

JAIN EMBLEMS.

CHAPTER X.

Jainism.

Jainism and Buddhism—Mahavira—Jain beliefs—Temples at Palitana—Mount Abu—Parasnath—The Yatis.

THE Jains are at the present day an important body of religionists in India, more for their wealth and influence than their numbers. It is said that half the mercantile transactions of India pass through their hands as merchants and bankers, largely in the north and west of India, and in smaller numbers throughout the **Jainism and southern peninsula.** Till comparatively recently they were believed to be quite a modern sect of Hindus, at any rate not much more than a thousand years old. But the careful researches of several eminent scholars have led them to the belief

that Jainism is coeval with, if not slightly older than, Buddhism, and took its rise in the same development of Brahman asceticism and reaction from Brahmanical tyranny. We cannot enter into the details of the discussion, but shall simply take this view as supported by the best authority, Prof. Jacobi.

There are some resemblances between Buddhism and Jainism which do not necessarily show that the one is derived from the other, but rather that they took their rise in the same age or during the same intellectual period. Buddhism proved the more adaptable and appealed to more widespread sympathies, and surpassed and overshadowed Jainism; but the latter, less corrupted, and more characterised by charitable actions, has survived in India, while the former is extinct. We find similar titles given to the saints or prophets in both, such as Tathagata, Buddha, Mahavira, Arhat, etc.; but one set of titles is more frequently used by the one, another by the other; and it is noteworthy that the word *Tirthankara*, describing a prophet of the Jains, is used in the Buddhist scriptures for the founder of an heretical sect. Both lay great stress on not killing living creatures; both worship their prophets and other saints, and have statues of them in their temples; both believe in enormous periods of time previous to the present age. The rejection of the divine authority of the Vedas and of the sway of the Brahmins is also common to the two. There is further almost an identity between the five vows of the Jain ascetics and those of the Buddhist monks: namely not to destroy life, not to lie, not to take that which is not given, to live a life of purity, and to renounce all worldly things (the last being much more comprehensive than the corresponding Buddhist vow); but it appears that the first four were equally the vows of the Brahman ascetics. There are other points in the life of the Jain monks which agree substantially with rules laid down for the Brahman ascetics.

Vardhamana, or Mahavira (his name as a Jain prophet), the great founder of Jainism, figures in their *Kalpa Sutra* as the twenty-fourth prophet, and appears to have been

a younger son of Siddhartha, a Khsatriya noble or chief of Kundagramma, not far from Vesali, **Mahavira** already mentioned in our account of Buddhism, and the wife of Siddhartha, was sister of the king of Vesali, and related to the king of Magadha. At the age of twenty-eight Mahavira became an ascetic, and spent twelve years in self-mortification. After that period he became recognised as a prophet and saint, or Tirthankara (meaning conqueror or leader of a school of thought), and spent the remaining thirty years of his life in teaching and in organising his order of ascetics, mostly within the kingdom of Magadha, but also travelling to Sravasti and the foot of the Himalayas. Mahavira is referred to in the Buddhist books under his well-known name Nātaputta, as the head of the rival sect of Niganthas, or Jains, and several contemporaries are referred to in the books of both religions. We may put down Mahavira's date as about the fifth and sixth centuries B.C., but the earliest extant works of the Jains do not go beyond the third century, and were not reduced to writing till the fifth or sixth century A.D. It is very doubtful how far Mahavira is indebted to Parsva, his predecessor, according to the Kalpa Sutra, by about two centuries. The lives of the earlier Jains, like those of the predecessors of Gautama, are altogether mythical. Adinath is the earliest of them.

The life of Mahavira, as related in the Kalpa Sutra, contains but few details, and is very far from having the interest of that of his great contemporary. He is declared to have torn out his hair on entering the ascetic life, to have gone naked for eleven years, and to have abandoned all care of his body. All perfections of circumspect conduct and self-restraint are attributed to him. He at last reached the highest knowledge, unobstructed and full, so as to become omniscient. At his death he became a Buddha, a Mukta (a liberated soul), putting an end to all misery, finally liberated, freed from all pains.

"Mahavira," says Professor Jacobi, "was of the ordinary class of religious men in India. He may be allowed a talent for religious matters, but he possessed not the

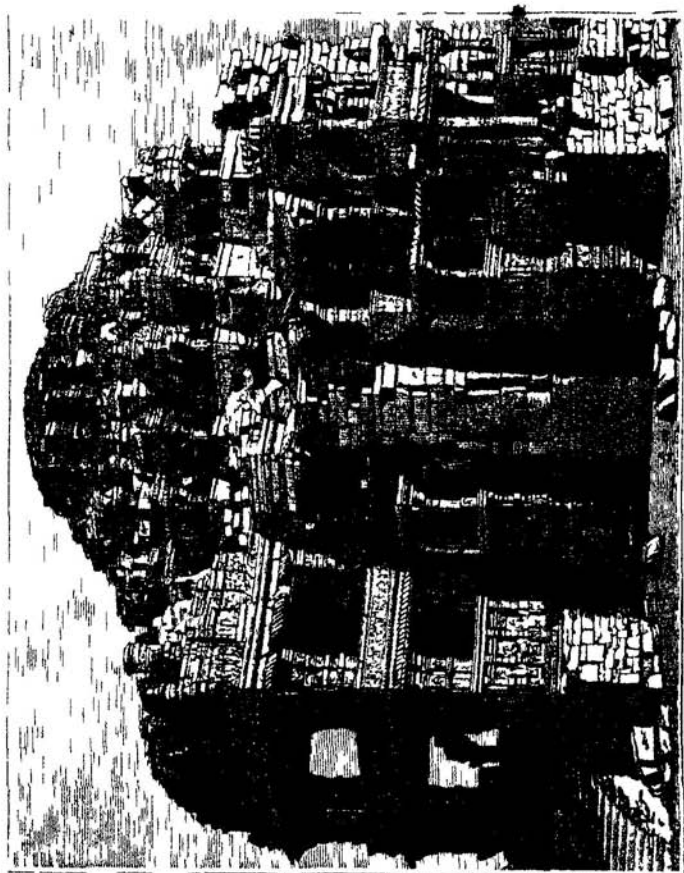
genius which Buddha undoubtedly had. The Buddha's philosophy forms a system based on a few fundamental ideas, whilst that of Mahavira scarcely forms a system, but is merely a sum of opinions on various subjects." The matter of the Jain works yet translated is so inferior to that of the Buddhist scriptures that we shall not make any extracts from them.

The Jains believe in a Nirvana, consisting in the delivery of the soul from the necessity for transmigration; and they do not look for an absorption of the soul into the universal Soul. In fact ^{Jain beliefs.} they do not teach anything about a supreme deity. Right perception, clear knowledge, followed by supernatural knowledge, leading to omniscience, were the stages of progress to Nirvana. The space occupied by each of the perfected ones who have attained Nirvana is stated to be boundless, increasing according to their desire. Their parts are said to be innumerable, and there is no returning again to a worldly state, and no interruption to that bliss. Their term of existence is infinite, and they exercise themselves in the highest philosophy. Believers must also practise liberality, gentleness, piety, and sorrow for faults, and kindness to animals and even to plants. This last the Jains exhibit in the present day by an extreme unwillingness to injure living creatures. They believe all animals and plants (and even the smallest particles of the elements) have souls, and they spend much money in maintaining hospitals for sick animals. They will not eat in the open air during rain or after dark, for fear of swallowing a fly or insect; they strain water three times before drinking it, and will not walk against the wind for fear that it should blow insects into the mouth. The strict devotees carry a brush to sweep insects out of the way when they sit down, and a mouth-cloth to cover the mouth when they are engaged in prayer. In strictness the Jains disregard Vedas, gods, and caste; but practically they yield considerably to caste regulations, they pay some devotion to many of the Hindu deities and have a numerous list of good and bad spirits of their own, and

they appeal to the Vedas as of considerable authority when they support their views. Now-a-days the peculiarity of nakedness is only retained by the ascetics among the Digambaras (sky-clad ones), and then only at meal-times. The Svetambaras, the other sect of the Jains, are white-robed and completely clad. They have no sacrifices, and practise a strict morality. Many of their beliefs are common to Brahman and Buddhist philosophies, such as that re-births are determined by conduct in previous states of existence.

The Jains possess some of the most remarkable places of pilgrimage in India, situated in the midst of most lovely mountain scenery. At Palitana, in Kathiawar, is the temple-covered hill of Satrunajaya, the most sacred of the pilgrim-resorts of the Jains and Jains from all parts of India desire to erect temples upon it. Many of them are very small buildings only about three feet square, covering impressions of the soles of two feet marked with Jain emblems, and sacred to Mahavira. The larger temples have considerable marble halls with columns and towers, and plenty of openings, unlike Hindu temples; the marble floors have beautiful tessellated patterns. In the shrine, on a pedestal, are large figures of Mahavira, sitting with feet crossed in front, like those of Buddha. Often on the brow and breast are five brilliants, and gold plates adorn many parts of the body. The eyes are of silver overlaid with pieces of grass, and projecting very far, so as to stare very prominently. The larger temples, says Fergusson ("History of Indian Architecture"), "are situated in *tulks*, or separate enclosures, surrounded by high fortified walls; the smaller ones line the silent streets. A few *yatis*, or priests, sleep in the temples, and perform the daily services, and a few attendants are constantly there to keep the place clean or to feed the sacred pigeons, who are the sole denizens of the spot; but there are no human habitations, properly so called, within the walls. The pilgrim or the stranger ascends in the morning, and returns when he has performed his devotions or satisfied his curiosity. He must not eat, or at least must

not cook his food on the sacred hill, and he must not sleep there. It is a city of the gods, and meant for them only, and not intended for the use of mortals." Some



JAIN TEMPLE OF ADINATH, GWALIOR.

of the temples date from the eleventh century, but the majority have been built in the present century.

