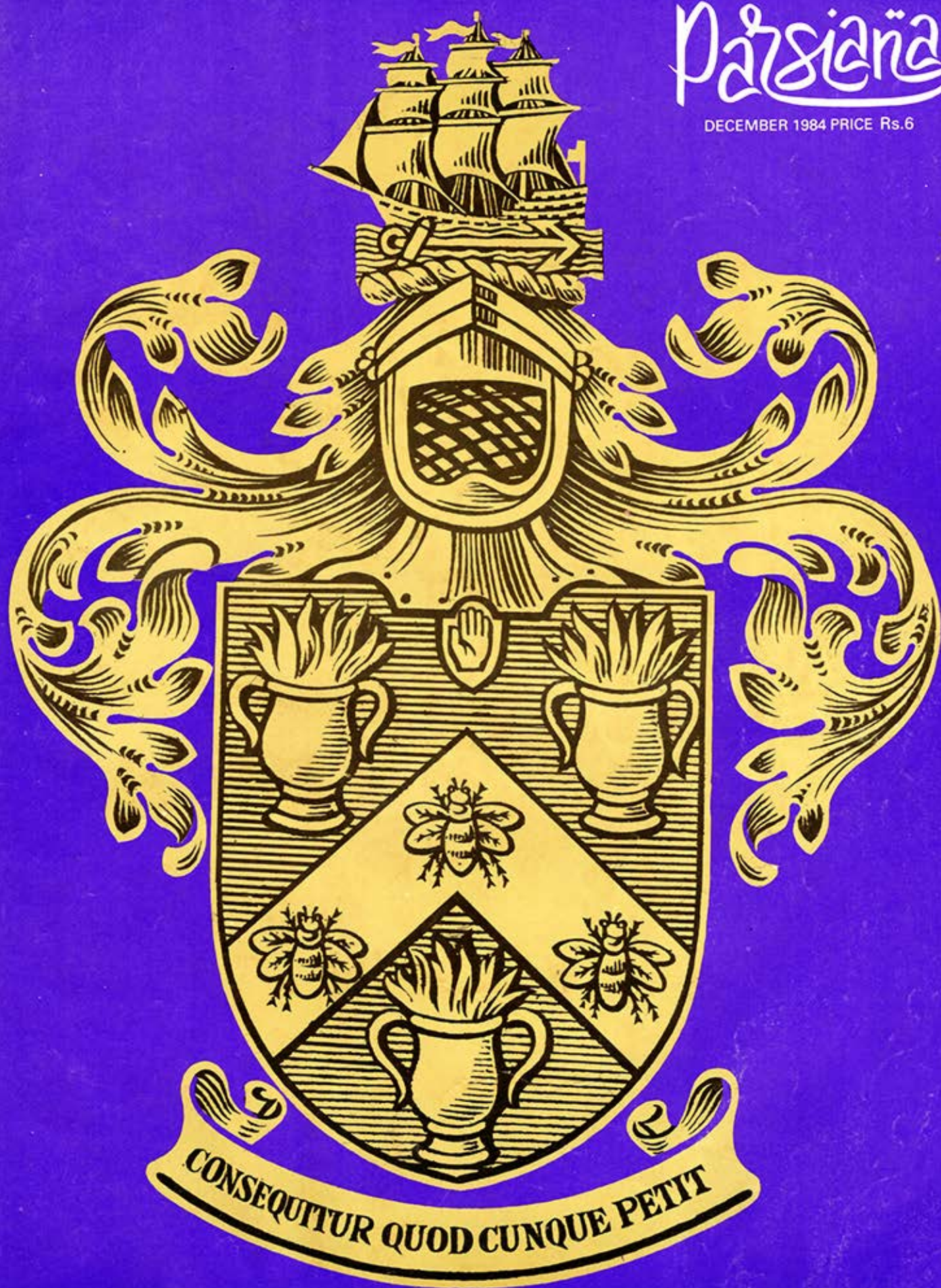
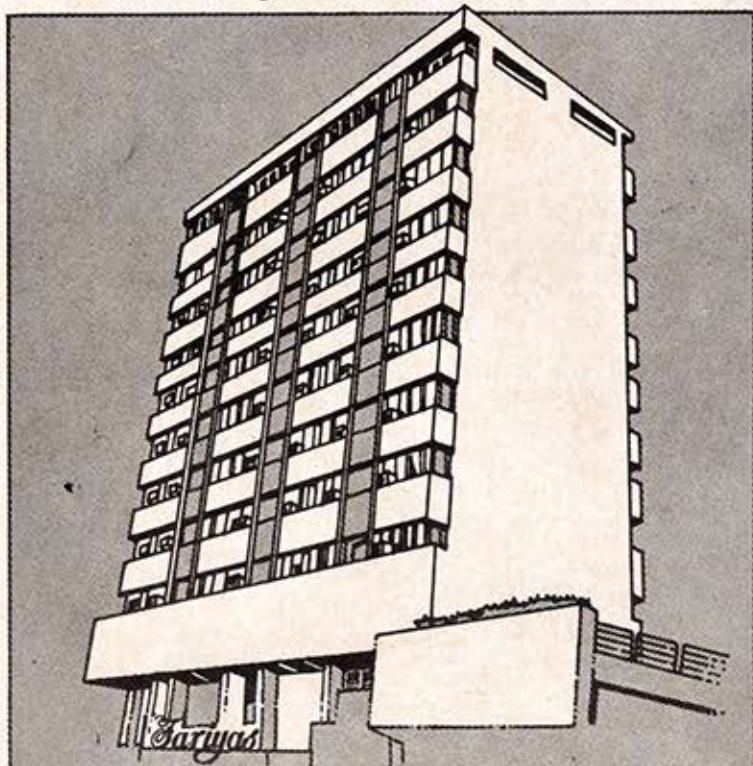


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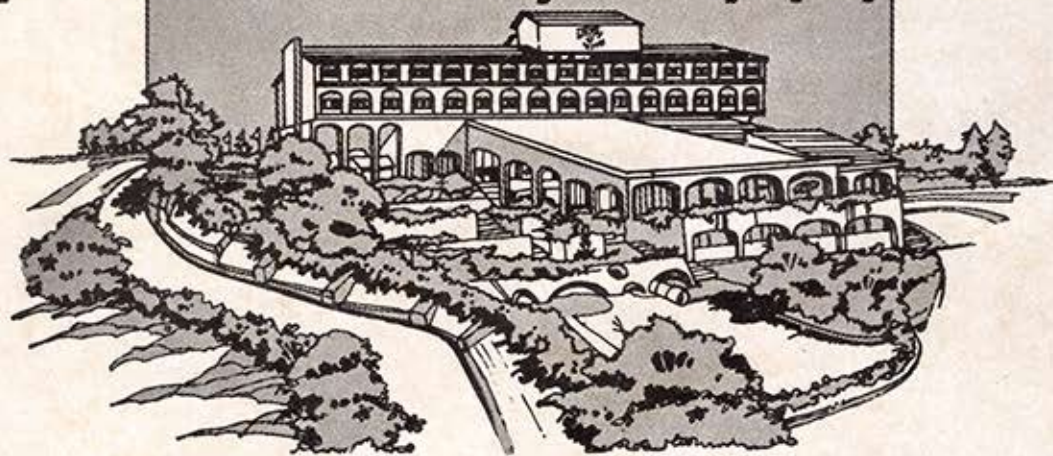
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Parsiana

December 1984
Volume 8 Number 6

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MANAGING EDITOR Arnavaz Mama
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DESIGN CONSULTANT Mini Boatwala
DESIGN ASSISTANTS Kranti Shilotri,
Varghese W Fernandez
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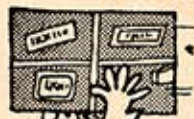
Parsiana is published by Jehangir R Patel for Parsiana Publications at C/o H L Roach, Navsari Chambers, ground floor, 39 A K Nayak Marg, Fort, Bombay 400 001, printed by him at Kaiser-E-Hind, 300 Perin Nariman Street, Bombay 400 001 and phototypeset at The Typesetters, Bombay 400 023. All rights reserved. Address all editorial and business correspondence to Parsiana, GPO Box 892, Bombay 400 001. Phone: 268730.

Annual inland subscription: Rs 40 for one year (12 issues); Rs 75 for two years (24 issues). Foreign subscription rates: Seemail Rs 80 for one year, Rs 150 for two years; Airmail Rs 160 for one year, Rs 290 for two years. For US cheques add \$ 4 to cover bank charges

For Indian upcountry cheques add Rs 3 for bank charges. Cheques and drafts are to be drawn in favour of Parsiana and posted to GPO Box 892, Bombay 400 001 or C/o H L Roach, Navsari Chambers, ground floor, 39 A K Nayak Marg, Fort, Bombay 400 001.

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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.

Zoroastrianism course

With reference to "Zoroastrianism: a graded course," I the undersigned, as the author of the three volumes of the above mentioned graded course, would like to clarify the following points, raised by the critic.

Continuity: Subjects dealt with in Volume I on an elementary level are all explained in detail in Volume III. Hence continuity is for the most part, observed.

In between Volumes I and III, Volume II comprises mainly the subjects not included in Volume I and III, especially, the concept of Asha which is the pivotal teaching of Zoroastrianism.

Constancy: (a) Date and birthplace of Zarathushtra: Definite date of Zarathushtra has not, as yet, been fixed. The statement that Zarathushtra must certainly have lived much before the historical event of the defeat of the

Assyrians by the Medes in 607 B.C. (Vol. III ch. I) is purposely written to show that the Prophet lived before that important historical event, and not after, as some of the scholars would have us believe. The exact place of Zarathushtra's birth is also equally difficult to determine.

We are concerned more with the fundamental teachings and the message of the Prophet rather than with controversial details like the date and birthplace of Zarathushtra.

(b) Feeling of wonder or anger at the germinal stage of religious consciousness? Animistic theory which, for the most part, preceded polytheism among primitive people, aroused mixed feelings of anger, wonder, veneration etc. in the primitive man in accordance with his response to the natural phenomena.

Pedantic tone of the books: Writing books on a religion like Zoroastrianism, which has as its source a scattered and mangled literature and not the complete whole preserved from the hoary past, and a tradition lacking in continuity, one has to be particular in giving accurate references from relevant sources and curb the free play of imagination. Again, there is a lot of difference between reading books on a religious system like Zoroastrianism which derives its information from a badly mutilated literature and frequently interrupted and broken Iranian tradition and books of fiction like stories and novels in which the author can delight in giving a free hand to the flight of his fancy and imagination and thus write in a style vibrant and vivacious.

R.R. MOTAFRAM

Some Surtis sore...

I was taken aback to see my article — entitled 'Parsis resent shifting of holy fire' appearing in the *Indian Express* of May 7, 1984 — reprinted in your August issue under the heading 'Some Surtis sore over shifting.' Courtesy demands that you at least inform the authors when using their articles appearing in other publications.

Besides, I found it highly unethical on your part to have selected two letters from among the few which appeared in the *Indian Express* in response to my article. It is but natural that both these letters contradicted my article for they had been written by the authorities

against whom I had made the charges.

There were other letters, however, which my newspaper had also published which vindicated the facts borne out in my article, but which you chose to ignore. Moreover, I had also written a rejoinder explaining my standpoint on the issue which again did not find space in your columns.

When one chooses to publish two letters from several containing views both for and against an issue, one expects



Mody Atash Bahram: 'motivated version'

that they represent both the versions involved (unless one is motivated).

SAROSH BANA

Bana's rejoinder:

I stand by my report. Whether an action has been undertaken three times or a dozen times in the past, if it violates norms, it violates norms. My report sought to reveal that what took place could have been better handled.

Raw deal

I understand from what I have been reading in various Parsi publications, that the Bombay Parsi Punchayet is spearheading to major housing projects in the city of Bombay; one at Little Gibbs Road and the other at Shapurjee Bharucha Baug, Andheri.

Understandably, the Gibbs Road Project will cater to the housing needs of Parsis belonging to the upper strata of the community, whereas the other one will be fulfilling the needs of the less affluent Parsis.

What amuses me here about the scheme is the difference in benefit derived by the affluent Parsis in contrast to the benefit the other section hopes to receive.

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Let me put it this way; the current market value for flats at Gibbs Road is approximately Rs 2000 per sq. ft. It is here that our BPP has decided to be magnanimous and offer flats to the affluent Parsis at the rate of Rs 800 per sq. ft. In short the affluent Parsis will be deriving a benefit of approximately Rs 1200 per sq. ft.

Now compare this figure with the benefit the less affluent will derive at Shapurjee Bharucha Baug. The current market value for flats around the vicinity of S.B. Baug is around Rs 500 per sq. ft. Here the BPP has thought fit to offer flats to the less affluent at the rate of Rs 420 per sq. ft.

Whereas the affluent Parsis with all resources at their disposal will obtain a benefit of Rs 1200 per sq. ft., the other section with little or no resources at their disposal will derive a pseudo benefit of Rs 80 per sq. ft. only. One begins to wonder from this whether the BPP reserves any soft corner for the middle class Parsis.

