

Parsiānā

Changing Relationships

THE MEETING was described as historic and one of the major achievements of the keenly contested Bombay Parsi Punchayet Anjuman Committee elections. The trustees of the BPP in an unprecedented move agreed to meet with the 600 or so elected representatives and donors of the Anjuman Committee on 25 April at the Framjee Cowasjee Institute in Bombay's Dhobi Talao area.

Though three of the seven BPP trustees stayed away from the Sunday morning function, (Jal Vimadlal because he felt the Anjuman Committee had no "representative capacity" other than to elect trustees as and when vacancies arose, Dr Nelie Noble because she had to attend some "religious ceremony" and Maneck Hodiwalla due to an "emergency in the family") the meeting was described as a "healthy precedent," by BPP Chairman Dr Aspi Golwalla.

"Perhaps for the first time the punchayet and the Anjuman Committee are meeting," he noted. The threefold objective of the meeting, said Golwalla was to acquaint the community with the activities of the BPP, publicize the problems that the Punchayet encounters, and to "seek your help and guidance."

"Our (the Punchayet's) image has been largely negative," said Golwalla. He felt the main reason for this was a communication gap between the Punchayet, the community and the Press.

"We are trying to breach the gulf."

Jamsheed Kanga, the founder-leader of the Committee for Electoral Rights (CER) that swept the last elections and a trustee of the BPP, said the function was one "which I have been dreaming about for a long time. It officially signifies a change in the relationship between the BPP and the distinguished members of our community...this is the first manifestation of our (the trustees) coming forward and asking you to help."

BPP Trustee Eruch Desai attributed the "change in thinking" to the "revival" brought about in the community, largely as a result of the elections last year.

A member of the audience, Ratan Doctor while praising the initiative of the four trustees present, likened the stand of some of those absent to that of a constable in a police station whose standard reply to any request is to quote a section of the law as to why it can't be done.

Golwalla listed some of the steps taken by the Punchayet to streamline the organization's functioning. These include hiring three part-time accountants to update the accounts of the 1,200 trusts that comprise the BPP, and appointing administrative consultants to assist in "putting the administration on modern lines."

Another welcome measure is the dispatching of doles to recipients by money order to avoid their having to come to the Punchayet office each time. This will cost the BPP an additional Rs

2,500, said Golwalla.

In regard to the pressing problem of housing, the chairman announced that the trustees of the Arbab Guiv Foundation would be contributing another six to seven lakh rupees for housing construction at Contractor Baug in Mahim. The Anjuman and individual Zoroastrians of Hong Kong have promised 10 lakh rupees for housing. Efforts to persuade well-to-do residents of the various Parsi colonies to contribute small amounts on a regular basis for maintenance of existing baugs and construction of new housing is also under consideration, said Golwalla.

The BPP is considering allocating flats on three bases, ownership, advance compensation and rent, he said. There are around 7,000 applications for housing pending with the BPP, of which maybe 4,000 are active and around 700 are couples waiting to marry, said Golwalla.

Stating that the BPP had an annual income of around 70 lakh rupees against assets of around eight crore rupees, Golwalla said it was difficult for the Punchayet to maintain its existing services in the light of rising costs. "We may have to curtail our activities," he warned.

"People say the funds are there (in the community) but the will is lacking," said Golwalla. As far as the trustees were concerned, he noted, they were making an all out effort. "We are working in harmony. We may have differences of

opinion but no conflicts."

Kanga also noted the time for "confrontation" between the BPP and the community was "past. There must be a feeling of trust, of confidence." Stating that "housing is the most important problem facing the community," Kanga said applications would be divided into various categories such as the homeless, engaged couples, practising priests and people living in crowded premises. A certain percentage of the available flats would be determined for various categories.

The new flats would, by necessity, have to be small and this would impair the quality of life, he noted. The only long-term solution was for people to leave Bombay and settle elsewhere. "Bombay is for the affluent," he said.

BPP Trustee Jamshed N. Guzder

"The C.E.R. has failed to keep the community informed of the work which it has been doing."

noted that properties held by the various trusts in nearby places such as Sanjan could be developed for the elderly. This would ease the congestion in Bombay.

