

ASIATIC PAPERS

PART II

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BY

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*Goethe's Parsi-nameh or Buch des Parsen, i.e.,
the Book of the Parsees.*

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I.

THE subject of this paper was first suggested to me, about six years ago, by an interesting article of Prof. Dowden in the *Contemporary Review* of July 1908,¹ entitled "Goethe's West-Eastern Divan." The word Divan (دیوان) in Persian means "A collection of miscellaneous poems." These collections generally contain "poems in the alphabetical order of the final letters of the various ending rhymes."² For example, the last letter of each couplet of the first group of odes is 'alif' or 'a'; then the last letter of each couplet of the second group is 'bê' or 'b'; and so on. The Divan of the celebrated Persian poet, Hafiz, who as we will see later on, suggested to Goethe the idea of his Divan, serves as an illustration of this arrangement of the odes.

The Buch des Parsen, *i.e.*, the Book of the Parsees, which forms the subject of this paper, is a part of Goethe's "West-Östlicher Divan," *i.e.*, the West-Eastern Divan. Of the twelve parts or books of the Divan, it forms the 11th part or book. As far as I know, all of Goethe's German works are not translated into English. The Divan is one of such untranslated books.³

On reading the above article, my knowledge of German having got all rusty, I had requested my friend, Father Noti of St. Xavier's College, to kindly translate for me the Buch des Parsen. On resuming my study of the subject recently, I found that Goethe had, in his "Noten und Abhandlungen" (Notes and Discussions), in connection with his "West-Östlicher Divan," written, under the head of "Aeltere Perser" (Old Persians),⁴ some notes on the ancient Persians. Father Hömel has, at my request, kindly translated it for me. I give both

¹ Vol. XCIV, pp. 23-42. ² Dr. Steingass's Persian-English Dictionary.

³ It forms the 14th Volume of the Stuttgart Edition (1867) of Goethe's Works in our Library.

⁴ Goethe's Werke Vierzehnter Band (14th Volume), Stuttgart Edition (1867), pp. 138-41.

these translations at the end of this paper, hoping that they will help some students interested in the subject. I beg to tender here my best thanks to Father Noti and Father Hömel for their kindness to translate the poem and notes for me.

Goethe speaks of his Parsi-nameh as "Vermächtniss altpersischen Glaubens", *i.e.*, "The Testament of the old Persian faith." He places his views in the mouth of a poor but pious man, who, on the approach of death, says a few words of advice to some young men who had nursed him and honoured him.

I propose to deal, in this Paper, with the following subjects in connection with Goethe's Parsi-nâmeḥ :—

1. An outline of Goethe's Life and a few traits of his character, to enable us to understand well the circumstances which led the German poet to write on an Iranian subject.
2. A short account of his West-Eastern Divan, of the twelve books of which the Parsi-nâmeḥ forms the eleventh book.
3. An account of his Parsi-nâmeḥ, with a few observations on the most salient points of the book.
4. Translations into English of Goethe's Buch des Parsen and of his Notes on the Ancient Persians.

II.

I. A SHORT OUTLINE OF GOETHE'S LIFE.

To properly understand the time and the circumstances under which Goethe wrote his Divan, and in it the Parsi-nâmeḥ, one must know, at least, a short outline of his life. To understand Goethe's poems well, his life must be known. One of his biographers, Mr. Oscar Browning thus speaks on the subject: "Goethe differs from all other great writers, except perhaps Milton, in this respect, that his works cannot be understood without a knowledge of his life, and that his life is in itself a work of art, greater than any work which it created. This renders a long and circumstantial biography a necessity to all who would study the poet seriously. . . . He is not only the greatest poet of Germany; he is one of the greatest poets of all ages. . . . He was the apostle of self-culture . . . and taught both by precept and example the husbandry of the soul. . . . As Homer concentrated in himself the spirit of Antiquity, Dante of the Middle Ages, and Shakespeare of the Renaissance, so Goethe is the represen-

tative of the modern spirit, the prophet of mankind under new circumstances and new conditions, the appointed teacher of ages yet unborn. ¹

Johnan Wolfgang von Goethe was born ² in Frankfort on 28th August 1749. He was the only son of his parents, who both formed a religiously inclined pair. His father had received the title of Imperial Councillor in 1742, at the age of 32. At first, Goethe was instructed at home by his father. French culture was much prevalent at the time. He came into great contact with it, through the soldiers of France who were at Frankfort during the Seven Years' War, in which France sided with the Empire against Frederick the Great. In 1765, at the age of 16, he went to Leipzig for further study. There he wrote several smaller poems and songs. He returned to Frankfort in 1768, at the age of 19, and remained there without any definite aim for a year and a half.

During this period, he came into contact with Mrs. Klettenberg, a member of the Moravian school. She drew his attention to the mystical writings of the saints and to Alchemy. The latter led him to the study of science, in which he, later on, made many researches. He then went to the University of Strasburg in April 1770 and studied there till August 1771. Here, he got most of the impulses of his later more active literary life. Then, his mind was for some time diverted from a literary to a scientific line, and he studied Anatomy, Midwifery and Chemistry, especially the last. He also studied here Art, and the Cathedral of Strasburg served him as a model of Gothic architecture.

Here, in Strasburg, he came into contact with Herder, who was 5 years older than him and who created in him a taste for Nature in Art and for the principles of the remantic school. In August 1770, he took his degree as Doctor of Law, the subject of his dissertation being "The duty of providing an established Church." He then returned to Frankfort. He now wrote several works.

¹ Goethe : His Life and Writings, by Oscar Browning (1892), pp. 136-37.

² The house, in which he was born, is still to be seen in Frankfort. During my two days visit of Frankfort, in 1889, I had the pleasure of visiting his house on 21st September 1889. I have put down in my note-book, the number of his house as "No. 22 Grosser Hirschgraben". There is also his statue in Frankfort. On its four sides, his literary works are represented. On one side, is represented his Poëcy—Tragedy and Comedy ; on another, his Faust and Mephistocles ; on the third, a group of five works ; on the fourth, some of his other works. In the Museum of Antiquities, I saw, on a glass plate, the representation of the Persian winged Farohar with the flame of fire before it.

In the spring of 1772, he left Frankfort for Wetzlar, a quiet country town and one of the seats of the Holy Roman Empire. The Emperors held their Courts of Justice there. Here, he contracted the friendship of Lotte (Charlotte), the second daughter of one Herr Buff. At one time, Lotte spoke to him of the other world and of the possibility of returning from it. It was arranged between them that whoever "died first, should, if he could, give information to the living about the conditions of the other life." ¹

The fate of a young man named Jerusalem, whom he met at Wetzlar, and who committed suicide for failure in a hopeless passion for a married woman, suggested to Goethe the composition of the Werther. This work is said to have influenced many a lover who shot himself with a copy of Werther in his hand. Werther and Götz were the two works of Goethe which laid the foundation of Goethe's fame. Götz was a name of the chivalrous age which he had assumed in play with other literary friends discussing old chivalrous subjects. The assumption of that name gradually led him to write that work. Götz was published in 1773 and Werther in 1774. While writing such works Goethe also practised as an advocate at the Court at Wetzlar. At this time, he conceived the idea of writing Cæsar, Faust, Mahomet, the Wandering Jew and Prometheus. To write the drama of Mahomet, he studied the Koran.