In view of the present circumstances it is becoming more and more evident that the BPP as usual is giving this unfortunate section (Middle Class) a raw deal.

NOSHIR HOMI DADRAWALA

Of Dabu and Mody

Apropos Dasturji Dabu, may I add that his students, myself being one, tended to regard him as super-human in many ways and so we naturally asked him in one of his classes whether he had had any spiritual experiences. He admitted having had only one such experience in which he witnessed fire as the principal force behind the working of this world. As this happened a little before he was to speak on the importance of fire his writings on this subject assume special significance.

All that I read about my erstwhile boss, Russi Mody, in *Parsiana* is something I know firsthand and is true to the dot. His genius in human relations remains unmatched in other organizations I served both in India and U.S.A. These two illustrious sons of the community, while so far apart in their lifestyles and missions, nevertheless reflect the spirit of Zoroastrianism in their respective undertakings. Incidentally, I was pleasantly surprised to see Mody starting his day with *loban*.

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Symbol of aristocracy

Of the five Indian baronets, three were Zoroastrians.

Shridhar Naik and Nina Ghosh

The baronetcy, a signal honour bestowed on any individual during British rule, conferred on the baronet a hereditary knighthood which entitled the recipient to a berth in the highest echelons of society in the British Empire.

Bestowed on those whose munificence and contribution to public life won recognition from the Imperial government, the baronetcy was first conferred through the Letters Patent from His Majesty, and then created by an Act of Parliament, though after the passage of the Indian Councils Act, the baronetcy had to be endorsed by the Governor General in Council. The baronet was required to create a trust, setting aside a sizeable sum for the upkeep of future generations of the baronetcy.

India witnessed the creation of five baronets, the first of them being the legendary Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, followed by Sir Dinshaw Petit, Sir Cowasjee Jehangir Readymoney, and Sir Currimbhoy Ebrahim in Bombay and Sir Chinoobhai Madhavlal of Ahmedabad.

Recalls a city elder with an air of nostalgia, "The baronet was virtually an institution in himself, a symbol of imperial aristocracy, who led the life of

a maharaja without being called one." The Baronetcy Act clearly mentioned the family residence, which in all five cases was a palatial mansion, and provided each baronet with a family emblem, consisting of an insignia and a family motto.

The baronetcy was introduced in India on August 6, 1857, when Sir Jamsetjee was created the first Indian Baronet in recognition of his generosity, and dedication to public welfare. With the creation of the baronetcy, Sir Jamsetjee achieved a 'triple first' having been knighted in Her Majesty Queen Victoria's birthday honours list of May 24, 1857, and even earlier being awarded the Order of the Freedom of the City of London in 1855. Sir Jamsetjee was the first Indian to receive these honours.

The Baronetcy Act bestowed on the family the motto: "Industry and Liberality," and provided for a sum of Rs25,00,000 to be set aside in a trust for the upkeep of the baronetcy in perpetuity. The family home, the Mazagaon Castle, which now houses the Sales Tax office, was also handed over to the trust.

The family's Fort House, which later had the showroom of Handloom

House, today finds itself in a sorry state, reduced to ashes with only the outer walls standing as a pitiable reminder of its glorious past.

Controversy surrounds the birth of this merchant prince, with one version claiming his birth date as July 15, 1783, in the Yathaahoo Vairyo Mohalla behind the present Crawford Market, while another states that he was born in Navsari. The fact remains however, that he was born in a modest weaver family, orphaned at the tender age of 16 and consequently denied the benefit of a formal education. It is ironic, therefore that when the Uni-



Lord Elphinstone wanted to give Jejeebhoy a military funeral but this was denied by his relatives on account of the Zoroastrian religion.



versity of Bombay came into being, Sir Jamsetjee was appointed one of the five Indian fellows.

After the death of his parents, Sir Jamsetjee was forced to come to Bombay and eke out a living selling empty bottles, an occupation which earned him the surname of Batliwala. Finding that this occupation afforded no future, the ambitious Sir Jamsetjee embarked in 1800 on his first voyage to China as a clerk of his cousin. This was the first of his five trips, in the course of which he amassed a fortune, and then built upon it through regular trade with China and the Far East.

The name of Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy will remain immortal for his generosity to the cause of charity. A regular donor for flood and famine relief, his aid even reached the victims of a flood in France and a famine in Ireland.

At home his donations for charity were endless. The most notable of these was the Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy Benevolent Institution which set up 19 schools including six for girls.

The Sir J.J. Poona Bund and Waterworks was built at the behest of the Baronet to provide pure drinking water to the residents of Pune. The Mahim Causeway, linking the city to Bandra and the suburbs, was built from a donation by Lady Avabai Jamsetjee. The first civil hospital in the city, now known as the J.J. Hospital and the J.J. School of Art, the first of its kind in the country, was a result of the munificence and benevolence of the first Baronet.

Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy passed away on April 15, 1859. Lord Elphinstone, the then governor of Bombay, wanted

to give him a military funeral with full military honours but this was denied by his relatives on account of the tenets of the Zoroastrian religion. Says a newspaper report "The whole city suspended its normal activities and all government and private offices remained closed in his honour... Thousands of people followed the cortege... The whole route was kept clear of all traffic..." A rare honour, and which speaks volumes for the greatness of this legendary figure.

The present Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy is the Seventh Baronet. The sixth Baronet died without a male heir and the baronetcy devolved on his second cousin who now resides at Worli. During the lifetime of the sixth Baronet, Mazagaon Castle was sold to the government and the family moved to Sett Minar, a bungalow on Peddar Road, which has also been demolished. The Jejeebhoy family then still lives on, continuing to uphold the traditions of its illustrious founder.

Another eminent citizen bestowed with the honour of baronetcy was Sir Cowasjee Jehangir Readymoney, a leading figure in the banking and commercial world of Bombay and a promoter of renowned concerns like the Tata Iron and Steel Company, the Hydro Electric Power and Supply Company and the Bank of India.

But it was his donation of four lakhs of rupees for the Institute of Science that won supreme recognition from Her Majesty's Government and in 1908 Sir Cowasjee Jehangir, who had been knighted earlier became an Edwardian baronet. The official Baronetcy Act was passed by the Governor General of



The baronetcy of Sir Cowasjee Jehangir stands abolished by an Act of the Maharashtra state legislature.

India in Council in 1911.

The Baronetcy Trust involved a sum of Rs 10,000 invested in government securities and an annuity of Rs 50,000. The Fort Mansion which was earlier the family's dwelling place and which still stands next to the Akbarally's department store on Veer Nariman Road along with the Readymoney Mansion on Napean Sea Road which was later built as the family house, but is now demolished, were also handed over to the trust. The family insignia in this case bore two mottos. "Burning I shine" and "My life is His who gave it."

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir (Baronet) was the adopted son of Sir Cowasjee Jehangir (Knight), knighted for his munificence and commitment to public welfare, but unfortunate not to enjoy the creation. It is said of the Knight that

(Facing page) Sir Jamsetjee: first Indian baronet. Sir J. J. Hospital (from an old water colour painting by Higgins)

(Top) Sir Cowasjee: banker and businessman

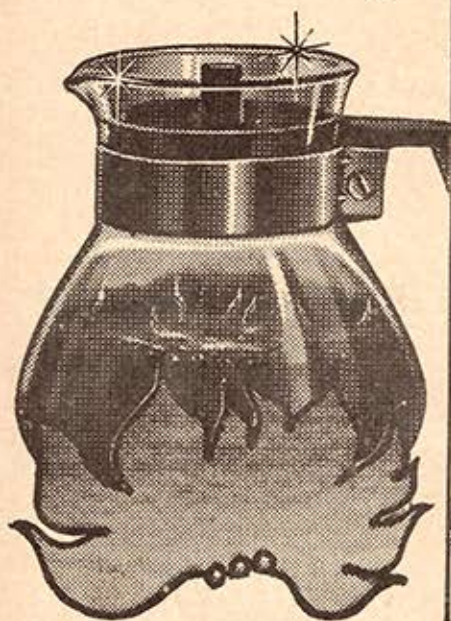
(Left) Fort House: Jejeebhoy's palatial home



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Sir Dinshaw began his career as an apprentice with Messrs Dirom, Careter and Co on a meagre salary of Rs 15 per month.

he could never turn back a person who approached him for alms or money, and hence the people of Bombay conferred on him the name of Ready-money, which has come to stay as the family surname.

The Baronet kept up the charitable precedent set by his adoptive father in promoting social amenities in the city. His charities, amounting to over Rs 31 lakhs in all, included the Cowasjee Jehangir Hall, the Jehangir Hall in the Imperial Institute, London, the Elphinstone College, which is known as the Sir Cowasjee Jehangir Building, the Sir Cowasjee Jehangir Ophthalmic Hospital, founding of the Viceroy's Leper Relief Fund and a building for poor Parsis at Dadar.

The second Baronet, keeping in step with family tradition, played an active role in the civic and political life not only in the city, but also in the country as president of the Bombay Municipal Corporation (before the mayoralty was created), the Indian delegate to the Round Table conferences, and as India's representative at the jubilee celebrations of King George V and Queen Mary in 1935, and again at the coronation of King George VI in 1937.

Another grand baronet of the Victorian era, Sir Dinshaw Petit, was bestowed with the signal honour in 1890, though the official Baronetcy Act was passed by the British Parliament in 1893.

Born in a family of traders, amidst a relatively affluent milieu, Sir Dinshaw was the grandson of Nasarvanji Kavasji, who migrated to Bombay from Surat and established himself as a shipping agent. It is said of Kavasji that so diminutive was his stature that the French sailors who called at Bombay Port, often referred to him as 'Le Petit Parsi' (the small Parsi). The label Petit stuck and was eventually adopted as the family surname.

Sir Dinshaw began his career rather modestly, as an apprentice with Messrs Dirom, Careter and Co on a meagre salary of Rs 15 per month. Being am-

bitious, he foresaw that the textile industry offered more lucrative openings and inaugurated his entry into the textile world with the setting up of the Manockjee Petit Mill at Tardeo.

Moving on to become one of the city's foremost textile magnates, Sir Dinshaw's empire later extended over the Royal Mills, (afterwards the Dinshaw Petit Mills), the Mazagaon Mill, the Victoria Mill, the Framji Petit Mills, the Gordon Mills (later called the Bomanji Petit Mills).

However, constituting Sir Dinshaw Petit's chief claims to fame are his benefactions, which amounted to Rs 5,68,919, quite distinct from the generous sums he donated for the welfare of his co-religionists. His most noteworthy contribution to his own community was the building of dwelling places for poor Parsis many of whom were then at the mercy of rapacious landlords.

His deep concern for water supply led him to build four water fountains in Poona on the supply lines constructed during the days of the Peshwas, apart from donating substantially for waterworks at Ahmednagar, Igatpuri and Panvel.

As regards the city of Bombay, the

Baronet's greatest contribution is the hospital for women and children at Babula Tank Road, near the J J Hospital, coming at a time when clinical facilities for the treatment of women and children were far from adequate. Then came the donation of the site for a hospital for the treatment of infectious diseases, with a pre-condition that a special ward be reserved for Parsi patients, together with the necessary facilities pending the disposal of dead bodies to the Tower of Silence.

Besides, there was the donation for the Bai Sakarbai Petit Hospital for animals at Parel. Equally, if not more note-worthy, was his donation of premises for the Victoria Jubilee Technical Institute, which today is one of the leading engineering institutes in the country.

Outside Bombay, the populace of Ratnagiri will remember him in perpetuity because of his donation for the leper's asylum. He later offered the government of Bombay a sum of Rs1.25 lakhs for the setting up of another leprosy hospital at Trombay, but the project fell through because the government was disinclined to bear the annual maintenance expenditure of Rs18,000. The foundation stone of this



Sir Dinshaw: starting salary Rs. 15

hospital was laid by Prince Albert Victor, who made an official announcement regarding the creation of the baronetcy on the occasion.

The Baronetcy Act laid down that for the upkeep of the baronetcy, a sum providing an annual interest of Rs 1.25 lakhs was to be invested in municipal bonds. The family residence, the palatial Petit Hall at Napean Sea Road, which Sir Dinshaw built in 1867, was also handed over to the trust. Earlier, the family lived in a house on Hornby Road, which was demolished by the Third Baronet, and in its place has been built the offices of the Petit Trust.

After the death of the first Baronet in 1901, the mantle of baronetcy fell on his grandson Jijibhoy, whose father Framji, the heir apparent to Sir Dinshaw, died during the first Baronet's lifetime. The family then lived on in Bombay till 1947, contributing continuously to the city's public life, as members of the highest social echelons.

With the dawn of Independence, the third Baronet left the shores of India for good. The family settled in its villa at Nice in Southern France, where the scions of the Petit household continue to live.

The Petit Hall — whose marble floored salons witnessed many a grand banquet attended by dignitaries of the



The Lady Sakarbai Petit Hospital for Animals: cattle wards

highest order, including the Shah of Persia in whose honour a special banquet was held — has now been demolished. In its place stand two skyscrapers which house representatives of the most affluent social strata today.

