroze Karkaria is certainly down, he is definitely not out!



Karkaria : 'never sits idle'.

"Cawas Tamboli, Principal, Government School for Blind Boys, Delhi.

"You can't keep a good man down, and Cawas Tamboli has always risen to the top in whatever he has undertaken. Blindness, he says, has been no barrier to him in any way. Today he is a Central Government Grade I Officer, Principal of the Government School for Blind Boys, under the Directorate of Social Welfare, Delhi Administration.

"A bright, intelligent boy, he had to use all his persuasive powers to convince his parents to let him continue his education after his failing vision was first detected, and he was kept back home for some years. He made up for lost time by gaining double promotions at the Calcutta Blind School, Behala, and passed out from the Blind Boys Academy, Ramakrishna Mission, Narendrapur, in the first grade.

"Joining the prestigious Presidency College, Calcutta, he graduated and went on to do his M.A. and his LL.B. side by side, attending the M.A. classes in the morning, and the law lectures in the afternoon. He studied throughout on scholarships and he states with legitimate pride that his father did not have to spend a single paisa on his education.

"Next, after a three year teaching stint at his former school in Narendrapur, Cawas applied for the diploma course of the Perkins Teacher Training Programme, U.S.A. His interviewer, Dr. Waterhouse, was highly impressed, and he was selected for the year 1970-1971 and given a Fullbright travel grant to cover his passage both ways.

"At Perkins also, Cawas achieved excellent grades and he decided to go in for the M.Ed degree course as To meet the heavy expenses, he applied for a scholarship to the Institute of International Education. This he could only get on the recommendation of the head of his department and the consent of the Indian government. Whilst the former was given in glowing terms the O.K. from the government took three long months to come. By that time Cawas was in dire financial straits and found it very sticky going. In desperation, he applied for smaller loans from two or three other places, and waited and waited. When the money came, it came from all sides, and did he splurge!

"On his return home he married Bina whom he had courted for ten long years. She is a doctor with the Government Family Planning Programme, and they now have a charming little toddler, Yasmin.

"Looking for a job, Cawas joined the Delhi Branch of the National Association for the Blind as Executive Officer, where he remained till 1974.

"His present post he secured through selection on merit by the Union Public Service Commission, from all candidates interviewed. He is the principal administrator-in-charge of the entire school, including the boarding and hostel supervision and the academic training of the students.

"Cawas is determined to climb as high as he can go. And one day, when he has made his pile, it is his sincere desire to devote his time to pure, voluntary welfare work, God willing."

Those wishing to acquire a copy of the book can do so from The National Association For The Blind, Revenue Unit Finance Raising Committee, Bldg. No. 3, Office No. 1, 13th floor.

Navjeevan Society, Lamington Road, Bombay-400 008. Phone 893388. There is no price but donations are accepted.

'The Original Emissary of God'

Discourses on Zoroastrianism by Ervad Godrej Dinshawji Sidhva: published by the author from Dinshaw Villa, 71-72 Cyrus Minwala Colony, Mahmoodabad, Karachi 29, Pakistan, pages 107.

In the preface the author emphasizes that for man to live as man, the transcending need is religion, and 'the first need of religion is faith.' The book is a product of the author's abiding faith in the teachings of Zoroaster, 'the original emissary of God'.



Symboli: 'double promotions'

The book covers a wide field with chapters on the life and teachings of Zoroaster, the navjote, marriage, funeral and other ceremonies and customs, such as the more esoteric Yazishna and Vendidad. Some of the chapters are reproductions of the author's speeches —on occasions such as the birthday celebration of Zoroaster—and therefore necessarily of a limited scope in covering the subject.

Over a third of the book is devoted to the three contemporary religions of the early but now forgotten Zoroastrian era, — Mithraism — Manichaeism— Mazdakism, with a final erudite chapter on Ancient Iranian Literature.

The book is replete with references to texts in explanation of the ceremonies, but there are portions which seem to justify customs merely because of the ancient lineage. The custom of keeping non-Zoroastrians away from the body after the **sachkar** is attributed to "the simple reason. . . .that the Zoroastrians have. . . .been through purificatory ceremonials", which of course are denied to the others; "and any thinking reasoning non-Zoroastrian" is expected to be convinced of the necessity of his exclusion.

For the Parsi Zoroastrian who has faith, but who goes through the rituals of the faith in a mechanical way, without an understanding of the prayers or the significance of the ceremonies, the book is instructive. The author observes that his labour ". . .will be regarded as well rewarded if (the book) enables the reader to obtain some elementary knowledge of our religion and ceremonials." Judging by this criteria the book serves its purpose.

Need Contacts?

All About Contact Lenses by Dr. Keiki R. Mehta, Jaico Publishing House, Bombay, pages 112, Rs. 7.50.

Everything you always wanted to know about contact lenses but didn't ask or found your optician didn't have time to answer, you can now read about in Dr. Keiki R. Mehta's book. Titled "All About Contact Lenses" the 112 page paperback by the noted Ophthalmic Surgeon presents in a readable, easy to comprehend, question answer format information for those who wear lenses and those who wish to wear them.