Guzder said the BPP intended to build 1,000 flats in the next four years for all sections of the community at a cost of eight crore rupees. This money would have to be raised through various housing schemes. He was confident this could be accomplished.

A member of the audience, Jehangir Nicholson, voiced the sentiments of many present when he said the historic meeting "created a sense of confidence, a sense that the trustees have the welfare of the community at heart."

CER Meet

Eleven days prior to the BPP meeting, the Committee for Electoral Rights (CER) held its second meeting with the Anjuman Committee, the CER members and the general public at the Cowasjee Jehangir Hall. Sensitive to the criticism being levelled at them by some that the CER was not active enough, the leaders claimed that their activities were not sufficiently publicised. Dadi Engineer, deputy chairman of the party, had written an article in the conservative *Jam-e-Jamshed* Gujarati

daily of March 21, 1982, entitled, "What the Dickens is the C.E.R. Doing?" While stating that the organization was active, he added, "I must candidly admit that the C.E.R. has failed to keep the community informed of the work which it has been doing."

The Zoroastrian, a lively journal published by CER office bearers Zal Contractor, Berjis Desai, Dr Perin Cabinetmaker and J. Merwanji, echoed Engineer's sentiments in the April issue: "The total absence of communication between the CER and the Parsi public is responsible for the public disillusionment with the CER."

Kanga listed the "main achievement" of the CER as being "the recognition" on the part of the BPP that "they have to take the people into confidence, especially the elected representatives." Several committees have been constituted on which non-trustees have also been co-opted, he noted. The Committee for Economic Uplift which barely met in the past, meets every three weeks on an average, he said. Steps to streamline the management of the BPP are also underway.

On the subject of electoral reform, Engineer put forward a scheme in which "only effective modifications to the present indirect scheme have been suggested. Moreover, consideration has also been given to safeguarding the interests and the vested rights of past donors."

In brief, the scheme would restrict the size of the Anjuman Committee to 500, of which 400 would be elected by the community from various constituencies and 100 would be elected from amongst the donors. The 500 would then elect the trustees who would be eligible to stand for three terms of six years each. A trustee should be a graduate, aged 30 or above.

Engineer invited recommendations from the public upto the middle of June. After that, the drafting of the clauses would begin, he said.

Among the more active groups in the CER, according to Kanga, is the Youth Wing headed by Kersi Limathwala and Kersi Gazder and assisted by Zal Contractor. The group has organized visits to various Parsi institutions such as the madressahs, the widow's chawls, dharamsalas and hospitals. They found the occupants of many of the places visited, suffering from "loneliness and a sense of desertion. We want to help the inmates find companionship," said Limathwala. The Youth Wing is also organizing a

talent contest.

On the subject of housing Fali Poncha, a CER deputy chairman, spoke of a "cross subsidization scheme" also referred to as the "Robin Hood Approach." The proposal envisages building housing for those who can afford to pay more and from the excess monies generated, construct flats for those of limited means.

To ensure fair allotment of flats, Kanga and the others suggested the names of applicants and allottees be printed in the newspapers. Thus the community could judge for itself and bring to the attention of the trustees any irregularity.

Ginger group

The two May meetings reflected activity on the part of the BPP, the Anjuman Committee and the CER. While the Anjuman Committee's functioning appears to complement that of the BPP trustees, the CER has still to determine its role. The leadership views the CER as a "ginger group and think tank," a body that serves as a link between the Anjuman Committee and the community. On the other hand, the CER has shown itself to be active in organizing social functions, and publishing a newsletter, *The Zoroastrian*, amongst other activities.

To ensure fair allotment of flats, the names of applicants and allottees should be printed in the newspapers.

If in addition, the group could generate intellectual activity through seminars and symposia and serve as a pressure group especially in regard to election reform and the revival of an all India body, much of the present charges of lethargy would be dispelled. The alleged short-comings of the CER are not so much due to a lack of publicity as to a lack of clearly defining the party's role in the community. This has been made all the more necessary due to the unfortunate absence of an effective opposition party.

The earliest Parsi settlers

"A great number of Parsis from Iran", James Douglas writes, "under dates A.D. 1009 and 1021 inscribed their names in one of the Kanheri Caves in Pahlavi — an earlier date this, we think, than is generally attributed to the appearance of our Zoroastrian friends in this part of the Konkan".