At the special invitation of the Duke of Weimar, who had passed through Frankfort, Goethe went to Weimar in November 1775. Before the Seven Years' War, all the German princes looked to France for culture. But now, they "were beginning to take an interest in German literature." ² Most of them had literary men of genius in their courts. So, the Duke of Weimar had Goethe who "rose like a star." ³ Weimar was known at the time as the German Athens. The Duke invested him with the title.....of Geheimlegationsrath (Secret Legation Councillor), with a seat and voice in the privy council, and an income of £180 a year.....Goethe devoted himself with industry and enthusiasm to the public business.⁴ The first ten years at Weimar were interrupted now and then by long journeys, one of which was to Switzerland in 1779. Goethe was the principal adviser of the Duke of Weimar, who, in 1785, formed

¹ Life and Works of Goethe by Lewis, Vol. I, p. 183.

² "Goethe : His Life and Writings", by Oscar Browning, p. 56.

³ Ibid., p. 60.

⁴ Ibid., p. 62-63.

the Fürstenbund or league of princes, under the supremacy of Frederick the Great, to resist the ambition of Austria under Joseph II.¹ He thus took an interest in the question of the independence of Germany.

The year 1786 was very important for him. He saw that the work and the pleasures of the Court of Weimar, where he had spent 10 years, had kept him away from his literary pursuits and from his study of art and science. Many of his literary compositions had remained unfinished. His study of science was kept off. It is said of his scientific studies that he had a glimpse of Darwinism before Darwin. "He succeeded in seeing, as in a vision, the great scheme of evolution applied to all phenomena of the natural and moral world."² So, to pursue quietly for some time, all his favourite studies, and to satisfy "his longing to possess his soul in peace,"³ he journeyed in Italy from September 1786 to June 1788. He travelled *incognito* under the name of Müller. He returned to Weimar in June 1788, a new man, *i.e.*, a man with a new idea about art, *viz.*, that, not only the work of art must be solid, firm and simple, but "that life itself should be a work of art."⁴ He resolved to be free from "the distractions which had hitherto confused him".

In 1788, he entered into, what is called a "half-marriage" with Christiane Vulpius, a healthy blooming young girl, who first presented herself before him with a petition seeking some favour for her brother. Her simple beautiful features attracted Goethe. He took her home and made her his housewife. Several reasons are assigned, why he remained in an improper *laison* with her and did not marry her, one being her low position in life. A son was born to him of this girl. About 15 years after the first *laison*, he thought it advisable to marry her. The first half-marriage and the second legal marriage both were subjects of scandalous talk in the country and threw a slur upon the conduct of this great poet.

In 1792 and 1793, Goethe went with his master, the Duke of Weimar, to war. During the intervals of fight he pursued his favourite study of Optics and of the various branches of Natural Science. In the Autumn of 1793, the Duke left the Prussian service. Goethe, now being free, took to the management of the theatre for which he now wrote several pieces. He now contracted the friendship of Schiller,

¹ Ibid., p. 71.

² Ibid., p. 75.

³ Ibid., p. 78.

⁴ Ibid., p. 86.

who was younger than him by about 10 years. Their friendship inspired both of them mutually. Schiller's influence led Goethe to finish his *Wilhelm Meister's Lehrjahre*. The death of Schiller in 1805 upset Goethe for a time.

In 1806 was fought the great battle of Jena. Weimar was plundered. Goethe's friends lost everything. Goethe's property was saved by the firmness of his wife. Napoleon entered the town but Goethe did not go to see him. Then it was in 1808, that Napoleon, the military dictator, saw Goethe, the literary dictator of the time, at Erfurt, where the sovereigns and princes of Europe met in a Congress.

In October 1808, Goethe, at the express desire of Napoleon, had an interview with him, when he (Napoleon) went to Weimar to attend the conference of princes. Napoleon's Estimate of Goethe. When Goethe entered, Napoleon welcomed him with the words "*Vous êtes un homme!*" When he left, Napoleon said to his courtiers "*Voilà un homme.*"¹ Goethe was bold in the expression of his view, as in the case of his defence of Giordano Bruno. So, he liked Napoleon's appreciation of him. He speaks of his words as "the wonderful words with which the Emperor received me."² As his biographer says "Goethe could not ask anything more than the recognition contained in these words, coming from such a mouth. He declared, too, that 'Napoleon had put the dot above the i (of his life).'"³ It is said of that cynic philosopher Dionysius, that at midday, he went about with a lamp. When somebody asked him, why he went out with a lamp during daylight, he said, he went out in search of a "man," meaning thereby, that he found none whom he could really call a "man." When we remember this pretty anecdote, we see the full force and meaning of the words of Napoleon, calling Goethe a "man."

The year 1809 was an important one for Goethe, because, he then, as it were, began a new era. The troubled period—a period of nearly 10 years—of sorrow, owing to the wars and other circumstances, was over. Many were the causes of the sorrows of these ten years, the principal of which were the following:—1 The death of his dear friend, Schiller, on hearing the news of which he is said to have wept bitterly; 2 the plunder of his town of Weimar; 3 the death of Duchess Amolia, a great admirer and friend of Goethe; 4 the death of his mother; and 5 his own illness.

¹ The Life of Goethe by A. Bielschowsky, translated by W. A. Cooper, Vol. II., p. 411

Life and Works of Goethe by Lewis, Vol. II, pp. 366-67.

Ibid., Bielschowsky, Vol. II, p. 453, note 77. ³ Ibid., p. 414.

He now wrote an autobiographical account of his early life under the title of *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (Poetry and Truth). His biographers think, that it is not a faithful account. The last part of it appeared in 1814. During this time, the Germans were uniting and rising to overthrow the power of Napoleon. Goethe took no part in the movement. The reason for this coldness was his "natural indifference to the details of human affairs",¹ as shown by the fact, that even in the midst of weighty affairs like war and court business, he flew to his studies. Again, he "was a man of thought rather than of action". He thought Napoleon to be "the greatest living depository of power."²

Now the habit of contemplation begun to grow upon him more and more. So, in 1814, at the age of 65, he struck, as it were, a new line of poetical activity. In 1812, he first saw Hammer's translation of Hafiz. On the death, in June 1828, of the Grand Duke, Karl August, a life-long companion from the time of his youth, he is said to have uttered the words "Now it is all over". He died in 1832.

III.

A FEW TRAITS OF HIS CHARACTER.

In the above short outline of his life, we have referred to the principal events of his life. But some of the traits of his character require to be specially referred to. It is said, that he began to grow up, as a boy of observing habits, which gave him a contemplative or meditative bent of mind. The great earthquake of Lisbon in 1755 is reported to have killed about 60,000 men. This natural phenomenon and the Seven Years' War made him more contemplative in his boyhood. "From Nature to Nature's God," was the bent of his early life. He was, at first, a little inclined to mysticism, and his association, at an early age of about 20, with Klettenberg, a lady, who was a mystic, led him a little further towards mysticism. He was more inclined to pantheism in his belief.

According to his biographer, G. H. Lewis,³ Tacitus noticed, that a kind of Nature-worship was, as it were, a "natural tendency" of the ancient Germans. Goethe was, from his early years, inclined towards this natural tendency. As early as in 1770, Goethe defended M. Giordano Bruno, who was burnt in 1600 for declaring that the earth moved, a teaching which the Christian Church at the time had declared to be heretical. Giordano Bruto was a student of Nature, and this study had led him to a kind of pantheism—a monotheistic

¹ Goethe by Oscar Browning, p. 124. ² Ibid., p. 125.