The majestic marble staircase and one chandelier out of the many that adorned its halls, have found shelter in the Tata Theatre — a symbolic remembrance of a family whose contributions to Bombay can seldom be surpassed. The 40 odd servants who waited upon their master in his days of glory still inhabit the servant's quarters, hav-

ing revelled in an era of grandeur which is no more.

In a section of the compound, a red bricked chalet has been built, which holds a part of the marble flooring, Victorian furniture and family heirlooms. This serves as the family's local residence, an essential pre-requisite to honour the baronetcy, where the present Baronet, the fourth in the line, pays his dutiful visits. While the eminent family may have no roots in Bombay now, its connections with the city are far from severed.

Reprinted from Sunday Mid-day, September 2 and September 16, 1984.

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Funding the Feder

A new emphasis on action emerges as members identify the problems of finance, data and motivation that restrict progress.

Arnavaz Mama

Various means to collect funds for the activities of the Federation of Parsi Zoroastrian Anjumans of India dominated the body's executive council meeting and extraordinary general meeting on October 26 and 27, 1984 in Secunderabad.

The Federation has obtained income tax exemption whereby its income will not be taxed and those donating to the trust will get tax exemption up to 50 percent. A fund for women and children has been formed and Rs 11,000 pledged by individuals present at the two day meet.

The monthly Federation newsletter edited by the body's joint honorary secretary Keki Gandhi, which is at present the highest cost item on the Federation's budget, has been provided advertising support from various regions to cover expenses.

About 3,000 people are likely to attend the opening function of the Fourth World Zoroastrian Congress at Cusrow Baug. BPP trustee and chairman of the Congress, Jamshed Guzder clarified that there will be three full days of business sessions at the Birla Matushri Hall where "only those who are keen on a particular subject are expected." The list of speakers has not yet been announced.

Disappointed with the World Zoroastrian Organization's response to the Federation's queries and suggestions for joining the London-based world body, the Federation will now seek a mandate from the associations of the world to form a committee which will

decide on how to proceed with the formation of an apex body.

The Federation will now have two vice-presidents from the west zone instead of one. This change will permit Poona which has the largest Zoroastrian population after Bombay, to nominate a vice-president. The Federation will now have five vice-presidents, one each from the North, South and East and two from the West.

Also, the Federation's general meeting will be held annually instead of once in two years as hitherto.

In order to deal with the problems of defunct anjumans a proposal made by Gandhi was reiterated by Group Captain Dhunjishaw M. Marker, vice-president, Mhow Anjuman, for obtaining and preserving documents, trust deeds etc pertaining to the properties of such anjumans.

BPP trustee and Federation joint secretary Eruch Desai, noting that the Federation had been "talking and not acting," added that resolutions and decisions must be specific. "Define who is in charge and what is to be done and reported at the next meeting." Accordingly Gandhi suggested an 'action sheet' be prepared after each meeting detailing who was to do what. The delegates welcomed the suggestion and instructed Gandhi to prepare and distribute the action sheet.

Setting the keynote in his welcome address, Sq. Leader Jamshed Italia, president of the Parsi Zoroastrian Association of Secunderabad and Hyderabad, referred to the issues before the

Federation and noted, "Do it now or our generation will not be able to do it."

Federation president and BPP chairman Dr Aspi Golwalla noted his disappointment with the attendance, attributing it to the expense of travelling and remarked, "Unfortunately the Federation does not have funds to provide." He also noted past complaints about the tendency to concentrate on problems relating to Parsis in Bombay and remarked that 70,000 of the community does reside there. He simultaneously encouraged other anjumans to bring forth their problems for discussion and solution. Golwalla noted that BPP chief executive Russi K. Anklesaria had visited Ahmedabad after the last executive council meeting in Bombay on May 19 and 20 and reported that there were no more quarrels.

The executive council meeting, originally scheduled for September 8 and 9 and postponed because of the unstable political climate that then prevailed in Hyderabad, was hosted by the Parsi Zoroastrian Association of Secunderabad and Hyderabad with care and concern for the delegates' comfort. All the trustees of the local anjuman, particularly Bejan Dittia, Noshir Nagarwala and Naval Vakeel, assisted by the women of the twin cities and the hospitable host families with whom many of the delegates were quartered, had sought to make the delegates' sojourn pleasurable which Shrivax Nargolwala, Federation vice-president and president of the Delhi Anjuman, grate-

ation



fully acknowledged on behalf of the delegates. Reminiscing about Hyderabad's loyalty to the Federation at a time when many others had departed in the wake of Bombay's abrupt exit in 1978, Nargolwala savored a remark then made by Jamshed Italia, president of the anjuman: "Carry on the work; we are with you."

WZO

Negotiations with the World Zoroastrian Organization (WZO) having stalled, the Federation will write to all the associations of the world, enclosing copies of the correspondence between them and Shahpur Captain of the WZO. "We (the Federation) do want reasonable weightage. We cannot expect to help the community if problems of 70 percent are not considered," declared Gandhi. "We will take a mandate from world associations that the steering committee will decide how best to proceed with the issue in light of the WZO's stand."

Gandhi gave a synopsis of the discussions since October '83 noting that individuals and anjumans having one vote under the present charter is not acceptable; that 14 of 21 managing committee members being from the UK was not acceptable; that while the Federation had agreed to the headquarters being in London, the meetings of the managing committee should be held in rotation in different parts of the world; that agenda and background papers are now coming in very late.

Captain Jal Postwala, secretary of the

Vizag Zoroastrian Association, suggested that a questionnaire be distributed with the rest of the papers at the Congress "so that we can get an idea of what the delegates think." But Gandhi argued: "Are we going to go by what 1,200 delegates who have no locus standi say or are we going to stand by the considered opinion of the associations?"

Nargolwala asserted that the problem "should no longer be shelved... What is involved is the simple question whether the Federation joins the WZO. It is not important whether other associations consider we should or not. The question is whether, if the Federation does not join, it should create another world body. Since it represents nearly 80,000 Zoroastrians it can consider itself a world body... Unity cannot be at the cost of harm to the community. Have a closed door session with delegates of associations, an advisory session only."

"There is bound to be criticism that some people behind closed doors are taking decisions," said BPP trustee Jamsheed Kanga. "Why be afraid of open discussion?"

Desai, who had submitted copies of proposed amendments to the articles of association of the WZO declared, "It's a lawyer's prerogative to confuse others but now I am more confused than ever as to what a world body should do. Negotiate on bare principles," he advised. "At the moment let

"Even if you offer Rs 5000 per month, if no one wants to take up mobedi it's no use."

us not tread on dangerous grounds—just state the bare principles...that's the best possible course." Desai said, "the Federation should ask the WZO 'Are you agreeable to these basic principles?' Put the ball in their court...if they don't see reason, follow Mr Nargolwala's approach and form own body."

Stating "a personal opinion," Gandhi declared that the steering committee should comprise "a maximum of two representatives from each continent or a minimum of one from each country... Ensure that the convener is from India... When we form a world body we have to sit down with the associations of the world to hammer out the new constitution. Otherwise we'd be guilty of the same folly" as the WZO.

Defunct Anjumans

Though the sub-committee formed to pursue the assets of defunct anjumans was set up in May, it had not met so far. "I took over this task," reported Golwala. "We wrote to the Tithal (sanatorium) trustee Mr Shroff, but there is no response from him." The sanatorium near Balsar is in a dilapidated condition.

Golwala went on to state how three members of the Khambhat Anjuman had attended a meeting with him and Russi Anklesaria, the BPP's chief executive and had photographs to show how part of the dokhma lands had been encroached. The Bombay and Surat Punchayets are looking after the

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is a potential winner.

Some people
are disguised
as losers.

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fool you."

- Kenneth Blanchard
Spencer Johnson

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assets of the Khambhat Anjuman after all the former trustees died.

Golwalla apologized for "not taking the committee's permission" before meeting the concerned trustees. The executive council, however, endorsed his work by officially casting him in the role of chairman, the Federation vice-president and president of the Surat Punchayet Maneck Gheyara as vice-chairman and BPP chief executive Russi Anklesaria as convener.

"Khandwa is one defunct anjuman where no Parsis exist," noted Marker. "The anjuman property is in the hands of non-Parsis and nobody has been able to do anything. Register (anjuman properties) in a central register so that we know what their properties are."

Gandhi immediately responded: "If some documentary evidence regarding the encroached property in Khandwa is available to me I can take it up with the minister in Delhi. If every anjuman would give the secretariat copies of trust deeds to maintain a central record... Unless trust deeds give a history of allotment of property, there is no way to pursue it... (One must) establish that



Two pillars minus gate and walls stand at the entrance to this dokhma on the outskirts of Surat.

The Diu dokhmas which were not in use for decades should be protected as national monuments.

the title to the property belonged to the Khandwa Anjuman. We can then approach the home ministry... a list of dharamshalas would itself give an inventory of properties!"

Nargolwala cited the example of the Agra Anjuman's Hathras cemetery lying unused 35 km away, while Kanga spoke of the beautiful site of the dilapidated Golvad sanatorium. "The problem" noted Desai, "is that we have to deal with people who are not under our control. We should consider whether those private trusts could become members of the Federation so we can hear their problems and make suggestions."

On the subject of preserving the dokhmas in Diu as national monuments, Gandhi reported that K.T. Satarawala, ex-governor of Goa, Da-

man and Diu and currently governor of the Punjab had suggested to the Director General of the Archeological Survey of India that the dokhmas, which were not in use for decades, should be protected as national monuments and the director general had indicated that this was accepted in principle.

As regards the plot of cantonment land in Srinagar offered by Behram Pestonji, S. Nargolwala and Guzder agreed on it being an ideal setting for a holiday home for middle income Parsis but differed on the route to take towards that goal. Guzder noted, "the commander-in-chief must give the permission to build... I can collect four to five lakhs in a jiffy." Nargolwala countered: "Which comes first, the chicken or the egg? The defence authority will not give permission unless they see a definite plan and funds to implement it."

Nargolwala concluded, "The ball is in Guzder's court. He has offered to speak to Pestonji and get a firm proposal which could be considered by the Cantonment Board in Delhi" but added, "get firm commitments from individuals regarding finance!"

Newsletter

"I am happy to say I've started on the modest figure of 4,000 and once the mailing list is increased, I'll go up to 5,000" said Gandhi but admitted that financing the newsletter was a problem. Noting that the main expense of the Federation was the cost of the newsletter which now came to Rs 28,200 per annum, he suggested that the centre half page in each issue of the

Federation's newsletter be given to whichever commercial organization bears the total expense of its production. Each anjuman, he said, should undertake to get two advertisements from business organizations in their area. "I'm prepared to take up two issues," said Guzder and set the ball rolling. Desai accepted responsibility for one and the BPP for four more. Dr R.D. Anklesaria, trustee of the Calcutta Zoroastrian Community's Religious and Charity Funds, Dinshaw Anklesaria, trustee of the Poona Parsi Punchayet, Rustom Daroga, trustee of the Delhi Parsi Anjuman, Minoo Belgamvala of the Madras Parsi Zarthosti Anjuman, Italia, Nargolwala and Bejoo Jilla of the Nanded Parsee Anjuman expressed willingness to obtain advertisements for one issue apiece.

Capt. Jal Postwala of the Vizag Zoroastrian Association distributed copies of the Association's directory and newsletter—a commendable venture, considering that there are only nine families who are members of the association!

Fourth World Zoroastrian Congress

"Three thousand people are likely to attend the inauguration on the central lawn of Cusrow Baug" said Guzder, chairman of the Congress. The Federation, which had been very hopeful of having the late Ms Indira Gandhi inaugurate the proceedings on January 10, 1985 yet uncertain whether her electioneering schedule would accommodate the occasion, is now bereaved of a staunch friend and supporter. At the three full days of business sessions

(January 11, 12, and 13—9.30 am to 5.30 pm) at the Birla Matushri Sabharwal which accommodates 1,176 people, only those who are keen on a particular subject are expected to attend.

The entertainment program as detailed by Guzder, envisages a performance by the Parsi doctors on Friday, a gala dinner at the Cooperage on Saturday where 2,000 people are expected at a cost of Rs 50 for members and Rs 75 for non-members. A full evening's entertainment has been planned; in Guzder's words, "Something to show off the professional skill of our young men and women." The program, which is expected to begin halfway through the first *paat* and last to the end of the second last *paat*, will include an audio-visual with commentary by Adi Murzban, Dolly Dotivala's troupe, Homi Daruwalla's international award-winning audio-visual on Singapore, Farida Pedder and her troupe of modern ballet.

Membership at the Congress is envisaged in six categories: patron (Rs 1,500 including spouse), vice patron (Rs 750 including spouse), member of

the reception committee (Rs 350; spouse Rs 300), delegate (Rs 75; spouse Rs 50), student (Rs 15) and practising mobed (free). Nargolwala jocularly suggested each foreign de-

"The next step is to get the Government of India to recognize our Federation as an institution of a national character."

legate be asked to bring a bottle of Scotch!

