

BPP ELECTORAL SYSTEM A Need For Change

The elections for the A, C and D Registers of voters who help elect the trustees of the Bombay Parsi Panchayat will be held in the beginning of 1981.

These elections are held once in seven years. The general body of the community can vote for the members of the Registers through a rather archaic, complicated and undemocratic process.

Parsiāna publishes a letter signed by 30 prominent members of the Bombay community calling for electoral reforms. The letter was originally published in the conservative Gujarati daily, *The Jam-E-Jamshed*.

At the World Zoroastrian Congress which took place in December 1977 in Bombay a large number of participants voiced strong dissatisfaction of the manner in which the Trustees of Parsi Panchayat, Bombay, are at present elected. Apparently as a result of this criticism the Parsi Panchayat felt it necessary to appoint a committee of their own choice to consider the changes to be made in the system of election. The composition of this committee leaves much to be desired and does not represent a proper and fair cross-section of the community. Our community can boast of persons of industry, medicine, law, accounts,

architecture, engineering and other professions whose representatives are absent. The committee can hardly be said to be representative of the Parsi community. Even the decision of this committee to invite the views of the members of the community on this vital problem was not accepted by the Trustees. As a result we feel the need of directly placing the problem before the members of the community as they have every right to know and be concerned with the manner in which the present system of electing Trustees works.

We believe that not many Parsis are even correctly informed of the Scheme for election of the Trustees. Even those Parsis who know something about the scheme are only vaguely aware that the system operates by a system of Registers, but we doubt if their knowledge goes beyond this. As a matter of fact, the scheme is by no means a simple one and its implications may not be evident even to those who are aware of it. Hence, it is extremely important to understand the scheme as it exists at present and its working.

The scheme for election of the Trustees of the Parsi Panchayat of Bombay was framed in 1910. The Bombay Parsi Panchayat consists of 7 Trustees who are each elected for 10 years with no restriction on the number of times they can be re-elected. Any person over the age of 30 years can be elected as a Trustee. The Trustees are not directly elected by the Parsis of Bombay by an adult franchise, but are indirectly elected by an electoral college or body.

The scheme operates by a system of Registers and is broadly as follows:

In the first instance those who are registered as voters with the Panchayat are divided into 4 Registers:

A Register

Consists of all those who have donated cash or property to the Bombay Parsi Panchayat ranging from Rs. 500 to Rs. 5000.

C Register

Consists of graduates and diploma holders of certain specified Institutions who register on payment of Rs. 7.

D Register

Consists of all Parsis over 21 years who pay Rs. 5 as registration fee.

F Register

Consists of all Parsis who have donated cash or property in excess of Rs. 5000.

Thus all Parsis over the age of 21 years can register themselves in one or the other of these Groups.

These 4 Groups of persons elect an electoral college or body called "The Anjuman Committee". This Anjuman Committee in its turn elects the 7 Trustees.

In the Anjuman Committee all members of Group F, i.e. donors automatically become members and get a right to vote for the Trustees' elections. The remaining 3 Registers, i.e. A, C and D together elect their representatives to the Anjuman Committee in certain proportions so that their total number equals the number of donors (F Register). For example, if the

total of donors (F Register) is 243, then the members registered in A, C and D registers together elect 243 representatives to the Anjuman Committee which will consist of 486 persons.

The number of representatives elected by each register is determined by the Trustees but the total elected number cannot be less than 100. The Anjuman Committee elects the Trustees whenever any vacancy arises.

Our information (which may not be up-to-date) is that at present the persons registered in each Register and the number of representatives of that Register in the Anjuman Committee is as follows:

	Regd. Persons	Representative
A—Register	80	28
C—Register	334	19
D—Register	6735	142
F—Register	243	243
	<u>7392</u>	<u>432</u>

The Anjuman Committee is elected every 7 years but all those who donate Rs. 5000 and above automatically get on the Anjuman Committee even

“It is a matter for consideration whether this single advantage is not outweighed by its numerous disadvantages.”

during the mid-term period. Hence this number is usually more than that of the other 3 registers. This briefly is the existing scheme.