³ Life and Work of Goethe Vol. I., p. 100.

pantheism which one observes in the East. As said by Goethe's biographer Mr. G. H. Lewis, "Pantheism, which captivates poetical minds, has a poetical grandeur in the form given to it by Bruno which would have allured Goethe had his tendencies not already lain in that direction." Bayle criticised this pantheism of Bruno, and Goethe said against this criticism : " Je ne suis pas du sentiment de M. Bayle à l'égard de Jor. Brunus, et je ne trouve ni d'impiété ni d'absurdité dans les passages qu'il cite."¹

In the above references to the views of Goethe, we saw, that he was pantheistic in his belief. However, it seems that Goethe's view of Pantheism. his pantheism was not of any gross character. It was not a pantheism opposed to monotheism. As Dr. Ketkar has, while speaking of Hinduism, said, " Monotheism and pantheism should be regarded as synonyms, and pantheism is the only possible form of any consistent monotheism."² This pantheism, taking it to be synonymous with monotheism, was the result of the mind soaring from Nature to Nature's God. Goethe himself thus presents his view on the subject : " To discuss God apart from Nature is both difficult and perilous ; it is as if we separated the soul from the body. We know the soul only through the medium of the body, and God only through Nature. Hence the absurdity, as it appears to me, of accusing those of absurdity who philosophically have united God with the world. For everything which exists, necessarily pertains to the essence of God, because God is the one Being whose existence includes all things. Nor does the Holy Scripture contradict this, although we differently interpret its dogmas each according to his views. All antiquity thought it in the same way ; an unanimity which to me has great significance. To me the judgment of so many men speaks highly for the rationality of the doctrine of emanation."³

This view of Nature corresponded to the view of the East, more especially of India. So, we see, that from an early age, he was, as it were, inclined to the philosophic views of life held by the East.

In his Memoirs, written by himself, while describing his portraiture of Mahomet in a hymn which he had once composed, he gives us an idea of his views as how to rise from Nature to Nature's God. He says :

How he carried the mind from Nature to Nature's God.

" The scene is supposed to represent a bright and serene night. Mahomet salutes the multitude of

¹ Ibid., pp. 101-102.

² Dr. Shridhar v. Ketkar's " Essay on Hinduism, its formation and future", quoted in the Academy of 15th June 1912, p. 749.

³ Life and Works of Goethe by G. Lewis, Vol. I, pp. 102-3, Bk. II.

stars as so many divinities. To the propitious planet Gad (our Jupiter), then rising above the horizon, he pays special homage as the king of all the stars. The moon next appears, and captivates for a while the eyes and the heart of the pious adorer of Nature. Presently the brilliant rising of the sun excites him to renewed homage. But the aspect of the heavenly bodies, notwithstanding the satisfaction with which they inspire him, leaves his heart a prey to desire. He feels that there is still something greater ; and his soul is elevated to the contemplation of the only, eternal, and infinite God, to whom all things owe their existence. I had composed this hymn with the deepest enthusiasm." ¹

It was such a view of grand Nature that led him to look with reverence to the Sun.

IV.

2. HIS WEST-ÖSTLICHE DIVAN.

Having given an outline of his life and having spoken of some of the traits of his mind, we now come to the subject of his West-Eastern Divan.

Goethe was drawn towards the East, as said above, long before he wrote the Divan. In his autobiography, while speaking of Mademoiselle Von Klettenberg, he refers to the Missionaries, and says : "I happened to advocate the people whom they sought to convert, and to declare that I preferred the primitive state of those ignorant nations to that to which they had been brought." ²

Again, as referred to in our account of his life, he was drawn to the East by his study of the Koran for his book on Mahomet. He had studied the life of this great Mahomedan prophet. While speaking of him and while defending his character and personality, he thus speaks on the work of great prophets :—

"I perfectly understood how a man of superior genius should desire to turn to the advantage of his fellow-creatures, the divine faculties which he is conscious he possesses. But, having to do with men of grosser

¹ "Memoirs of Goethe," written by himself (1824), Vol. II., pp. 113-14.

² "Memoirs of Goethe," written by himself (1824), Vol. II., pp. 117-18.

intellects, he is compelled, in order to secure their friendship, to lower himself to their level ; and this necessity degrades his eminent qualities by assimilating him to his inferiors. Thus the celestial powers of genius are depreciated by an amalgamation with worldly speculations; and views directed to eternity, lose their sublimity, and become narrowed by their application to ephemeral objects. . . . I found that history presented situations completely similar. It was thus that I conceived the idea of borrowing, from the series of events which compose the life of Mahomet, the groundwork of a dramatic representation of those bold enterprises so forcibly presented to my mind ; and which, though determined by noble feelings, too frequently end in crime.”¹

One of Goethe's biographers has said, that when Goethe turned to the East, for a kind of diversion and tranquillity
 Goethe's views of Indian Mythology. or peace of mind, India did not appeal to him so much as Persia did, because he found it “too monstrous a jumble.” Goethe, after referring to the Scandinavian Edda, which contains a reference to the story of Zoroaster laughing at his birth, as said by Pliny, thus gives his views of the Indian Mythology :

“A similar kind of interest attached me to the Indian fables, with which I began to get acquainted by means of Dapper's Voyage, and which I added to my mythological stores with pleasure. The altar of Ram became the ornament of my tales ; and, notwithstanding the incredible multiplicity of the personages, of these fables, the ape Hanneman was the favourite of my auditory. But I found all these monstrous personages unfit to form part of my poetical furniture ; the imagination being either unable to conceive them at all, or only able to comprehend them under absurd and ridiculous forms.”²

Goethe wrote his *West-Östliche Divan* during the sunset of his life, when he was in his 65th year. It was the
 The times and the circumstances under which the *West-Östliche Divan* was written. political storm in Europe that drove him to the harbour of peace and tranquillity in Asia. As his biographer³ says : “During the storms of war, Goethe had more and more withdrawn, in spirit, from the European world and taken refuge in the original abode of man in Asia, in order in those far-off regions to restore that serene harmony of his being which had been disturbed by the

¹ “Memoirs of Goethe,” written by himself Vol. II, pp. 112-13.

² “Memoirs of Goethe,” written by himself (1824), Vol. I, pp. 435-7.

³ Dr. Beilschowsky, translated by W. A. Cooper, Vol. III, p. 1.

discordant notes of the restless age. It was only natural that the trend of events should turn the eyes of all to the Orient Goethe participated in this general movement China and India could not hold his attention ; China was too barren, India too monstrous a jumble. Persia, on the other hand, tempted him to linger. He became acquainted with the culture of this country through its most congenial representative, Hafiz, the celebrated poet of the fourteenth century. Hammer's translation of Hafiz's collection of songs, the *Divan*, had appeared in 1812 and 1813, and Goethe needed but to read the introduction to this work to be most strongly attracted by the life and writings of his Oriental brother."

In one place in his *Memoirs*, he says :

"For some years past the events of my life having compelled me to call my own powers into action, I devoted myself with ardent zeal and unremitting activity to the cultivation of my mental faculties. . . . My mind was wholly directed to Nature, who appeared to me in all her magnificence. . . . I accordingly formed a religion after my own mind." ¹

He named his *Divan* the West-Eastern *Divan*, because, taking the imagery from the East, he had planted therein his own Western views. "He made the first attempt to transplant Eastern poetry to a German soil." ²

Why the *Divan* was named West-Östliche.

Just as the success of Firdousi in Persia in writing his *Shah-nâmeh*, an epic based on ancient historical traditions of Persia, led many other Persian poets to write many *namehs* or books on the line of his *Shah-nameh*, Goethe's success in Germany in writing on Eastern subjects is said to have led other German writers like Rückert (1788-1866), Platen (1796-1835), and Heine (1799-1856), to write on Eastern subjects. Rückert, who was a Professor of Oriental languages, and is said to have known 30 languages and who was a translator of Oriental poems, had, following Goethe, named one of his poems, *Östliche Rosen* (1823), *i.e.*, "Eastern Roses". His "*Rostem und Sohrab eine Heldengeschichte*" (*Rustam und Sohrab*, an epic or heroic story) is based on a Persian episode. As said by another biographer, who calls Goethe, "the German Hafiz", ³ it was not only the Oriental works of Von Hammer, but works of other Oriental scholars also that

¹ "Memoirs of Goethe," written by himself (1824), Vol. II, p. 121.

