

# LEPROSY, AN OLD IRANIAN VIEW OF IT. THE LEGEND SUGGESTING COW-URINE AS ITS SUPPOSED PREVENTIVE.

(Read on 29th June 1921.)

## I.

The subject of this paper has suggested itself to me, while studying the Persian Rivâyet of Dârâb Hormuzdyâr, a book of mediæval Persian literature, wherein it is said, that cow's urine was discovered as a remedy in very remote old times by king Jamshed of the Peshdâdian dynasty of Persia, to whose reign is also attributed the discovery of wine. The subject of my paper is two-fold :—

I. To present the view of the ancient Iranians on the subject of Leprosy.

II. To relate a much later legend, which describes, how the Iranian custom of using urine for purification, and how the idea of the use of urine as a preventive against leprosy arose.

## II.

### The Ancient Iranian View of Leprosy.

Herodotus (Bk. I., 138), as translated by Rawlinson, says: "If a Persian has the leprosy, he is not allowed to enter into a city or to have any dealings with the other Persians; he must, they say, have sinned against the sun. Foreigners attacked by this disorder, are forced to leave the country; even white pigeons are often driven away, as guilty of the same offence."<sup>1</sup>

Henry Cary thus translates the passage: "Whosoever of the citizens has the leprosy or scrofula, is not permitted to stay within a town, nor to have communication with other

<sup>1</sup> The History of Herodotus, by George Rawlinson (1858), Vol. I., p. 278.

Persians; and they say that from having committed some offence against the sun, a man is afflicted with these diseases. Every stranger that is seized with these distempers, many of them even drive out of the country; and they do the same to white pigeons making the same charge against them.”<sup>1</sup>

Rawlinson, giving a footnote, says, that “in the original (Greek of Herodotus) two kinds of leprosy are mentioned, the *λέπρα* and the *λέυκη*. There does not appear by the description which Aristotle gives of the latter (Hist. Animal III, II) to have been any essential difference between them. *λέυκη* was merely a mild form of leprosy.” Cary translates these two Greek words, ‘lepra’ and ‘leukh,’ separately as “leprosy or scrofula.”

Ctésias says: “A leper was called by the Persians *pisága* (*paésaka*) and nobody can approach him.”<sup>2</sup> The Persians were so much afraid of the contagion of leprosy, that according to this Greek author, Mégabyzus, escaped on pretending to be a leper, as no Persian dared to touch him.

Leprosy is referred to in several places in the Avesta. The

Leprosy as referred to in the Avesta. first two principal references are (a) in the Vendidad, Chap. II, 29 and 37 and (b) in the Âban Yasht (Yt. V. 92). We learn from these two passages, that, as referred to by Herodotus and Ctésias, leprosy was believed from very ancient times in Iran to be a contagious disease, the sufferers from which were kept apart from the healthy. The Avesta word for leprosy in these passages is *paesa* (𐬯𐬀𐬎𐬎𐬀) Pahl. *pis* (𐬯𐬀𐬎𐬎𐬀) Pers. پيس . The Iranian word *pisága*, given, as mentioned above, by Ctésias, for a leper,

<sup>1</sup> Herodotus, literally translated by Henry Cary (1889), p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> As quoted by Prof. Darmesteter in his *Zend Avesta*, Vol. II, p. 27, n. 51.

would come from the word *paësa* by the addition of the suffix *aka* ( **دوسد** ), as *dahâka*, one who stings or hurts, from **دوس**. The word *pisâga*, given by Ctesias may be *paësdâka* **دوسدسوسد** a leprous. This word comes from the Avesta root *pis* ( **دند** ) Sans. **पिस** or **पिब** to prick, to hurt, to injure. This word occurs as *paësa* in three places in the Avesta (a) Vendidad, Ch. II, 29, (b) Ibid 37, and (c) Âbân Yasht (Yt. V, 92).

There is another word also in the Avesta, which is taken by some scholars, e.g., Darmesteter and Harlez, to mean leprosy. It is *pâman* ( **دسوسدسوس** ). It is the same as Sans. **पामन** which, according to Mr. Apte, means a skin disease. It occurs in Tîr Yasht (Yt. VIII, 56) and Behrâm Yasht (Yt. XIV, 48)

Of these two words, the first is important, as there is no doubt about its meaning. Again, the Pahlavi translator of the Vendidad makes its signification clear, and confirms the view that it was a contagious disease. We will briefly examine these passages. I will give the text and translation of one of the passages which with its Pahlavi rendering is important.