Let us evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of this highly complicated electoral system. Its apparent advantage is that by a process of indirect election it enables a candidate for Trusteeship to get elected without seeking popular vote of the community at large. It is argued in favour of the system that deserving and eminent persons would be deterred from standing for the office of Trustees if they were made to canvass votes of a large electorate especially when there is a contest. It is also urged that a popular election by the community would not only be difficult to operate but would conceivably result in the election of a propagandist candidate. Assuming there is validity in this point, the existing system has so many drawbacks that it is a matter for consideration whether this single advantage is not outweighed by its numerous disadvantages.

First and foremost, it is obvious

from a plain reading of the scheme that the existing system effectively deprives the average Parsi of any voice in the election of a Trustee. For all practical purposes the community is made to abandon its will and discretion in the choice of a Trustee to a body of persons, 50 per cent of which is elected every seven years and the remaining 50 per cent of which has a permanent status. A Parsi who has not made a donation of more than Rs. 5000 can only have a very indirect and remote part to play in the election of a trustee and that too only by registering himself as a voter on either the A, C or D Register and electing members from his respective Registers to the Anjuman Committee for a period of 7 years. Having done so, he has no voice in the election of a Trustee. A candidate however deserving of Trusteeship cannot be selected by the community's will unless the Anjuman Committee of the time is pleased to elect him. Indeed, the very first step of his proposal and seconding cannot be taken unless two members of the Anjuman Committee are willing to propose and second him.

Suppose a member of the community is eminently fit to fill in a vacancy by his undoubted integrity, qualifications and stature in the community but is a persona non-grata with the existing Anjuman Committee because of his views. Such a person, however eminent would not stand any chance of being elected however much

“The existing system breeds a dangerous apathy or unconcern in the community.”

the community at large may feel that he is suitable and needed. Thus the system blocks any urgent and felt necessities of the time in electing the right Trustee. On the other hand a person offering himself as a Trustee, however unfit to be a Trustee cannot be resisted by the community if he has the support of the majority of the existing Anjuman Committee or the person or persons controlling the majority votes in the Anjuman Committee.

Secondly, the existing system breeds a dangerous apathy or unconcern in the community as it fails to bring about any involvement of the average Parsi in the elections and affairs of the Parsi Panchayat. It is not surprising that out of the whole community of over 70,000 persons less than

8000 Parsis are registered between all the Registers including donors.

One may ask why should an average Parsi bother to get himself registered at all for the mere satisfaction of electing once in seven years half of the strength of a heterogeneous body of persons like the Anjuman Committee which may collectively elect a Trustee by their likes and dislikes, whims or caprice.

Thirdly, the system lends itself to several malpractices. Because of the non-involvement of the average Parsi in the system and his consequent indifference to the election of the Anjuman Committee, it is not difficult to pack the Anjuman Committee with persons of a particular viewpoint or a particular person's choice. Experience shows that the only factor which should really weigh with the registered voters in electing members of the Anjuman Committee, viz. their competence to select a Trustee, is hardly ever taken into consideration in electing members of the Anjuman Committee. As a matter of fact, members of the Anjuman Committee are often elected according to factions or followings of this or that Trustee or their professed religious or pseudo-religious or orthodox views. After the Anjuman Committee is elected, capturing or pocketing of the votes of the Anjuman Committee is also possible by interested persons and groups.

Thus a candidate for Trusteeship can succeed or fail according to the support or lack of support of a controlling caucus in the Anjuman Committee. We do not say that in every election of the Panchayat this has occurred but there is an increasing feeling amongst members of the community that independent persons who do not cater or conform to the views of the predominant section of the Anjuman Committee do not stand a chance of being elected as a Trustee. Indeed, even the belief in the existence of such a practice today operates as a deterrent to independent minded persons offering themselves as trustees of the Panchayat.