² Goethe: "His Life and Writings," by Oscar Browning (1892), p. 126.

³ The Life and Works of Goethe by Lewis, Vol. II, p. 398.

had influenced Goethe. Mr. Lewis names (Silvestre) De Sacy.¹ I think that the name of that distinguished French traveller and scholar, Anquetil Du Perron, who had visited India in 1755-61 and who had then published his translation of the Zend Avesta of the Parsees in 1771, may be added as the name of one who had very likely influenced Goethe in his work of the "Buch des Parsen." Dr. Thomas Hyde, the author of "Historia Religionis Veterum Persarum" also seems to have influenced him.

Goethe, in his West-Eastern Divan was chiefly inspired by Hafiz. Goethe and Hafiz. Oscar Browning thus speaks on the subject: "At a time when North and South and West were splitting in sunder, when thrones were breaking up and empires trembling, he sought a willing refuge in the restoring fountain of the Eastern poet¹." These two poets had, as pointed out by his biographer, many traits in common. Dr. Bielschowsky says ² :

"The bard of Shiraz seemed the very image of himself. Had he himself, perchance, lived once before upon the earth in the form of the Persian? Here was the same joy of earth and love of heaven, the same simplicity and depth, truthfulness and straightforwardness, warmth and passionateness, and, finally, the same openness of heart towards everything human and the same receptive mind free from institutional limitations. Did not the same thing apply to him that the Persians said of their poet, when they called him 'the mystic tongue' and 'the interpreter of mysteries', and when they said of his poems that to outward appearance they were simple and unadorned, but that they had a deep, truth-fathoming significance and highest perfection of form? And had not Hafiz, like him, enjoyed the favour of the humble and the great? Had he not also conquered a conqueror, the mighty Timur? And had he not out of the destruction and ruin saved his own serenity, and continued to sing peacefully as before under the old accustomed conditions?"

"Thus Goethe found in Hafiz a beloved brother of a former age, and, gladly treading in the footsteps of his Oriental kinsman, produced, to compete with the Eastern Divan, one in the West, which had to be styled West-eastern, as the Western poet blended the ideas and forms of the East with those of the West, and boldly assumed the mask of the Persian singer without sacrificing an iota of his own profound personality."

¹ Goethe: His Life and Writings, p. 126.

² "The Life of Goethe," translated by W. A. Cooper, Vol. III, p. 3.

Goethe's West-Eastern Divan consists of the following twelve books, and of these, the Book of the Parsees forms the 11th book :—

The Twelve Books of the West-Östlicher Divan.

1. Buch des Sängers, *i.e.*, the Book of Singers.
2. Buch Hafis, *i.e.*, the Book of Hafiz.
3. Buch der Liebe, *i.e.*, the Book of Love.
4. Buch der Betrachtungen, *i.e.*, the Book of Contemplation.
5. Buch des Unmuths, *i.e.*, the Book of Sadness.
6. Buch der Sprüche, *i.e.*, the Book of Proverbs.
7. Buch des Timur, *i.e.*, the Book of Timur.
8. Buch Suleika, *i.e.*, the Book of Zulikha.
9. Das Schenkenbuch, *i.e.*, the Book of the Cup-bearer.
10. Buch der Parabeln, *i.e.*, Book of Parables.
11. Buch des Parsen, *i.e.*, the Book of the Parsees.
12. Buch des Paradieses *i.e.*, the Book of Paradise.

Goethe has given Oriental names to all the above 12 books of his Divans. He has called the books "Nâme" which is the Persian word for a book (نام). He has called the first book "Moganni-nâme" and has given "Buch des Sängers," *i.e.*, the "Book of Singers," as its German equivalent. He has taken this name from a long ode¹ or rather a booklet of Hafiz, called Mughanni-nâme (مغنی نامہ). In fact, this booklet of Hafiz which gives its name to the first book of Goethe's Divan, gives some names and makes several allusions which remind us of the ancient Persians or Parsees. Therein, we find allusions to the Turanian King Afrâsiâb, his son Shideh and his minister Pirân², the hereditary enemies of Iran, and to Salim and Tur, the sons of the Irânian King Faridun. Therein, we also find a reference to the Zindehrud (couplet 22, زندۀ رود) referred to by Goethe.

The second book, Hafis Nameh, has Buch Hafis, as its German name. The word hâfiz (حافظ) in Persian, means one who learns his Koran well by heart. This was the poetical name of the Persian poet.

¹ Ode 687 in Col. Wilberforce Clarke's Translation of Hafiz. Vol. II, p. 993.

² Col. Clarke is wrong in saying that he was a great general of Irân (*Ibid*, p. 996 note). He was the great Minister and General of Turân.

The third book, "Buch der Liebe," *i.e.*, the "Book of Love," must be Ishq or Ashq-nameh and not Ushk-nameh as Goethe has termed it. The Persian word for Love is Ishq (عشق).

The fourth book, "Buch der Betrachtungen," *i.e.*, the "Book of Contemplation," is named Tefkir-nameh. The word is Arabic Tafkir (تفكير) meaning "reflection, consideration."

The fifth book, "Buch des Unmuths," or "Book of Sadness", is entitled Rendseh-nameh, which properly speaking is Ranj-nameh, (رنج نامه) *i.e.*, the "Book of Troubles."

The sixth book, "Buch der Sprüche" or the "Book of Sayings or Proverbs" is named Hikmet-nameh (حکمت نامه) *i.e.*, the book of wise sayings.

The seventh book, "Buch des Timur" or the "Book of Timur" has taken its name from Timur or Timurlane, who had, at one time devastated Asia. It is suggested that in the character of Timur, Goethe had, before his mind, Napoleon, the Timur of the West of his time.¹

The eighth book, "Suleika-nameh" or the "Book of Zuleika", has taken its name from the well-known eastern female character of Zulikha, who has been the subject of the song of several Eastern poets. The story of Yousaph and Zulikha is as much known in the East as that of Romeo and Juliet in the West. In Zulikha, he had in his mind Marianne vom Willemer, the newly married wife of his old friend Willemer, under whose influence he had fallen in his old age.

The ninth book, "Das Schenkenbuch," *i.e.*, the "Book of the Cupbearer", is named Saki-nameh. Goethe has taken this name from a long ode or rather a booklet of verses of Hafiz himself. This booklet² is named Saki-nameh (ساقی نامه). Therein, every alternate couplet begins with the word Sâkî (*i.e.*, O Cupbearer!). This poem of Hafiz has, in the very beginning, an allusion to Zardusht زردوشت or Zoroaster and his sacred fire. It has also several allusions to eminent kings and personages of ancient Irân, like King Jamshed, Tahamtan (Rustam) and his celebrated horse the Rakhsh, Minocheher, Buzurj Meher, Noshirwan, Kai Kâus, Kai Kobâd, Dârâ and Kai Khusru.

¹ Goethe : His Life and Writings by Oscar Browning (1892), p. 126.

² It forms Ode No. 686 in Col. Wilberforce Clarke's Translation.

The tenth book, "Buch der Parabeln" or the "Book of Parables", is entitled Mathal-nameh (Masal-nameh **مثال نامه**) from the Arabic word *masal* which means, a fable, adage or parable.