Mount Abu, in Rajputana, is another remarkable place

of pilgrimage, and has been termed the Olympus of India. There are five temples, two of which, **Mount Abu.** according to Fergusson (*"History of Indian Architecture"*), are unrivalled for certain qualities by any temples in India. They are built wholly of white marble, and the more modern of the two was built (between 1197-1247) by the same brothers who erected a triple temple at Girnar; for minute delicacy of carving and beauty of detail it stands almost unrivalled. A simpler yet very elaborate one, erected in the eleventh century, is a typical example of larger Jain temples; it has a central hall terminating in a pyramidal spire-like roof, containing a cross-legged seated figure of the deified saint worshipped, who in this case is Parsva, the predecessor of Mahavira. There is also a large portico surmounted by a dome, and the whole is enclosed in a large courtyard, surrounded by a double colonnade of pillars forming porticos to a range of fifty-five cells, as in Buddhist viharas, but each occupied by a facsimile of the central image, and over the door of each are sculptured scenes from the saint's life. In some Jain temples the image of Mahavira or other saints is repeated in an identical form hundreds of times, each with cells or niches. Remarkable skill and ingenuity have been displayed in the decoration of the columns and other parts of the Jain temples.

Parasnath, in Bengal, is the eastern metropolis of the Jains, having been the supposed scene of the entrance into Nirvana of ten of their twenty-four deified **Parasnath.** saints. In one view of Parasnath there are to be seen three tiers of temples rising one above another, in dazzling white stone, with fifteen shining domes, each with bright brass pinnacles. In style these temples differ from those in the West or South, and are partly derived from Hindu temples and partly from Mahometan mosques. There are no priests to perform ceremonies for the pilgrims; each performs his devotion according to his own views. They have to pay toll to the priestly order before entering, and to leave some contribution to the repairs of the buildings. Extreme cleanliness being one

of the Jain principles, it is carried out perfectly in the temples, producing an effect of surpassing beauty. "On entering the centre and holy chamber," says one of the few European visitors who have gained admission, "it is impossible to avoid being impressed with the simple beauty of the place. The pavement is composed of fine slabs of blue-veined marble; and on a white marble pediment, opposite to the entrance, five very beautiful images of the Jain saints sit in dignity waiting for the prayers of their disciples, which are rendered more deep-toned by the echoing influence of the dome." Pilgrims visit every shrine in the holy place, a work of extreme labour, owing to the number of peaks; and the pilgrimage is completed by a circuit round the base of the group of hills, a distance of something like thirty miles.

The yatis, or ascetics, among the Jains have no absolute rule as to worship, being only devoted to meditation and abstraction from worldly affairs; but they often read the Jain scriptures in the temples, while the ministrants, attendants, etc., in the temples are Brahmans. The Jains fast and specially devote themselves to religious duties during a part of the rainy season (the Buddhist Vassa). At its commencement they are accustomed to confess their sins to an ascetic and obtain absolution for them. The Svetambaras are the broader of the two sects, taking their meals clothed and decorating their images, and allowing that women may attain Nirvana, which the Digambaras deny.

[On Jainism see "Sacred Books of the East," vol. xxii.; "Imperial Gazetteer of India;" "Statistical Account of Bengal;" "Encyclopædia Britannica," Art. Jain.]





CHAPTER XI.

Zoroaster and the Zend-Avesta.

The Avesta—Zend and Pahlavi—The Magi of the Bible—The Greeks and the Magi—Modern study by Europeans—Zoroaster—A real personage—His life in Eastern Iran—His date—Mythical developments—Marvels and miracles—Contrary opinions—The doctrines of Zoroaster—Ormuzd and Ahriman—Dualism—Importance attached to thoughts—Relation to early Aryan religion—Comparison with Vedic religion—Ahura—Zoroaster and the settled agriculturists—Attributes of Ormuzd—The name of Ormuzd—Lofty conception of the Deity—The Amesha-Spentas—The Yazatas or spiritual genii—Mithra—Vayu—Sraosha—The soul of the bull—The powers of evil—Ahriman—The daevas and druj—The Yatus, Drvants, etc.—Zoroaster magnified—The universal conflict—The Fravashis—Immortality—Future rewards and punishments—The final dissolution and renovation.

THE Zend-Avesta¹ is the popular name of the great religious book or collection of books of the Parsees, a wealthy and influential body of Indian residents (numbering over 70,000) whose ancestral home was Persia, but who after the seventh century, when the Persians were overthrown by the Mōhametans, took refuge in Western India and the peninsula of Guzerat. Only a few thousand descendants of the old people still keep up the ancestral worship in Persia itself, in Yezd and its neighbourhood. Properly speaking, the old collection of books is the *Avesta*, Zend (or "interpretation") being the name of the translation and commentary on it.

¹ See "Sacred Books of the East," vols. iv., v., xviii., xxiii., xxiv., xxxi. "Encyclopædia Britannica," ninth ed., articles "Persia," "Pahlavi," "Parsees," "Zend-Avesta," "Zoroaster." "Avesta," translated with commentary by Prof. de Harlez, second ed. Paris, 1881. "Civilisation of the Eastern Iranians," by Prof. Geiger, translated into English by D. P. Dastur; London: Henry Frowde, 1886. (G.)

in the Pahlavi or early Persian language. Nor is "Zend" strictly a correct term for the language of the *Zend and Avesta*; both the book and the language in *Pahlavi*, which it is written are properly called Avesta, and there is no other book remaining in the language. But the language of the Avesta is very generally termed Zend, since that name has long gained currency. This language was that of north-eastern Iran in its wide sense, and was akin to Sanskrit. From it or a closely allied form the Iranian or Persian family of languages is derived.

Considering how much was known by the ancient Hebrews and Greeks about the Zoroastrian religion, it is a surprising fact that little more than a *The Magi of the Bible* century ago Sir William Jones rejected the Avesta as a modern rhapsody. The priests of this religion were the Magi or "wise men" of the Old and New Testaments, located in "the East" among the Chaldeans and Persians, and viewed by the Israelites chiefly as astrologers, diviners, and interpreters of dreams. In Daniel xx. we read that the prophet and his associates were reckoned "ten times wiser than all the magicians and astrologers." How deeply this view of them impressed itself, we see in the fact that from their Greek name "magoi" is derived our generic term for all professors of enchantment and preternatural powers. Daniel is represented as interceding for the Magi when condemned to death by Nebuchadnezzar, and was himself appointed Master of the Magi; again and again after this we find that one common ground was recognised between the religions, both hating idolatry and acknowledging the "God of Heaven." The "wise men (Magi) from the east" of Matthew ii. may not have been from Persia, but the mention of them implies the high position they held and the respect paid to their persons and doings. Later references to Magi in the New Testament imply what was the fact, that large numbers of impostors had become distributed through the Roman empire, among whom may be mentioned Simon Magus and Elymas.

The Greeks early knew about the Magi through Herodotus and other travellers and historians; and Aristotle

and other philosophers wrote about the Persian religion in lost books. The Magi appear to have recommended the destruction of the Greek temples in Xerxes' invasion. After the Greek conquest of Persia the name of the Magi represented a hated system of divination, and the religion of a conquered foe. Both Plato and Xenophon, however, speak of the Magi with respect. Philo, the great Alexandrian philosopher describes them as men who gave themselves to the worship of nature, and the contemplation of the Divine perfections, and as being worthy to be the counsellors of kings. Much literature was put forth in Greece as being the oracles of Zoroaster, but having very faint traces of his system. Throughout the middle ages, however, no real knowledge of the ancient Persian religion existed in Europe. Gradually after the Renaissance the old knowledge was re-collected; and travellers in Persia and India gathered the beliefs of the Parsees and described their practices. Thomas Hyde, an Oxford professor, in 1700 published the first accurate description of modern Parseeism; and in 1723 Richard Cobbe brought to England a copy of the Vendidad, which was hung up by an iron chain in the Bodleian library, a treasure which nobody could read. More than thirty years later, Duperron, a young Frenchman, after years of persuasion and investigation, obtained from the Parsees of Surat both their books and the means of translating them, and in 1764 brought to Paris the whole of the Zend-Avesta; in 1771 he published the first European translation. But it was loudly asserted that the Avesta was a forgery and a late concoction; and it was not till the Pahlavi inscriptions of the first Sassanian emperors had been deciphered by De Sacy, and they in turn led to the reading of the Persian cuneiform inscriptions by Burnouf, Lassen, and Rawlinson, that it was proved beyond doubt that the Avesta was written in a still more ancient language. Zend, as it is usually called, is apparently derived from a common source with Sanskrit; and its grammatical forms remind one of Greek and Latin as well as of the language of the Vedas.

ZOROASTER.

So much scepticism has been displayed as to the Avesta that it is scarcely surprising to find that many have doubted the existence of any person corresponding to Zoroaster or Zarathushtra (in modern Persian, Zardusht), although they might in some cases admit that he was a mythological personage developed out of some man. But it requires very cogent proof to upset the unanimous voice of classical antiquity, which speaks of Zoroaster as a real person and the founder of the Persian religion. The period when he lived and the details of his life must be admitted to be doubtful; and his name is not mentioned in any cuneiform inscription yet deciphered. No doubt the Zoroaster of the later parts of the Avesta and of the Zend is largely mythical, and of these myths we must later give some account. But the Zoroaster of the gathas or hymns contained in the Yasna appears as a man, trusting in the Divine Being whom he worships, facing fierce opposition from without, crippled at times by the faintheartedness of his supporters, sometimes suffering from inward doubts and struggles, and again exulting in secure confidence. And it is less marvellous to believe in these sentiments as having proceeded from a man who was the founder of a religion than to believe they were invented long afterwards in the successful days of the religion, when it was beginning to decay. But, as in the case of Buddha and also of the early history of Buddha, these old Aryans had no notion of writing biographies. All we have from them is incidental information, which may be even more reliable, when sifted, than details professing to be biographical would have been in that age.