Kanga, who is the chairman of the subjects committee, noted that the theme of the Congress was *Ham-Band Paivaste*—bound together unitedly (forever). He gave a synopsis of the topics: "conditions in each area so that potential emigrants know what to expect, thus developing a kind of data bank on life in different parts of the

world; improving communications so that we know how to assist and guide each other; how and in what way the religion is relevant in tackling today's problems; areas of research; and the concept of an appropriate world body.

Dr. R.D. Anklesaria of Calcutta suggested that youth (age group 18-30 years) be asked to give their idea of Zoroastrianism and state their problems at a separate session where the older generation should not be allowed.

Desai detailed the contents of the souvenir to be published for the occasion. With an advertisement cum donations target of two lakh rupees, the souvenir, with articles from outstanding Parsis and hopefully, high priests, will be illustrated with pictures of Parsi landmarks and photographs of ancestors. One article will provide condensed accounts of each of the associations and anjumans outside India together with their activities, said Desai.

Guzder noted that all the eminent Parsis honoured at the tercentenary celebrations of the BPP have been designated honorary patrons. Parsi

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judges of the High Court have also been invited. A badge will be distributed to all delegates, Guzder said.

Air-India, designated the official carrier, will distribute information literature free of charge and will provide two free tickets, New York-Bombay-New York, said Guzder. "We had hoped to premier *A Quest for Zarathushtra* (starring noted conductor Zubin Mehta) but, unfortunately, the movie will not be ready.

Regarding publicity for the event, Guzder said he expected to call a press conference in the next two or three weeks. 10,000 newsletters, expected to be ready in a week would be distributed to every flat of the baus belonging to the BPP, and the rest to the remaining baus. The Bombay based morning newspaper *The Daily* had offered to prepare a supplement on cost sharing basis and to print topical articles free of charge. Radio and TV coverage for the Congress was also being planned, he said.

Nargolwala advised that the holding of the Congress by the Federation should be emphasized in the panels and

souvenirs. The bank account should be under the authority of the Federation and the surplus should be utilized for

"The BPP put out an appeal for Rs eight lakhs for mobed quarters (at Doongerwadi). We have received only Rs 50,000..."

the objectives of the Federation, he noted. To counter criticism in the newspapers regarding the need for the Congress as well as allegations that Guzder was promoting the Congress to enhance his chances of reelection to the BPP board of trustees in February 1985, Nargolwala suggested that Federation members write to the Parsi Press to explain their point of view. Gandhi noted the Bombay community would

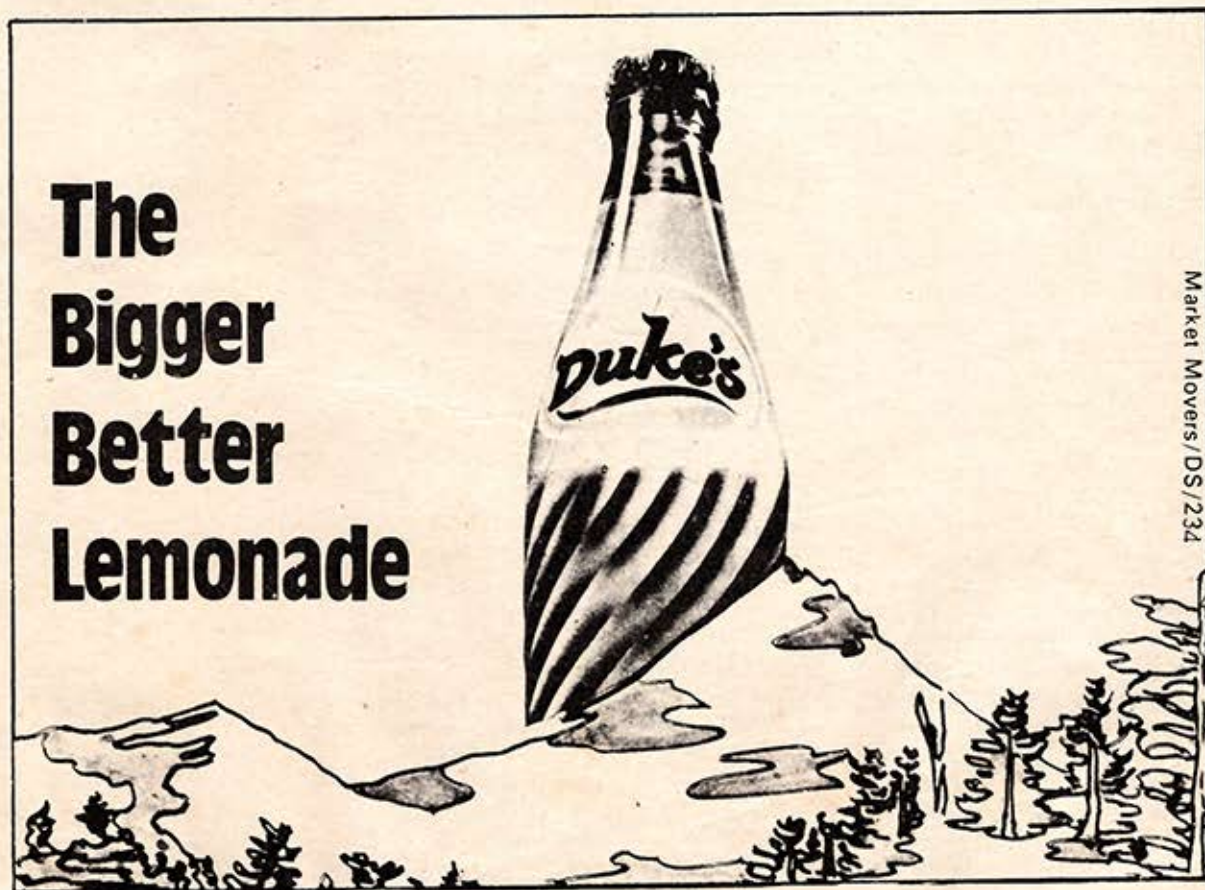
be making a mistake in not reelecting a man like Guzder while Golwala stated that Guzder would in all probability be reelected unopposed.

The Priests

Paucity of funds and dearth of reliable information have been hampering the Federation's attempts at the amelioration of priests. It was reported that the Zoroastrian Community Development Institute had estimated that the training of a single yozdathregar (higher liturgical) priest would cost one lakh rupees. "The first thing you must have is funds," said Golwala. "In the last four months we (the BPP) put out an appeal for eight lakh rupees for mobed quarters (at Doongerwadi). We have received only Rs 50,000... We requested seven trusts to come for a meeting... only one trust responded."

On the one hand persist reports of the mobeds' miserable condition of life and work. On the other, mofussil anjuman cannot find anyone to cater to their needs, despite providing superior terms of service.

continued on page 30



The lost tribe?

Trying to maintain both identity and numbers is proving difficult.

Malini Karkal

The census of 1891 mentioned that there were not more than 100,000 Parsis in the world. By 1961 the number was estimated to be 128,077. Of these, 100,772 (78.7 percent) were enumerated in India. However, the number in India has shown a decline since Independence. The largest number of Parsis lived in Bombay — 68,816 in 1951 rising to 70,065 in 1961 — with post-Independence migration from other areas in the country. But the following census of 1971 showed a decline to 64,667. Figures for 1981 are not yet available but other indications are that the number has gone down further.

Most Parsis continue to be Zoroastrians. John Wilson, a Christian educator of Bombay, wrote a book on their religion and it appeared in 1843. It exposed the degree to which the community was ignorant of its own religious background and literature. After the first wave of resentment, the Parsis took the accusations to heart and began an educational and reform programme that had considerable effect. Parsis completely forbid conversion to their faith, even of those non-Zoroastrians who marry Parsis. Strict adherence to these rigid rules was demanded to maintain "purity of blood," though there are instances of mixed blood expressed by non-Aryan characteristics such as blue eyes and fair hair and the presence of the chromosome G6PD, which is present only in one other community — the Warli tribals — in the area on the west coast of Gujarat where the Parsis initially lived. The community to a large extent has managed to keep its independent identity and this has had demographic repercussions.

The history of the slow growth of the Parsi population provides a good opportunity to study what causes low fertility in a community.

The census of 1881 counted 85,314 Parsis in undivided India. The number rose to 114,890 by 1941 and, in 1951, the Parsis in India and Pakistan numbered 117,147. Between 1881 and 1951, the

absolute number showed a consistent increase even when it was observed that the rate of growth was much slower than that of the general population.

Between 1881 and 1951, while the general population in India grew by 74.6 percent, that of Parsis grew by 37.3 percent. More significantly, the growth of the general population was mainly due to natural increase — the difference between births and deaths — whereas for the Parsis the major contribution was of immigration into India. An analysis of the data on age distribution of the Parsi population of undivided India gave a birth rate of around 31 and a death rate of around 29 per thousand for 1881-1891. The rates for the general population for the same period were 49.2 and 42.6 respectively.

At the turn of the century, the rates were 28 and 23 respectively. Both continued declining and were around 23 and 20 by 1931. The national rates at this later time were 46.4 and 36.3.

The population of Greater Bombay showed lower rates for each decade. In 1872, both the birth and death rates were around 28 and reached about 20 by 1925. The death rate, which hovered around 14 till 1947, showed a decline to 11.6 by 1954. It then moved upwards, in spite of improvement in mortality, and continued rising because of the aging of the population. The rate was 15.6 in 1969, 16.0 in 1970 and 15.9 in 1971. The birth rate had reached a low figure of 10.6. For the decade 1961-71, the figures for birth and death rates for India were 41.2 and 19.0 respectively.

(It is interesting to note that the reproductive rates in all minority communities — anywhere in the world — are higher than that of majority communities. This happens mainly because they find security in numbers. But as we have seen, the Parsis' reproductive rate is just the opposite — much lower than that of the general population.)

Thus natural increase contributed very little or negatively to the growth of the Parsi population. Increase in popu-

lation was mainly due to immigration. Between 1901 and 1911 the increase in population was 5,775 whereas the net influx was 4,779. During the following decade, when an influenza epidemic was rampant, the population grew by 1,663 whereas the net influx was 419. Again, between 1921 and 1931, the population had gone up by 7,913 whereas the net influx was 3,913. Parsis were only a small fraction of the population of India to begin with, and with their slower rate of growth they are an unrecognized minority group in the country. Except for the size of the population, no details are given about the community in the censuses since Independence.

Though Parsis are a minority community in India they are affluent, as can be seen from their standard of living.





From this point it is worth seeing some of the characteristics of the population as noticed in the 1982 survey.

Parsis are a highly urbanized community with a large majority living in urban areas. Among those living in Bombay, almost 78 percent were born in the city. Of the remaining 22 percent, 2 out of 3 persons have been living in the city for over 25 years. Of those who have been living in Bombay for less than 25 years, the majority is young.

Being "old residents" of Bombay, the Parsis are less affected by the deteriorating living conditions in the city than the general population. The housing conditions of the community are much better than those of the general population.

Nearly 53 percent of Parsi households are located in prestigious south Bombay, and an additional 30 percent and more live on the island part of Bombay. Thus over 83 percent of the population has convenient locations and are not required to commute long distances to their places of work. In addition, as the Parsis have been living in Bombay for a long time, they possess larger houses. Even those that were rented had far lower rents than what is charged in recent years.

Data available from the 1971 census show that 77.4 percent of the households in the city lived in one room and 14.2 percent in two rooms. In comparison, 3.6 percent of Parsi households lived in one room and 19.4 percent in two rooms. It was also observed from the 1971 census data that the number of persons per room was 4 for the general population whereas Parsi households were much less crowded and the number of persons per room was 1.4.

The households of Parsis were equipped with amenities which were not easily available to many Bombay residents. 82 percent of the households possessed cooking gas, 78 percent owned a refrigerator and 49 percent had a geyser for hot water. Nearly two

The reproductive rates in all minority communities — anywhere in the world — are higher than that of majority communities.

out of three households had a radio or a television, and one in three had a telephone. One in three also owned a vehicle and two of these three owned a motor car. The reported income per household was over Rs 2,000 per month.

The low fertility among Parsis is a result of the late age at marriage, a section of the population remaining unmarried, and low marital fertility. Between 1881 and 1891 the mean age at marriage of Parsi females in India was 19.2 years; between 1891 and 1901 it was 22.1. By 1931 the age rose to 25 and has remained the same since. For the general population, the females married on an average at 12.5 years in 1891 whereas by 1971 they did so at 14.3.

The proportion of females reporting "never married" between the ages 20 and 29 is an index for late marriage. For Parsi females of Greater Bombay the value of index for 1901 was 48.8. It rose to 62.65 by 1961 and to 65.2 by 1971. A survey in 1982 showed it to be 68.2. The latest available figures for the general population refer to 1971. These data show that the percentage of "never married" females between the ages 20 and 29 for India was 6.0, for Maharashtra it was 6.2 and for Greater Bombay 19.4. It is therefore evident that the incidence of late marriage is higher for Parsis even after comparing it with the general population of Greater Bombay.