The first Parsi settler on the island, however, is believed to be Dorabjee Nanabhoy, who came to Bombay from Soomari, near Surat, somewhere around 1640. Nanabhoy or Nanabhai was a linguist of a kind, being well-versed in Gujarati, Marathi and English, with a bit of Portuguese thrown in. These qualifications came in handy and the Portuguese (who often called the Parsis, "Jews" because of their facial features), utilised his services as a revenue collector. The English did the same later. Dorabji died in 1689.

His son Rustom, too, served the English, but in a different capacity. He was called Rustom Gendral, or General, from the fact that he defended the island during the Sidi invasion in 1692; when a plague epidemic had laid low the small English garrison. Rustom organised a militia of local fishermen and succeeded in driving out the Sidis. He occupied Dungarry Fort, and for a few days, actually "governed" Bombay, till the chief of the Surat factory arrived on the island to take over from him.

For these services, he was given the hereditary title of Patel of Bombay, and all the fishermen on the island were placed under his charge. He collected taxes from them and settled their civil and religious disputes. He died in 1763. The Patels have been remembered in the Cowasji Patel Street in the Fort while C.P. Tank was named after a later member of this clan.

The Patels served Bombay well, for a good 150 years after the first one died. They administered entire villages, developed transport, built sailing-vessels, farmed the Worli Fisheries successfully, organised the supply of fresh water to the East India Company's ships and initiated welfare schemes among the poor.

There must have been others of this community in Bombay at the time of Nanabhoy, for Gerald Aungier wrote or

had someone write a note to the Court of Directors in London on December 15, 1673, shortly after he took over the governorship of the island. The letter told of "another caste of people called Percees (Parsees) which are those who, fleeing the cruelty of their first promoters, the Mahometan religion in Persia, settle themselves in India, where they enjoy their old rights and customs unmolested... They are an industrious people and ingenious in trade wherein they tally employ themselves. There are at present few of them, but we expect a greater number, having gratified them in their desire to build a burying place for their dead on the island". By 1674, a Tower of Silence had been built (Modi Hirji Wachha is believed to have been the builder) on Malabar Hill, and an agiary in the Fort.

Aungier's wish for more of the community as settlers in Bombay was fulfilled, but much later. Before that, another interesting Parsi connection with Bombay is worth a mention:

Rustom Manock (1635-1721) was an influential Parsi of Surat. He was broker to the Portuguese and political representative of the Portuguese Viceroy who resided in Goa. Manock arranged for the establishment of the Surat factory for the English East India Company and was also their broker. In 1701, he accompanied the English ambassador to the court of Aurangzeb. He also represented Parsi interests in Surat.

Later, he had a dispute with the Company over a sum of Rs.6,90,000, which they refused to pay. He died before the matter was settled.

His three sons, Framji, Bomanji, and Nowroji took up the matter. Framji was imprisoned by the Nawab of Surat "at the instigation of Sir Nicholas Waite, Governor of Bombay." His house was seized and a fine of Rs.50,000 imposed. Bomanji went to Bombay to seek justice, but was put under house arrest by the governor.

The third brother Nowroji, then set sail, secretly, for England, on the British man-of-war, the "Salisbury". He took his Parsi servant with him. These two men were probably the first Indians to reach England. Nowroji's trip was suc-

cessful and the Court of Directors awarded him the sum of Rs.5,46,790. Nowroji returned to India between 1725-30. He bought land at Mazagon, started stone quarries, and settled down to establish one of the richest families in Bombay.

He shared his good fortune generously with the less fortunate of all communities building dharmshalas and hospitals, bridges, roads, wells and tanks.

Among the best-known of the earliest settlers was Lowji Nusserwanji, who left Surat when only 25 years old (in 1735) at the instance of Mr. Dudley, the master attendant at Bombay. Immediately on arrival, Lowji settled down "to found the greatest dockyard in India and to build some of the finest ships the world ever saw".

With the decline of Surat, the Parsis began to flock to Bombay. The first wave of immigration was during the 1790 famine in Gujarat; the second when in 1837, a fire destroyed more than half the town of Surat.