Whatever may have been the reason underlying the Registers system when it was framed in 1910, today the system has lost all logic and consistency. One may ask, what is the logic in giving special treatment by way of a direct vote in the Anjuman Committee to donors who donate Rs. 5000 and more? Is there anything to show that a donor would not contribute Rs. 5000 to the Community's funds unless he is given his precious vote on the Anjuman Com-

"Is there anything to show that a donor would not contribute Rs. 5,000 unless he is given his precious vote?"

mittee? Again, what one may ask, is the justification for retaining the 'A' Register of donors who have donated less than Rs. 500? Do persons donate Rs. 500 for the satisfaction of voting a member of the Anjuman Committee? If the justification for the C Register, when the scheme was framed over half a century ago, was that graduates, diploma holders, professional persons etc. constituted the elitist element in the general vote as against the D Register, surely the 19 allotted seats in the Anjuman Committee to the C Register is a pitiful recognition of the contribution of such an elite body in selecting a Trustee. On the other hand, with a high level of University and professional education in the community today there would be few persons who would not qualify for enrolment in the C Register. In fact, a random glance at the D Register shows that it contains a large number of graduates and professional persons. Hence, in a large number of cases there is no clear distinction between a voter in the C Register and D Register except the choice of the person himself who opts for one or the other Register and the difference in the registering fee of Rs. 7 and Rs. 5 for the C and D Registers respectively.

Sixty eight years ago it may have been thought expedient that the Trustees should be elected by an electoral body part-composed of donors and part by election who could be trusted and who knew best to select Trustees. Is such a supposition valid today? Indeed the whole basis of the scheme seems to have become anachronistic since it was framed in 1910 and it is time we had a fresh look at the entire system and not make minor changes here and there to placate popular discontent at its working.

But above all, the most glaring defect in the system to many persons is the total absence of any method of accountability either of the Anjuman Committee or of the Trustees to the community at large. After the election to the Anjuman Committee, for a period of seven years there is no use of the Anjuman Committee. It does not function save to elect a Trustee. For the next seven years no member of the community can call it into account for its choice of a Trustee.

Likewise, a Trustee once elected for a period of 10 years is not responsible or accountable either to the community or even to the Anjuman Committee in the sense in which an elected representative is. There is no system of periodic reporting of the activities of the Trustees. Even the accounts of the Trust are not required to be published to the community but only to be filed with the Charity Commissioner.

It should not be forgotten that by virtue of their being elected Trustees of the Panchayat in Bombay where practically the entire community in India is concentrated, the Trustees are not mere Trustees of funds and properties. By virtue of their position the community expects not only that the funds and properties should be properly managed but that the

"The most glaring defect... is the total absence of any method of accountability."

Trustees should be responsive to the urges and needs of the community. That is why we consider that the present attitude of the Trustees to consider any electoral change as a matter solely for them to be totally wrong.

We hope that this article will be the beginning of a constructive debate on the subject in the community.

CAPT SAM AGA, marine surveyor
MR TEHMTAN R. ANDHYARUJINA, advocate
MR KHURSHEDI H. BHABHA, advocate
DR ERIN R. BROACHA, paediatrician
MR K. S. COOPER, advocate
MS MANI K COOPER, advocate
MR JEHAN D. DARUWALA, journalist
MR JEHANGIR R. GAGRAT, solicitor
MR JAMSHYD N GODREJ, industrialist
MR NAVAL P. GODREJ, industrialist
MR PHEROZ GUTTA, banker
MR BEHRAM A.

HATHIKHANAVALA
company director
MR B. A. MINOCHER HOMJI, dy. commissioner police (retd)
MR HOMI P. KANGA, company director
MS DOLLY P. MASANI, educationist
DR FALI S. MEHTA, dental surgeon
MR PORUS A. MEHTA, advocate
MR DARA B. MISTRY, architect
MR HOSI B. MISTRY, building contractor
MR H D PETIT, solicitor
MR NOSHIR S POCHKHANAVALA, industrial consultant

MS PILOO R POCHKHANAVALA, sculptor
MS FEROZA H SEERVAI, social worker and educationist
MS ARNI N SETHNA, marketing consultant
DR H. N. SETHNA, scientist
MR RUSSI N SETHNA, solicitor
MR PESI M SHAW, hotelier
MR NOSHIR D. SIDHVA, industrialist
DR FAROKH E. UDWADIA, medical consultant
MR DARA R. ZAIWALLA, advocate

Rashid D. Bamanbehram
Professional Photographer for
Photos of Weddings, Navjotes and
Birthday parties. Contact :
Flat No. 3, First Floor, No. 6 Wadia Block, Khareghat Colony, 30A Hughes Road, Bombay 400 007.