Although his birthplace is uncertain, Zoroaster's active life and teaching may safely be placed in Eastern Iran, possibly in Bactria. The later parts of the Avesta describe him as teaching during the reign of ^{His life in} Vishtaspa, the same word as is rendered Hys- ^{Eastern Iran.} taspes by the Greeks; but there is reason to believe this king belonged to a much earlier period than Hystaspes,

the father of Darius. This king was evidently the patron and friend of the great religious teacher; and his influence greatly contributed to Zoroaster's success. Two brothers, Frashaoshtra and Jamaspa, the latter a minister of the king, were among Zoroaster's prominent supporters; indeed he married their sister Hvovi. Like some other religious leaders, Zoroaster derived much aid from his relatives and their followers; and he appears to have had a family of sons and daughters. The Avesta does not speak of his death; but in the late Shah-Nama, or book of Turanian kings (13th century), it is related that he was murdered at the altar in the storming of Balk by the Turanian conquerors. Almost the only means that we have of indicating Zoroaster's date is the fact that

His date. when Cyrus reigned, in the 6th century B.C., the Magian religion was firmly established in Western Iran. Various conjectures assign him dates between 1000 and 1400 B.C.

Turning now to the view of Zoroaster given by the later parts of the Avesta, it is easy to see that he became invested with marvellous powers, nothing less than super-

**Mythical
develop-
ments.**

natural, and was in fact made part of the Magian mythology. He is described as smiting fiends chiefly with his prayers, driving away Ahriman the evil spirit with huge stones which he had received from Ormuzd, the supreme and good god. At his birth the floods and trees rejoiced. Ormuzd is even represented as sacrificing to a spring, and praying that Zoroaster may be brought to think and speak and do according to his law. Zoroaster in fact becomes the supporter of Ormuzd, and drives away Ahriman and the fiends that try to kill him. He is a godlike champion, who kills the powers of evil with the word of truth or the sacred spell. At some far-off period a posthumous son will be born to him who will come from the region of the dawn to free the world from death and decay, and under his rule the dead will rise and immortality commence.

Still later, in the Bundahish we have more details and marvels about Zoroaster, and from it a legendary

history of the great teacher may be compiled. During his early life a whole series of marvels occurred, **Marvels and miracles.** mostly protecting his life from danger. His **miracles.** early life was blameless, but it was only after he attained the age of thirty that his mission commenced. He appears to have emigrated from his native country to Iran proper, with a few followers, and miracles were worked in his progress. The spirit Vohu-mano ("the good mind") introduces him to Ormuzd, the supreme Being; he asks permission to put questions to Him, inquiring which of God's creatures is best, and receiving the answer, "He is the best who is pure of heart;" and then receives instruction as to the names and duties of angels and the nature of the evil spirit Ahriman. Various miraculous signs are shown to him. He sees a fiery mountain and is commanded to pass through the fire, but is not hurt thereby. Molten metal is poured into his breast without his feeling pain; and these wonders are explained to him as having a mystic meaning. He then received the Avesta from Ormuzd and was commanded to proclaim it at the court of King Vishtaspa. This belief in the communication between Zoroaster and Ormuzd runs through the whole Avesta. In every important matter he questions Ormuzd and receives a precise answer from him. Various statements are made that these revelations took place upon a mountain, which afterwards burst out into flames. When he at last presented himself at court, the king's wise men endeavoured to refute him, but were compelled to own that he had beaten them in argument; finally the king accepted the Avesta, after the prophet had been accused as a sorcerer and had proved his mission by miracles. The king at last did nothing without consulting Zoroaster, and erected the first fire-temple.

Having treated Zoroaster as having been a real historical personage, round whom many mythical or exaggerated narratives have collected, we will quote a few sentences showing the contrary opinion held by not a **Contrary few scholars:** **opinions.** "All the features in Zarathushtra point to a god: that the god may have grown up from a

man, that pre-existent mythic elements may have gathered around the name of a man, born on earth, and by-and-by surrounded the human face with the aureole of a god, may of course be maintained, but only on condition that one may distinctly express what was the real work of Zoroaster. That he raised a new religion against the Vedic religion, and cast down into hell the gods of older days can no longer be maintained, since the gods, the ideas, and the worship of Mazdeism (*i.e.*, Zoroastrianism) are shown to emanate directly from the old religion, and have nothing more of a reaction against it than Zend has against Sanskrit." (Darmesteter, S.E., vol. iv.)

THE DOCTRINES OF ZOROASTER.

The most special feature of Zoroaster's teaching is the dualistic principle, according to which Ahura Mazda (Ormuzd), the good spirit, is constantly antagonised by **Ormuzd and Angra Mainyu (Ahriman)**, the evil spirit, who **Ahriman** is the originator of everything evil. The latter is to be ultimately expelled from the world, and man must take an active part in the struggle, his conduct being regulated by the code revealed to Zoroaster by Ormuzd. Ormuzd and Ahriman are believed to have been co-existent, and opposed in the earliest period known to the Gathas; but the ultimate triumph of **Dualism**. Ormuzd indicates essential if latent inferiority in Ahriman. It must not be taken that other spirits were not believed in by Zoroaster; but as far as one can judge, his special teaching relates to the supremacy and greatness of Ormuzd and his final victory.

As regards conduct in this world, Zoroaster enforces the doctrine that no one can occupy a position of indifference; he must be either on the side of good or of evil. The only proper course was to choose **Importance attached to thoughts** the good, and to follow it in thought, word, and deed. This was announced clearly in the first gatha; and we must concede to Zoroaster the great merit of seeing the importance of the thoughts, and tracing evil to that source. When we remember how

few of the hymns of the Rig-Veda refer to sin or its expiation, and how slight are the traces of feelings of guilt, and the necessity for obtaining forgiveness for it from the Deity, it will be seen that the Avesta contains distinctly an advanced teaching.

Whatever may have been Zoroaster's contribution to the religious progress of his race, such a religion as his could only become accepted where there was already a large basis of positive belief, even if that belief were erroneous; and as there can be no doubt that the Iranians were derived from the same stock as the Aryan Hindus, we must compare their early religion with the features found existing in the Avesta, in default of any document recording what was the state of belief upon which Zoroaster began to work. And this study leads to most interesting results.

The general name for a god in the earlier portions of the Rig-Veda is *deva* (bright); in the Avesta the evil spirits are called *daeva*, essentially the same word; while in the later Rig-Veda the name means exclusively a good spirit, a beneficent god. In contrast to this, we find the use of an alternative name to *deva* in the earlier parts of the Rig-Veda, namely *asura*. This is the same word as *ahura* in the Avesta, forming part of the name Ormuzd (Ahura Mazda) and limited to a good sense. Yet in the later Rig-Veda and in Brahmanism the same name is exclusively applied to evil spirits. We have not space to trace fully how this divergence was concomitant in India with the deposition of Varuna from the supreme place among the gods and the rise of Indra; but it may be inferred from the Avesta that in Zoroaster's time the people of Iran were divided between two distinct and contrasted forms of belief—the wilder unsettled nomads who believed in the *devas*, the original spirits of the Aryan race, and who ill-treated and sacrificed cattle; while the more settled people believed in the *ahuras*, the patrons of cattle, and elevated the care of cattle into a sacred function.

Zoroaster therefore appeared as a champion of the

belief of the settled peoples, and added the epithet Mazda, the wise, to the name of the chief god whom they already believed in. He identified the **Zoroaster and the settled agriculturists.** old devas, still believed in by the nomads, with powers of evil, false gods, devils. These, he taught, were all different manifestations or helpers of a predominant evil principle, often called Druj, or deception, and less frequently Angra Mainyu, or Ahriman. This is but a concentration and development of the early Aryan belief in a conflict between the powers of nature, some benefiting and others injuring mankind.

The frequent brief address to Ormuzd in the Vendidad is "the most blissful spirit, creator of the material world, **Attributes of** thou Holy One," or more fully, "I venerate **Ormuzd.** the Creator, Ahura Mazda, the brilliant, radiant, greatest, best, most beautiful, mightiest, wisest, best-formed, most exalted through holiness, giving profusely, granting much bliss, who created us, who prepares us, who maintains us, the most blissful spirit." Dr. Geiger lays stress on the spiritual view which is given of Ormuzd, and says that he is not represented as having any visible form, except where the sun (Mithra) is spoken of as "the body and the eye of Mazda." Anthropomorphism is rare as applied to the Supreme Being in the Avesta: and Geiger looks upon all the passages as symbolical, which speak of wives and relatives of Ormuzd. But we cannot be blind to the extreme probability that such relationships would be looked upon as real by the general mass of the people, however definitely the leaders may have regarded them as symbolical.

Great importance is evidently attached to the "name" of Ormuzd, and it is interesting to compare it with the "name" of Jehovah as treated in the Old Testament Scriptures, and the 99 names of Allah in the Koran. **The name of Ormuzd.** These names, as given in the Ormuzd Yast, are "the One of whom questions are asked, the Herd-giver, the Strong One, Perfect Holiness, Creator of all good things, Understanding, Knowledge, Well-being, and the Producer of well-being, Ahura (the Lord), the most Beneficent, He in whom there is no harm, the Un-

conquerable, He who makes the true account (that is of good works and sins), the All-Seeing, the Healer, Mazda (the All-wise)." He is represented in the gathas as not to be deceived, and as looking upon everything as a warder with eyes radiant with holiness. How high is the conception of the deity reached in the gathas may be seen from the following extract from one of them (Yasna 44):—

"That I ask of Thee, tell me the right, O Ahura!
 Who was the father of the pure creatures at the beginning?
 Who has created the way of the sun, of the stars?
 Who but Thou made it that the moon waxes and wanes?
 This, O Mazda, and other things I long to know.
 Who upholds the earth and the clouds above,
 That they fall not? Who made the water and the plants?
 Who gave their swiftness to the winds and the clouds?
 Who is, O Mazda, the creator of the pious mind?
 Who, working good, has made light as well as darkness?
 Who, working good, has made sleep and wakefulness?
 Who made the dawn, the mid-days, and the evenings?"