It is known that a late age at marriage is accompanied by a section of the population never marrying. The proportion of females "never married" in the age group 40 to 49 is an index of non-marriage in the population. For the Parsis of Greater Bombay, the percentage was 3.3 in 1901 and it rose to 18.9 by 1961. By 1971 the percentage showed a slight decline to 17.9. The 1982 survey showed that it had gone up to 21.0. The general population of India for 1971 reported 0.6 percent of females between the ages 40 and 49 as

never married. Maharashtra reported the percentage to be 0.6 and Greater Bombay 2.6. Marriage among the general population is therefore early and universal, whereas for the Parsis it is late and a substantial proportion opt not to marry.

Experience in the European countries has shown that in late marrying



populations, nuclear families had long been residentially and economically separated from kinship groups, the family households were much smaller and socially and economically independent, thus reducing the moral authority of larger kinship groups and encouraging individualism. People whose religion did not emphasize early marriage, and in whom declines in mortality resulted in a rise in natural increase, adjusted their growth in population by late marriage and high celibacy, which resulted in low fertility. These populations took advantage of opportunities for employment. Females adjusted



Karkal: investigating decline (Photo: Homiyar Mistry)

their non-marital status by seeking alternatives to marriage and rearing children in employment outside the home.

The 1982 survey of Parsi households in Greater Bombay showed that nearly the entire population was literate. Comparison of the education levels of the never married and the ever-married females showed that the former had achieved higher levels of education compared to those of the latter. The data on those reporting as students are indicative of the importance the community attaches to education. In the age groups 15 to 19 and 20 to 24, the percentages of females reporting as students were 34.5 and 7.5 for urban India and 81.5 and 36.3 for Parsis.

It was further observed that larger proportions of Parsi females were economically active compared to females in urban India. The percentage of such females amongst the Parsis was 28.8 whereas among urban females in the general population, the percentage was 7.3. Among the employed, one in five Parsi females held an administrative or executive position, whereas among the females in Greater Bombay only one in 100 did.

Another interesting observation is about females reporting as housewives. Data for Greater Bombay, available for the general population for 1971, show that in the age groups 20 to 24 and 25 to 29 as many as 71.6 and 83.1 percent respectively reported as "housewives." Among the Parsis for the same age groups the percentages were 18.1 and 22.8 respectively. All this goes to

Parsi females are more active in pursuing education or careers. Marriage and being a housewife does not interest them as they do the general population.

show that Parsi females are more active in pursuing education or careers. Marriage and being a housewife does not interest them as they do the general population.

The survey of 1982 showed that 20 percent of the ever-married females were childless and another 26.5 percent had only one child. Among the females of completed fertility (aged 45 years and above) the percentage of the childless was 18.7 and those with one child was 20.7.

More important is the fact that when asked if they wanted a child or more children, 64.8 percent of the females with no children said that they desired none and 84.1 percent of the females with one child and 98.5 percent of those with two children said that they did not desire any more children. Finally, it is worth noting that not a single female with three or more children desired any additional children.

Putting it statistically, it is observed that in 1901, because of non-marriage, the births to Parsi females in Greater Bombay were 55 percent fewer than what the number would have been if every female was "married" throughout her reproductive ages. This proportion was more or less the same up to 1931, but it showed a decline to 49 percent in 1961 and then a rise to 59 percent in 1971 and to 63 percent in 1982.

Since married females are producing fewer children, that too has an impact on the overall fertility of the population. It was observed that in 1901 marital fertility was only 43 percent of the standard and it declined to 35 by 1931. Declining rapidly since then, it was only 17 by 1982.

As a result of the influence of the marriage pattern and marital fertility, the impact on overall fertility showed that the actual fertility of Greater Bombay's Parsi population was only 24 percent of the standard in 1901. It showed rapid decline and was only 11 percent by 1982.



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The example of the Parsis clearly shows that the status of females in the community, their interest in pursuing careers and self-improvement leads to the lowering of population's fertility.

From the presentation so far, if anyone concludes that enlightenment and raising the status of females will lead to a society that plans for its extinction it is not true, especially for a population such as that of India. For a traditional society to raise the average age of females at marriage to 25, and accept non-marital status for a substantial proportion, requires many other

Stillbirths and miscarriages are more frequent among Parsis than in the general population.

changes to have taken place, mainly when society has given up its traditional character and has the individual and conjugal family at its core.

The question that perhaps still remains incompletely answered is why is the decline in the Parsi population of such a magnitude that the very survival of the community seems to be threatened?

A dimension that needs further research concerns the biological changes in the community. The data collected in the 1982 survey indicate that fetal wastage (stillbirths and miscarriages) among Parsi females is much higher than that observed in the general population. It is known that the outcome of a pregnancy is related to age and the order of pregnancy. Females below the age of 19 and those in higher ages (over 40) experience higher wastage. Similarly, wastage is reported to be higher for higher orders of pregnancy. Even when allowance is made for the fact that Parsi females marry late, it is observed that the wastage of pregnancies for Parsi females is higher when compared to the females of the same age in the general population, and this happens in spite of the fact that they are better nourished and receive better medical attention.

Prof Karkal is head of the Department of Public Health and Mortality, International Institute for Population Sciences, Deonar, Bombay.

Reprinted from Science Age, September 1984.

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In search of the Goo

A report on the Zoroastrian immigrants settled in Chicago.

Ruzbeh Antia

The 1960s and early 70s were the peak period of Zoroastrians' immigration to the United States. A project examining in some detail the Zoroastrian community in Chicago was presented by Ms Ruzbeh Antia in partial requirement for her degree in journalism from the Marquette University. The first instalment of Antia's thesis "Keeping the fire of faith alive: Zoroastrians in Chicago" described the social and economic condition of the Zoroastrians, the reasons why they emigrated, their assimilation into the American mainstream, and their views on Zoroastrian traditions, rituals and acceptance of converts.

Birth, death and outmarriage

Hoshang and Joyce Presswala were married about four years ago in Denver and now live in Chicago. He is a Zoroastrian, she is not. Before she met Hoshang, Joyce had never heard of Zoroastrians or their religion. "That was my first interest in Hoshi," she says, "the fact that he comes from such an unusual group."

Joyce has since learned a lot about Zoroastrians. She has visited their stronghold in Bombay, which she admits, was a "culture shock." She sometimes attends meetings and other functions of the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago (ZAC). But she does not feel that she can identify with the community. "There isn't that much to identify with," she points out.

Hoshang has involved himself with the activities of the ZAC and even served on its executive board of directors. However, he is not overly concerned about bringing up his children as Zoroastrians or having navjote ceremonies performed for them.

"I have a child from a previous

marriage. She has no interest in having a navjote performed," said the tall, bearded Hoshang. "I don't see why I should push her into it. After all, she's just like a regular American kid," he added, tucking into typical Parsi food at a recent meeting of the ZAC.

Zoroastrians are obviously worried that too many among them will follow the example of Joyce and Hoshang Presswala — marry outside the community and not bring up their children as Zoroastrians.

Our children are bound to marry non-Zoroastrians when they grow up," said Roshan Patel of Chicago. "We can't shut our eyes to the fact and hope it won't happen."

Of course, not all those Zoroastrians who marry outside the community or their children are necessarily lost to the group. "Except for one case, most of those who have married out want to bring up their children as Zoroastrians. They have navjotes performed and all," said Rohinton Rivetna.

Kersey Antia, the Chicago community's head priest, said that he had performed several navjotes for children of mixed marriages and hoped to perform many more in the future. He pointed out that two of the children were taught their prayers and prepared for the ceremony by the non-Zoroastrian mothers.

How much does the community stand to lose or gain from outmarriage? This is a very difficult question to answer. First, accurate statistics and research are hard to come by. Next, there is no general consensus on the effects of outmarriage even among sociologists. Most of them recognize that a host of variables have to be taken into account and that they vary from one community to the next.

Much of the debate about outmar-



Front entrance of Darbe Mehr
Opposite page.

Conference Room at Darbe Mehr

riage in the North American Zoroastrian community is necessarily speculative because it concerns the future. At present, the rate of outmarriage does not appear to be very high. In the Chicago survey, less than one fourth of all married respondents were married to non-Zoroastrians. Of these, 90 percent were men. Moreover, although the actual number of Zoroastrians marrying outside the community increased in the larger 19 to 40 age group, there seems to be no increase in the rate of outmarriage. About 10 percent of Zoroastrians in the 19 to 40 and 40 to 60 age groups are married to non-Zoroastrians.

These figures, however, may be misleading. In this survey, we were dealing with first generation immigrants with firm roots in the mainstream Zoroastrian cultures of India and Iran. Some of them may have been married before they immigrated to the United States and many returned to their home count-

d Life-II



ries after immigration to marry Zoroastrian spouses.

"The pattern so far has been for the boy to find his feet in this country, then go home and marry a girl his parents have chosen for him and bring her back with him," says Roshan Rivetna.

Second generation Zoroastrians who have been brought up partly or entirely in the United States will be much less likely to follow this old pattern. At the same time, given such small numbers and dispersion of the community throughout the United States and Canada, the demographic odds against their finding Zoroastrian spouses within North America will be very high.

"There hasn't been a single case of two Zoroastrians being married within the community in Chicago," asserts Rohinton Rivetna, peering over the rims of his spectacles. "There are enough

single people around, but it just hasn't happened."

On the other hand, the trend towards increasing numbers of marriages outside the community already seems to have started. Rivetna cites the example of five women who came to the United States in their early teens and recently married. Only one married a Zoroastrian.

The survey also indicates that the number of men marrying outside the community far exceeds the number of women. However, it must be remembered that almost 84 percent of the women who responded to the survey were married before they came to the USA.

The effects of outmarriage depend to a large extent on the way in which a group defines itself. Groups that define themselves "objectively," as sharing fixed common attributes (religion, language, customs etc.), which are difficult to

change and can only be acquired by birth into the group, are more liable to be threatened by outmarriage. On the other hand, groups adopting looser, more "subjective" approaches based on personal identification with a group and its concerns, are less vulnerable. Such groups have a greater potential for absorbing the spouses and children of mixed marriages.

Zoroastrians have traditionally defined themselves objectively and have adopted strong protective injunctions against outmarriage. Moreover, only children born of Zoroastrian fathers have been allowed into the fold so far. These traditional attitudes towards mixed marriages could make the community more vulnerable. However, there is some evidence that many of these attitudes are changing in North America.

The most frequently challenged



"The next generation is crucial. The real test of the survival of the community in North America will be when our children grow up."



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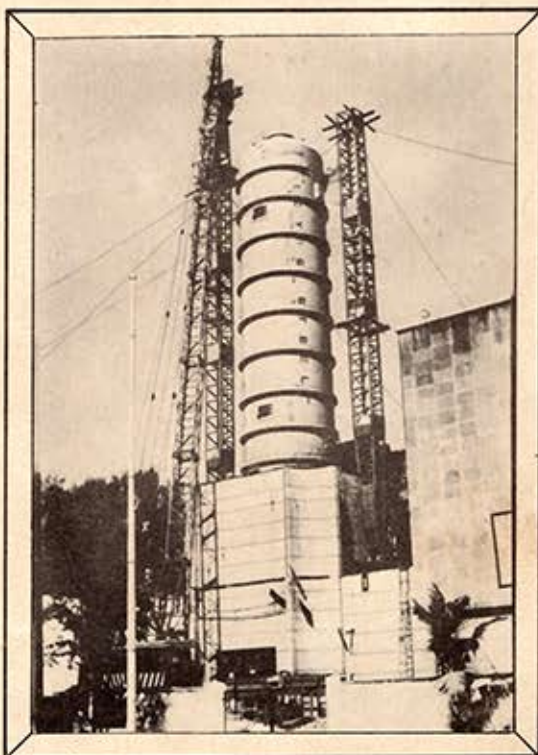
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ZAC youth at Darbe Mehr grounds during an overnight camp

tradition is the one that bars children of Zoroastrian mothers and non-Zoroastrian fathers from entering the religion. "I don't see any basis for continuing to differentiate between children of Zoroastrian men and those of Zoroastrian women," asserts Roshan Rivetna.

Noshir Hormazdiyar, a Zoroastrian priest from New York, has made a break with tradition and performed navjotes for children born to Zoroastrian mothers and non-Zoroastrian fathers.

"I have even performed navjotes for non-Zoroastrian spouses who want to be accepted into the religion. I have had to face much opposition but you can't go on following the old ways forever. I think mixed marriages can help in perpetuating the religion in North America," Hormazdiyar said.

The results of the Chicago survey provide an ambiguous and inconclusive answer to the crucial question: are mixed marriages a help or a hindrance to the survival of Zoroastrianism on this continent?

According to the survey, about half of the children of mixed marriages are being taught about the religion and culture by some method. The same number are also aware of their Zoroastrian heritage, according to the parent.

However, only 10 percent of those who responded to the survey and who have married non-Zoroastrians, had the Zoroastrian wedding ceremony performed. In contrast, all those married to Zoroastrians were married according to Zoroastrian rites. Children with both

Zoroastrian parents also appear to be more aware of their Zoroastrian heritage (according to the parent) and are taught more about the religion and culture.