(a) In the Vendidad (Chap. II, 29), where God asks Jamshed, the Yima of the Avesta, to so construct and rule his new *var* or colony, as to render it free from various physical and mental or moral deformities, one of the physical deformities is leprosy. We read (Vend. II, 29) :

**دسوسدسوسد** . **دسوسدسوسد** . **دسوسدسوسد** . **دسوسدسوسد** .  
**دسوسدسوسد** . **دسوسدسوسد** . **دسوسدسوسد** . **دسوسدسوسد** .  
**دسوسدسوسد** . **دسوسدسوسد** . **دسوسدسوسد** . **دسوسدسوسد** .



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*Transliteration.*—Al pîs âigh javit kard yekvîmûnet tan nâzûk aê dinik-kâr. Aitô mûn aêtûn yemallûnêt aê al pîs i kôftê, hanâch mûn javit kard yekvîmûnêt tan) Al aîsh min zakân dakhshagân mûn humand âigh Gûnâk-minôi dakhshak pavan anshûtâân bara dâd yekvîmûnet (Ash val zak zinâk al yezlunân).

*Translation.*—Nor a leper, whose body shall be separated. He is weak (nâzûk,<sup>1</sup> i.e., unfit) for religious functions. There are some who say this that a leper who has marks<sup>2</sup> on his body must also be separated; nor anybody (who has some) of such marks which are the marks which the Evil spirit has given to men. (They should not carry him to such a place.)

In this Pahlavi passage, we find that a kind of isolation (javit kardan) is referred to. The Pahlavi translator says, that there are some who are over-cautious and they want to keep away even those who, though free from contagious leprosy, have leprosy-like marks over their body.

I have translated the Avesta word “vitarétô-tanush” applied to leprosy in the above Avesta passage of the Vendidad, as “(leprosy which has) spread over the body.” Ervad Kavsaji Edalji Kanga, in the footnote of his translation, translates similarly ( तमाम तन उपर पंथराचमेला जे डेढोर )<sup>3</sup>

1 نازک tender, fragile.

کوفتم a blemish, a bruise from کوفتن to strike to, bruise

3 Vendidad, 3rd Ed., p. 70.

Haug and other Gujarati translators have given similar rendering, but Darmesteter, following the Pahlavi rendering, has translated the word as "(leprous) to be confined," thus associating with it the idea of "isolation." His point of view, as argued by him (S. B. E. IV, Vendidad Introduction, V, 14-15); is, that the Avesta, which aims at cleanliness and generally enjoins a kind of isolation for many kinds of sickness, must necessarily enjoin isolation for leprosy.

(b) The second passage of the Vendidad (II, 37) throws no further light on the subject. It merely says that Yima (Jamshed) carried out the injunctions of Ahura Mazda and took care that there were no lepers in his *var* or colony.

(c) The third passage, *viz.*, that of the Âban Yasht (Yt, V. 92) contains words similar to those of the Vendidad about leprosy. There, Abân Ardviçura Anâhita tells Zoroaster, that only the physically healthy should celebrate, and participate in, the ceremonies in her honour. Among the unfit are mentioned the leprous.

(d and e) Coming to the passages of the Tir and Behrâm Yashts above referred to, wherein the word for leprosy is *pâman*, Ahura Mazda says to Zoroaster, that when the Iranian territories paid due homage to the star Tishtrya (Sirius) and to Behrâm, with the necessary ritual, the territories remained free from various physical and mental deformities, and among them, from leprosy.

The original idea of the uncleanness and contagiousness of the leper has continued to survive among the Parsees. Of course, it is quite natural, that lepers who have the complaint in, what one may call, a living form, in which matter flows from the wounds, are asked to be kept aloof. But, in the case of priesthood, priests with white or coloured marks over the skin, showing suspicious signs of even a dry kind of leprosy, are also prohibited from officiating in the liturgical services.