Now on sale

The Parsiana Book of Iranian Names

The Iranian names of boys and girls along with their meanings which originally appeared in Parsiana have now been reprinted in an attractive 24 page booklet.

The book, which is priced at Rs. 9 is available on sale at:

* Faredoon and Burjor Sandalwood Shop, Princess Street.

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

* Nalanda Book Shop, Taj Inter-Continental Hotel, Apollo Bunder Colaba.

* Minoo Sukhadwala Sandalwood Shop, Next to Aslaji's Fire Temple, Draupadi Bldg., 386 V. Patel Road, Bombay-400 004.

* H. L. Rochat & Co. (Next to Roneo Vickers) Navsari Chambers, Ground Floor, 39 A. K. Nayak Marg (Bastion Road), Bombay-400 001.

Write to Parsiana G. P. O. Box 892, Bombay-400 001. Phone: 268730

60 YEARS OF THE DADAR PARSI COLONY

A Question of Identity

Gustasp Irani

Even while the Mancherji Joshi Dadar Parsi Colony celebrates its Diamond Jubilee this year, its 10,000 residents, the largest concentration of the community in the world, find themselves fighting to retain the colony's Parsi identity. Located in the busy Dadar area of Bombay, the colony, which flaunts the airs of a large provincial township with large open roads, low structured buildings, lawns and gardens, has been witnessing over the past 10 years a growing influx of non-Parsis among its midsts.

The development started around the late 1960s when individual landlords of properties in the colony started to sell-out to non-Parsis who built upon the existing structures and let out these new flats to non-Parsi residents. Recently the number of such instances are 8 to 10, according to estimates of members of the colony, and has given rise to concern. Evoking a covenant that the colony had obtained from all its original landlords that the flats be let out to Parsis only, the colony took its case to court about 6 to 7 months ago. As matters stand the court has issued a stay order preventing non-Parsis from taking possession of living quarters however, those already residing in the colony may continue to do so.

Apart from the de-Parsi-ization of the colony, "commercialization is frustrating the whole concept of a garden colony," protests Adi Joshi, honorary secretary of the Parsi Central Association (PCA) Co-operative Housing Society Ltd., which manages the colony. Joshi, the son of the founder father of the colony, Mancherji Joshi, traces the issue to the high prices of building and rents prevailing in the city. Because of the high profits that can be realized, Parsi landlords are selling their holdings. "Some of the new owners are talking of building huge, seven or eight floor, structures in the colony. Ours is a garden colony," he emphasises again. "Only one-third of the property may be built upon and the rest should be lawns. Most of the buildings are also only a few floors high," he adds.

In face of these "unhappy" develop-

ments, certain sections of the "youth" of the colony community decided that they should take an active part in stemming the tide, according to Joshi. What started as informal group discussions soon took on structural shape. As individuals started to make "generous donations to meet court expenses," says Joshi, the Mancherji Joshi Memorial Fund, under the auspices of the housing co-operative, was formed to manage and administer these funds. "Within five to six months we have already collected Rs. 60,000,"



Bust of Mancherji Joshi : Founder-father of the Dadar Parsi Colony.

says Ms Mithoo Jesia, an active member of the "youth group."

But the activities of the fund go beyond collecting and administering funds; it extends to generating greater awareness and active participation of all the colony community members. "We want each and every member of the colony to feel that 'I... we' are the Mancherji Joshi Colony," says Jesia. Members of the group have also volunteered to find suitable Parsi buyers for landlords who want to sell. "Only about six months ago hardly anyone knew about the covenant (landlords may let out flats to Parsis only) and now it is common knowledge," says Jesia.