The eleventh book, which is the subject proper of this Paper, is "Buch des Parsen" or the "Book of the Parsees." It is entitled Parsi-nameh. Lewis translates the words "Buch des Parsen", by "Book of the Persians."¹ But Prof. Dowden translates them by "Book of the Parsees."² There are several reasons why the latter rendering is preferable. Firstly, the proper German word for 'Persian' would be 'Perser' and not Parsi. The word 'Parsi' is rendered into German dictionaries by 'Parsee.' Secondly, the contents of the book shew, that Goethe does not speak in this poem of the modern Persians. Of course, as one would naturally be led to think from the fact of the Divan of the modern Persian poet Hafiz having led him to write his Divan, that Goethe speaks of the modern Persians or Persians in general. But that is not the case. He speaks of the ancient Persians, the ancestors of the modern Persians. And thirdly, Goethe heads his poem in the very beginning as "Vermächtniss altpersischen Glaubens," i.e., "the Last Will of the Old Persian Religion."

The twelfth or the last book, "Buch des Paradieses", i.e., the "Book of Paradise", is entitled "Chuld-nameh." It is Persian Khuld-nameh (**خلد نامه**). The first part of the name is Arabic (**خلد**) *khuld*, meaning eternity, paradise. The word 'paradiese' in the German name of the book (English paradyse, Fr. paradis) is *firdous* (**فردوس**) in Persian, meaning a garden, a vineyard, paradise.³ It is originally an Avestan word pairi-daêza (**پری داز**) meaning lit. "an enclosed place." It is one of the four Avesta or old Iranian words that have entered into the old Hebrew of the Bible.

Sarah Austin thus sums up the feeling, breathing through the Divan. "Through all the songs of the Divan breathes the untroubled feeling of an unexpected reconciliation with Life, and a cheerful acquiescence in the conditions of our being. The period of time within which this collection of lyrical matter had birth is shown in the opening song. It is the period in which all was wreck and confusion ;

¹ Life and Works of Goethe by G. H. Lewis, Vol. II, p. 399.

² *Contemporary Review* of July 1808, Vol. XCIV, p. 4.

³ Firdousi, the Homer of the East, derives his name from this word, Firdous.

thrones were overthrown, and nations panic-stricken. And now, when all seemed gloom and despair, the poet had fought through the fight with himself and the outer world ; he had gained the power to penetrate with cheerful courage into the deep origin of things in which men still received heavenly wisdom from God in earthly language, and did not distract their heads. The poet, become one with himself and with the world, stands firm against all outward shocks, and is no wise disheartened by them The poet stands isolated and self-dependant. This, which had at first given Goethe such intense pain, has now lost its bitterness. He is become like one of those happy sages of the east, whose unclouded brightness and serenity of soul nothing temporal could disturb ; who find their country everywhere, because peace and content reign in their own bosoms." ¹

Goethe's other biographer also says a similar thing : "The *West-Östliche* Divan was a refuge from the troubles of the time. Instead of making himself unhappy with the politics of Europe, he made himself happy studying the history and poetry of the East. He even began to study the Oriental languages, and was delighted to be able to copy the Arabic manuscripts in their peculiar characters This forms the peculiarity of the Divan—it is West-Eastern ; the images are Eastern ; the feeling is Western In this Eastern world we recognize the Western poet." ²

V.

3. HIS PARSI-NAMEH.

Coming to the Parsi-nâmeḥ itself, before examining it a little in details, I will here briefly sum up its contents in the words of Prof. Dowden ³ : "The Book of the Parsees is mainly occupied with the noble 'Legacy of the old Persian faith,' uttered to his disciples by a poor and pious brother now about to depart from earth. The worship of the Sun and of fire, seemingly so abstracted, is regarded by Goethe as profoundly practical. The dying saint enthusiastically aspires towards the light, but his lesson for his brethren is wholly concerned with conduct ;—'daily fulfilment of hard services'—such is his legacy in a word ; their part it will be to keep pure, as far as human effort can, the soul, the air,

¹ Characteristics of Goethe, from the German of Falk, von Müller, &c. (Conversations-Lexicon, and Supplement) by Sarah Austin (1833), Vol. II, pp. 241-43.

² Life and Works of Goethe by G. H. Lewis, Vol. II., p. 398.

³ His article on "Goethe's West-Eastern Divan" in the *Contemporary Review* of July 1908, Vol. 94, p. 41.

Goethe's Buch des Parsen or Parsi-nameh, to be properly understood, must be read with his *Noten und Abhandlungen* (Notes and Discussions). When we read both, together or side by side, we find that the subjects treated in the Parsi-nameh can be grouped under a few principal heads. These are :—

- The first and the most important subject is the reverence paid to the Sun by the Parsees, of which the veneration for fire is, according to Goethe, a subsidiary part.

In his Notes and Discussions, Goethe thus justifies, the Parsees' reverence for the Sun and the other luminaries. He says : " Gazing at Nature formed the basis of the worship of the ancient Parsees. Whilst adoring the Creator, they turned toward the rising Sun, as the most strikingly glorious phenomenon. They fancied: they saw their God's throne, surrounded by brilliant angels. The pomp

c. Ibid., p. 198, l. 8.

of this elevating worship was daily within reach of every one, even the most lowly. The poor would step forth from his hut, the warrior from his tent, and the most religious of actions would be accomplished. To the new-born child, the baptism of fire ¹ was administered in such rays, and all day long, and all life long, the Parsee saw himself accompanied by the Great Luminary in all his doings. The moon and the stars were lighting up the night ; they too were out of reach belonging to the realms of the endless. Fire, on the contrary, walks by man's side, giving light and warmth to the best of its capacity. It becomes a sweet and pious duty to say prayers in presence of this substitute, to bow to what was felt as infinite. Nothing is cleaner than a bright sunrise, and such was to be the cleanliness with which fires were to be kindled and kept, if they were to be and to remain sacred and sunlike."

From Nature to Nature's God is a principle upon which Zoroastrian teachings about worship are principally based. Nature is the grand manifestation of God. If a Zoroastrian is asked about the evidences of the Existence of God, his reply should be that the principal evidence is, what is now spoken of as, the "Argument from Design." Chapter 44 of the Yaçna serves as an instance. A Parsee's prayer, now named, *char disa ni namaj* (ચારે દીસાની નેમાજ), *i.e.*, obeisance in all four directions, in reciting which four times, he turns each time to all the four directions, East, South, West and North, beginning with the East and ending with the North, shews his faith, that he believes in the omnipresence of God, in his attractive presence in the great objects of Nature, the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, &c.

Mr. Andrew Carnegie, the great American millionaire, when he was once in Bombay, on seeing a Parsee pray before the Sun and the great sea at Back Bay, thus spoke of what Goethe calls the "elevating worship of the Parsis": "Fire was there in its grandest form, the setting Sun, and water in the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean outstretched before them. The earth was under their feet, and wafted across the sea ; the air came laden with the perfumes of 'Araby the blest.' Surely no time or place could be more fitly chosen than this for lifting up the soul to the realms beyond sense. I could not but participate with these worshippers in what was so grandly beautiful. There was no music save the solemn moan of the waves as they broke into foam on the beach. But where shall we find so mighty an organ, or so grand an anthem ?

A similar justification
by a modern tra-
veller.

¹ Vide the Sad-dar which speaks of kindling a lamp or fire on the birth of a child.

"How inexpressibly sublime the scene appeared to me, and how insignificant and unworthy of the unknown seemed even our cathedrals 'made with human hands,' when compared with this looking up through Nature unto Nature's God ! I stood and drank in the serene happiness which seemed to fill the air." ¹

Goethe's comparison of the splendour of a king with that of the great luminary reminds us of King Akbar's view, expressed by his great minister Abul 'l Fazal in his Akbar-nameh. He says :

A similar justification by Akbar.

"His Majesty maintains that it is a religious duty and divine praise to worship fire and light ; surely, ignorant men consider it forgetfulness of the Almighty, and fire-worship. But the deep-sighted know better. As the external form of the worship of 'the select' is based upon propriety, and as people think the neglect of some sort of worship abominable, there can be nothing improper in the veneration of that exalted element, which is the source of man's existence and of duration of his life ; nor should base thoughts enter such a matter.