In the Old Testament also, we read in the Leviticus (Chaps. XIII and XIV) various injunctions, as to how a priest should examine a suspected person as clean or unclean, and as to the ways of curing him. Among the Parsees also, even now, it is thought to be the function of a priest to examine a suspected priest, whether the spot that may have developed on his body are leprous or not. I remember more than one case referred to me, to determine whether the priest who was asked to see me can officiate as a priest or not. I always took the sanitary or health point of view, whether the spots were of a contagious or infectious kind. I remember one case, in which a Parsee lady consulted Dr. H. Masina and myself to determine, whether a priest officiating in a temple under her charge may be allowed to continue to officiate or not. However, whether contagious or not, the appearance of white spots, indicating a kind of leprosy, however uncontagious or innocent, is held to indicate that the priest should cease officiating in the inner liturgical services, though he may officiate in the outer liturgical services held to be of a lesser importance.

### III.

#### THE LEGEND DESCRIBING THE ORIGIN OF THE USE OF COW'S URINE AS A PREVENTIVE. TEHMURAS IN THE AVESTA AND PAHLAVI BOOKS.

The story ending with the discovery of the use of cow's urine as a remedy for all kinds of uncleanliness in general and for leprosy in special, is found in Darâb Hormazdyar's Persian Rivâyet. The Rivâyet is not published as yet, but a lithographed text of it will shortly be out. It was while studying for writing an Introduction for this coming book that the subject of this day's paper has suggested itself to me. I follow in my account of the legend, an old manuscript of the Rivâyet which has kindly been lent to me by Prof. S. H. Hodiwâlâ of Junâgadh. As far as I saw, only three manuscripts of the Rivâyet written by the learned scribe himself exist. One is in the Library of our Bombay University

which I have named B. U. Another, at one time, belonged to the library of the late Ervad Manockji Rustamji Unwâlâ and belongs to Ervad Meherjibhoy Nowrojee Kutar, the head priest of the Manockjee Seth's Fire-temple in the Fort, Bombay. This I have named as M. U. in one of my previous papers before the B. B. R. A. Society. The third is the one which I have followed in my present paper. From the name of its present owner, I have named it S. H. It is the oldest of the three. The story begins on folio 103a. The first portion of the story is headed as

گفتار اندر قیہ داشتن طهورت ابلیس را و حکایت او بازن خیش  
*i.e.*, A narrative about Tehmuras keeping the Iblis (Âhriman) under his custody and the story of himself with his wife. Before proceeding with the story as given in this Rivayet, I will like to describe briefly, what is said of this king in the old Avesta and Pahlavi books, the allusions in which have been worked upon as a new story by the writer of the present story.

The Tehmuras of our story is the Takhma-urupa of the Avesta.

The story of Tehmuras in Avesta and Pahlavi books.

This king Takhma-urupa is said to have prayed to Râma Khâstra, that he may be endowed with the power of overcoming Devs, evil-minded persons, magicians and *paris* or fairies, and of riding for thirty years in the form of a horse (aspahê kehrpa), Âhriman round the whole world.<sup>1</sup> Speaking in plain language, instead of in the figurative, he prayed to subdue all evil powers and even their chief, Âhriman. The period of thirty years is the period of his reign.<sup>2</sup> Ram Yazata granted his request. We read a similar statement in the Zamyâd Yasht (Yt. XIX 29). We thus read:—

سومنه . و درین . و درین . و درین . و درین .  
 و درین . و درین . و درین . و درین . و درین .

1 Ram yasht, Yt. XV, 12.

2 The Bundehesh ch. XXXIV, 4, The Shâh nâmeh.





Now the question is : What is it that is meant here, by saying that Âhriman swallowed a portion of the earth. Dr. West, in his translation of the Minokherad (S. B. E. Vol. XXIV, 60), translates this portion as Âhriman swallowing "the porportion of the worldly existences." He adds the word "existences" himself. I think, his interpretation, which itself is not clear, is not proper. I think, that what is meant is, "Reclamation of ground that was flooded by water." The Pahlavi writing that precedes this passage refers to Jamshed's new *vara* or new colony and to the heavy rain of Malkosh, a word traced by West (Ibid p. 59, n. 7), to a Chaldic word for "autumnal rain." Some connect this with the event of the Great Deluge. Whether you connect it with the Great Deluge or not, this passage in question refers to Jamshed's building a new colony and providing more ground for the increasing population of his country. We learn from the second chapter of the Vendidad which treats of Jamshed's *vara* or newly populated country that he thrice increased the available space for habitation. In the first attempt, he added one-third to what it was, and then did the same again for the second time and then for the third time. So, I think that when the Minokherad speaks of Jamshed bringing back from the womb or belly of Âhriman a portion of the earth, it refers to some kind of reclamation whereby he reclaimed land which was covered over by some flood, that flooding being the work of Âhriman whose work is always the work of destruction.