There is no doubt that Ormuzd is believed to have existed before any material thing, and to have called the world into existence by his will. He is specially mentioned as the creator of the holy mind, of religious truth, and of the prayers and offerings. Fire is also a special creation of Ormuzd, the importance of which we shall see later. Being omniscient and infallible, he rewards the good and punishes the evil both in this world and the next. Thus we read in the gathas:—

"Whosoever in righteousness shows to me
 The genuine good actions, to me who am Zarathushtra:
 Him they (the divine beings) grant as a reward the next world,
 Which is more desirable than all others.
 That hast thou said to me, Mazda, thou who knowest best."

The impious are thus threatened: "Whoso brings about that the pious man is defrauded, his dwelling is finally for a long time in darkness, and vile food and irony shall fall to his lot. Towards this region, O ye vicious, your souls will conduct you on account of your actions."

There have not been wanting those who see in the resemblances between this conception of the supreme Deity and that of the Jews a proof that the one was derived from the other; but the view that they are distinct and unrelated finds warm advocacy. Thus Dr. Geiger says: "In this sublime conception of the Avesta, Ahura Mazda undoubtedly stands far above the deities of the Vedic pantheon. Only the Jehovah of the ancient

^{Lotto} Jews may be compared to him. But how-
 conception of ever obvious the similarity between the God
 the Deity. of Israel and the god of the Mazdeans may be, still I reject entirely the assumption that the Avesta people have borrowed from the Jews. Upon the Iranian soil a narrowly-confined nation has, independently and of itself, attained that high conception of God, which, with the exception of the Jews, was never attained by any Aryan, Semitic, or Turanian tribe." (G.) To another student, Professor Geldner, Ormuzd appears as the idealised figure of an oriental king. To Professor Darmesteter he is the developed idea of the old Aryan "Heaven-God," and many features betray his former sky nature. Thus "he is white, bright, seen afar, and his body is the greatest and fairest of all bodies; he has the sun for his eye, the rivers above for his spouses, the fire of lightning for his son; he wears the heaven as a star-spangled garment; he dwells in the infinite luminous space."

The sevenfold arrangement of the Vedic gods which was sometimes made, and from which were developed the twelve adityas, was seen also in the Iranian religion, ^{The Amesha.} and it is a question whether it did not exist
^{Spentas.} very early, Ormuzd becoming the most prominent and finally the supreme. In some parts of the Avesta mention is made of seven Amesha-Spentas (the blissful immortals), of whom Ahura Mazda is chief. The names of the others are (1) Vohu-mano, the good mind, (2) Asha-vahishta, the best holiness, (3) Khshathra-varya, the desirable sovereignty, (4) Spenta-Armatī, moderate thinking and humble sense, (5) Harvatat, well-being, happiness, health, (6) Amertal, long life, immortality. The abstract meanings of these names render it difficult

to understand them, but there is no doubt that they are invoked in the Avesta as real beings who can answer prayer. We find them very definitely associated with particular functions: Vohu-mano protects herds, Asha is the genius of fire, Khshathra has the care of metals, Spenta-Armati is the guardian of the earth, while the last two protect the waters and plants. We may here indicate with some reserve Geiger's explanation of the abstract meaning of some of the Amesha-Spentas, as connected with these practical functions. Vohu-mano, the good mind, is the protector of herds because the people who accepted the Zoroastrian doctrine, and consequently were of good mind, were the cattle-rearers, as opposed to the nomads. Vohu-mano came also to be regarded as the guardian of all living beings. The connection of Asha, purity, with fire, is evident, fire being the symbol of purity. Armati (the Vedic goddess Aramati) is the protector of the earth, regarded as "the humble suffering one which bears all, nourishes all, and sustains all. In the Rig-Veda Aramati is devotion, or the genius of devotion. By the Indian commentator Sayana, Armati is regarded as wisdom, but he also defines the same word twice as the 'earth.'" Harvatat, health, is the master of water, for the waters dispense health. Amertal, long life and immortality, is the genius of plants, which dispel sickness and death, especially the Haoma (Indian Soma) plant, which gives health and long keeps up the vital powers. The white Haoma gives immortality. Fire is spoken of as the son of Ormuzd, and Armati as his daughter. In one place (Yast xix.) we find all invoked as sons of Ormuzd: "I invoke the glory of the Amesha-Spentas, who all seven have one and the same thinking, one and the same doing, one and the same father and lord, Ahura Mazda."

Another subject of great interest is the part played by the *yazatas*, sometimes characterised as angels or spiritual genii presiding over elements or over abstract ideas. Mr. Dastur says: "In the abstract, anything that is excellent and worthy of praise in the moral and material universe and that glorifies the wisdom of the

Deity is a yazata." (G. p. xxiv.) Mithra is one of the most significant of these, because he can be identified with Mitra, the Vedic god of the heavenly light, closely associated with Varuna. Mithra was believed to see and therefore know everything, and became the witness of truth and the preserver of oaths and good faith; consequently he punishes those who break their promises. He is also the lord of wide pastures and the prince of the countries. The tenth yast contains many hymns to Mithra, from which the following extracts are made (S. E. xxiii.).

The yazatas, or spiritual geni.
Mithra. "Ahura Mazda spake unto Spitama Zarathushtra, saying: 'Verily, when I created Mithra, the lord of wide pastures, O Spitama, I created him as worthy of sacrifice, as worthy of prayer as myself, Ahura Mazda. The ruffian who lies unto Mithra (or who breaks the contract) brings death unto the whole country, injuring as much the faithful world as a hundred evil-doers could do. Break not the contract, O Spitama, neither the one that thou hadst entered into with one of the unfaithful, nor the one that thou hadst entered into with one of the faithful, who is one of thy own faith. For Mithra stands for both the faithful and the unfaithful.'"

"We sacrifice unto Mithra, the lord of wide pastures, who is truth-speaking, a chief in assemblies, with a thousand ears, well-shapen, with ten thousand eyes, high, with full knowledge, strong, sleepless, and ever awake.

"Who upholds the columns of the lofty house and makes its pillars solid; who gives herds of oxen and male children to that house in which he has been satisfied; he breaks to pieces those in which he has been offended."

On behalf of Mithra, loud claims are put forth for a sacrifice, invoking him in his own name. He is prayed to for riches, strength, and victory, good conscience and bliss, wisdom and the knowledge that gives happiness. In one place he is a warlike, courageous youth, who drives in a chariot with four white horses through the

heavens, and also into battle; who becomes a yazata of war. See the account of Mithraism, later, p. 276.

Vayu, another Vedic deity, is the storm yazata in the Avesta, and is appealed to by Ormuzd to grant him power to smite Ahriman. He is invoked as a strong warlike helper in every danger. Among other important yazatas are that of Fire, the messenger of the gods, sent down as lightning and sun-fire to the earth; that of the waters, Ardisura Anahita, Tistrya the rain-bestower, Verethragna the fiend smiter, and the Sun and Moon, etc. Many of these are identical in name and epithets with Vedic gods or spirits, and in reading the yasts we seem to hear again the strains of the Rig-Veda.

Vayu.

"He who offers up a sacrifice unto the undying, shining, swift-horsed sun, to withstand darkness, to withstand the daevas born of darkness, to withstand the robbers and bandits, to withstand death that creeps in unseen, offers it up to Ahura Mazda, offers it up to the Amesha-Spentas, offers it up to his own soul.

"We sacrifice unto Tistrya, the bright and glorious star, for whom long the standing waters, and the running spring-waters, the stream-waters and the rain-waters:

"When will the bright and glorious Tistrya rise up for us? When will the springs with a flow and overflow of waters, thick as a horse's shoulder, run to the beautiful places and fields, and to the pastures, even to the roots of the plants, that they may grow with a powerful growth?"

The spirit or god Sraosha must also be mentioned; his name signifies obedience, especially to the Holy Word. He it was who first tied together the *baresma*, the consecrated sacrificial branches; he first sang the sacred hymns; three times a day he descends on the world to smite Ahriman. Hence he has been termed the priest-god; the holy prayers are the weapons with which he smites. He requires a man to rise early that he may perform the due rites; he pities the poor and needy, and guards the sanctity of the covenants. Again Ashi or piety, moral order, the daughter

Sraosha.

of Ormuzd and sister of Sraosha, Mithra and others, bestows the human intellect, defends matrimony, and cares actively for the house. She confers power and riches, and gives beauty to maidens.

Another spirit is named *Geush-urvan*. "Soul of the Bull"; in the gathas we find this spirit complaining before Ormuzd of the oppressions and dangers **The soul of the bull** inflicted on him by enemies. Besides those named, many other spirits are invoked, such as the holy doctrine, the Holy Word, the genius of justice, etc. Here we see how prone Zoroastrianism was to personify abstract ideas, just as the Vedic religion personified material objects or forces.

We now come to the obverse side of the picture—the powers of evil, and their relations to Ormuzd and the **The powers of evil** forces of goodness. It has already been stated how prominently the Avesta asserts dualism in the government of the world; but there are not wanting those who consider that Zoroastrianism is not more dualistic than Christianity, and point to the fact that no attempt is made to account for the origin of either spirit, while the temporary character of the power of the evil one is distinctly asserted. (West, S. E., vol. xviii.) Haug says that Zoroaster held the grand idea of the unity and indivisibility of the supreme Being, and sought to reconcile the existence of imperfections and evils with the goodness and justice of God by supposing two primeval causes which, though different, were united. But it is surely simpler to take the plain statements of the gathas, that two powerful beings opposed and counteracted each other, but that the good Being is the stronger and will ultimately conquer, as expressing the essence of the creed of Zoroaster. If one reads the gathas naturally, without prepossessions, it will appear that Ahriman is imagined to have existed from the beginning.