These figures hardly justify the doomsday fears that beset some sections of the community. They do suggest, however, that there is legitimate room for concern. For large communities, changes in demographic factors such as birth, death and outmarriage rates, may be merely statistics. For small communities like the Zoroastrians, such factors often become crucial chips in the survival game.

In India, the Parsi community has been declining at the rate of about one percent a year for the last 20 years. Almost a third of this decline is a natural one, caused by greater number of deaths than births. The rest has been attributed to emigration and outmarriage.

The demographic picture in Chicago is rather different. The community here has grown from a handful of people to about 400 in the last 20 years. Today it represents a good 15 percent of the total Zoroastrian population of the USA.

Although immigration has been the major cause of this increase, it is not the only one. The fact that 43 percent of the people listed in the Chicago survey are under 18 years of age, suggests that a significant proportion of the growth has been a natural increase (birth over deaths). The natural increase has been sharper since very few old Zoroastrians live in Chicago and hence, there are fewer deaths.

"Since my arrival there have been only three deaths among the community," reports Rohinton Rivetna. "Two adults and one child have died and all are buried here in Chicago."

Although no one over 60 was reported in the survey, a few elderly Zoroastrians do live in Chicago. Most are parents of the original immigrant or his or her spouse.

Freny Mehta, 73, first came to the United States almost nine years ago to help her daughter-in-law through pregnancy and childbirth. Widowed and with both her sons settled in Chicago, she decided to stay on. She keeps busy looking after her grandchildren, taking craft classes and being involved in the activities planned by the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago.

"There is so much to do here that I have no time to get bored," said the frail-looking Ms Mehta who still wears the traditional, Gujarati style saree rather than Western clothes like most other Zoroastrians.

In a major study of demographic patterns among the Parsis of Bombay, Paul Axelrod found a very high pro-

"There hasn't been a single case of two Zoroastrians being married within the community in Chicago. There are enough single people around, but it just hasn't happened."

portion of unmarried adults, especially women, a high proportion of childless couples and of aged people in the population.

In contrast, in the Chicago survey, 90 percent of the respondents were married. Of those who were married, 90 percent had one or more children, the average number per couple being 2.25. The average age for respondents and their families was 25, which suggests not only a youthful population but also one with considerable potential for future growth.

These are all very healthy demographic indicators but critical questions loom just under the surface. What will happen when that large part of the community, now under 18, comes of age? Will they retain their Zoroastrian identity? How many will marry outside the community? Most important, how many will bring up their children as Zoroastrians?

"The next generation is crucial," predicts Rohinton Rivetna. "The real test of the survival of the community in North America will be when our children grow up."

The pressures on the second generation of Zoroastrians to assimilate are great. They go to schools where there is often no other Zoroastrian child, where few have even heard of Zoroastrianism and where they are constantly exposed to the dominant culture.

"I try to teach them Zoroastrian stuff at home and they learn Christian stuff at school," complains Royenton Farhadieh about his three young sons.

The ties of the second generation to the mainstream cultures in India and Iran are remote. The demographic odds against their marrying Zoroastrians are probably equally remote.

"Our children grow up confused, knowing nothing about their heritage," explains Rivetna. "The child knows he is different. One Zoroastrian child thought he was an American Indian because everyone at school said he was Indian."

Rivetna feels that most often the blame lies with the parents. "They never

"The child knows he is different. One Zoroastrian child thought he was an American Indian because everyone at school said he was Indian."

explain anything to the child. After the child is fourteen or so it is probably too late to start explaining anyway," he said.

There are only a handful of adult second generation Zoroastrians in Chicago. Among them is Shenaya Bhote, 24, a graphic designer and daughter of Keki Bhote. Zoroastrianism plays very little part in her life and thinking, by her own admission.

"I was taught all about the religion. I've been to India several times and I've had my navjote done," she said. "But it is difficult to identify. I just see myself as American."

She also said that it was highly unlikely that she would marry a Zoroastrian or bring up her children as Zoroastrians.

It is difficult to say whether hers is an isolated case or part of a developing trend. It does, however, point out that being taught about the religion and culture or having a navjote performed does not guarantee a Zoroastrian identity.

"The navjote is very often just a sop to the grandparents," claims Dhun Batliwala. "The children may be taught the old stories and some prayers but that is not enough. They must also feel that they are Zoroastrian."

The next instalment will appear in the January issue.

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The ethnic issue

Farrukh Dhondy talks to Eunice De Souza about ethnic programs on British TV.

Eunice De Souza

Writer Farrukh Dhondy is the recipient of the Samuel Beckett award for the best first play on British television. A report in the Times of India, May 21, 1984 notes, "His award winning play Romance, Romance is one of a series of short dramas that he was commissioned to write for the BBC. It deals with the issue of an arranged marriage in the Asian community in Britain in a light-hearted and sympathetic manner."

"Dhondy is a committed writer — he has long been part of the anti-racist movement in Britain — who believes in retaining the complexity and ambiguity of the human condition in the 'political' plays, stories and novels that he writes. One of his earliest books, Poona Company tells of his childhood and upbringing in Pune. It is remarkable not only for its sharp characterization and evocative atmosphere of middle-class life in that city, but also for its largely successful attempt to enrich the English language through a careful and selective Indianization."

Noted poet and writer

Eunice De Souza interviewed Dhondy in London. Parsiana reprints extracts from the write-up which appeared in The Sunday Observer (Bombay) of April 8, 1984.



Farrukh Dhondy has just been appointed commissioning director for ethnic programs on Channel 4. The world is suddenly full of ethnic wallahs making tracks to his door.

At the moment, the "ethnic programming" includes feature films, dramas, situation comedies, documentaries, and two magazine programs, *Black on Black* for and by people from Africa, the Caribbean and so on, and *Eastern Eye* for Asians. I've heard very different reports about these magazine programs. One person said they were light programs quite professionally produced. Others laughed heartily at the mere mention of the program or

groaned. One program included interviews with Indians who keep dogs and the interviewer wanted to know why Indians in Britain give their dogs western names. The same program also featured a vet whose chief claim to fame appeared to be the fact that he has produced a book with suggestions for the names of dogs, from Sita to Scruffy. *Black on Black* featured an African magician whose chief trick was to cut some fellow's throat, bury him for five days, and then dig him out again, alive. We heard that, off the screen, the police went to see the magician and said he couldn't bury anyone for five days in winter, it was just too cold. These prog-

rams are produced by Asians and Blacks themselves.

Farrukh talked about his new job between calls (the phone rang incessantly). It will be a year at least before the work he commissions appears, and in the meantime he will continue to oversee the work commissioned by his predecessor, Sue Woodford, who is from the Caribbean. Farrukh has a three year contract.

"When Channel 4 started," Farrukh says, "it had the brief to find a new relationship between the new immigrant communities in Britain and the media, and to mediate that relationship. The first commissioning editor was given the job of setting up something. She did well, and she had to fight a lot of people."

I asked Farrukh how he proposed to tackle the easily inflamed sensibilities of ethnic communities here. Even an Indian TV producer here, a Black British Indian that is, gave this as a reason or an excuse not to produce more serious work. Farrukh said, "Last year I did a series on BBC 2 in which a girl from a Sikh family is dressed as a punk. The elders of the Sikh community started saying I was probably a Muslim trying to destroy the Sikh religion. They have to learn that a Sikh girl dressing as a punk is a representation of a strong reality and that the Sikh religion has to take its chances with it. Islam is an internationally explosive reality today. I know that the Muslim population of Britain has had to come to terms with the fact that you can't pack up a factory shift to say your prayers. The demands of capitalism are in charge of their reality. Thousands of them keep *roza* but even that gets modified to deal with the reality of life in Britain. As individuals and as a community they will have to discover some balance between Islam and capitalist reality. So far British capitalism is winning. There is a generation of Black British now, irreversibly. The young don't like being ghettoized."

I asked about the move in Asian communities to press for religious schools to protect their children. Farrukh said, "I will defend to the end a community's right to set up any education they want. It is easy for parents and communities to wring out of the British state concessions to have Islamic schools. It is more difficult to convince the clients of those schools, their children, to turn into alienated Asian indi-

viduals. The real fight is to get the children to attend these schools. On balance, I don't think the establishment of any immigrant enclave in the country will finally turn reactionary. If I thought they were going to become Khomeinis it might be a more difficult decision. I have more faith in the young of the Asian communities. I have carefully observed their socialization. Khomeini can't win here."

About immediate plans Farrukh says, "I would expect to buy quality material from India — film, features, documentary, as much as I can afford. I might possibly want to set up production companies between British and Indians, and the same with the West Indies, Africa and so on. I'd like to change the format of some of the programs we have here at the moment."

How will the appointment affect the writing he does for TV? "It means I can't write for TV. I have thought about this and I thought I should stop because I want to write a novel and short stories. I want to give myself time in which to write prose."

Reprinted from Sunday Observer, April 8, 1984

Do you have a G6PD enzyme deficiency?

The G6PD enzyme deficiency, common among the Parsis, makes them highly susceptible to certain drugs.* The deficiency may cause jaundice in the newborn and severe hemolytic crisis (destruction of red blood cells) in adults.

Ask your family doctor to arrange for a blood test to detect whether you have G6PD enzyme deficiency. If you happen to be a G6PD-D patient, it is essential that you carry your card at all times so that in any emergency you would receive appropriate treatment.

*Aspirin, phenacetin, acetanilid, all sulpha derivatives, furadantin and all nitrofurantoin derivatives, quinine, quinidine, primaquine, pamaquine, mepacrine, arsenic derivatives, PAS (para-amino salicylic acid), BAL (dimercaprol), benadryl, antistene, benemid, chloramphenicol, nitrites, heavy dose of Vitamin C, chloroquine, Vitamin K and sulphones (dapsone).

Issued in the public interest by Parsiana.

FUNDING THE FEDERATION

continued from page 17

The Federation's honorary treasurer Peshotan Nargolwala, who has studied the problem, noted that Bombay's 180 mobeds including 28 yozdathregars can be categorized into three groups depending on where they work. Category one comprises the atash bahrams and Doongerwadi where individual income ranges between Rs 1,000 and Rs 2,500 per month; category two comprises the affluent agiaries where mobeds earn Rs 800-1,500 and category three includes the poor agiaries with an income range of Rs 500-800-1,000. Income among the mobeds of the first two categories has gone up by nearly 50 percent in the last three to four years, estimates Nargolwala, and "they are not interested in any mofussil attractions. In category three no one is capable (of going into the mofussil) because they are too old or infirm," he added. However, referring to Ms Huzan Kharas' report submitted to the executive council in May as "highly pessimistic" Nargolwala noted, "Such a report, if it goes into circulation, will hamper recruitment" of young men into the cadre of fulltime mobeds. Zoroastrian Studies (ZS) has estimated that the cost of training 15 mobeds continuously would cost three lakh rupees a year, 50 per cent of which will be payment to ZS, said Nargolwala.

Gandhi reported that the Federation had requested Kharas for the names and addresses of those mobeds in her survey who fell below the poverty line but Kharas had declined to divulge identities on the basis that her survey was conducted in confidence. It was felt by some of the delegates that Kharas' sampling was in error and her conclusions, therefore, unreliable.

"Give a professional body the mandate to collect properly verified and authenticated data," suggested Gandhi. "Identify the areas where help is required." Noting that "even if you offer Rs 5,000 per month, if no one wants to take up mobedi it's no use," Gandhi exclaimed, "Identify where the block exists. Planning without data is treating a patient without diagnosis!"

The Federation has agreed to renew its contribution of Rs 300 per month for another two years to the Dadar Athornan Madressa and Nargolwala noted that the principal of the Madressa was very keen that the support con-

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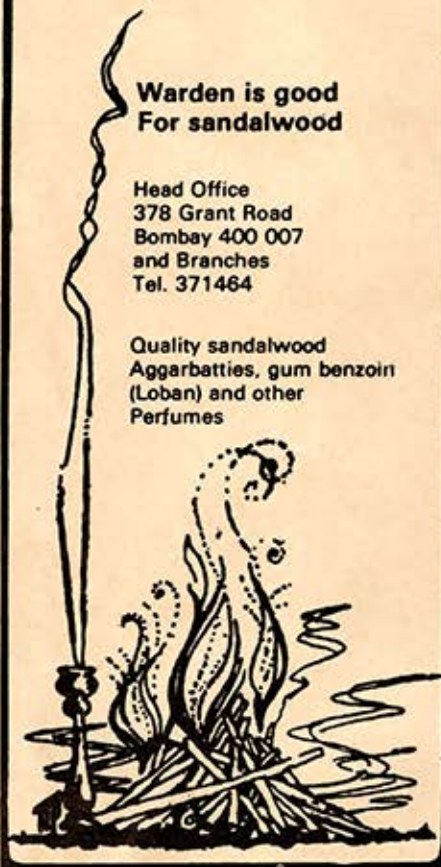
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tinue as the money was needed for the boys' food, college fees, etc. In return, said Nargolwala, "he is providing the Delhi Parsi Anjuman with two young priests." Then, on being reminded by Gandhi about the Federation's limited resources, Nargolwala volunteered to contribute Rs 3,600 from the Delhi Parsi Anjuman, adding, "You can look after the second year's contribution."