In Surat, they had been engaged as early as 1638, "in mercantile pursuit" as "bankers, shopkeepers and... various other traders"... "good carpenters and ship-builders, exquisite in the weavers' trade and embroidery"... "skilful merchants" and industrious artisans". These qualities they soon put to use in their new environment.

Hirji and Muncherji Readymoney were pioneers of the China trade... Dad-ybhoy Noshervanjee opened the first cotton acrew in Bombay....

As James Macintosh encapsulated their history: "The Parsis are a small remnant of the one of the mightiest nations of the ancient world who, flying from persecution into India, were for many ages lost in obscurity and poverty till at length they met a just government under which they speedily rose to be one of the most popular mercantile bodies in Asia"

by Olga Valladares, Evening News of India
November 6, 1981.

Due to exigencies of space, we are unable to carry the serial - Aek Atmakatha: The Life of Dastur Dhalla, in this issue. The next installment will appear in the May issue.

The Parsi Punchayet Case

Petit vs Jeejeebhoy VII

Conversion: Preached,
permitted but not practiced

THE JUDGEMENT SO FAR

In 1903 R. D. Tata married according to Parsi rites, a French lady, after having her navjote performed. Tata claimed his wife "had become a Parsi professing the Zoroastrian faith and consequently she was entitled to participate in all the charitable and religious Funds and Institutions of the Parsis" including the right to enter fire temples and have her body consigned to the Towers of Silence.

Thus the scene was set for the historic court case of Petit vs Jeejeebhoy, also known as "The Parsi Punchayet Case."

The question before the two judges of the Bombay High Court, Justice Frank C. O. Beaman and Justice Dinshaw Dhanjibhoy Daver, was whether a person born in another faith but converted to Zoroastrianism was entitled to the benefits of certain community trusts.

The plaintiffs (Sir Dinshaw Maneckji Petit; Tata and others) contended Zoroastrianism enjoins and practises conversion and that converts are entitled to all the benefits provided. The defendants (Sir Jamsetji Jeejeebhoy and others) while admitting that Zoroastrianism permits conversion state that "ever since their (Parsis) advent into India (they) have not admitted a Juddin (Person belonging to another religion) into their fold. They admit, however, that children born of a Zoroastrian father by an alien mother has been admitted into their fold by the performance of the Navjote ceremony."

Daver in his part of the judgement discredited the evidence, past and present, of conversion in India.

In the two last instalments he spoke of the traditions, circumstances and attitudes relating to conversion.

IT IS UNDER these circumstances that the communities of Zoroastrians in India object to the conversion of aliens. It may have been one of the tenets of the Zoroastrian Community to convert aliens. When, anywhere between 5,000 and 10,000 years before Christ, Zoroaster promulgated the religion revealed to him, circumstances must have existed that made this necessary or desirable. We have no knowledge of what other religions existed then; the scriptures that exist talk of such religions as then existed as Dewa Yeshna, which may mean Idolatry, or worship of some one other than the Supreme Being.

It must be remembered that the greater portion of the original and authentic Scriptures of the Zoroastrians—the Avesta Nasks—are lost and are not available to modern scholars. All except about a fifth part of these holy writings are lost, and no one knows what the behests of the prophet were in those scriptures that were lost. Reliance in this case is placed on the Ravayats. The Ravayats are not, in any sense, authoritative scriptural writings of the Zoroastrian religion. According to the Plaintiffs' own witness Sheriarji Bharucha, they are writings of which one may make use, if it suits one's purposes. If it agrees with one's ideas of what the religion dictates, act on it; if it does not conform to one's opinion and appears to him unreasonable, reject it. The Ravayats are supposed to be questions sent from India to Persia in comparatively recent times, and answers to such questions sent by men who are supposed to have understood the religion better than those who sent the questions down to them.