"How beautifully has Shaik Sharaf-ud-din Munyari said : 'What can be done with a man who is not satisfied with the lamp, when the Sun is down ?' Every flame is derived from that fountain of divine light (the Sun), and bears the impression of its holy essence. If light and fire did not exist, we should be destitute of food and medicines ; the power of sight would be of no avail to the eyes. The fire of the Sun is the torch of God's sovereignty".²

The tone of justification for the veneration paid to the Sun, adopted here by Abul Fazl, in the words, "If light and fire did not exist, we should be destitute, etc.," reminds us of a similar tone of justification used in the Avesta in the Khurshed Nyâish and Kurshed Yasht (the invocation in honor of the Sun) and implied in the words "Should the Sun not rise up, then the Daevas would destroy all things, etc."³

With regard to the baptism of fire to the new-born child, referred to by Goethe, one may refer to the Persian custom described in the Persian Sad-dar. It says : "When the child becomes separate from the mother, it is necessary to burn a lamp for three nights and days ; if they burn a fire it would be better."⁴ Dr. Thomas Hyde, in his "Veterum Persarum

¹ As quoted by S. Lang in his "Modern Zoroastrian," p. 220.

² The Ain-i-Akbari, translated by Blochmann, Vol. I., p. 48.

³ Yt. vi. S. B. E., Vol. XXII., p. 86.

⁴ Chapter XVI a S. B. E. Vol. XXIV, p. 277. Text, edited by Mr. B. N. Dhâbhar, p. 15.

et Parthorum et Medorum Religionis Historia", published in the middle of the 18th century, rests a good deal upon the Sad-dar for some parts or his version about the ancient Persians. It is possible that this work also was one of the books studied by Goethe for his materials about the ancient Persians.

Before we proceed further, we would notice here, what Mr. G. H. Lewis, a biographer of Goethe, says of Goethe's views in 1813, about the practice of paying reverence to the Sun as a manifestation of God. Mr. Lewis says ¹ :

Goethe's view
about the Venera-
tion for the Sun.

"But against dogmatic teachings he opposed the fundamental rule, that all conceptions of the Deity must necessarily be *our* individual conceptions, valid for us, but not to the same extent for others. Each has his own religion ; must have it as his individual possession ; let each see that he be true to it, which is far more efficacious than trying to accommodate himself to another's

" 'I believe in God,' was, he said 'a beautiful and praiseworthy phrase; but to *recognize* God in all his manifestations, *that* is true holiness on earth ' He looked upon the Four Gospels as genuine, 'for there is in them a reflection of a greatness which emanated from the person of Jesus, and which was of as divine a kind as was ever seen upon earth.' If I am asked whether it is in my nature to pay Him devout reverence I say—certainly ! I bow before Him as the divine manifestation of the highest morality. If I am asked whether it is in my nature to reverence the Sun, I again say—certainly ! For he is likewise a manifestation of highest Being. I adore in him the light and the productive power of God; by which we all live, move, and have our being."

With the Persian reverence for the Sun and the fire is connected the idea of what Goethe calls, 2. Dignity of the Elements and the Idea of Purity or Cleanliness connected with it. "Würde der Sämmtlichen Elemente", *i.e.*, the "Dignity of all the Elements." Goethe thus speaks of this subject in his "Notes and Discussions" :

"It is, however, important to notice that the ancient Parsees did not worship fire only ; their religion is clearly based on the dignity of all elements, as manifesting God's existence and power. Hence the sacred dread to pollute water, the air, the earth. Such respect for all natural forces that surround man leads to every civic virtue. Attention, cleanliness, application are stimulated and fostered."

¹. The Life and Works of Goethe (1855), Vol. II, p. 392.

What a modern writer, Mr. Samuel Lang, the author of "Modern Science and Modern Thought," says, in his "Modern Zoroastrian," is somewhat the same, as what Goethe says, about the "respect for all natural forces that surround man" leading "to every civic virtue." He says: "In this respect, however, what I have called the Zoroastrian theory of religion affords great advantages. It connects religion directly with all that is good and beautiful, not only in the higher realms of speculation and of emotion, but in the ordinary affairs of daily life. To feel the truth of what is true, the beauty of what is beautiful, is of itself a silent prayer or act of worship to the Spirit of Light; to make an honest, earnest, effort to attain this feeling is an offering or act of homage. Cleanliness of mind and body, order and propriety in conduct, civility in intercourse, and all the homely virtues of everyday life, thus acquire a higher significance, and any wilful and persistent disregard of them becomes an act of mutiny against the Power whom we have elected to serve."¹

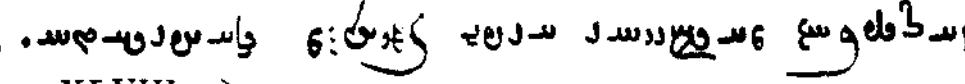
The dignity associated with the elements is practical. It carries with it, and conveys the idea of, Purity and Cleanliness, Order and Harmony. A beautiful Avestan maxim illustrates all that Goethe says. The maxim is: Yaozdâo mashyâi aipi zânthem vahtshâ"², i.e., Purity is the best thing for man, since his very birth.

Prof. Darmesteter says:—

"L'axiome 'cleanliness is next to godliness' serait tout à fait Zoroastrien, avec cette différence que dans le Zoroastrisme 'Cleanliness' est une forme même de 'godliness'."³

In the advice of Goethe's testator in the Parsi-nameh, "Let the dead be given to the living," we find a reference to the Parsee mode of the disposal of the dead. One must bear in mind, that the Parsee custom enjoins both, exposure to the Sun and exposure to the flesh-devouring animals. Thus, this custom accords with what Goethe says of the Iranian view of the Sun and Purity. The custom is looked at from the point of view of sanitation and purity. Goethe himself thus speaks of the custom in his Notes and Discussions:

¹. A Modern Zoroastrian by S. Lang, pp. 223-4.

².  (Vendidad X, 18; Yaçna, XLVIII, 5).

³. L. Zend Avesta II, Introduction, p. X.

"The strange mode of disposing of their dead is due to excessive care of not soiling the pure elements. The municipal police too acts on these principles : Cleanliness of the streets was a matter of religion. . . . Owing to such living and practical worship it is likely, there should have been that incredible population to which history bears witness."

The Iranian idea of purity entertained by the view of a German Scholar, Dr. Rapp, who wrote about 50 years after Goethe, is worth noting here, as it supports the view of Goethe. Dr. Rapp ¹ says:

Another German scholar's view of the Iranian Idea of Purity.

"The Iranians had a cultivated sense for purity and decency ; whatever has in the slightest degree anything impure, nauseous in itself, instils into them an unconquerable horror. This has a connection in part with the fact, that the impure is mostly even unhealthy and harmful, but in several cases the cause of the impurity does not allow of being traced back to that fact. The Iranians had in a certain measure a distinct sixth sense for the pure. All of that sort has, according to their view, their origin in darkness, in obscurity ; in such substances, according to their conceptions, the evil spirits dwell, and when they let such sorts to approach near to them, they thereby offer to the evil spirits admission into, and domination over themselves."

Goethe refers to the Iranians' solicitude to keep the ground, water, and air pure. He attributes the origin of their custom of the disposal of the dead to that solicitude for not soiling the ground. He makes his testator direct, that even fields be laid out on a neatly purified ground.