Drugs

A voluntary committee has been formed by the BPP at the request of noted stage director Pearl Padamsee to aid her in helping Parsi families with an addict on their hands. Chronic addicts, Golwalla noted, need an average of six months of hospitalization. Accordingly the BPP is also considering the provision of four beds for Parsis in Sevadham, the Christian Mission in Bandra, through Viraf Mehta, a 24-year-old reformed addict who is now working at the mission. Dr R.D. Anklesaria, suggested that the constituents and work of the committee be publicized in the Bombay Parsi Punchayet's *Quarterly Review* but Golwalla mentioned that he and Guzder were "thinking on lines of how to approach the Prime Minister regarding laws to restrain drug peddling; but peddlers are very dangerous. That's why names of the committee members should not be divulged."

While Anklesaria said that the problem of drugs was very limited in Calcutta and nil among the Parsis and Minoo Belgamvala of Madras reported that there was no problem there, Shiva Nargolwala noted that in Delhi the problem was quite acute among the student community as a whole though there are only two known Parsi cases. A consciousness has now been generated among parents to watch out for this

problem. Ms Katie Seervai of Madras suggested that the technique of auto hypnosis be employed in the process of treating addicts.

Jobs and careers

Gandhi gratefully acknowledged the interest and help proffered by Darius Forbes of J.N. Marshall and Jamshed Guzder to the Jobs and Careers Panel of the Federation in the training and employment of Parsis. He was particularly happy that the advertisement of a disabled job seeker of Baroda in the Federation's newsletter had succeeded in getting him employment in his own home town.

Accommodation problems of those boys training with J.N. Marshall in Poona had been resolved in some cases, noted Gandhi. One boy was accommodated at the J.N. Petit School, while the Poona Anjuman, which has no control over the dharamsala there, has offered to give up to Rs 200 per month per boy to accommodate him at the dharamsala during the period of his training in Poona, said Gandhi.

Gandhi analyzed the demand and supply which "do not match—the demand is for technical jobs while the supply is of clerical (people)." Moreover the salary expectations of technically qualified Parsis are 40 percent above those of similarly qualified non-Parsis, he said.

Gandhi lamented "there are Parsi schools with training facilities going abegging" and was supported by Kanga who cited the example of Boys' Town where under a special scheme, children of mobeds receive free training including the teaching of prayers, with free boarding and lodging. "It's a very good school," he said. "I studied there. Yet there are only 25 to 30 Parsi boys, there now."

At the other end of the scale, the problem of Parsi children being unable to compete for technical education once again raised the question of reservation: "Colleges endowed by Parsis should be allowed to reserve a certain percentage (of seats) for Parsi students. Our children and grandchildren may curse us for not asking. The boys must be made to try their best. The parents must involve themselves right from the beginning. Give loans to boys for medical and engineering colleges. In Sangli, Parsi boys have been refused," admission to the engineering college there, noted Katie Seervai.

Peshotan Nargolwala explained that four seats had been reserved for Parsis for 25 years at Sangli thanks to the large donation made by noted engineer Jehangir Daruwala. Twenty-five years having elapsed, those seats are now no longer reserved for Parsis. However, "we have mentioned seven or eight institutions in our appeal made one and a half years ago," he noted, referring to an appeal forwarded on behalf of the community by Ms Aloo Chibber, member of the Minorities Commission.

Golwalla commended the house of Godrej for absorbing the boys from the Golwad home and went on to suggest that those who find industrial opportunities in Vapi (Gujarat), where accommodation is scarce, can avail of the residential facilities of Golwad. Delhi and Calcutta having set up similar panels, Golwalla urged Secunderabad to follow suit.

Capt Jal Postwala, who had brought with him substantial copies of service pamphlets noted, "Pay, terms and conditions in the services have improved considerably." Guzder requested that copies of the service pamphlets be sent to the BPP marked for his (Guz-

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der's) attention.

Further to the note on opportunities in Government service prepared by BPP chief executive Russi Anklesaria, a panel consisting of Admiral Cursetjee, Admiral Gandhi, Golwalla, Kanga, Dittia and Anklesaria has been formed to aid the community in its effort to train Parsi youngsters to succeed in the public service examinations but is yet to meet. Kanga, who is the convener, admitted that the World Zoroastrian Congress whose subjects

The salary expectations of technically trained Parsis are 40 percent above those of similarly qualified non-Parsis.

committee he chairs "takes very much higher priority, so this has lagged behind," and promised to take it up shortly.

Income tax exemptions

Thanks to the combined effort of Shiva Nargolwala and Eruch Desai, the Federation has now been registered by the commissioner of Income tax, Bombay under 12 A (a) of the Income Tax Act. A trust once recognized by the commissioner of Income tax becomes entitled to tax exemptions, noted Nargolwala and the income is completely free of tax if investments are made in specified categories.

"The next step is to get the Government of India to recognize our Federation as an institution of a national character," said Nargolwala. Noting that there are very few such institutions, Nargolwala mentioned that an application had been made under section 10(23)(C)(v) for national classification. "We will get it in a month or two," he said.

While all this benefits the trust, for the donor to get a benefit the trust must be recognized under section 80 G. After 1961 no trust exclusive to a community can claim this exemption except if it establishes a fund for the benefit of the community's women and children and donations are received in this

fund, explained Nargolwala.

Accordingly, at the extraordinary general meeting convened at the Parsi Dharamshala, Secunderabad on October 28, the fund was proposed by Dr. Golwalla and seconded by Dr. Anklesaria and it was resolved to establish such a fund for the social, economic, educational, moral and religious uplift, progress and development of Parsi Zoroastrian women and children.

Guzder set the ball rolling with an initial donation of Rs 1,001 but Nargolwala decreed that the Federation should be the first contributor with a nominal Rs 101 donation. Within minutes, the delegates had rolled approximately Rs 11,000 into the kitty, which included Rs 4,400 from Sq. Leader Italia—the largest single donation offered on the spot.

Summing up the proceedings Nargolwala confessed "our progress is rather slow." Then warming to Hyderabad hospitality he added, "We have made so many friends. We meet representatives of the anjumans but when we stay in private homes we meet people who are so charming, they're an asset to the community."

The next Federation meeting will be held in Bombay on January 14, 1985.

Those attending the meeting were: Merwan B. Mehta of Ahmednagar, Dr Ratan H. Sagar and Ms P.R. Sagar of Allahabad, Dr Aspi Golwalla, Jamshed N. Guzder, Eruch B. Desai and Jamsheed G. Kanga of Bombay, Ardesir K. Batliwala, Rusi D. Anklesaria and Najoo A. Batliwala of Calcutta, Shiva D. Nargolwala, Keki J. Gandhi and Rustom E. Daroga of Delhi, Ms Daulatbai D. Irani and Ms Aban Mazda of Hyderabad and Karnataka, Minoo Belgamvala and Ms Katie F. Seervai of Madras, Group Captain Dhunjishaw M. Marker of Mhow, Bejoo R. Jilla of Nanded, Dinshaw S. Anklesaria of Poona, Sq. Ldr. Jamshed D. Italia, Bejan F. Dittia, Keki S.J. Dalal, Behram J. Baria, Noshir F. Nagarwala, J.M. Hormusji, Ms Gool Y. Chenoy, Ms P.B. Dittia, B.K. Batliwala, Naval B. Vakeel and Ms Parviz T. Parekh of Secunderabad and Hyderabad, Captain Jal S. Postwala of Vizag and Peshotan Nargolwala, honorary treasurer. The guest speakers were Dr Malla Reddy, Dr Parameswar, Dr (Ms) Polly Chenoy and Dr M.A. Aleem. The Press was represented by *Parsiana*.

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Phone: 65942

205, Gera Chambers,
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Phone: 65942

"Plays are to be performed"

Interview with playwright and writer Dina Mehta

R. Raj Rao

Dina Mehta's is no mean literary achievement. With such award-winning plays as *Brides are not for Burning*, *The Myth Makers*, and *Tiger, Tiger*, and with an impressive number of highly readable short stories to her credit, Dina, as a writer in full command of both the drama and the short story forms, occupies a somewhat unique place in Indian English literature.

Dina has some very "definite views" about English theatre in our country, and feels that it should be indigenous, that plays should be related to the Indian milieu in which they are created. "It is ridiculous to have plays which bear no relevance to India, which mean nothing to us," she says. "An audience and a play must re-create each other," but we in India have, unfortunately, "an audience of sheep, a pseudo-audience" that will swallow anything that is imported from the West.

Scourge of dowry

Every one of Dina's own plays is, in fact, an attempt to make this belief a reality. While *Brides are not for Burning* deals with the scourge of dowry (dowry might be a much-written about subject today, but not in 1979 when the play was created), *Tiger, Tiger* is woven around the exploits of Tipu Sultan. Dina will not agree that the English language is ill-equipped to express the flavour of Indian life. "The flavour of Indian life should be communicated through felicitous handling of the language, and that is where a writer's skill comes in." In any case, English expression is not incompatible with the Indian sensibility, Dina feels.

What a writer has to accept, however, is the challenge posed by the numerous shapes and patterns of Indian life that can be depicted on the stage. "I can never write about village India, for example, because I've never lived there," Dina says. "But I can use my imaginative vision to understand the plight of a factory worker, say, in

Bombay. How cut off I am from my people ultimately depends on me."

Personally, Dina would pride herself on this empathy, this ability to get into the shoes of others, as it were, that she has cultivated over the years; for doubtless, it enables her to portray the reality



"How cut off I am from my people ultimately depends on me."

of her characters without having to actually wander in search of it.

To my question whether being a Parsi limits the scope of Dina's vision of India, she retorts: "I've never thought of myself as a Parsi writer. In my short stories I've only created one Parsi character so far. A writer has to broaden his socio-cultural base, and then alone can the vicious circle, caused by the inability of the writer and his audience to relate to each other, be broken."

However according to Dina, "performance" must be a playwright's catchword. "Plays are not meant to be communicated in any other way but performance," she says. "I wouldn't use the dramatic form if I'm not aiming at a

performance; I would write a short story or a novel instead."

This remark facilitates, in our own discussion, a switch-over from drama to the short story, as we sip our coffee. How did Dina arrive at the short story and achieve mastery over it, I am curious to know. "Well, actually," she begins, "I've worked longer on the short story than on anything else. The plays came much later. A short story is like a sprint — you have to say what you want to in a given time, and you have to make the most economical use of language. And I've always had this ambition to use language well."

First novel

And now that Dina has embarked upon her first novel (which is still in the writing), it has enabled her to understand the demands of a good short story even better. "The short story is not a novel in miniature — it has its own form, a kind of distillation that gives it completeness. One has to remember that the canvas, in a short story, is small, and one does not have the margin for error that one has in a novel. The novel by this measure, is much more lazy than the short story."

Besides, Dina has always emphasized that "it is the vertical thrust of the short story that gives it its significance, its substance. A good short story spills over its own economy to give you a universal picture — a small incident can illuminate the whole of life — so although it's short, it grows enormous."

The awareness, in Dina's short stories, is almost entirely from the woman's point of view. But "I wouldn't see this as a limitation," she argues, "for it isn't something that I do consciously — it just happens." Thus, while there is only one short story she can recall that is centred around the male, there are innumerable ones woven around the female.

Reprinted from The Daily. September 16, 1984.

Echoes of a lifestyle

A booklet commemorates
the Parsi Club's 100-year anniversary

Homi J. Rogers

A Hundred Years of Ripon Club: 1884-1984.
Price Rs 30.

The Ripon Club of Bombay — popularly known as the Dhanshak Club — has completed 100 years. And to celebrate the momentous occasion has published a commemorative brochure to narrate in words and pictures the chequered history of the most prominent of Bombay's leisure — and exclusively Parsi — clubs.

Conceived over a century ago by Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, Jamsetji Tata and his son Dorab on the breezy heights of Mahabaleshwar, the Ripon Club aimed to be a point of social meet for the orthodox, Western-cultured and British-returned Parsis. Sir Pherozeshah Mehta took a great interest in the Club and taking time off from his many legal activities, even drafted the Club's prospectus and constitution. A bust of Sir Pherozeshah today stands in the Club premises as a tribute to the father and founder of the Club and its honorary secretary from the very commencement.