Ahriman, the prince of the demons, is the opposite and counterpart of Ormuzd in all characters. He dwells in infinite darkness, and is all darkness, falsehood and wickedness, and around him all evil **Ahriman** spirits collect. Any good man is his enemy, and he is

represented as being enraged at the birth of Zoroaster. The evil spirits are the daevas, (devas) male, and the druj (female). There are six principal evil spirits corresponding to the Amesha-Spentas: thus (1) Akomano, evil mind; (2) Andra (Indra), destructive fire; (3) Saru, the tyrant, opposed the first three of the Amesha-Spentas. The daevas and druj.

The first section of the Vendidad exhibits in detail the way in which Ahriman counterworked the beneficent creation of Ormuzd. His first creation was the serpent in the river, and winter, followed by the cattle-fly, corn-carrying ants, the mosquito, demon-nymphs and wizards, etc.; and also the sinful lusts, unbelief, pride, unnatural sins, the burying and burning of corpses, the oppression of foreign rulers, and excessive heat, each following a beneficial creation of Ormuzd. Ahriman was also represented as the killer of the first bull, the poisoner of plants, the causer of smoke, of sin, and of death.

Some of the associate spirits of evil can be identified with Vedic spirits; such are the Yatus, wizard demons. The Pairikas are demon-nymphs who keep off the rain-floods. The Drvants or Dregvants are head-long-running fiends. The Varenya daevas are the fiends in the heavens. Bushyasta sends people to sleep at dawn, and makes them forget to say their prayers. We cannot go into the details relating to all these. The Yatus, Drvants, etc.

We must note how in the Yasts Zoroaster appears as the typical and best human being, who first antagonised Ahriman. Thus, we read in Yast 13, "We worship the piety and the Fravashi (see p. 262) spirit of the holy Zarathushtra, who first thought, spoke, and did what is good, who was the first priest, the first warrior, the first plougher of the ground, who first knew and taught; who first possessed the bull, and holiness, the word and obedience to the word, and dominion, and all the good things made by Mazda; who first in the material world proclaimed the word that destroys the daevas, the law of Ahura; who was strong, giving all the good things of life, the first bearer of the law among the nations; for whom the Amesha-Spentas longed, in one Zoroaster magnified.

accord with the sun, in the fulness of faith of a devoted heart; they longed for him, as the lord and master of the world, as the praiser of the most great, most good, and most fair Asha; in whose birth and growth the waters and the plants rejoiced; and whose birth and growth all the creatures of the good creations cried out, "Hail!" (S.E. vol. xxiii.) Here we see, as if in process, the deification of a human being.

The conflict between good and evil was represented as universal in its extent. Every power or being or **The universal material thing** was engaged on one side or the **conflict.** other. All animals and plants belong to one or the other, or are forced into their service. Sometimes the gods and fiends are seen under the guise of dogs, snakes, otters, frogs, etc.; and it was held a crime to kill the creatures of Ormuzd, while a man might atone for evil by killing the creatures of Ahriman. Darmesteter, speculating on this aspect of the Avesta, says, "Persia was on the brink of zoölatry."

Of course mankind were shared between Ormuzd and Ahriman. The servant of Ahriman and of Asha (fire) offers sacrifice to them with libations of haoma juice (the Vedic Soma), the great healing and invigorating plant, which when drunk by the faithful benefits the gods; sacrifices of consecrated meat and libations of holy water. He aids Ormuzd and the holy spirits by every good thought, word, and deed, and by increasing the number of and protecting the creatures of Ormuzd. The priest, or Atharvan, who drives away fiends and diseases by his spells: the warrior who destroys the impious, the husbandman who produces good harvests, are all workers for Ormuzd, and those who do the contrary, for Ahriman. The former will have a seat near Ormuzd in heaven, and at the end of time the dead will rise and live happily on the earth, which will then be free from all evil.

In this connection we may note the belief in the existence of a spirit (*Fravashi*) distinct from the **The** body originally, separated from it by death, and **Fravashis.** believed to be simply the spirit of ancestors; but this

developed into a belief in Fravashis as the immortal principle or counterpart of any being, whether gods, animals, plants, or physical objects. They are spoken of in Yast xiii. as "the awful and overpowering Fravashis," bringing help and joy to the faithful, helping in the maintenance of all creations. Because of the help they give in the perpetual conflict between good and evil, the Fravashis are worshipped and invoked on all occasions. They are praised as "the mightiest of drivers, the lightest of those driving forwards, the slowest of the retiring, the safest of all bridges, the least erring of all weapons and arms, and never turning their backs"; they are correspondingly dreadful to the foe. They are, however, said to ask for help thus: "Who will praise us? Who will offer us a sacrifice? Who will meditate upon us? Who will bless us? Who will receive us with meat and clothes in his hand, and with a prayer worthy of bliss?" High above all other Fravashis is the Fravashi of Ahura Mazda.

There is no doubt that the Avesta teaches the doctrine of immortality, and a coming world which is "better than the good." The idea of a bridge conducting men thither has been common to many religions. The early Avesta represents it as a chinvat bridge, or bridge of retribution, at which justice is administered. The good go to the abode of light and glory where Ormuzd reigns and is praised in hymns. The evil, the false priests, and idol-worshippers go for all eternity to the habitation of the devils, in eternal night, scorned by the demons. Yast xxii. gives a detailed description of the fate of the good and of the evil. A good man's spirit, remaining near the head of the body, tastes during the three nights succeeding the death of the body as much happiness as the whole living world can taste. He passes into the most blissful region and is met by his own conscience in the shape of a beautiful heavenly maiden who recites to him all his good deeds, and then conducts him through the Paradises of Good Thought, Good Worth, Good Deed, and Endless Light. The evil man correspondingly suffers

Immortality.

Future
rewards and
punishments.

for three nights as much as the whole living world can suffer, and then is brought through a foul region into the hills of Evil Thought, Evil Word, and Evil Deed, and finally into endless darkness. Later this vision is amplified.

In one passage of the gathas we find mention of a final dissolution of creation, when the final distribution of rewards and punishments will take place; **The final dissolution and renovation.** but the general tenor of the Avesta is to look for a regeneration of the earth, with a resurrection of the bodies of the dead, to join their souls. Many hold that this view of the resurrection was original in Zoroastrianism, and that it was adopted from the Persians by the Jews. The end of the world is to be preceded by the appearance of three great prophets, all regarded as supernatural sons of Zarathushtra, the last one (Astvat-erta) being named the victorious Saviour, embodied piety, overcoming all torments of men and demons. He is to renew the world, he makes the living immortal and awakens the dead from their sleep, brings death, old age and decay to an end, and grants to the pious eternal life and happiness. One last decisive struggle takes place between the powers of light and darkness, and Astvat-erta, with the aid of the good spirits, vanquishes the demons, and extirpates evil. Then comes the peaceful and happy reign of Ormuzd and all the good, no longer disturbed by any evil-disposed being.





CHAPTER XII.

The Zoroastrian Books—Mithraism.

The Avesta—Country of its origin—Date of the Avesta—The Gathas—People to whom addressed—The Vendidad The most pleasing and displeasing things Impurity of corpses—Exposure of dead—Law of contracts and assaults—The Vispered and Yasna—The liturgies The early rites of Mazdaism—Rise of the Magi—Loss of Zoroastrian books The Pahlavi texts—The Bundahish—The Shayast la Shayas The Dadistan-i-Dinik—The Spirit of Wisdom—Mithraism—Mithraic monuments Antagonism of Christians—Mithraic ceremonies.

THE AVESTA.

FROM the Avesta itself it appears to be conclusively proved that it originated in Eastern Iran, east of the central desert of Persia, the land of the Syr-Daria, nearly all the places mentioned in it being situated therein, with the exception of Ragha, near its western boundary. Babylon is the only famous western city mentioned. A passage especially noted is this, in which the Aryan country is described as the first created and best land. "As the first of the lands and as the best dwelling-place, I, Ahura-Mazda (Ormuzd), created the Aryana vaija (the country), situated on the good Datya. Thereupon Angra Mainyu (Ahriman), who is full of death, counter-created the water serpents and a winter produced by the demons." (G.) This Aryan country was very possibly in Upper Ferghana.

The Avesta itself testifies to its own date in the fol-

lowing way. It does not mention any town which was **Date of the famous in the Median and Achaemenian period**
Avesta. except Ragha; nor does it mention the names of later nations or empires. It only knows Aryans, not Persians, Parthians, or Medes as such. It does not even contain any reference to the battles between the Medes and the Babylonians, still less to the conquests of Alexander the Great. And this is the more significant as it alludes to many external events, battles, invasions of foreigners, the hostility of the Aryans to non-Aryans, and of the settled agriculturists to the nomad tribes. The tribal grouping was in full force, and only specially powerful kings were able to unite the tribes into kingdoms. It is much more natural to regard all this as a sign of great antiquity, especially when coupled with the primitive type of the Avesta language. And it is not safe to dismiss portions of the narrative as purely mythical because all trace of some of the names mentioned has vanished. Herodotus's statement that the Medes were anciently called Aryans, supports this view of the antiquity of the record which deals solely with Aryans, before the Medes had become a distinct people.

Let us take the gathas, or hymns of the Avesta, contained in the Yasna, and study them for traces of the people among whom they were composed. In them **The gathas.** Zoroaster speaks directly. The king Vishtaspa is described as his pious friend in his great work, wishful to announce it; and in many ways the gathas address or speak of contemporary persons and events. The religion itself is in process of formation, and its followers are subject to persecution. No doubt mythology is intermingled; but if everything which contains mythological interpretations or descriptions were adjudged to contain no historical fact, very much more than the Avesta would have to be sacrificed.