To keep all ground neat and pure is one of the oft-repeated *far-mans* of the Avesta. In the Vendidad, such a ground is represented as feeling pleased and delighted. In reply to Zoroaster's questions, Ahura Mazda describes at some length the different kinds of ground which feel delighted. They are the following :—

1. The piece of ground where the pious say their prayers.
In other words, a place of worship is the first that feels delighted.

¹. "Die Religion und sitte der Perser und übrigen Iranier nach den griechischen und römischen Quellen" (Religion and Customs of the Persians and other Iranians, according to the Greek and Roman authors). German Oriental Society's Journal, Vol. XVII, Leipzig, 1863, pp. 52-56. Translated from the German of Dr. Rapp by Mr. K. R. Cama, in his "The Zoroastrian Mode of Disposing of the Dead", p. 19.

2. The place where righteous persons live with their families in peace, piety and plenty.
3. The water-less ground when irrigated, and the moist ground when dried or reclaimed, feel delighted. The ground feels more delighted when cultivated.
4. The ground where cattle are bred.
5. The ground where cattle go for pasture and which they fertilize by their manure.

On the other hand, the following pieces of ground feel grieved : —

1. The ground of volcanic crevices which are seats of unhealthiness and disease.
2. The ground where men are buried.
3. The ground which has graves or tombs-structures over it. According to the spirit of the teachings of the Avesta, pure and simple burial—though not good in itself—is far better than burial with structures, which delay quick decomposition and prevent the bodies from being soon reduced to dust. The structures make the burial-ground, seats of diseases.
4. Uneven ground, full of holes and crevices which engender sickness.
5. The ground, whereon people lead an unrighteous life.

The following classes of persons are spoken of as those who make ground feel delightful :—

1. The man who disinters buried bodies and exposes them, and thus frees the ground from being impure and unclean.
2. The man who destroys tombs or structures over the graves and thus helps an early decomposition.

Goethe makes his testator direct, that waters of canals, streams, and rivers must have "a free course and cleanness. As

Purity of Water. Senderud ¹ comes to you quite pure, from the mountain regions, so let him depart again quite.

¹ The Senderud of Goethe is the Zenderud (زند رود) of Isphan, of which M. Barbier de Meynard, basing his work on the Modjem el-Bouldan of Yakout and other Arab and Persian writers, says : "C'est un des noms de la rivière célèbre qui passe à Ispahân et arrose plusieurs bourgs et campagnes de son territoire. C'est une grande rivière dont les eaux sont douces et fécondantes (Dictionnaire Géographique, Historique et Littéraire De la Perse, p. 289).

pure." He dilates a little on this subject in his notes and discussions and refers to the Iranians' "sacred dread to pollute water, the air and earth." He adds "on the one hand they would not soil a river, and on the other hand they were digging canals with careful economy of water and they kept them clean."

Both Herodotus and Strabo refer to the Iranians' scrupulous care for the cleanliness of water. Herodotus says: "They neither make water, nor spit, nor wash their hands in a river, nor defile the stream with urine, nor do they allow any one else to do so, but they pay extreme veneration to all rivers."¹ Strabo says: "The Persians never pollute a river with urine, nor wash nor bathe in it; they never throw a dead body, nor anything unclean into it"²

The Avesta enjoined, that an Iranian should never spoil the water of rivers. Not only that, but if he saw some decomposing matter in a stream or rivulet, he should stop at once, whether he be going on foot, driving, or riding, and go into the water as far as he can and remove the filth. This injunction was latterly stretched a little too far, and applied even to salt water; and we find from Tacitus,³ that in the time of the Roman Emperor Nero, Tiridates, a Zoroastrian king of Armenia, refused to go to Rome when summoned to that court, on the ground, that he had to cross the sea, where he would be obliged to pollute the water against the dictates of his religion.

Goethe speaks of the religion of the Parsees as based on "the dignity of all elements," and, while speaking of their Purity of Fire. "strange mode of disposing of their dead," says that that is "due to excessive care of not soiling the pure elements."

Now, one can easily understand how air, earth, and water can be kept pure, but not so easily, how fire can be kept pure. Of course, a Parsee is asked to be careful to see, that he places dry, clean, and fragrant wood over his sacred fire. That is a kind of physical purity. But in a Pahlavi writing attached to the Pahalavi Shâyast lâ Shayast,⁴ fire, not only the sacred fire of the fire-temples but also the culinary fire burning in one's hearth at home, is required to be kept pure and clean. Here, it is the work of moral purity that is spoken of. Physical purity is here a symbol of moral purity. So, it

¹ Bk. I, 138, Cary's Translation (1889), p. 62.

² Book XV, Chap. III 16. Hamilton and Falconer's translation, Vol. III, p. 137.

³ Works of Tacitus, Vol. I. The Annals, Book XV, p. 24. The Oxford Translation.

⁴ S. B. E., Vol. V., p. 375. Shâyast lâ Shâyast, Appendix, Chap. XV, 12.

is said, that if one cooks upon the fire of his house some food that he has purchased from money dishonestly acquired, he defiles the fire, he makes it impure. Similarly, if a worshipper offers to the sacred fire of the fire-temple odoriferous wood or incense that is bought from money acquired dishonestly, he displeases the fire.

With purity and cleanliness, go, to a certain extent, Order, Harmony, Discipline which help one in their daily fulfilment of duty and work. Goethe makes his testator direct :—" When you plant trees let them stand in rows, for he (the Sun) gives prosperity to what is well ordered."

3. Daily fulfilment of hard services, resulting from the Iranian view of Order.

'Order' is one of the characteristic teachings of the Avesta. The word 'Asha' which is one of the few technical words of the Avesta that cannot be sufficiently well rendered into another language, significantly contains the idea of Order. The word Asha is Sanscrit *rita* and philologically corresponds to *right*. What is good, right or perfect in points of Order, Discipline, Purity, Harmony, Truth, Beauty, is Asha. It carries with it, the idea, not only of physical Order, but moral Order. Ahura Mazda, is the Ashoân Asho, the Most Orderly of the Orderlies.

VI.

4. PARSI-NAMEH, BOOK OF THE PARSEES.

Testament of the Old Persian Faith.

(Translated by Father Noti from the German.)

What testament, brethren, is to come to you from him who is departing, from him the poor and pious, whom you, juniors, have patiently nursed and whose last days you have honoured by your cares?

Often we have seen the king riding along, decked with gold and accompanied by gold on every side, gems being sown like dense hail-stones on him and on his nobles.

Did you ever envy him for this? and did you not more nobly feed your eyes, when the Sun on morning's pinions arose in his arched course over the innumerable peaks of Darnawend?

Who could keep his eyes from looking at that spectacle? I felt, I felt a thousand times, during so many days of my life, that I was carried along with him at his coming, to recognize God on his throne and to call him the Lord of life's fountain and to act (in a way) worthy of that sublime sight and to proceed on my way in His light.

But when the fiery circle ascended and was completed, I stood as if dazed in darkness, I struck my breast and threw my limbs, front forward, down to the ground.

And now let me make a holy testament for your fraternal will and memory : the daily observance of heavy duties ; no other revelation is required.

As soon as a new born child moves pious hands, let him forthwith be turned towards the Sun, let him be bathed, body and soul, in the fiery bath. He will feel every morning's grace.

Let the dead be given to the living ; let even the animals be covered with rubbish and earth and let what seems to you impure, be concealed, as far as you have the power.

Let your field be laid out on a neatly purified ground, in order that the Sun may like to shine upon your industry. When you plant trees, let them stand in rows, for he (the Sun) gives prosperity to what is well ordered.

Also the water must never lack in its channels a free course and cleanness. As Senderud comes to you quite pure, from the mountain regions, so let him depart again quite pure.

That the soft fall of the water may not be weakened, take care, to dig out diligently the channels. Reeds and bulrushes, newts and salamanders, let them be destroyed, one and all.