Also running against the grain of the common complaint, "the youth of the community don't care," Jesia feels that the youth of the colony care very

'strongly' about things Zoroastrian and Parsi. Manifestation of this care was evident in the "whole-hearted" response of not only the youth but the entire colony to the diamond jubilee variety entertainment programme staged on 21, 22 and 23 March and 15 April at the J. B. Vacha High School Hall at the colony. All the resources in terms of actors, backstage help, organization, props etc., were from the colony. The objective of the function, Jesia points out, went beyond celebration; it was to collect funds through sale of tickets and donations and, more important, create a sense of purpose.

If the predicament the colony finds itself in at present may be attributed to the rising prices of land and buildings, as Jesia and Joshi believe, the situation is not very unlike that which prevailed in the community over 60 years ago. Parsis were being de-housed from the Fort area of Bombay, which then had the largest concentration of the community, because of a boom in the prices of land and buildings. A historic backdrop to the formation of the colony which appears in its 1964 directory observes:

"Among the causes which brought the housing difficulties (in the community), the principal ones were: The increase in the price of building material, blind speculation in landed property and the passing away of properties from members of our community to other communities in consequence of fancy prices offered, with the result that the Parsi inmates were ousted by the new owners..."

Around this time the Improvement Trust, a government body which is now a part of the Bombay municipality, was working on a scheme to develop the Dadar-Matunga area on sound town planning principles. Mancherji Joshi, then an Assistant Executive Engineer with the Municipality saw in the scheme an alternative

"Commercialization is frustrating the whole concept of a garden colony"

to house the displaced Parsis. He proposed to form a Parsi co-operative housing society, under the auspices of the Parsi Central Association which now manages the colony. While the co-operative society was being formed Joshi requested the Zoroastrian Building Society to take over the plots and later transfer them to the Society.

In all 121 plots were taken up

under the scheme for which individual landlords applied to build upon and let out to the community at nominal rents. However, in the time interval between the Improvement Trust developing the plots and handing them over, some of the original applicants found themselves financially unable to take delivery of these plots. Joshi approached individuals, philanthropists, the Bombay Parsi Panchayat and other institutions to take over these plots.

In December 1921 the foundation stone of the first building of the colony was laid by Jamshedji Jeejibhoy, Fifth Baronet, and the opening ceremony of the first four buildings was performed by Mr Turner, the chairman of the Improvement Trust on 28 January 1923. By 1931, 120 plots were built upon, 35 of these on the lines of charity. The PCA Co-operative Housing Society owned 14 plots and their buildings.

In time the Society started to establish various social institutions. Presently located in the colony are the J. B. Vacha High School and the Cowasji Jehangir Primary and Infant School. the Rustomji Nusserwanji Rustom-Framna Agiary, the Jamshedji Nusserwanjee Petit Reading Room and Library, the Athornan Boarding Madressa, the Yezdiar Industrial Institute for destitute widows and girls of poor families and the Dadar Parsee Colony Gymkhana among many others.

Unlike the situation of 60 years ago when Parsis of the Fort area were being dishoused, the Parsis of the Dadar colony are not being threatened with similar circumstances. The concern is more over the influx of non-Parsis into the colony. Non-Parsi landlords appear to be honouring the covenant that the existing structures are for Parsis only. The dispute is over the question whether the covenant extends also to new structures being built. They believe not. The Parsis of the colony feel otherwise. The court will decide.

The question that one is likely to ask is; will the problems that the Dadar Parsi Colony is facing also spread to the other Parsi colonies in Bombay. "No", says Joshi, and points out that most of these colonies are held by trusts and not by individuals as is the case of the Dadar Colony. The only other baug which has an ownership structure on lines similar to the Dadar Colony is Malcolm Baug at Jogeshwari, but being in the suburbs it is not likely to be affected, not for the present at least, Jesia speculates.