One important fact intimating the great age of the gathas, and also showing the connection of the Aryan people they describe with the Aryans of the Rig-Veda, is the high importance attributed to the cow, showing special attention to its breeding and rearing. Thus they

were in the pastoral state which succeeds a nomad life, and becoming more settled than mere keepers of sheep and goats, which can be readily transferred from place to place. We are expressly told in the gathas that the cow is the giver of permanent homes, and the especial care of the active labourer, and also leads to the development of agriculture. In the Vendidad, in contrast to this, agriculture has become of equal importance with cattle-breeding. In the gathas antagonism is represented as occurring between the nomads and the agriculturists, and the former oppose the teaching of Zoroaster. In fact, the nomads plundered the settled people then as now, and naturally disliked the moral teacher of their more civilised brethren. We find Zoroaster assigned as the special protector of the cow, and the announcer to man that the cow is created for the industrious and the active. In the later parts of the Avesta we find the religion of Zoroaster firmly established and an order of priests (Atharvans), but the people are still peasants and shepherds, and their daily life is intimately connected with their religion, the annual feasts being specially related to the agricultural and pastoral life. The people do not yet seem to have used salt. Glass, coined money, and iron were unknown; the bronze age still ruled. One passage, which has been alleged to refer to Gautama, and to show the date of the Avesta to be later than his time, is not at all conclusive, and the name is rather an old Iranian form; also the name Gautama occurs in the Rig-Veda. It was, in fact, an early Aryan name.

The Vendidad is specially the Zoroastrian book of purification; but the first two sections belong to the older literature. The first section at once touches a natural chord by representing Ahura-Mazda (Ormuzd) as telling Zoroaster that he has made every country dear to its own people; were it not so, they would all have come to the Aryan country, which was created best of good lands. The counter-creation of Angra Mainyu (Ahriman) is then described, giving rise to the ten months of winter. Other neighbouring coun-

The people
to whom
addressed.

The
Vendidad.

tries were then created, followed by Ahriman's creation of special evils or plagues, including various sins, evils, and insect plagues. In the second section Zoroaster asks Ormuzd who was the first mortal with whom he had conversed; and he replies, "The fair Yima, the great shepherd," who appears to have represented the founder of civilisation. Afterwards he was told that a period of fatal winters was approaching, and he was commanded to gather into a large enclosure all kinds of seeds and grains, and to make a sort of terrestrial paradise. This Yima is compared in some respects with Yama, the ruler of departed spirits, in the Rig-Veda.

The third section gives an enumeration of five things most pleasing and five most displeasing to the earth.

The most pleasing and displeasing things. These are, (1) the place where one of the faithful with wood for the altar fire, and the sacred bundle of twigs, steps forward praying to Mithra, the lord of wide pastures, and Rama Svastra, the god that gives good pastures to cattle; (2) the place where one of the faithful erects a house for a priest, with wife, children, and herds; (3) the place where one of the faithful cultivates most corn, grass, and fruit; (4) where there is most increase of flocks and herds; (5) and where they yield most manure. The unpleasing places relate to the corpses or other creations of Ahriman, and also the captive wife and children of one of the faithful. No man is allowed to carry a corpse Impurity of corpses. alone, and every corpse, if buried, must be disinterred (for exposure) within six months. A large part of the Vendidad relates to the extent of defilement by corpses or portions of dead matter and the means of purification. Throughout all we see the guiding principle that purity, especially of the body, is of prime importance; but impurity is believed to be the work of a demon, which especially inhabits a corpse, and thence passes to those who touch it. Peculiar washings and spells are enjoined in order to expel the impure spirit. Nowhere has this idea of impurity connected with the dead been more elaborately developed. The evil spirit is expelled from the corpse itself by the "four-eyed dog."

being brought near and made to look at the dead. In practice this is interpreted as a dog with two spots above the eyes. This may be compared with the four-eyed dogs of the Vedic god Yama, and the three-headed Cerberus, watching at the doors of hell. Wherever the corpse passed, death walked with it, threatening the living; consequently no man or animal might pass that way till the deadly breath had been blown away by the four-eyed dog, the priest aiding with his spells.

Fire, earth, and water being all holy to Zoroastrians, corpses must be kept as far as possible away from them and placed on the highest summits, where there ^{Exposure} are always corpse-eating dogs and birds, and ^{of dead.} fastened by the feet and hair lest the bones should be carried away. The bones must afterwards be laid in a building known as the Dokma, or tower of silence. This principle was carried out very thoroughly, partial death and sickness being equally unclean. Everything proceeding from the human body was impure, even parings of nails and cut hair. Sickness was sent by Ahriman, and must be cured by washings and spells. If several healers offered themselves together, one healing with the knife, one with herbs, and one with the holy word or by spells, the latter was to be preferred. Hence the class of priests included the chief doctors.

The fourth section of the Vendidad is occupied with laws about contracts and assaults; the latter are of seven degrees, and guilt is estimated as very greatly increased by each repetition of the offence. Crimes are ^{Law of con-} punished not only by stripes, but in addition ^{tracts and} by penalties after death. ^{assaults.} Offences against the gods were punished more heavily than offences against man; and death is the punishment of the man who falsely pretends to cleanse the unclean, and the man who carries a corpse alone, these being special offences against the gods. Repentance only saves the sinner from penalties after death. The burning or burial of the dead, the eating dead matter, and unnatural crimes were in-
expiable, apparently punished by death as well as future torments.

The Vispered and Yasna properly form an indivisible part of the Avesta; in fact, they constitute a liturgy. The Vispered, which is very short, contains merely invocations and invitations to Ormuzd and the good genii **The Vispered** to be present at the ceremonies about to be **and Yasna** performed. The Yasna means literally "offering with prayers," and includes the gathas or hymns, to which we have already referred. These were to be recited by the priests alone (the laity not being present), during the performance of certain religious ceremonies, which in brief were the consecration of holy water, of the sacred twigs or Baresma, and of the juice of the Haoma, and the offering of the draonas, or little round cakes, on which pieces of cooked flesh were placed, and afterwards eaten by the priests. Properly it was the priest's duty to recite the entire Avesta once every twenty-four hours, and principally during the night, this being essential in order that they might keep themselves fit to perform the rites of purification.

The liturgies are not of interest proportionate to their length, and it is difficult to give an idea of their varied character within our limits. Here is a brief extract from the Vispered: "We honour the omniscient spirit Ahura-

The Mazda. We honour the light of the sun. **We** **liturgies** honour the sun, the Amesha-Spentas. We honour the perfect Mantras. We honour the brilliant works of purity. We honour the assemblies, of which fire is the cause. We honour pure and benevolent prosperity and intelligence." Again, "Apply your feet, hands, will, Mazdeans, disciples of Zarathustra, to the practice of the good works prescribed by law and justice, to the avoidance of bad actions, contrary to law, and unjust; give to those who lack."

The Yasna largely consists of lists of those in whose honour the various consecrated objects are offered, or to whose praise the priests are chanting. Thus: "With this Baresma and holy water I honour the pure spirits of the months, pure spirits of the pure world. I honour the new moon, pure spirits of the pure world." Frequently various points in the history or achievements of

the spirits are alluded to. Then the features of Ormuzd's rule are spoken of: "Reign undisputed over the waters,



PARSEE SUN-WORSHIP.

over the trees, over all that is good and of pure origin.
Make the just man powerful, and the wicked powerless

and weak." A long account of the origin and history of Haoma is put into the mouth of Zoroaster, and prayer is offered to him as a person, in extravagant terms. Paradise, health, long life, prosperity, conquest, safety, posterity, etc., are among the gifts besought of Haoma. He is also asked to frustrate the efforts of those who would injure the worshipper, and to bring every calamity upon him.

From these various indications we may picture to ourselves the Zoroastrian religion as practised centuries before the Christian era, and long after the time of Zoroaster. It is to be noted that the Avesta contains no mention of temples; and the sacred fire was kept up on altars in the open air on elevated places, at most surrounded by a simple wall. No image or representation of the gods or genii was made; fire alone was sufficient to symbolise them, kept up perpetually in great stone or copper basins, fed with the choicest wood. The priests (atharvans) taught the holy law, recited the sacred texts and invocations, prepared the Haoma, washed and kept the sacred vessels, and presided at ceremonies of penance and purification. They were expected to know the Avesta by heart, and had charge of the instruction and initiation of novices and students. It appears that they were accustomed to go from place to place in the exercise of their sacred functions; and some of them were medically skilled, but performed many cures by sacred formulas. The holy days which the religion prescribed were sufficiently numerous, including the 1st, 8th, 18th, and 23rd of each month, sacred to Ormuzd, the 3rd and 5th to the Amesha-Spentas, and every day had its special spirit or deity. The new year's festival to Ormuzd, and that of the autumnal equinox to Mithra, were among the principal festivals; and the dead in general were celebrated on the last ten days of the year. The contaminations that made men impure, as we have already detailed them, gave much work to the priests in purification.

By the time of Darius, Chaldean and Semitic image-worship had influenced the worshippers of Ormuzd to a

The early
rites of
Mazdaism.

limited extent. Darius placed a symbolical picture of the god on his inscriptions; Artaxerxes II. erected statues and a temple to Anahita, at ^{Rise of the} Magi. Ecbatana. How the Magians became the priests of the Avesta religion we have no clear account. They appear to have been a tribe or caste of the Medes, and probably they were the inheritors of the primitive Aryan tradition, who accepted the Zoroastrian development of it, and acquired great influence in the Persian empire, becoming not only teachers of religion, and priests, but also political administrators and advisers; and they appear to have become combined or amalgamated with the priestly families of old Persia. The Sacred fire was carried before the kings by Magians, and the king's sons were instructed by them in the religion of Zoroaster. It is doubtful whether at this time they occupied themselves with sooth-saying, prophecy, the interpretation of dreams, etc.; it is probable that these offices were performed by the Chaldæan priests. The Greek historians represent that no one could sacrifice in Persia without a Magian. They offered sacrifices at high places, first praying to fire (or rather, looking towards the sacred fire). They sacrificed animals, striking them down with a club; but no part of the flesh was set apart for the deity, the soul of the animal only being required. "As far west as Cappadocia," says Strabo, "there were enclosed places, in the midst of which was an altar heaped up with ashes. On this the Magians kept up the unquenchable fire. Each day they went and sang for an hour before the fire, holding in their hands a bundle of twigs." The Magian religion extended even to the cities of Lydia, where Pausanias observed their worship.