The brochure under review has a racy text and outlines at reasonable length the role played by 'Lion' Mehta in the setting up of the Club. Written by Behram 'Busybee' Contractor, who has received much assistance in his task from the valuable historical document prepared by the Club as their *Golden Jubilee Brochure*, the slim monograph bristles with information, aimed to entertain and enlighten. A chapter recreates the ethos

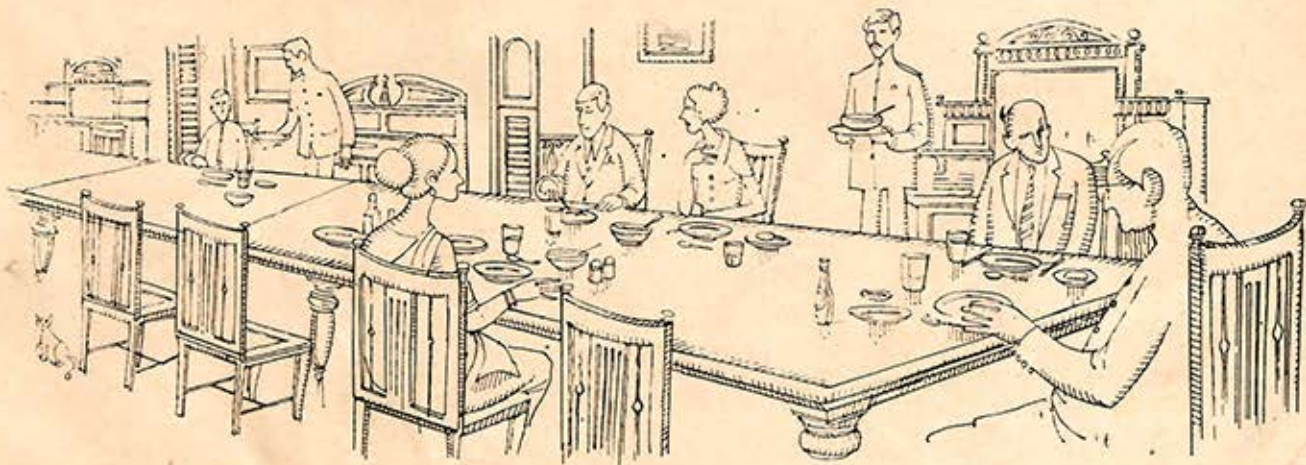
of 1884, with particular reference to January 27, when the first general meeting of the Club was convened, while the most exciting news reported in the Bombay Gazette was of a fire that broke out the night before in a heap of hay. Advertisements extolled virtues of Madon's cod-liver oil emulsion or beckoned one to the Elphinstone Theatre to witness a performance of Sheridan's *School for Scandal* in Gujarati. The event of the Club's inauguration, however, was reported at considerable length, and a reprint of the article has been included in the brochure, thus enhancing its value as a collector's copy.

Yet another informative chapter discusses the different premises occupied by the Club, before it shifted in 1917 to its present home on Mahatma Gandhi Road. It is interesting to learn that at one time the Club house was almost opposite the Apollo Pier and hence provided a grandstand view for royal arrivals and departures. In 1911, when the King Emperor George V and Queen Empress Mary arrived in Bombay (and the Gateway to India — a monument now synonymous to the city — was constructed), members were requested by a circular to inform the Club's secretaries if they proposed to come to the Club on the occasion, so as to enable the secretaries to make suitable arrangements for their accommodation. The present premises were however preferred



since most of the members are drawn from the bar, and it was hence strongly felt by them that the Club should be near the city's High Court.

Staunch Parsis would also find of interest the story of the Club's first controversy — told here both by the author and its perpetrator, C.M. Cursetjee, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta's lieutenant in the formation and management of the Club, and later its vice-president. The battle in 1889 (just five years after the Club's inception), nearly split the Club and the matter was taken to court for a decision. Despite the ruling in favour of the Club, notable stalwarts like B.D. Petit, Byramjee Jeejeebhoy and Dr. Moos resigned from the Club. The cause celebre was the invitation extended for dinner by Cursetjee to two notable Europeans, Thomas Bennett and Shipsey. This was interpreted by certain members as a breach against a rule. They felt that the word guest meant Parsis only. The Ripon Club to them was probably as sacrosanct as a fire temple! The appellation Parsi Dhan-



shak Club hence could have greater meaning than just the culinary speciality of the Club.

Incidentally, there is one complete chapter on gourmets — a reputation enjoyed by successive generations of Ripon Club members. The meals down the years have been mentioned, and it is with a twinge of envy that we learn that in 1910, a seven course dinner (including one sweet) could be had for Rs. 2 only. Even today, the Ripon Club ranks as one of the best and most economical eating places in the Fort for its members, who continue to take an interest in guarding the culinary

reputation of the Club. The brochure reproduces two letters from vigilant members who have taken to task the committee and the cook for falling standards. And one letter is as recent as November 27, 1973. The Ripon Club is like a good Parsi: it laughs at itself.

The brochure is well-produced and neatly designed. Complementing its text are some simple yet quietly evocative sketches (by Mario Miranda), which contribute immensely in making the total job very pleasing. The present Managing Committee needs to be commended for an excellent effort undertaken in projecting the history of the Club.

Management manual

A compilation of ideas from top management levels.

Great Ideas in Management by C.Northcote Parkinson, M.K.Rustomji and S.A.Sapre. Published by India Book House, Bombay, 1984. 278 pp, Rs 30.

Minoo K.Rustomji has by now won international recognition for his series of books on management made simple — a management that has extended to even social fields of bringing up children and medical spheres of looking after your health. With his constant collaborator, C.Northcote Parkinson, (author of the famous Parkinson Law) and S.A.Sapre, Rustomji has churned out yet another management monograph, which, though may not rank amongst his best is certainly the most ambitious of the current crop.

Great Ideas in Management attempts to outline concisely and accurately within its framework of 278 pages, the basic ideas of some of the world's greatest management experts — from F.W.Taylor to J.K.Galbraith. Covered in its pages are nuggets on human relations, effective administration, performance appraisal, leadership, collective bargaining, motivation, marketing, as expounded by a galaxy of 25 masters of modern management.

Encyclopaedic in its range, *Great Ideas in Management* serves both as a primer and a handy reference book to the history of business management. What makes the presentation complete here and in the other chapters, is that Rustomji does not only expound the

management theories put forth by the greats, but supplements them with brief notes on the economic conditions of the period which gave rise to the ideas of these experts.

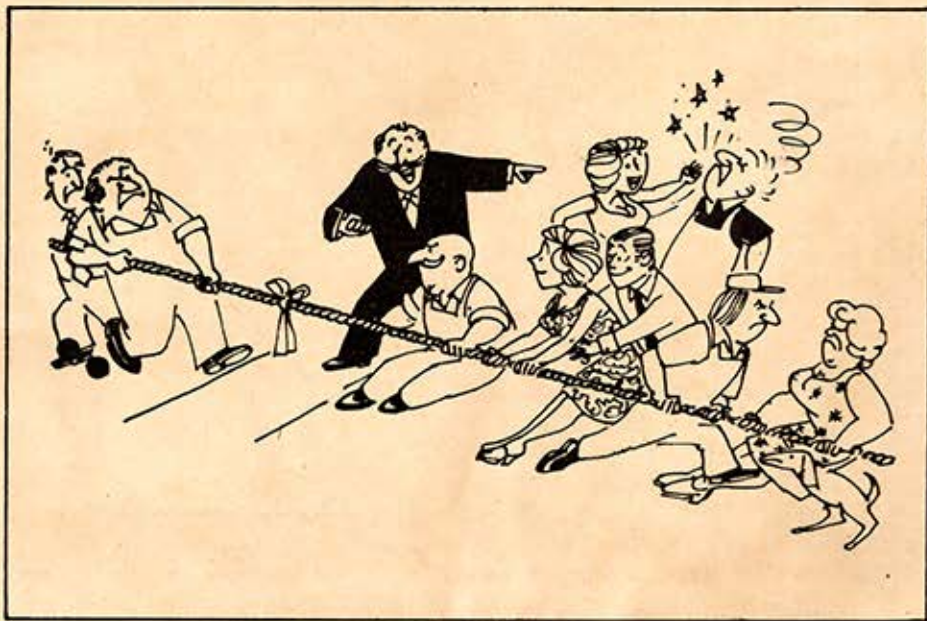
At times, however, the short resumes affect the total understanding of the theory Rustomji is trying to put forth. For example, while diagnosing the famous case study of the failure of Ford's Edsel car, Rustomji writes, "the publicity campaign was so well organized that it aroused tremendous expectation among the people. The car simply could not fulfil these expecta-

tions and it proved to be a miserable failure." It would not hence be right to say that the publicity campaign was well organized — overkill can also ruin a product (as it did to the Edsel) and no marketing or advertising man true to his salt can take the credit for organizing advertisements or publicity that either oversell or offer more advantages than the product can actually deliver.

As with all works that are compilations, the book suffers from the usual sins of omission. For some inexplicable reason, Rustomji extends the scope of great ideas only up to Galbraith. Today in the face of the onslaught of Japanese management techniques being rated as the best, it would have been appropriate if the book dealt with these ideas too. And with S.A.Sapre as a collaborator, one would have expected on this subject, a chapter or two, as both the authors are knowledgeable about Japanese management techniques, having earlier collaborated on *The Incredible Japanese*.

Nevertheless, within its purview, *Great Ideas in Management* proves invaluable both as a reference work and as a stepping stone to the discovery of the wisdom of greats who have shaped managerial thinking. With innumerable case studies to illustrate and exemplify, sketches (by Halbe) to enliven and visually recreate the written word, *Great Ideas in Management* fulfils the need for a lay person's manual to the intricacies of management.

Homi J. Rogers



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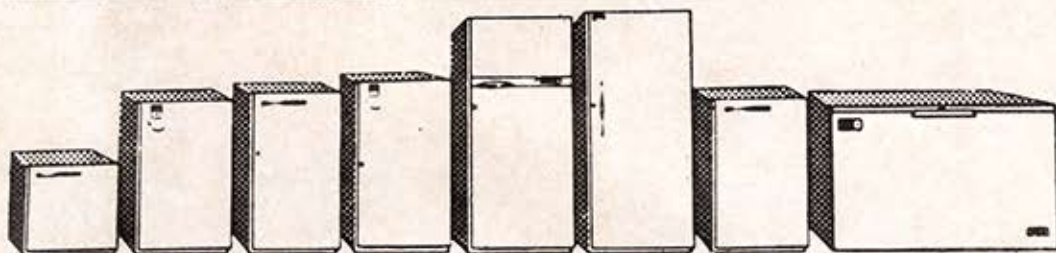
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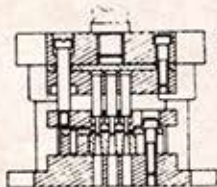
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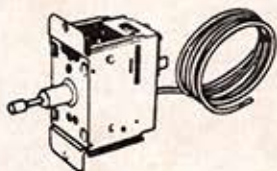
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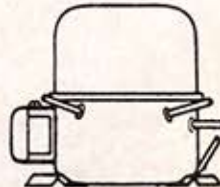
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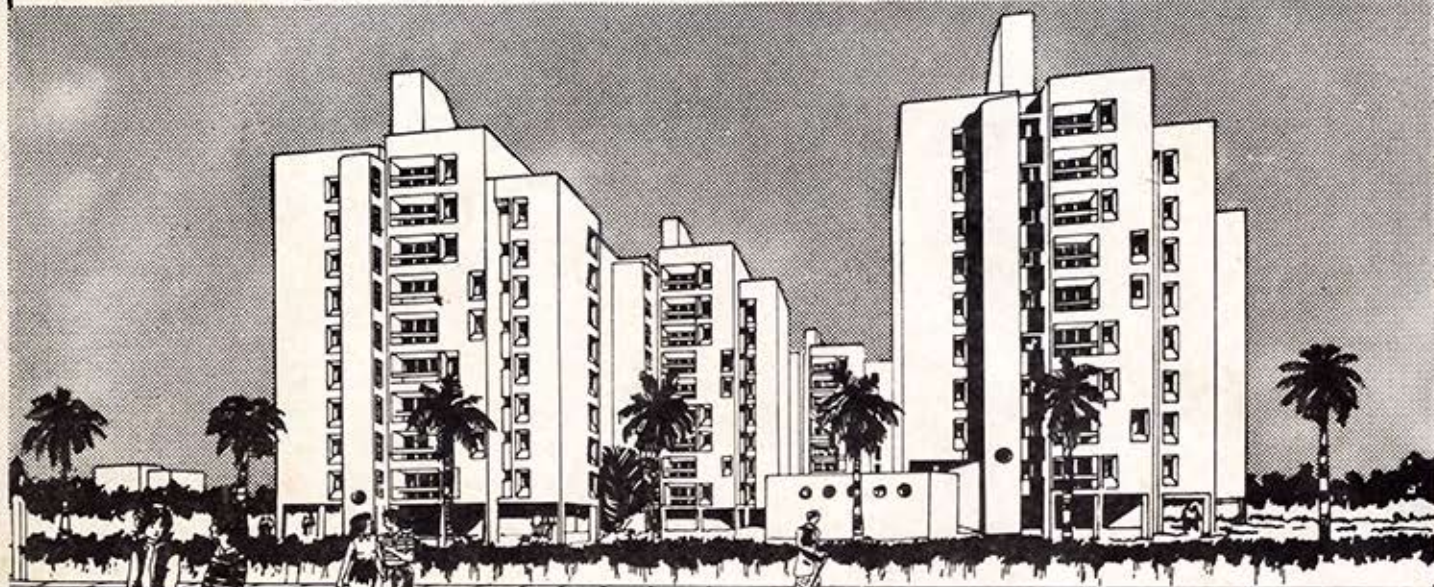


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