

THE MASTER'S MASTER

Curset M. Patel,

(Ustad Sahib Behramshah Navroji Shroff met his Master Sraoshavarez Marazbanji Sahib, the head of the Demavand Koh Magavs and its Anjuman some 100 years ago. Behramshaji left his home-town Surat at the tender age of seventeen or so with an adventurous spirit in his veins, and tired of monotonous domestic life. He reached his uncle's place in Peshawar, where out on a walk one day he met Rashidjee Saheb the nayab Saraoshavarez Saheb, second in Command of the Demavand Koh. As it was destined, Rashidjee persuaded Behramshajee and took him to their abode of Mount Demavand. Behramshajee was tutored and blessed with the pristine pure knowledge of Zarthusti Din for 3½ years. After which Behramshajee went round almost the whole of India and finally returned to his home-town Surat. His mother married him off and he led a simple life like any other ordinary Parsee. He maintained silence, and kept hidden in his breast the precious knowledge of the Zarthusti Din for about 30 years. One fine day he thought to himself that the time has come when he will have to stand and speak before his community, as ordained by his master. On the same day in the evening at the Baug-E-Parsa, Behramshajee just casually peeped into the room where a debate on the subject of "Atash" was taking place. Munchersha Master the principal of the missionary school who was conducting the debate, saw a stately old gentleman Behramshajee, and invited him inside to have a seat. At the end of the discussion, Behramshajee casually posed a question to the gathered group as to what they understood by the different names of Atash-like Atash-e-Froba, Atash-e-Burjin-Meher, Atash-e-Khurdad, etc. which they had mentioned. And since they were not able to give any proper reply he started explaining to them the different Atash in the universe and their function, etc. Although they had never heard this kind of an explanation from anyone before yet it was so lucid and methodical, that Manchersha Master who was a scholar and a genius himself grasped at once that Behramshajee possessed something which was of great importance, and enquired as to how he possessed this knowledge which he termed 'Khshnoom' and from where he learnt all that he spoke. Would he not repeat the same? To this Behramshajee replied that there is a great man behind me who is my Ustad. This Ustad is none other than the Sraoshavarez Marazbanjee Sahib - blessed be his name - the head of the Demavand Koh.

Here we shall try in brief to understand and know about the blessed and unique representative of Sarosh Yazad on this earth-the great Sraoshavarez Marazbanjee Sahib the Master of Master of Ilm-e-Khshnoom).

The holy saints of the Zoroastrian religion left Iran forty-nine years before the fall of the Sassanian empire and its last King Yazdegar Sheriyar and made their abode somewhere in the ranges of Mount Demavand. In Pazand prayers we refer to Mount Demavand as "Demavand Koh" and recite "Hama-Zor Kohe-Demavand" thrice meaning we salute you and join you, get connected to you. The group of holy saints who stay there are known in Zoroastrian Religion as Magavs. They are also referred to in Hindu religion as Magha. Christianity addresses them as Magi. The account in the

holy Bible of the three wise men of the East is quite wellknown. There it is stated that, "they saw the star at Bethlehem and knew that the Messiah has been born". These seers who saw the star were none other than our Persian Magavs. They always remain in the number of 72 and are highly evolved souls possessing deep spiritual knowledge of not only the Zarthushti 'Din', but also of all other religions. They went into seclusion taking with them the holy scriptures, and whatever was required for strict observance of the Zoroastrian law of "Asha" (Purity). They are also termed, as "Durvishes" - "Dur" meaning far away from and "Vesh" - harm that is those highly advanced souls who are far away from doing any harm by thought, speech or action to God's creation. They have no need to marry because the Soul of a Magav is a complete unit having absorbed into itself its respective soul particles from mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms. Thereby its holy feminine counterpart and holy masculine counterpart have mingled themselves into "Khaetvadatha". With these "Gofenasheen" Saheb Dilan Sahebs there are other people (Anjumen) totalling about 2000 or so, who are mainly engaged in agriculture and they lead a true Zoroastrian life by strictly following all the "Tarikat" of Baj etc. and abiding by the law of "Asha" as enjoined by the Holy Prophet Zarthushtira.

Behramshajee had the good fortune to live with them for almost 3½ years, and learn all the "Tarikat" and gain the pristine pure knowledge of the Zarthushti Din, under the guidance of his master "Sraoshavarez".