"AMAR JYOTI ZARATHUSHTRA"

The variety entertainment programme of music, dance, 'natak' and a tableau presentation of the life of Zarathushtra, to celebrate the diamond jubilee of the Mancherji Joshi Dadar Parsi Colony appears to have been a tremendous success judging from the audience response. By popular demand the programme, which was held on 21, 22 and 23 March at the J. B. Vacha High School Hall at the colony, was staged a fourth time on 15 April at the same premises. Still the demand for re-performances remains unabated, according to Ms Mithoo Jesia, one of the organizers of the celebrations. There is talk of holding the performance again in the future and also of taking it to the other colonies and baugs in the city and suburbs.

Much of the enthusiasm seems to have generated from the item "Amar Jyoti Zarathushtra" or "Eternal Light of Zarathushtra," by Jesia, a novel audio-visual tableau production in which the narration of the different scenes of the life of the prophet are visually presented by the players frozen as statues. People who have seen the play have reacted with un-failing praise. Even those who qualify their views—"there were some factual errors"—emphasise that the qualification does not detract from its merits. Jehan Daruwalla, Editor of the *Bombay Samachar*, believes it is a play every Parsi should see.

Other items on the programme were "Dance Through the Ages," choreographed by Pearly Bativala ("The can-can really brought the house down on every occasion," says



Zarathushtra in tableau : a play for every Parsi

Jesia), "Songs" by various artistes "Black Comedy" a Gujarati Play directed by Homi Wadia and Rafiq Mukadam and "Speeches." The chief guests on the four occasions were Nadir Modi, noted Bombay lawyer and founder of the Young Collegian's Zoroastrian Association, Jimmy Gunder, Indian Merchants Chamber chairperson and trustee of the Bombay Parsi Panchayat (BPP), former Justice Jal Vimalal, BPP trustee, and B. K. Boman Behram, chairperson of the BPP.

Jesia however, measures the suc-
(Continued on page 7)



The Can-Can : Bringing the house down

AEK ATMAKATHA

The life of Dastur Dhalla-VI

Bombay or Bust

Sixth extract from 'Aek Atmakatha', the Autobiography of the revered Dastur Dr Maneckji N. Dhalla, noted Zoroastrian scholar and high priest of the Karachi Parsis : published by the Dastur Dr Dhalla Memorial Institute, Karachi and translated from Gujarati into English by Gool and Behram Rustomji.

THE STORY SO FAR

Born into a poor dastur family in Surat on 27 August 1875, Dhalla moved with his family to Karachi in 1878. At six Dhalla started his schooling and by eight was wedded to five-year old Cooverbai.

His failure to pass his matriculation proved to be a severe disappointment to his family and his refusal to answer an invitation to come to China only served to heighten their dejection. Dhalla became the editor and later the proprietor of a fiction magazine which discontinued publication after three years of sustained losses.

When Dhalla's wife came to live with him after his twentieth birthday, differences between himself and his wife began to surface over their different approaches to life—his conservative and hers liberal. Dhalla meanwhile started to educate himself in religious and scholastic subjects through extensive reading. He wrote three books on religious matter and started to deliver a number of religious lectures.

Seth Khurshedji Rustomji Cama, the Zoroastrian Grand Master of Bombay, had come here to inspect the local Lodge of Freemasons. He delivered a sympathetic discourse on the illiterate condition of the priest class. At the end of the talk I expressed some of my opinions. He greatly appreciated my ideas and before leaving Karachi, as well as through correspondence from Bombay, he entreated some of the leaders here to prevail upon the Karachi Anjuman to arrange to send me to the Bombay Madressah for a five years' study course. His request bore no fruit. I was as ignorant of Avesta, Pahlavi, Pazend and cuneiform writing as they were. After due deliberation I came to the conclusion that I should take such steps as would eventually lead me to the portals of the Madressah at Bombay to study. Yet in order to gain direct acquaintance with them to facilitate my line of action, we resolved to go to Bombay. Taking a month's leave from the office we went to Bombay.