The exposure of corpses was but partially practised by the ancient Persians, and may have been restricted to the priests. Certainly the kings were buried; but under the Sassanian monarchy, the dead were exposed according to the modern custom.

There can be little doubt that the Avesta anciently consisted of many more books than we have at present. Various traditions speak of their number (twenty-one)

and contents, and the efforts made to preserve them.

Loss of Zoroastrian books. Alexander the Great, in a drunken frolic, burnt the palace at Persepolis, which contained one of the two then existing complete copies of these books, and the other was said to have been taken away by the Greeks. The attempts of the Sassanian kings of Persia to collect and preserve the Zoroastrian books were rendered futile by the destroying fury of the Mohammedans, and those who refused to adopt the faith of the conquerors emigrated to India, and settled chiefly on western shores. They preserved some portions of the Avesta, together with translations, commentaries, and original works in the Pahlavi language and character, which prevailed in Persia from the third to the tenth century A.D. In these Pahlavi texts we have **The Pahlavi texts.** much of the middle period of Mazdaism, "with a strange mixture of old and new materials," says Dr. West, "and exhibiting the usual symptom of declining powers, a strong insistence upon complex forms and minute details."

The Bundahish is one of these texts which gives an account of cosmogony and legendary history, describing **The Bundahish.** creation under the good and evil influences of Ormuzd and Ahriman, with their conflicts, and coming down to early Persian kings and to Zoroaster, with a brief account of later Persian history. There are many references which indicate that this is a translation with commentary from an Avesta original. The Bahman Yast is a remarkable prophetic book, in which Ormuzd is said to give to Zarathustra a narrative of the future history of his religion.

The Shayast La-Shayast is a work about "the proper and the improper," or laws and customs about sin and **The Shayast.** impurity. The nature and degrees of different breaches of propriety, the kinds of good works and those who can or cannot perform them, the mode of atoning for sins, various kinds of worship, and an infinite number of detailed rules are given, showing no elevation of mind, but a pedantic reliance on outward formal purification.

The Dadistan-i-Dinik, by Manuskihar, a **high priest** of the Parsees, was written in the ninth century, and

represents the doctrines and practice of the modern Parsees. The title signifies "Religious Opinions or Decisions." The purpose of the creation of ^{The} Dadistan-i-Dinik. men is defined as "for progress and goodness," which men are bound to promote. Man is bound to glorify and praise the all-good Creator. "A righteous man is the creature by whom is accepted that occupation which is provided for him, and is fully watchful in the world as to his not being deceived by the rapacious fiend." The evil happening to the good in this world to so large an extent is attributed to the demons and evil men; but for this they receive more reward in the spiritual existence, and by it they are kept from evil and improper actions. Explanations are given as to the exposure of the dead, the knowledge by the soul of the fate of the body, the future of the evil and the good. A brilliant picture is given of heaven, and a very dark one of hell. The sacred thread-girdle is declared to be a sign of the service of the sacred beings, a token of sin ended, and a presage of beneficence. The sacred ceremonial is pleasing to Ormuzd, because it entirely fulfils his commands, and produces propitiation of good spirits, the increase of digestiveness, the growth of plants, the prosperity of the world, and the proper progress of living beings. The proper mode of celebrating the ceremonial is described; but there is little in it that adds to the essentials already described, and nothing that is of a very lofty or original character. Another ^{The spirit of} Pahlavi book, "Opinions of the Spirit of Wisdom," is of interest for its expressing the belief ^{wisdom.} that the "innate wisdom" of Ormuzd, a distinct personality created by Ormuzd, produced both the material and spirit worlds, and can appear in a personal form and give instructions, such as those recorded in the work itself. Another similar book is called by its author "The Doubt-dispelling Explanation," and defends and expounds the dualism of Mazdaism, asserting that other religions can only account for the origin of evil by degrading the character of the supreme Being, or by supposing a corrupting influence to be at work, which is really an evil

spirit. He makes references to, and attacks the inconsistencies he finds in Mohammedan, Jewish, Christian, and Manichæan doctrine.

MITHRAISM.

The recurrence of the name of Mithra in the preceding chapters, from page 7 onwards, will already have been noted; and we must now give a brief account of the obscure cultus which has been termed Mithraism, which some assert to have been the most widespread religious system in the Roman empire for some centuries after the rise of Christianity, having been even brought into this country by the Roman soldiery (see J. M. Robertson in "Religious Systems of the World," 1890, pp. 225-248). In the Veda, Mithra is twin-god with Varuna; in Zoroaster, he is lord of wide pastures, created by Ahura-Mazda; he was still lord of the heavenly light, and so became specially the sun-god, god of light and truth, of moral goodness and purity, punishing the Mithra-Drj, 'him who lies to Mithra'; hence also he is a judge in hell. (S.E., iv. xxiii.) Rawlinson says that Darius Hystaspes placed the emblems of Ahura-Mazda and of Mithra in equally conspicuous positions on the sculptured tablet above his tomb (B.C. 485); and his example was followed by later monarchs. The name Mithradates, "given by Mithra," so often borne by Eastern monarchs, is another testimony to the influence of Mithra. He came to be regarded as a sort of intermediate between Ormuzd and Ahriman, a mediator eternally young, preserving mankind from the evil one, and performing a mysterious sacrifice, through which the good will triumph; and in some aspects Mithra was regarded as a female deity, and there are many Mithraic monuments on which the symbols of two deities appear, male and female. The Mithraic monuments. Græco-Roman bas-relief of Mithras slaying a bull, in the British Museum, indicates one form of the symbolism associated with this god, and connected with the idea of sacrifice and purification; and in other associations a ram was slain to Mithra. We learn from Origen that the Mithraic mysteries included a complex represen-

tation of the movements of the stars and planets, and of the disembodied human soul among them.

Much of the difficulty of comprehending Mithraism really is due to its opposition and proscription by early Christianity, and to the secrecy with which its worship was carried on, largely in caves. There are *Antagonism* many remains of Mithraic altars cut out in *of Christians* rocks, and he was even named "Mithras out of the rock." The rites were probably to a large extent derived from those of Zoroastrianism. At the vernal equinox, the deity appears to have been symbolically mourned as dead, a stone image being laid by night on a bier to represent the dead god; and Justin Martyr and Tertullian describe initiation and other ceremonies of the worshippers of Mithra, which they regarded as imitations of the Christian sacraments. We can see in the light of the Greek myth of Persephone, that this was no imitation, but an early and widespread symbolism of the early death of Nature, and the restored life of spring-time. Initiation was an elaborate ordeal, including trial by water, by fire, by cold, by hunger, by thirst, by scourging, etc.; and the worshippers *Mithraic* were divided into different grades, called after *ceremonies* different birds and other animals. Tertullian says that the soldier of Mithra was offered a crown, which it was his place to refuse, saying Mithra was his crown. Mithraism seems to have had considerable popularity among the later Roman soldiery, and to have been acknowledged by the emperors, so that there are many military inscriptions, "Deo Soli Invic to Mithræ,"—"to the invincible sun-god, Mithra." The most usual representation of him depicts a young man in Oriental costume kneeling with one knee on a prostrate bull, grasping the head and pulling it back with his left hand, while with the right he plunges his sword into its neck. A dog, a snake, and a scorpion drink the blood flowing from the bull, and the sun and moon occupy the two sides of the relief.

There is much curious speculation and fact bearing on Mithra-worship, but the study cannot yet be said to be placed on a basis of certainty; and to say that Christianity borrowed largely from Mithraism, is quite unproved.



CHAPTER XIII.

Modern Parseeism.

The Parsees—Their persecutions—Their principles—A Parsee catechism—The priesthood—Devotions of the laity—Festivals—Ceremonial rites—Deathbed forms—The towers of silence—Ceremonies of departed souls—Family life.—Foundation and consecration of towers.

THE PARSEES.

A PEOPLE within a people, like the Jews in England, the Parsees have attained and maintained an influence and wealth far beyond their numerical proportion. Their persistence is in its way as strong a testimony to the power of heredity as any. The people survive by their commercial ability; their religion survives with them, like Judaism with the Jews. Persecution was long their fate, both in Persia and India; the difficulties of their struggle for existence have fixed their striking characteristics in a mould more tenacious of life. May we not say that they have largely preserved a pure faith in one supreme beneficent God, Ormuzd, and believe them when they repudiate the designation fire-worshippers, and reject idolatry in all forms? Fire they revere, fire is the symbol of their god, and they do not treat fire lightly in any circumstances; indeed, they are the only people who universally refrain from tobacco-smoking, as offending their religious principles. But they are equally fixed in the determination not to defile any of the works of Ormuzd, whether earth, water, animals, or plants; and their practices of cleanliness and frequent personal ablution must have contributed

greatly to their maintenance in health. The greatest number of them is to be found in Bombay; they are numerous in Surat, Ahmedabad, and other cities of Gujerat; and they are to be found in many other cities under British Indian rule. Their total number is about 82,000, including 8,000 in Persia (Yezd, etc.). Their name is derived from their original province, Pars, or Fars, from which Persia is named.