Now, it seems that the Avesta and Pahlavi books express in a figurative way that Takhma-urupa overpowered the work of destruction by Âhriman. But some later writers have worked upon this figurative writing and worked out further figurative stories about Takhma-urupa as a rider and Âhriman as his horse.

## IV.

The source of  
the story. The  
Mobad of Delhi,  
Âzar Kaiwân

The writer of the story says that he took  
it from "that Mobad of Dahlui."

ز گفتار آن موبد دهلوی  
بگویم یکی داستاں بهلوی  
بر آورد او رازهای نهان  
ره راست آراست اندر جهان  
ز هر یک بدی بود پرہیزگار  
و ہر اہ ہمیشہ بود آموزگار  
سر اورا بیازند بود دست رس  
خردمند دل بود و نیکو نفس  
بہ ہندوستان او یکی بود و بس

*Translation.*—I give a Pahlavi story from what is said by that Mobad of Dehli (Delhi). He described concealed secrets (*i.e.* mysteries). He adorned the path of truthfulness in the world. He abstained from every kind of evil and he was the teacher of every way (of virtue). He had access to Pazend (books). He was wise and good-souled . . . . .<sup>1</sup> He was one in Hindustan and that was sufficient (*i.e.*, he was all in all).

Now, who was this Mobad of Delhi who is spoken of as the only man of his kind in India. I think the reference is to Dastur Âzar Kaiwân bin Âzar Gushasp, a mystic from Persia. He is said to have passed 28 years of his life in meditation and prayer in retirement. Then, he came to India and settled in Patna. He was accompanied by a few Zoroastrian disciples like Mobads Farhâd, Hosh and Sarosh. He gathered round him a large number of Hindu and Mahomedan disciples. His teachings were of a mystic and Sufist kind. His work known as "Mukâshafat-i-Âzar Kaiwân," *i.e.*, Revelation or ecstatic contemplations of God by Azar Kaivan, is well-known. He

<sup>1</sup> The writer has left this line blank.

died in 1614, at the age of 85. The Persian book known as *Jâm-i-Kaikhosru*, written by a Parsee, Khudajui Nâmdâr, was based on the writings of this Dastur Âzar Kaivan.<sup>1</sup>

The name of this book, *Jâm-i-Kaikhosru*, *i.e.*, the cup of Kaikhosru, is in reference to the mystic cup referred to in the *Shâh-nâmêh*, as the cup into which King Kaikoshru looked on the Jamshedi Naoroz day, the day of the Vernal Equinox, about the 21st of March, and predicted events and saw what happened in other parts of the world. This cup reminds us of the Holy grail of the Christians, the thoughts of which have inspired the celebrated German composer Wagner in his world-known opera *Parsifal*, and Tennyson in his "Sir Galahad." This cup or (jam) mirror, which is also known as the *jâm* of Jamshed, reminds us also of the Cup of Joseph of the Genesis, of the cup of Nestor of the ancient Greeks, and of the mystic cup of the Indian king Kaid, referred to by Firdousi in his account of the Invasion of India by Alexander.

This is rather a digression, but my object in this, is to say, that the story I am going to describe may not be taken literally in all its details some of which are rather filthy, but may be taken in an allegorical, figurative or mystic sense, as Dastur Azar Kaivan, to whom it refers as an authority, was a mystic and his writings reflected by the *Jam-i-Kaikhosru* were mystical. The *Dabistan* thus traces the ancestry of Azar Kaivan to the *Tehmuras* of our legend : Azar Kaivân—Âzar Zerdusht—Azar Barzin—Azar Khurin—Azar Ayin—Azar Bahram—Azar Nosh—Azar Mihtar—Azar Sâsân the fifth—Azar Sâsân

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* the *Dabistan* by Shea and Troyer, Vol. I, pp. 87 et seq. for an account of his life and saying. *Vide* the Gujarati *Dabistan* published in 1262 Hijri, pp. 208 et seq. *Vide* Parsee Prakash, Vol. I, pp. 10 and 516. This *Jâm-i-Kaikhosru* was translated into Gujarâti by Munshi Abdul Fattah *alias* Munshi Ashraf Ali, at the direction of the first Sir Jamsetji Jeejeebhoy and published in 1848 from the Sir Jamshedji Jeejeebhoy Translation Fund, which is now administered by the Trustees of the Parsee Panchayat and which was founded in honour of the event of the Knighthood—the first Knighthood in India—conferred upon Sir Jamsetji.