Bombay was the headquarters of scholars. There dwelt the most religious-minded dasturs and davaras. There qualified and cultured mobeds spread the faith. Innumerable literary luminaries shone in those erudite skies. Lectures and sermons were being delivered there as they were the sacred Farverdegan days. My talk was fixed for the Amerdadsal day. It was my birthday. In the journey of life I had crossed the 25th milestone. The lecture was to be organized under the auspices of Mr. Dinshaw Irani's Bazme Rooze Ahura Mazda at the Faramji Cowasjee Institute under the Chairmanship of Seth Khurshedji Cama. The topic of my maiden speech at Bombay was: "Where, how and why should the soul be guided?". The lecture was delivered. It proved very successful. The chairman extolled it in beautiful words. The daily as well as the weekly newspapers praised the lecture. Camaji's enthusiasm increased and he began to make attempts to get me to Bombay at any cost, to further my education.

By God's grace the trip to Bombay was successful from all angles. On reaching Karachi I began to make preparations for the commencement of a new chapter of my life. I would be obliged now to leave my job at any time. Due to age my uncle had resigned from the post of superintending the sagdi and now he earned his livelihood by performing casual ceremonies. My father had appealed to the Trustees of the Daremeher four years ago to increase his salary. On the strength of that appeal he received a

"The head trustee put a condition... that no further appeal for increments should be made in future".

raise of Rs 3, his salary increased from Rs 15 to Rs 18 per month. At that time my father was 68. During his 28 years of service his salary had increased from Rs 12 to Rs 15 and now to Rs 18. But fearing lest my father should live to be a hundred and re-appeal at 75, the head trustee put a condition on the application that this would be final and that no further appeal for increments should be made in future.

In Bombay the first dairy was opened through Parsi enterprise and it yielded returns. I decided to start one in Karachi, and not having the wherewithal personally, I borrowed money at an interest, bought 45 cattle in partnership and set up a dairy on a large scale. Rising at 2.30 before sunrise, my good partner and I saw that the cattle were given fodder and water under our direct supervision and by the time the cows were milked, the milk measured and distributed and the accounts taken, it was morning. Besides the time spent on study, I had to work at the office the whole day. It was not possible to stand such a strain for long, so my father gave up his job at the Daremeher and worked at the dairy at the same salary as he had received there.

Camaji had told us that when I would leave Karachi to study in Bombay for a period of five years, it would be necessary that I be absolved from the responsibility of running the dairy for my own peace of mind and convenience of study. So sustaining quite a loss, I disassociated myself from the partnership and incurred a debt of Rs. 1,500.

The Madressah's new term started in January, but I had made arrangements to give a series of talks in Bombay before joining it. I resigned from my job in mid-1901. Once again a sense of despair spread over the members of my family. Stern warnings came from Bombay. An urgent invitation to go to China came again from there. Friends and relatives considered my resignation a leap in the dark. Except my constant companion of joy and sorrow, no one sympathised with me. With courage and confidence she persuaded the house-hold and bravely volunteered to shoulder the responsibility of running the house most economically in

my absence. So, strengthened by her courage I set sail for Bombay.

As soon as I reached Bombay I delivered seven lectures before the reopening of the Madressah. Camaji presided over most of them. Praising my talks he acclaimed me as a 'second Jeevanji Modi.' He further stated that the style and substance of my speeches marked me out as an original thinker. He went on to say that it was the opinion of many not to let Dhalla return to so distant and deserted a city as Karachi but to contrive to keep him in Bombay. Differing from that opinion he stated that Karachi was the most important gateway to the west of the sub-continent and that its future was extremely bright. It was therefore much more valuable that he should return to such a rising, developing and promising city, that the Anjuman there should make him their head priest and later he could continue to visit Bombay and other Zoroastrian centres annually.

ZARATHUSTRA: (Cont. from page 5)

cess of the programme in terms of what went into its production rather than audience appreciation.

"It was a colony affair," she says. The young and the elderly, "from 7

to 77" contributed to the function in whatever way they could, either as actors, organizers, backstage help, selling tickets, etc. The significance of this colony involvement, Jesia points out, is because the function was more than a commemoration of the jubilee, it was a rallying call to the members to fight the threat to the colony of its Parsi identity.