The Parsees, or Guebres, of Yezd have still thirty-four fire temples great and small, but possess very few books; and till lately were in a very degraded condition and in great poverty, being most unjustly treated by their Mahometan neighbours; their condition has, however, been mitigated by the persistent efforts of the Parsees of Bombay and of the British ministry in Persia. At Baku, on the Caspian, they still have fire temples.

Till recently the pure faith was only preserved by a few of the Parsee priests; and the average priest was little but a reciter of portions of the sacred *A Parsee catechism*. books and formulas by rote, without understanding the language in which they were written. Of late years a catechism of instruction has been prepared for the instruction of Parsee children, from which we learn that they are taught that there is one God, Ormuzd, and that Zartusht (Zoroaster) is his true prophet; that the religion of the Avesta was communicated to him by God, and that it is true beyond doubt; that God is good, and that good deeds are enjoined. All evil and wickedness are strictly forbidden. Morality is confined within three words, pure-thought, pure-word, pure-deed; truth is particularly enjoined. Evil deeds will bring punishment after death in hell, and judgment is believed to take place on the fourth day after death, determining whether the deceased goes to heaven or hell. But a future resurrection is held out as certain, when God only can save any one. It is also enjoined upon believers that they turn their face towards some luminous object while engaged in prayer and worship, which must be of frequent occurrence in the day. Angels are believed in, who aid mankind in various ways, and superintend various parts

of creation. Prayers are addressed to these spirits. Prayer is made that the evil may become virtuous and be pardoned by the mercy of Ormuzd. There is no propitiation of the evil spirits, or prayer to them.

The priesthood is handed down by inheritance from father to son, although priests may become laymen. The **The priest-hood.** high priests, or dasturs, are the especial religious authorities, imposing penances and declaring doctrine. The ordinary priests, or mobeds, and the lower priests, or herbad, complete the religious orders of the Parsees. They have a council, or Panchyat, composed of six dasturs and twelve mobeds, which settles all the joint affairs of the Parsee community. At present the condition of the Parsee priesthood is one of progress; two colleges, representing the two sects of the Parsees (marked by comparatively unimportant differences), have been established, under able teachers; and learned works of considerable value bearing on the history and ancient texts of their religion have been produced by Parsees who have studied at German universities and write English with fluency. The Parsee community does not make offerings to the priests and to the temples the chief or only meritorious work; but its charitable institutions are numerous, and a Parsee beggar is unknown.

As to the devotional practices of the laity, a man who is very religious will say prayers many times a day, **Devotions of the laity.** albeit in the Avesta language, which he does not understand. Prayer may be said on rising from sleep, after bathing, and after every operation of life, before and after meals, and before going to bed. Among the strangest and most repulsive of Parsee practices, to western notion, is the habit of rubbing nirang (cow's urine) over face and hands, as a specific against devas or evil spirits, a prayer or incantation being recited at the same time. Devotions at the Parsee fire altars are quite optional, and they may be performed

Festivals. at any time by the worshippers, who usually give something to the priests. There is, however, a considerable attendance at the festivals, about once a week, and at special seasons, such as the six days' festival in

the middle of winter, celebrating the six periods of creation, that at the spring equinox in honour of agriculture, that to Mithra, etc. On the tenth day of the eighth month there is a festival to Fravardin, who presides over the souls of the departed, when special ceremonies for the



FIRE TEMPLE OF PARSEES, BAKU

dead are performed, the towers of silence are visited, and prayers said for them in the small temples in the grounds; these are in addition to annual celebrations for the dead in each house. New Year's Day is both a day of religious festival and social intercourse, when the fire-temples are

visited and prayers said, looking towards the altar of sacred fire. Visits to friends, with ceremonial hand-joining, follow, and alms are given to the poor.

The Parsee infant, born on a ground floor, to which he is again brought as soon as he is dead, has his nativity

Ceremonial rites. cast on the seventh day by a Brahman or Parsee astrologer-priest; at seven years old he is purified with nirang, and invested with the sacred girdle of

seventy-two threads, representing the seventy-two chapters of the Yasna. As the priest blesses the child, he throws upon its head portions of fruits, spices, and perfumes. This is the ceremony of the *kusti*. Marriages are carefully arranged by the astrologer, but are celebrated with a religious ceremony, in which the couple are tied together by a silken cord gradually wound round them, while a benediction is pronounced in Zend and

Deathbed forms.

Sanskrit. It is in their funerals that the Parsees are most peculiar. A dying Parsee will be attended by a priest, who repeats to him consolatory texts from the Avesta, gives him the sacred Haoma juice to drink, and prays for the forgiveness of his sins. The body is then taken to a ground-floor room from which everything has been removed, laid upon stones, washed in warm water, dressed in clean white clothes, and laid upon an iron bier. The priest, in the presence of the corpse, gives an exhortation to the relatives to live pure and holy lives, so that they may meet the deceased again in paradise. This exhortation consists of the first gatha of Zoroaster. A dog is brought in to look at the deceased, this being known as the *sag-did* or dog's gaze. This used to be looked upon as a means of judging, by the dog's instinct, whether life was really extinct; but it is now explained as securing the passage of the soul over the Chinvat bridge, over which only the pious pass to heaven. The carriage of the body to the towers of

The towers of silence.

silence is committed to a special class of Parsees called Nessusalar, or unclean, from the work they perform. The towers of silence in Bombay are constructed on the top of Malabar Hill, a great home of vultures. Built of stone, they rise about twenty-five

feet, with only a small entrance below. On arrival at the appointed tower, prayers are said at the neighbouring fire-altar. The body is then exposed on a stone platform within the tower, so that all fluids pass into a well, into which also the bones left by the vultures are swept. During the three days after death a priest constantly prays before a burning fire, ^{Ceremonies of departed souls.} fed with sandal-wood near the spot where the dead body was laid, the soul not being believed to leave this world during that period. On the fourth day after death there is a further ceremony for the soul of the departed. Contributions to charities are made in memory of the deceased, and successive annual, *muktad*, or ceremonies of departed souls, keep them in remembrance.

The well-to-do perform a ceremony every day of the first year after a death; and the last ten days of their year are specially set apart for the *muktad*. One of the rooms of the house is specially cleaned and set apart, and every morning choice flowers and fruits are placed there, and prayers are offered in it by the relatives, not only for the dead but for themselves for forgiveness of their past sins.

Parsees keep their heads covered day and night, having imbibed an idea that it is sinful to be uncovered. Parsee women occupy a much higher position than ^{Family life.} among Hindus and Mohammedans; and in recent years women have been admitted to meals in common with the men. The family life, especially of the well-to-do, has much in it that is admirable. The education of women has made great progress among them in recent years. Much superstition still exists about the significance of particular days, every day having some special thing for which it is best suited; some days for beginning a journey, others for choosing a new house, others for soliciting a bride, etc.

The largest tower of silence in Bombay is about ninety feet in diameter, or 300 feet in circumference, the outer (circular) walls being built of very hard stone, faced with white plaster. Inside the tower is a circular platform extending to its full circumference, formed of large stone slabs, divided into three rows of exposed receptacles for



TOWER OF SILENCE, MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY.

the bodies of the dead, diminishing towards the interior, the exterior row being used for men, the middle for women, and the inner for children. Each receptacle is separated from the others by ridges about an inch high : and channels are cut for the purpose of conveying all liquids into a deep hollow, or well, in the centre of the tower. "When the corpse has been completely stripped of its flesh by the vultures, which is generally accomplished within one hour at the outside, and when the bones of the denuded skeleton are perfectly dried up by the powerful heat of a tropical sun, they are thrown into this pit, where they crumble into dust." There are also four drains leading from the pit to the exterior, opening into four wells. "At the mouth of each drain charcoal and sandstones are placed for purifying the fluid before it enters the ground, thus observing one of the tenets of the Zoroastrian religion, that "the mother earth shall not be defiled." The wells have a permeable bottom, which is covered with sand to a height of five or seven feet.

The foundation-laying and the consecration of a new tower is an occasion of great ceremony. After the ground has been marked out and limited with a thread Foundation and consecration of towers. carried round a large number of nails arranged in a circle, prayers are offered to Sraosha, the guardian deity of the souls of the dead, to Ormuzd, and to Spenta Armati, the guardian deity of earth, to departed souls, and to the seven Amesha-Spentas. These prayers, acknowledging that it is wrong to contaminate the earth with the bodies of the dead, pray that the enclosed space, and no more, may be occupied for depositing the bodies of departed souls. At the consecration of a dokhma, a trench is dug all round it, and then in the centre of the tower two priests perform the Yasna and Vendidad prayers and ceremonies in honour of Sraosha for three consecutive mornings and nights. On the fourth morning there is a prayer in honour of Ormuzd ; and afterwards there are similar prayers to those at the foundation. Other services outside the tower follow, during and after which thousands of Parsees visit the

tower, which is afterwards closed to everybody. Sometimes the towers are erected by public subscription, but private persons frequently bear the sole expense, it being considered a specially meritorious act to build one.

Thus, in the midst of antagonistic creeds, persists the religion associated with the name of Zoroaster, a standing revelation to us of the ideas and worship of long-distant ages. Reverence and worship for the great Ormuzd, the supreme Being, principally typified by the wondrous fire, dread of the evil spirit and anxiety to avoid the evils he can bring, and practical charity chiefly characterise this most interesting survival from the past. Learned modern Parsees maintain and teach that invocations to spirits other than the supreme God do not belong to the religion as originally established by Zoroaster, and that they may all be dispensed with, retaining the belief in one God and in purity of thought, word, and deed. They hold also that all their ritual and ceremonies may be altered according to the spiritual state and needs of the community.

[For the best account of the modern Parsees and their present religious state, see "History of the Parsees," by Dosabhai Framji Karaka, C.S.I., late member of the Bombay Legislative Council. Macmillan, 1884.]



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