IV—Azar Sasân III—Azar Sâsân II—Azar Sasan I—Darab junior—Darab senior—Bahmah Isfandiar—Gushtasp—Lohrasp—Arvand—Kai Nishin—Kai Kobad—Zâb—Nauder—Minuchehr—Iraj—Feridun—Abtin of the line of Jamshid—*Tahmuras*—Hosheng—Siamak—Kaiomars—Yâsân Ajam of the neage of Yâsân,—Shai Mohbul—of the lineage of Sha Giliv—Jai Alad— of the lineage of Jai Afram—Abad Azad— of the family of Mah Abâd “ who appeared with splendour in the beginning of the great cycle,” (Shea’s Dabistan Vol. I. pp. 87-88).

## V.

Coming to the story itself, it runs thus (f. 103 a):—Tehmuras, having subdued Âhriman or the Devil, The story itself. rode upon him as upon a horse and went over all parts of the earth for a period of 3 years. He began his ride early in the morning, rode over mountains like the lofty Elbruz and in valleys. On returning home, he stabled the horse (the Âhriman) and gave him no food or water. In spite of this want of food and water for days together, the horse (Âhriman) lived and thrived. One day, his wife expressed to him her surprise, as to how a horse can live without food and water for days together and asked for an explanation. Tehmuras said to her: “I also was wondering as to how he lived without food and water; so, I once asked him for an explanation and he replied:

خورش مرادان تو اندر جهان

بدی گندگی و گنہ مردمان

حرام و پلیدی و جرم و گناہ

خورش مرادان تو ای پادشاه

*Translation.*—Know as my food in the world, the evil, the dirty tricks and the sin of men. O King! Know unlawfulness, filth, sin and crime to be my food.

One day, Âhriman thought of getting rid of the daily trouble and annoyance of being ridden by Tehmuras and of going over mountains and valleys. So, he saw the wife of Tehmuras and

persuaded her to make one night some inquiries from her husband, whether, when he went riding over him (Âhriman) over mountains and valleys, he ever got afraid. He promised her many gifts ( nazl نزل ) and presents (hadiah), if she made that inquiry. She was deceived and consented. She accordingly once made inquiries from her husband. Tehmuras said, he was afraid nowhere, but at a place of turning on the Elburz mountain, where the horse (Âhriman) gets a little restive. Then, he has to use his big mace (gerân gurz) and to shout (bâng-i-buland) and to beat him, so that he may run fast over this place.

Themuras's wife told all this to Ahriman, who was much pleased to learn the secret of Tehmuras. He rewarded the woman with gifts. Among the gifts given to womankind on that day were lying with a woman ('asl), fornication (Zanâ')<sup>1</sup> . . . and menstruation.

The next day, when Tehmuras rode over Âhriman and went towards Chinvad on the Elbruz, the latter, having learnt the secret as to where Tehmuras used to get nervous, became very restive on the spot which made Tehmuras nervous. He began to turn a somersault (lit. sat on his head and two front feet). Tehmuras coaxed him and struck him with his mace ('amûd). Âhriman overthrew him from the saddle, and, emitting a bad smell (zafr), swallowed him and ran away like a horse.

The writer of the poem here dilates upon the weakness of womankind and the wickedness of a bad wife. "Hell (saqr) is better than a bad wife. Prison and confinement are better than to have a bad wife. It is better to die than to have her. Even if you are as wise as the philosopher Lukmân, as strong as Rustam, as efficient in charms and incantations as Faridun,

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<sup>1</sup> This word seems to be *پسار* pasar son. But then the meaning does not harmonize with that of the other preceding and succeeding words.

as resourceful as Tehmuras who rode over the Iblis, you will not be able to know the deceits of women. Even God himself becomes confounded (khireh gardad) by the deceit of a woman."

This legend reminds us of the Genesis story (Chaps. II-III) of the Fall of Adam and Eve at the hand of Satan. The very first result of the fall was, that Adam and Eve, who were, upto then, "both naked, the man and his wife and were not ashamed," began to feel ashamed and "the eyes of them both were opened and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons....Unto the woman he (God) said, I will greatly multiply the sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee (Gen. III, 7 and 16). Something similar is the result of the fall of woman according to our story. 'Asl, i.e., lying in with women then came in and other womanly complaints also. Again as the result of the fall of woman, came in also adultery and menstruation in the world.