When you have thus purified earth and water, the Sun will like to shine through airs where he is worthily received and where he produces life and salvation and welfare of life.

You, who are harassed from labour to labour, be consoled ; now the universe is purified and now Man may venture, to strike the image of God out of the flint.

Take joyfully notice, where the flame is burning : clear is the night and lithe are the limbs.

On the active fires of the hearth, what is raw in the saps of plants and beasts, is made mature.

If you carry wood, do it joyfully : for you carry the seed of the earthly sun. If you pluck *Pambeh*,¹ you may confidently say : This will be made into a wick and bear the Holy.

¹ Pambeh is Persian پنبه meaning cotton or twist.

If you piously recognize in the burning of every lamp the semblance of a higher light, no mishap shall ever prevent you from adoring the throne of God in the morning.

This is the imperial seal of our existence, this is the mirror of the Deity for us and the angels, and all that but stutter the praise of the Most High, are gathered there in circles round circles.

And wish to bid good-bye to the banks of Senderud and to soar up to Darnawend to meet him rejoicing, when he comes up at dawn and to bless you from there in all eternity.

If Man values the earth, because the Sun shines on it, if he delights in the vine, which weeps at the touch of the knife, as it feels, that its juices, well-matured and world-refreshing, will become incentive to many powers, but stifling to many more : he understands, that he has to thank for this that heat which makes all this prosper ; he will, when drunk, stammer and totter ; he will, when moderate, sing and rejoice.

VII.

THE ANCIENT PARSEES.

(Translated by Father Hömel from the German.)

Gazing at Nature formed the basis of the worship of the ancient Parsees. Whilst adoring the Creator, they turned towards the rising Sun, as the most strikingly glorious phenomenon. They fancied they saw there God's throne, surrounded by brilliant angels. The pomp of this elevating worship was daily within reach of every one, even the most lowly. The poor would step forth from his hut, the warrior from his tent, and the most religious of actions would be accomplished. To the new-born child the baptism of fire was administered in such rays, and all day long, and all life long the Parsee saw himself accompanied by the Great Luminary in all his doings. The moon and the stars were lighting up the night ; they too were out of reach belonging to the realms of the endless. Fire, on the contrary, walks by man's side, giving light and warmth to the best of its capacity. It becomes a sweet and pious duty to say prayers in presence of this substitute, to bow to what was felt as infinite. Nothing is cleaner than a bright sunrise, and such was to be the cleanliness with which fires were to be kindled and kept, if they were to be and to remain sacred and sunlike.

Zoroaster seems to have been the first to transform this noble and pure religion of Nature into an intricate worship. Mental prayer,

which includes and excludes all religions, and which penetrates the whole of life only with a few privileged minds, develops with most men only as an ardent, enrapturing feeling of the moment ; but if this disappears, man is restored to himself, and being neither contented nor occupied any longer, he relapses into endless tedium.

To fill this tedium with consecrations and purifications, with walking to and fro, bowing and stooping, forms the duty and profit of the Priests; in the course of centuries, these carry their trade to endless triflings. He who is able to take a prompt survey from the primitive childlike worship of the rising Sun, to the silliness of the Guebers, as it is to be found even at the present day in India, the same will see in the former a fresh nation starting from sleep to salute the early dawn, and in the latter a backward people who try to expel common tedium by pious tedium.

It is, however, important to notice that the ancient Parsees did not worship fire only ; their religion is clearly based on the dignity of all elements, as manifesting God's existence and power. Hence the sacred dread to pollute water, the air, the earth. Such respect for all natural forces that surround man leads to every civic virtue. Attention, cleanliness, application are stimulated and fostered. On this, culture of the soil was based: for, on the one hand, they would not soil a river, and, on the other hand, they were digging canals, with careful economy of water, and they kept them clean. The circulation of these canals gave rise to fertility of the soil, so that the cultivation of the realm was, at that time, ten times larger. Everything on which the Sun smiled was pursued with the utmost zeal, and more than anything else they tended the vine, the Sun's favoured child.

The strange mode of disposing of their dead is due to excessive care of not soiling the pure elements. The municipal police too acts on these principles ; cleanliness of the streets was a matter of religion ; and even at present, when the Guebers are expelled, banished, despised, and at most finding shelter in ill-famed slums of a suburb, it happens that a dying follower of that religion bequeaths a certain sum, in order that some street of the city may be cleansed forthwith and thoroughly. Owing to such living and practical worship, it is likely, there should have been possible that incredible population to which history bears witness.

So tender a religion, based on God's omnipresence in his visible works, cannot but have a special influence on morals. Look at its principal positive and negative commandments : Not to lie ; not to

make debts ; not to be ungrateful ! The fruitfulness of these doctrines will easily be understood by every moralist and ascetical teacher. In fact the first negative commandment implies the two next, and all others ; for, they are, in fact, derived from untruthfulness and faithlessness. This is probably the reason why the devil is referred to in the East merely as the perpetual liar.

But, as this religion leads to musing, it is likely that it will lead to effeminacy, as there is indeed some trace of the womanish character in their long loose garments. There was, however, a powerful safe-guard in their manners and institutions. They used to carry arms even in times of peace and in familiar life, and they practised the use of arms in every manner possible. Most clever and fast racing was customary among them ; their games too, like the one played with clubs and balls in large play-grounds, kept them vigorous, strong and nimble ; and relentless levies of troops would transform each and every one into heroes at the beck and call of the king.

Let us turn back on their religious feelings. At first, public worship was limited to a few fires, and for this very reason it was more venerable ; then a reverend priesthood multiplied more and more, and at the same rate fires became more numerous. It lies in the nature of perpetually incompatible relations, that the closely united spiritual power should, on a given occasion, rebel against temporal power. Omitting that the Pseudo-Smerdis, who seized the kingdom, had been a priest, that he had been raised, and for some time supported by his colleagues,—we find on several occasions that the priests were dangerous for the rulers.

Scattered by Alexander's invasion, not favoured under his Parthian successors, raised and gathered again by the Sassanides, the Parsees always stuck to their doctrines, and opposed the ruler by whom these were infringed. Thus roused in every possible manner the utmost aversion in both parties, at the union of Kooshru with the fair Schireen, a Christian.

At last, the Parsees were expelled for good by the Arabs, and driven to India. What was left of them and their mental followers in Persia, is despised and insulted down to the present day ; at times tolerated, and persecuted at other times according to the whim of rulers, this religion is still persevering here and there in its primitive purity, even in desolate nooks, as has been said by a poet in "The Old Parsee's Testament."

It can hardly be doubted that in the course of ages much good is due to this religion, and that it contained the possibility of the higher civilization which spread over the Western part of the East. Yet it is exceedingly difficult to convey some notion as to how and whence this civilization was spreading. Many towns were scattered throughout many districts like centres of life ; but what appears most marvellous to me is, that the fatal neighbourhood of Indian idolatry could not influence this religion. It is striking that, while the towns of Balkh and Bamian were so close to each other, we see how in the latter the silliest idols of huge dimensions were made and adored, whilst in the former there remained temples of the pure fire, there sprang up large monasteries of this confession, and there flocked together numberless *mobeds*. How glorious was the organization of these institutes may be gathered from the extraordinary man who came from thence. Out of them came the family of the Barmekides, who were so long flourishing as influential State-Servants, until they were at last,—like an almost similar house of this kind in our day,—rooted out and driven out. ¹

¹ I beg to draw the attention of my readers to a very learned and interesting paper by Dr. A. F. J. Remy, entitled "The Influence of India and Persia on the Poetry of Germany (1901)." It was after the above paper was printed that a casual look at my note-book reminded me of this paper, and it was too late to make any use of it here.