Aside from the routine hard lenses and the more recent "soft" lenses, Mehta also refers to the permanent wear lenses which can be worn upto three months at a stretch, 24-hours a day. And the science of orthokeratology whereby the spectacle number can be reduced by shaping the front curvature of the cornea is explained.

At the end of the book Mehta lists some do's and don'ts for those considering contact lenses such as: purchase the best lenses you can afford; select your practitioner carefully; do not expect instant results as the "success of a well-fitted lense is a happy marriage between curvature and power variable of your eye and a contact lense;" and look after lenses well.

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Vehement Virtuoso

Kaikhosru Sorabji who holds the record for "the longest non-repetitious piece for piano ever composed," as noted in the Guiness Book of World Records was featured in the London Sunday Times of June 2, this year. We carry below a text of the article.

Kaikhosru Sorabji, the 85 year-old Parsee composer who has lived for many years in strict seclusion in Dorset is music's self-created mystery man. Fifty years ago he enjoyed some celebrity as a composer of vast, com[illegible], intellectually and technically [illegible]ng works, mainly for piano of which once in a while he would give public performances that showed his own virtuosity to be fully equal to their demands.

He made a second reputation as what is called a "trenchant" critic, writing mostly in the *New Age* and the *New English Weekly*, sometimes with insight and eloquence, especially about the special objects of his enthusiasm (Busoni, Reger, Medtner, Szymanowski and others who lie slightly to one side of the beaten track of classical tradition) and invariably in a vein of dogmatic superlatives, whether laudatory or hostile. Two volumes of his reprinted criticism have appeared, "Around Music" (1932) and "Mi Contra Fa" (1947) the latter has a subtitle "The Immortalisings of a Machiavellian Musician" which con[illegible]s the quirky and somewhat musty flavour of his provocative prose.

Before long Sorabji not only withdrew from active musical life, but imposed an absolute veto on "any proposed public performance under any circumstance" of his music, and even on its further publication. The music world thought of him as a combination of Timon of Athens and a less jovial Miller of Dee—that worthy who cared "for nobody, no not I, and nobody cares for me."

Somebody, however cared enough about this remarkable man to penetrate his hermitage and overcome his ingrown suspicions of the outside world. This was the young and brilliant South African pianist Yonty Solomon who in due course received Sorabji's permission to play his music and has already done so more than once.

On Tuesday at the Wigmore Hall he chose a daunting programme consisting of a brisk, brilliant, extroverted account of Bach's Goldberg Variations, followed by Sorabji's manuscript Concerto per piano senza orchestra per suonare da me solo (1946) to give the work its full title as set out in Grove.

There was much curiosity and a fair attendance. What we heard tallied roughly in texture and style, with what we had expected to hear, but strangely contradicted in detail the pianist's account of the unknown work printed in the programme. So far from "beginning with a silence" and embracing in its course the equivalent of "a very descriptive orchestral" silence (whatever that phrase may mean) and (by way of a second movement) "a fragment of nocturne" the music—in Mr. Solomon's scintillating performance—began before the applause had quite subsided and continued for some 35 or 40 minutes in a virtually unbroken torrent, a ceaseless pounding, cataract of pianist bravura.

It was not nonsense; the music was evidently the work of a great virtuoso (for such frenzied yet sustained brilliance could hardly have been otherwise conceived), and even of a musicianly thinker—in that the harmonies and figurations that scudded past in the whirlwind seemed logical and pointful, in so far as they could be grasped. But how far was that? For short spells the result was exhilarating; after a while the vehemence of the music became self-defeating, like the letters of a friend who underlines every second word.

The listener, never granted more than a moment's respite and rarely that, becomes bemused by the sheer rush and multitude of notes and is reduced to a kind of a rustic gaping. Those who have written admiringly of Sorabji's earlier works opine that they exhibit an Oriental mind expressing itself in terms of modern European musical technique (the composer is in fact of mixed ancestry) but in this Concerto without Orchestra I could detect little that was specifically Oriental except the profusion of ornament and indifference to time scale.

Submitted by Geeta Doctor

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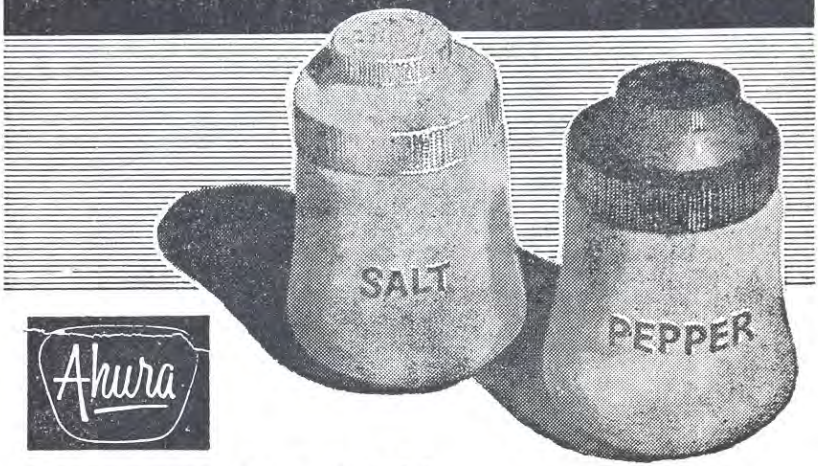
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