Now, just as in the Genesis story, there appears on the scene, after the Fall of Adam through the fault of Eve, God, who curses Satan for his evil conduct, so, in the Persian legend, there appears on the scene, after the fall of Tehmuras through the fault of the woman, Sarosh, an angel of God, who tries to punish Ahriman and make him disgorge the body of Tehmuras whom he had swallowed.

Jamshed, of whom the writer speaks as the son of Tehmuras, not finding his father return home, made all possible inquiries to trace his whereabouts but failed. Thereupon, Sarosh, the angel appeared before him and informed him of the death of Tehmuras and of all that had happened. Thereupon, Jamshed asked for advice as to how to regain the body of his father. Sarosh said, that not violence or sharpness (tundi), but tact

The Genesis story of the Fall and Tehmuras's story.

The Sequel of the story.

was required in this case. Ahriman was fond of two things; unnatural lust (*luti*)<sup>1</sup> and oral music (*sarûd*). These must be held as temptations and his secrets drawn from him.

Jamshed followed the advice of Sarosh, went to a desert and began to sing. Âhriman was allured by the singing and went there and sat by the side of Jamshed. Then Âhriman was allured to unnatural lust. Jamshed demanded the deed first, before he submitted his body (*azav* اعضو). Âhriman exposed himself. Thereupon Jamshed at once passed his hand into the stomach of Âhriman through his podex and drew out the body of his father Tehmuras from his stomach, and, throwing the dead body on the ground, ran away. Âhriman ran after him but could not overtake him. So, he retired to his hell. Thereupon, Jamshed returning to the place removed his father's body; and washing it placed it in a *satudân*,<sup>2</sup> i.e., an ossuary or bone-receptacle. The writer of the metrical composition says that the custom of making *astodâns* for the dead came into existence from that day. He says:

و لیکن همان دست جمشید را  
 کر انداختم بود بعضو گنا  
 بدان دست یکی زخمی شد پدید  
 که هرگز بگیتی ندید و شنید  
 بدان دست شد بوس و قفل  
 بفرسید جمشید شر زان خلل  
 که گو بوی زین دست با مردمان  
 رسد زان تنش نیز گردد چنان  
 وزین بوی درد هم از یکدگر  
 بگردد تبر آدمی سر بسو

<sup>1</sup> لوتی miswritten for لوطی

<sup>2</sup> *Satudân* is the Pahlavi "astodân," *Vide* my paper on "Astodân or Persian coffin said to be 3,000 years old, sent to the Museum of the Anthropological Society of Bombay by Mr. Malcolm of Bushire" (*Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, Vol. I, No. 7, pp. 426-41. *Vide* my *Anthropological Papers*, Part I, pp. 7-22).



بدین فکر جم گشت با دل ستوه  
 برون شد همی از میان گروه  
 بکوه و بیابان کودش وطن  
 بسی درد افزود اورا بقن

*Translation.*—But on that hand of Jamshed, which was put into the body of the Ganâ (*i.e.*, Ganâ minô or Ahriman) there appeared a wound which no body had ever seen or heard of in the world. On that hand appeared leprosy<sup>1</sup> and *kajal*.<sup>2</sup> King Jamshed got alarmed by this complaint, because (even) if the smell of this hand reached (other) men, their bodies also would turn thus (*i.e.*, leprous). Even from the smell of this disease from one another a man gets hurt or sick altogether. With this anxiety Jamshed got stupified in his heart and went out from the midst of people. He made his abode in mountains and deserts and much pain increased in his body.

This passage then shows how intense was the fear of the ancient Iranians for leprosy, as mentioned by Herodotus. It also describes the legendary origin of the disease and says that it was the consequence of a kind of filth.








Jamshed roamed about in distress from place to place as his hand was all rotten (*busideh*)<sup>3</sup> through the disease. He

<sup>1</sup> بارص *baras* also seems to have come from *paësa*, the Avesta word for leprosy.