"Sraoshavarez" is the one who is attuned with Sarosh Yazad - (or the listener of the Divine Celestial Music of Sarosh Yazad); the one who is the representative worker of Sarosh Yazad in this world; the holy 'Sraoshavarez Saheb' (Sraosha = Sarosh Yazad and Varez = Worker). He has a

sublime and exalted position in Nature, and his position is the highest amongst the eight different grades of priests, whose designations are found in the "Uziren Geh" prayer and elsewhere in "Vendidad" and "Vispared." The eight grades of priest are :—

- 1) Fraberetar
- 2) Aberetar
- 3) Asnatar
- 4) Rathvishkar
- 5) Havanan
- 6) Atravakhsh
- 7) Zaota
- 8) Sraoshavarez

A Fraberetar who is on the first rung of the ladder has in him fifteen basic requirements of an Athravan in its full sublimity which he possesses not only as his virtue but as a "Shakti" — a force of power. His health is in perfect condition, "Pur Tandarosti" physically as well as mentally. He does not get contaminated by any evil (Druj) of the world nor any disease has any effect on him, no kind of contagion troubles him in any form. The attractions of the world, money or materialistic gain, or the web of 'Maya' has no effect on him. By the power of truth at his command he can impress the opposite person, and put his stamp of authority on him. He never harbours any evil for any men. He is true to all, and whatever is in his mind, is in his heart, and the same on his tongue. He can understand spiritual as well as worldly affairs, and because of his high 'Khayrad' (वेदिक) — intelligence, which comes from within he never loses in any arguments to any man. He can explain and show proof of the laws of Religion, and can prove with the power of his Kusti and Sudreh why religion has ordained certain things.

A Fraberetar is the possessor of all the above qualities. Still in comparison with the other seven stages, the work he has to do, (to put it in our worldly way) is of a

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ERVAD PHIROZE SHAPURJI MASANI

37th Baj day.

Dini-Avaz Committee performed the Religious ceremonies of Baj, Yazashni, and Jashan (from the separate contribution collected for the occasion) on the 37th Baj (death anniversary) on 18-2-'80 of Behesht Behereh Ervad Phiroze Masani, at the Banaji Atash—Behram, Charni Road, Bombay. A lecture on 'Avan Niyash' was also given on the occasion by Ervad K. N. Dastoor under the presidentship of Mr. Jal Vakil (Ex—Metropolitan Magistrate of Bombay), where high tributes were paid to the life and work of the late scholar. We append below a short write—up by Mr. Nanabhoy Mama in 1943, which has been sent to us by one of our readers from Hyderabad.

IN MEMORIAM :—

Ervad Phiroz Shapurji Masani, M.A., LL.B., Solicitor.

Born :—

5th September 1887 (Fasli Roz Farvardin—Mah Sheherivar)

Died :—

18th February 1943 (Fasli Roz Spendarmad—Mah Spendarmad)

Learned both in Law and Letters, Ervad PHIROZ was born for a specific and a well—defined mission which he so gloriously fulfilled, before he passed away into realms of brighter existence. This great mission was to strengthen and to stabilize the blessed foundations of "KSHNOOM", so auspiciously laid out by the Late Ustad-Saheb, Beheramshah Navroji Shroff. In the benign dispensations of the Great Unknown Ervad Phiroz was destined, with the loving and ardent co-operation of his high-souled colleagues, Dr. Framroze Sorabji Chiniwalla, Mr. Jehangir Sorabji Chiniwalla, his own dear brother Dinshah, and that genuine lover of

ancient religious lore, Seth Kaikhashru Burjorji Choksey, to sustain and to propagate for all humanity, the Sacred Science of "KSHNOOM", which is as the Light that dispels all darkness, and which is as the Reality that dissolves all Illusions. May the brilliance ever grow and spread! Amen! An Athravan by birth, and an Athravan by principles and practice, to Ervad Phiroz, the convictions of his heart were like the pleasures of his life; and his stern heroism in upholding them against all opposition was the finest proof of the high spirited traditions of his tribe. His high responsibilities were a labour of love for him; he responded with all the joys of a willing worker, and has, for all future, bequeathed them to hands as worthy and as noble, as the blessed ones of his revered Master, from whom he had himself inherited them.

May his Soul rest in Peace Eternal in the loving embrace of Sarosh Yazad!

"Zarathushti Din Shaad Baad!"

"Daad din-e veh Mazdayasni vaafiringani baad Hafta Keshvar Zamin! Aedun baad!"

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mere messenger or liaisoner. He manages all the work with the outside world for the higher seven stages of priest, who do not mix their breath with any outsider, and some higher souls even do not look at an outsider, and as we have seen above a Fraberetar is not a carrier of any contagion from the outside world to them.

Here it is left to the good sense of the reader to understand that if a Fraberetar who is still on the 1st step, out of 8 stages of Priests, and who still is the possessor of all the powers enumerated above then what must be the status of the other six grades of priest, and the final, grade of "Sraoshavarez"—blessed be his name who was our Master's Master.