There are three Ravayats on which reliance is placed. One, at least, of the statements made in the question put in the first of these three Ravayats seems to me to be so startling that one hesitates to place much reliance on the accuracy of these Ravayats. It says that not

only were Durvands invested with Sudra and Kusti, but they prepared Daroons for Ghambar and other ceremonies, and these used to be consecrated. Only a Zoroastrian could understand the gross improbability of such a thing having happened. However, this discussion is not of much importance, as I am proceeding on the basis that conversion of aliens is permitted and enjoined by the Zoroastrian religion. The usage of twelve centuries however, proves that, under their altered circumstances—away from their fatherland, amidst surroundings never within the contemplation of the Prophet when he promulgated his religion—the enjoinder to propagate the Zoroastrian religion amongst aliens has fallen into complete disuse. It is now sought to put in force this ancient ordinance of the religion to proselytise aliens, and to disregard the custom and set at naught the usage of the community prevailing amongst them for many centuries.

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The Plaintiffs seek the assistance of the Court, relying on the Ravayats and a report of a Committee of Experts selected from the Zoroastrian Community. Surely, if these documents are relied on as authorities, the person on whose behalf such assistance is sought must comply with the requirements laid down in these documents. Take an important extract from the Expert Committee's report. Only those persons

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who, "with good object and pure intention . . . after showing their fitness to be considered as Zoroastrians," desire to be admitted, then they may be admitted; but such admission must depend on a most important condition being fulfilled, and that is that such admission should be allowed "if no harm of any kind whatever could be done to the Zarthosti Mazdyasnans themselves."

Who is to be the judge of "good object" and "pure intention" of the candidate and of his or her "fitness to be considered as Zoroastrian?" Surely, not—as the Plaintiffs contend—the solitary priest who, according to their expert witness Sheriarji, is not bound to make any inquiries or ask anybody's permission? And, above all, who is to judge that, by such admission no harm of any kind whatever could be done to the Zarthosti Mazdyasnans themselves? Surely, not that same solitary priest to whom a silver rupee may be dearer than the welfare of the Community.

Take the Ravayats and let us see what they lay down. The first Ravayat is to this effect: "We say that the Mobeds (priests) and Behedins (laymen) should first take into consideration the religion and the tenets of the religion and the safety of their own persons and property, in order that (by so doing) they may not suffer any sort of harm. After being satisfied with regard to the aforesaid matter, if they buy Juddin's children and having taught them Avesta, if they take them into the good Mazdyasnans religion, then that is a great meritorious act."

The second Ravayat relied on says: "If that person properly observes the tenets of the religion and puts faith in the religion, and if the good religion does not suffer harm (by such person coming into the religion), then it is lawful and proper to admit such person into the religion."

One of the questions submitted to the

Expert Committee was: "What are the ceremonies that should be performed?" To this question the Expert Committee give a very clear and definite reply: There are to be three ceremonies: 1stly, after a year's probation from the date of the written application of the candidate, he or she after undergoing the purifying ceremony of Nahan, is to be invested with Sudra and Kusti in the same way as an ordinary Zoroastrian child; 2ndly, the candidate is then to be given the Burushnum; and 3rdly, the candidate is to be then reinvested with Sudra and Kusti.

This report is signed by ten experts, including both the high priests of the Parsis, one of whom performed the Navjot ceremony of the 6th Plaintiff's wife. Three of the signatories, however, make additional minutes. Mr. K. R. Kama thinks the restrictions rather deterrent and the probation period too long, and Messrs. Sheriarji Bharucha and Behramgore Anklesaria think that the mere Navjot ceremony—the first of the three ceremonies mentioned in the report—is sufficient. Mr. K. R. Kama has not been examined before the Court. Mr. Sheriarji Bharucha and Mr. Behramgore Anklesaria have both been examined before us. Sheriarji is the accredited apostle of the Society, whose express aim is to *reform* religion and disseminate it according to the views of the Society of which Mr. K. R. Kama is, I believe, the head, and the opinions of those whose convictions are based not on what the tenets of a religion *are*, but what, *according to their view, they should be*, cannot command much attention in a Court of Law. Mr. Anklesaria candidly told the Court that his opinions were based on his reading of books only.

We find, however, that seven out of ten experts in the report relied upon by the Plaintiffs, including *both* the high priests, deliberately lay down that the three ceremonies, including the Burush-

num, are essential to the proper admission of a Juddin to the Zoroastrian faith.

We find that, as far back as 1836, in a Resolution passed by the whole Panchayet, the "holding of the Burushnum" is stated as a ceremony necessary for investing the children of Parsi fathers by kept-women.