<sup>2</sup> *Kajal* seems to be a disease similar to leprosy. Steingass does not give the word. In Persian, there is a word کچال *Kachal* which is the name of a bird called magpie. It is said to be "all snowy white below." Its scientific name is *pica caudata*. I suspect that the word magpie is another form of *marga* (bird) *paësa* (Av. leprosy) *i.e.*, of the bird of leprosy. Can the Latin name *pica* be connected with Av. *paësa*, Pers. *pis. leprosy*? It is possible that *kajal* or *kajala*, the white magpie, may have derived the meaning of leprosy from the fact that this white bird, like what is said by Herodotus (*vide* above) of some white birds, was taken to symbolize leprosy.

<sup>3</sup> بوسیدن from پوسیدن from पोषु Lat. *pu-trere*, Fr. *pu-tréfier*, to putrify. The Parsee Gujarati word पोसु *bosru*, stinking, seems to be a corruption of Pers. *busidah* بوسید

wandered here and there like distracted men (bî-hushân). He lamented and prayed to God, that he may be cured of his disease. One night, he slept at a place which was an abode of several cows. One of the cows<sup>1</sup> passed there, and, standing near his hand, passed urine<sup>2</sup> over that (part) of pain (alam). We read :—

<sup>3</sup> بجائی کر افتاد آن       

بشده بر طرف درد اندر زمانش

بجائی کر     

چکیدند قطره بوان دست اوی




بدان جای شد بر طرف درد او





چون آن درد کم شد ز شاه اشو

*Translation.*—From that place (*i.e.*, part of the hand) where the urine of the cow fell, the pain at once disappeared. On that part of his hand where drops of that cow's urine fell, his pain disappeared. When the pain of the pious king subsided

The writer says that the king was pleased at this unexpected cure and he gave money in charity. Once, he saw that very cow in a dream, and he prayed to God and thanked Him for the cure. He wondered at the power of God (zû'l-minan lit. Lord of bounty), at that dream, at that cow, and at that pouring<sup>3</sup> of the urine. Then the angel Sarosh again appeared before him, and said that the whole of his wound would be

<sup>1</sup> The word gâo is written in Avesta characters. I do not understand why it is so. Is it out of respect ?

<sup>2</sup> The word is written in Avesta characters as    shashâv. Pers. شاش urine and او water. cf. پیشاب pish and âb.

<sup>3</sup> The word rikhtan is written in Avesta characters as    

cured, if he rubbed âb-i-zar<sup>1</sup> *i.e.*, urine over it. He then asked Jamshed to instruct all mankind to use cow's urine as a protection and remedy. They may rub it immensely (bi-quiâs) over their body when they get up from Bushyâs<sup>2</sup> *i.e.*, from sleep. When they find their head (*i.e.*, whole body) unclean (nâ-pak) they may rub it over the whole body. Jamshed accordingly instructed all mankind to use cow's urine.

Facts to be gathered from the Legend.

We thus see in this legend the following matters :—

1. From very ancient times, the Iranians took Leprosy to be both contagious and infectious. Even the smell (bu) of its fluid was believed to spread infection.

2. It is the result of some internal filth or impurity within the body of a man.

3. Cow's urine, which is spoken of under various names, was supposed to be a preventive and curative of some skin diseases.

## VI.

Upto about a few years ago, the Parsees generally used cow's urine, and, failing that, goat's urine, every morning on rising from bed. The practice has, owing to various circumstances, mostly died out in Bombay, though it is still prevalent to a certain extent among the Parsee priesthood. It seems to be still more prevalent in the mofussil Parsee centres. They have a *nirang*, *i.e.*, a short prayer or incantation to be recited during the application.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Urine is spoken of as âb-i-zar, *i.e.*, golden-coloured water, on account of its little yellowish colour.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Vendidad, Bushyâs was the demon of sleep, who kept men sleeping idly in the morning. So, here, sleep is spoken of as bushyâs.

<sup>3</sup> I have given this nirang in my paper on "A Few Parsee Nirangs." Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay, Vol. XI, No. 7, pp. 843-863.

Cow's urine is known among the Parsees by various names.

(a) It is called *gao-miz* (Avesta *gao-maêza*), from Av. *gao* Sans. गौ cow, and Av. *miz*. Sans. मिक्ष, Lat. *ming-ere* to sprinkle to make water. So, *gao-miz* is the urine of the cow. It is the same as गौमुत्र.

(b) It is spoken of as *âb-i-zar*, *i.e.*, golden water, from its goldlike yellowish colour.