"When the lights come on again they are frozen like statues"

Talking of the actual production of "Amar Jyoti Zarathushtra" Jesia, who has been associated with theatricals for a long time having written and produced many plays, including award-winning ones at the J. B. Vacha School and broadcasts of children's programmes over All India Radio, cannot overemphasise "team work." "When the lights go off the actors have to move about in pitch darkness and find new positions. When the lights come on again they are frozen like statues. This takes a tremendous amount of coordination which can be

achieved only by practice." Over a month's practice was necessary before this coordination was perfected, says Jesia.

In addition to the many actors there were a number of backstage assistants whose time and contributions were just as valuable Jesia notes. There was Rohinton Commissariat, assistant director, Sam Poonawalla, special lights, sound and recording, Pervez Zaiwala and Viraf Godrej, production and assistant production managers respectively, Kerfegar Doctor, slides, Chandrakant Patel, who made the lights in addition to a number of others who lent their voices to the different characters. Jesia makes special mention of Rustomjee Panthaky, principal of the Dadar Athornan Madressa, at the colony, and Nadir Mody, the script consultants who verified the historical facts and the other aspects of the prophet's life.

Talking of how she came to choose this novel form of presenting the life of Zarathushtra Jesia says: "The use of tableau presentations lends itself nicely to items with ethereal themes and to do the life of the prophet this way seemed to be just right." Apparently the people who have seen the presentation also feel likewise.

LET'S BUILD THEM TOGETHER!

Whether it's a five-star hotel, a Sultan's Palace, a hospital, a chemical factory, a fertiliser plant or a housing project—we have the expertise and experience—to handle any turn-key construction project anywhere in the world.

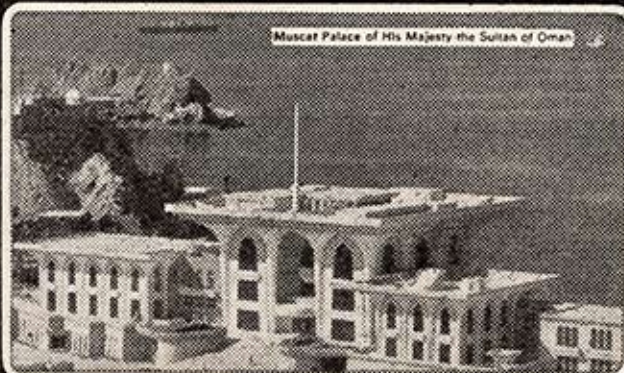
Over the last 100 years we have not only pioneered the construction industry in our country but spread our wings to Muscat and the Middle East—where against competition from the best construction companies, we won the contract

for putting up the imposing Muscat Palace complex of His Majesty the Sultan of Oman—and completed it in time.

The multiplicity of projects carried out by us over several decades has resulted in the building up of expertise in numerous aspects of the construction industry. We proudly offer this expertise for any construction project and proposals for joint ventures would be welcome.

Oberoi-Station Hotel
— Bombay

Taj-Intercontinental Hotel
— Bombay



Muscat Palace of His Majesty the Sultan of Oman

SP

SHAPOORJI PALLONJI & CO. (PVT.) LTD.

International Operations Division,
Engineering & Construction Contractors,
New India Centre, 17 Coopers Road,
Bombay 400 039 India

Decades have rolled by yet Ahura's devotion to serve industries has not minimised. This attitude to serve industries right from 1936 to date is no accident. It is Ahura's policy to be purposeful and this has helped many an industry to look to Ahura for manufacturing Process Chemicals suited to their specific needs. In the last 44 years Ahura's expertise, advanced technology is keeping abreast of

developments to satisfy industries with quality Process Chemicals.

Being a little more useful every year to the industry is our motto.

AHURA CHEMICAL PRODUCTS PVT. LTD.

84, Sion Road - Sion East
Bombay-400 022.
Phone: 473351
Grams: AHURACHEM
Telex: 011-3917



**Being a little
more useful every year
to the industries
is our motto.**



AHURA IS PROCESS CHEMICALS

Graphic A-131