We also find from the published pamphlets of both the late high priests, Dustoor Jamaspji and Dustoor Peshotam, that, although they were divided in their opinion as to whether Reemun Burush-

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num was or was not necessary, they are agreed that the nine nights' Burushnum was a ceremony essential to the admission even of those whose fathers were Zoroastrians: and Dustoor Jamaspji actually made the whole nine of the Mazagon people go through the Burushnum of the nine nights. The sons of both these high priests are the present high priests of the Parsis, and both of them have signed the report of the Expert Committee.

What is of still greater importance is that one of the very Ravayats on which the Plaintiffs base their contentions is very clear and explicit on the point: "If such *goolams* (slaves) and *kamjuks* (female slaves) have their faith in the good religion, then it is incumbent that they should be taken into the religion, by investing them with Kusti, and when they become clever, well conversant

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with the tenets of the religion, and firm in their religious faith, *they shall be given Burushnum* (they shall be made to undergo the Burushnum ceremony).

The Plaintiffs base their case on the question of conversion on the Expert Committee's report and on the Ravayats. These documents are the foundation on which they have built their case. Can it lie in their mouths to say : "We will rely only on such portions of them as suits our case and we will repudiate the rest." If they rely on documents they must take them as a whole, and it seems to me quite obvious from the materials available to the Court that, according to the dictates of the Zoroastrian religion as expounded in the Expert Committee's report and the Ravayats, and from the evidence, both oral and documentary, one of the essential ceremonies necessary for the admission of a Juddin into the Zoroastrian religion is that of the nine nights' Burushnum.

The Expert Committee is most emphatic in its opinion ; for, immediately after naming the three ceremonies, they say: "Such Candidates alone who are admitted to the din (religion) after the performance of ceremonies *in this way* shall be entitled to all the rights as a Zoroastrian."

While this question was being discussed, (the plaintiffs' counsel) Mr. Lowndes pointed out to us that the nine nights Burushnum was a ceremony that was extremely inconvenient for a grown-up female to go through. It is possible that the undergoing of this ceremony, in so far as it may involve the candidate going through certain forms, might not conform to some people's ideas of decency, but that is a matter that we are not concerned with. If a party chooses to enter a particular religion, he or she must go through the prescribed ceremonials however irksome they may be.

It must also be remembered that two of the Mazagon females whom Dustoor

Jamaspi invested were, respectively, aged 20 and 19 ; and if they, who claimed to be descended from Parsi fathers, had to undergo the Burushnum of nine nights, how could a Juddin desiring to be converted to Zoroastrianism be said to be properly converted if he or she does not go through this purificatory ceremony ?

Dustoor Kaikhushru was called by the Court and asked a few questions. The circumstances under which he was called and not allowed to be cross-examined are recorded in my note book. As both parties did not choose to call him, and as he was not cross-examined, I have thought it best to refrain from making any comment on his evidence.

On the question of whether it is usual and customary to convert Juddins to Zoroastrianism, the Plaintiffs' Counsel relied on a great many books, such as books written by historians and travellers and Journals of Societies, dictionaries, gazetteers, encyclopaedias, etc. As a counterblast to this, the Defendants' Counsel produced other

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books of a similar nature. I have expended a great deal of my time in going over the passages relied on by both sides, and I consider the whole of the time so spent absolutely wasted. Most of the statements made in those books are about as accurate as the statement of modern travellers who spend a

few weeks in the country and then feel competent to write books and newspaper articles about the manners and customs, the feelings and sentiments of the peoples of India. Even the article on the Parsis in the "Bombay Gazetteer" is full of inaccurate and misleading statements.

One sample will suffice : it says the Persian emigrants in India had forgotten their origin and their country. It would be wasting one's breath to point out how utterly absurd this statement is. We were told the article was compiled by the late Income Tax Collector of Bombay, Mr. Sirvai, and Mr. Bomanji Behramji Patell. I refuse to believe that Mr. Bomanji Patell, the author of the "Parsi Prakash", could write such sorry stuff as is to be found in the article. I doubt if the late Mr. Sirvai wrote it. How any Parsi can write some of the things that are to be found in the article passes my comprehension. Mr. Sirvai was dead, but when the suit was heard Mr. Bomanji Behramji Patell was alive and well, and he was not called to prove that the statements relied on by the Plaintiffs in the "Gazetteer" were correct.