(c) It is called *dast-shûi*, because it was used every day early in the morning to clear or purify (*shustan*) hands before a wash.

(d) It is called *nirang*, because its application in the morning is accompanied with the recital of a short *nirang* or incantation.

There is an interesting paper on the subject of urine, by Dr. Wilhelm, Professor of Iranian languages in the University of Jena, under the title of "On the Use of Beef's urine, according to the precepts of the Avesta, and on similar customs with other Nations." Dr. Wilhelm dwells herein at some length on the various injunctions about its use as a purifier,—purifier of man and of various polluted articles. He then refers to its use by various nations both ancient and modern, beginning with the Hindus. He then refers to its use, sometimes even to-day, by the people of Bretagne "that province of France, which holds its name from the Celtic Britons who sought refuge there, and which, preserving its independence longer than the other French provinces, shows still many traces of ancient Celtic manners and customs" (p. 21). He describes on the authority of Mr. F. Luzel, the story of an old woman named Gillette in a Breton manor. "One morning, when Gillette had stayed in the stables for the night, she lingered with going out, although the cow-herd told her that the bell for break-fast had done with ringing for some time already. She murmured

Dr. Wilhelm on  
the Use of Urine.

prayers which would not end and seemed to wait or to pray for something. But suddenly when a cow urined, the old woman rushed upon her, caught the urine into her hand and rubbed her face with it several times. The cow-herd, seeing that, treated her as a dirty and foolish old woman. But Gillette told him quietly: 'there is nothing better, my son, than to wash in the morning when rising one's face with the urine of cows, or even with one's own urine,<sup>1</sup> if one cannot get cow's urine. When you have performed this ablution in the morning, you are safe for the whole day from the snares and malice of the devil, for you become invisible to him.' The cow-herd, in the evening, related us the strange practice and words of Gillette, and an old man who was with us, told us, that he had often heard that although it was not clean, what Gillette had done was an excellent preservative against the evil spirit."

Dr. Wilhelm thinks that possibly the people of Bas-Britagne had derived it from Druidism, which had gone to the West from the East. He speaks of its use also among the Scandinavians of Iceland who belonged to the Indo-Germanic race. Dr. Wilhelm then speaks at some length on the question, how urine was employed in medicine from the most ancient times, in Egypt and Greece.

We read in the Old Testament (II Kings 5), that Elisha cured Naaman of leprosy by directing him to bathe in the Jordan seven times. "There is a legend of a son of Krishna being cured of leprosy by the Magas,"<sup>2</sup> the Iranian *magis* who were in India.

I will conclude my paper with a brief examination of the statement of Herodotus. We saw above that Herodotus says, that, the ancient Persians believed that a leper "must have sinned against the sun." We do not find anything correspond-

<sup>1</sup> We have a reference to the use of man's urine for some alleged cure in the Pahlavi Zadspāram (Chap. XVII 5. S. B. E. Vol. 47, p. 149).

<sup>2</sup> J. B. A. S. Vol. XVI, 1920, No. 3, p. 74.

ing to this belief in connection with the sun in Parsee books. But, we may trace a distant indirect connection. Perhaps, by the Sun, Herodotus meant Mithra, the God of Light, who is generally associated with the Sun in the Avesta. We learn from the *yasht* in honour of Mithra, that Mithra, who presides over Light,—both physical and mental or moral light—blesses those who are truthful and honest, but punishes, those who are dishonest and who break their promises, with sickness (*yasht* X, 110). So, leprosy being a sickness was possibly considered as a punishment for the sin of Mithra-drūji, *i.e.*, of offending Mithra by dishonesty.

### THE INDIAN CUSTOM OF A HUSBAND OR WIFE NOT NAMING HIS WIFE OR HER HUSBAND.

(Read on 31st August 1921.)

The subject of this paper has been suggested to me by Mr. Edward Clodd's recent interesting book *Introduction*, entitled "Magic in Names and other things" (1920). We in India are familiar with the custom, whereby it is considered improper for a husband to call his wife by her name or to name her before others and for a wife to call her husband by his name or to name him. This custom, though it has died out now among the educated higher classes, is still prevalent to a great extent. When a husband or wife had to call one another, they did so by names other than her or his own name. Mr. Clodd thus refers to the Hindu custom: "The Hindu wife is never, under any circumstances, to mention her husband's name, so she calls him "He," "The Master, "Swamy," etc."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> p. 57.