I have derived no assistance whatever from the books of travel, histories, dictionaries, journals of societies, and various other publications cited before us, and I do not propose to spend any time in noticing any of them.

To sum up this part of the case, on the question of conversion, the conclusions which I have arrived at on the evidence before the Court are :—

- I That the Zoroastrian religion not only permits but enjoins the conversion of a person born in another religion and of non-Zoroastrian parents.
- II That although such conversion was permissible, the Zoroastrians, ever since their advent into India 1200 years ago, have never attempted to convert anyone into their

religion.

- III That there is not a single instance proved before the Court of a person born of both non-Zoroastrian parents ever having been admitted into the Zoroastrian religion professed by the Parsis in India.
- IV That the Parsi community of Bombay, at a Public Meeting held on the 16th of April, 1905, expressed its disapproval of any conversions being allowed, and are strongly opposed to any such conversion in the present times, and resolved henceforth not to admit even the children of Parsi fathers by alien mothers.

V That, although conversion is permissible by the religion, there are certain conditions which the candidate must fulfil before becoming eligible for admission. The conditions are that it must first be satisfactorily established that he or she, in applying for admission, is animated by a good object and actuated by pure intentions, in other words, that he or she seeks admission from religious convictions and not from other considerations; and further, that the candidate is in all other respects fit to be admitted to the Zoroastrian faith.

VI That such an admission of a person

born outside of the religion is only permissible if it is established that by such admission "no harm of any kind would be done to the Zarthosti Mazdiyasnans themselves."

- VII That the ceremonies necessary to be undergone by the candidate for admission are (a) Navjot, (b) Burushnum, and (c) a repetition of the Investiture ceremony of Navjot after Burushnum.
- VIII That only those persons who have undergone these three ceremonies are entitled to the full rights and privileges of a Zoroastrian.

To be continued

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— Bombay



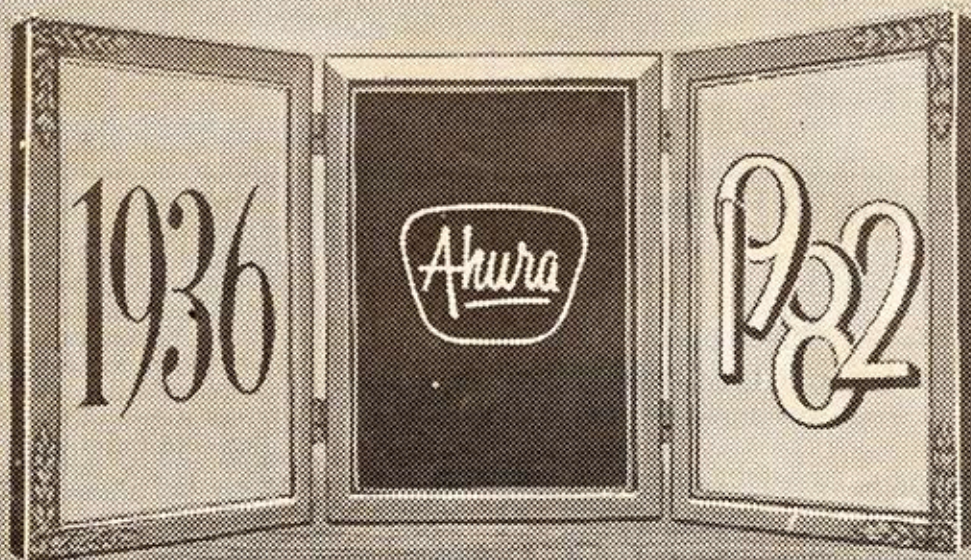
Muscat Palace of His Majesty the Sultan of Oman

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Published and edited by Jehangir R. Patel at C/o. H. L. Rochat, Navsari Chambers, ground floor, 39 A. K. Nayak Marg, Fort, Bombay 400 001 and printed by him at Jyoti Industries, 324, A to Z Industrial Estate, Bombay 400 013. Phototypeset at Decora Printers, Bombay 400 009.