

II.—PURIFICATORY CEREMONIES, RITES AND CUSTOMS.

CHAPTER IV.

The Padiyab and the Nâhn.

Rev. W. F. Blunt¹ in his article on the words "Clean and Unclean," thus introduces the subject of Purification: "The words 'clean', 'unclean', 'purity', 'purification' have acquired in the process of religious development a spiritual annotation which observes their original meaning. Their primitive significance is wholly ceremonial; the conceptions they represent date back to a very early stage of religious practice, so early indeed that it may be called pre-religious, in as far as any useful delineation can be established between the epoch in which spell and magic predominated, and that at which germs of a rudimentary religious consciousness can be detected. In a conspectus of primitive custom, one of the most widespread phenomena is the existence of 'taboo.' Anthropology has yet to say the last word about it, and its general characteristics can be differently summarised." These introductory words of Rev. Blunt on the subject of 'purification' suggest the question, whether in the matter of the progress of the world, there was at first, the revelation of truth and then degeneration, or whether there was at first a low state of ideas and then with the advance of time, there was progress and elevation. That is a very large question, and in its consideration, one must remember, that the world has progressed in what may be called cycles of time. From a broad consideration of the question on this special subject of 'purification,' we may say that the ancient Iranians had, from remote antiquity, the idea of mental or spiritual purity connected with that of physical purity. The number of different intricate purificatory ceremonies, referred to in the Vendidad, may be the result of a later development, existing side by side with the first idea of mental purity. Goethe in his "Notes and Discussions" (Noten und

¹ Rev. Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible p. 144.

Abhandlungen) connected with his Parsi-nameh or Buch des Parsen, seems to take that view.¹

As said by Dr. Rapp,² "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 have, 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." This view explains the origin of some purificatory rites and ceremonies, which cannot easily, from their surface, be connected with physical purity, sanitation and health.

Among the ancient Iranians, a good deal of importance was attached, to what we may term, the purification of the body. The reason was, that it was believed—and it is a very reasonable belief—that the physical purity, or the purity of the body, is a step towards the purity of the mind, the purity of the soul. Purity is essential for the good of the body as for the good of the soul. "*Yaoszdáo mashyái aipí Zánthem vahishtá*"³ i. e., "Purity is best from the (very

1 *Vide* my Paper on "Goethe's Parsi-nameh or Buch des Parsen", Journal B. B. R. A. S., Vol. XXIV, No. 1. (pp. 67-95) p. 93. *Vide* my "Asiatic Papers, Part II" (pp. 119-148) p. 146.

2 "Die Religion und sitte der Perser ünd 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 "Zoroastrian Mode of Dispcsing of the Dead." p. 19.

3 *Yaçna* (Gatha) XLVIII, 5; *Vendidâd*, V, 21.

beginning of one's) birth" is one of the most excellent sayings of the Avesta.

Religion has a good deal, a great deal to do with the soul—
 with the soul of man, with the soul of the
 universe. And as soul has a close relation-
 ship with the body, no religion, no religious
 system ignores the health of the body. Physical health comes
 as much into the domain of religion as spiritual health. It is
 for this reason, as well as for other reasons, that among all
 ancient nations, it was the priests who were Doctors of Medicine
 as well as Doctors of Divinity. It was so in ancient Egypt, in
 ancient Greece, in ancient India, and it was so in ancient Iran.¹
 As Thomson says :—

“ Even from the body's purity, the mind
 Receives a secret sympathetic aid.”

The purity of body is an emblem of the purity of mind. As
 a writer says : “ So great is the effect of cleanliness upon man
 that it extends over to his moral character.”

According to the Parsee books, upon the harmony of the
 Health of Mind bodily elements depends the health of mind.
 dependent on Diseases, which are introduced by Âhriman,
 Health of Body. or the Evil Spirit, disturb the harmony. So,
 as it is the bounden duty of a Zoroastrian to oppose Âhriman, it
 is also his bounden duty to oppose that which introduces disease
 in the body, and to seek that which keeps up health. That is
 the original object at the bottom of all Zoroastrian Purificatory
 Ceremonies. Purification was intended to keep the body strong
 and healthy, so that the strength of the body may act upon the
 mind and make it strong, healthy and pure. It is with this view
 that the Dinkard says : “ The removal of the sin pertaining to
 the soul and rendering it precious depends upon the strength of
 the body ; (for) it is owing to the existence of the body that there
 is cleansing of the sin of the soul.”² ‘ Mens sana in corpore
 sano ’ is an oft-quoted maxim ; but, as Dr. Casartelli says, “ It

¹ Vide my paper on “ Education among the Ancient Iranians,” p. 3.

² Dastur Peshotan's Dinkard, Vol. IV. p. 228.

has always been one of the most favourite maxims of Mazdeism."¹ Again as Prof. Darmesteter says, "The axiom that 'cleanliness is next to godliness' shall be altogether a Zoroastrian axiom, with this difference, that in the Zoroastrian religion 'cleanliness is a form itself of godliness.'"² Such being the case, it is no wonder, that in the Avesta, and among the followers of the Zoroastrian religion, a good deal of importance was attached to health laws and to the purification of the body as a step towards the preservation of health. As religion powerfully impresses upon the mind of the masses the necessity of preserving laws of health and purification, their observation has taken the form of religious ceremonies. An enormous multiplication of these had led and leads, at times, to the frustration of the original good object. A good deal has become mechanical.

A ceremonial *Pâdyâb* or ablution is seen practised in almost all ages and by almost all nations. It was deemed essential, both from the health point of view and from a symbolic point of view: *A sort of Pâdyâb or purification, common in all nations.* Moses enjoined such ablutions. The ancient Greeks and Romans had them. The modern Mahomedans and Hindus³ have them. The Christians have them symbolically in their baptismal rites. The sacred water placed at the doors of Christian churches, in which people dip their hands before entering, is a kind of "Aqua Lustralis" or the water of purification of the ancient Romans.

Purification is held essential among the Zoroastrians from two points of view: (1) Physically, from a health point of view and (2) Symbolically, from a moral point of view. *Two objects of the purification ceremonies.*

Firstly, from the point of view of health. Men come into contact with impurities hovering in the air, water and on the

1 "La Philosophie Religieuse du Mazdéisme sous les Sassanides" ar L. C. Casartelli, p. 128.

2 Le Zend Avesta. II. Introduction, p. X.

3 *Vide* the Manu Smriti and Nirnaya Sindhu. *Vide* Mr. Krishnalal Mohunlal Jhaveri's Paper on "The Cult of the Bath" (Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay, Vol. IX, pp. 217-24).

earth. When they know that they have so come into contact, they must purify themselves, and that, not only for their own good, but for the good of others among whom they are likely to spread the contagion. Not only should they purify themselves, but also purify their household things or utensils that may have come into contact with impurities. Again, there are times and cases, when they know, that they have not come into actual visible contact, but there are chances that they may have come into contact with some impurities. So, from a 'protective' point of view it is better that they wash or clean or purify themselves.

Secondly, as mind receives some sympathetic aid from the purity of the body, and as the effect of cleanliness extends to one's moral character, purification of the body seems to be an emblem of the purity of mind.

There are four kinds of purificatory ceremonies among the Parsees. They are the following:—(I) **Four kinds of Purification Ceremonies.** Pâdyâb, (II) Nâhn, (III) Bareshnûm and (IV) Riman. The first is very simple and is the work of a minute or two. It is performed by all without the help of a priest. The second takes a long time. It takes from about twenty to thirty minutes and one requires the services of a priest in it. The third is a longer affair. It is accompanied by a kind of Retreat, and lasts for ten days, and one has to go through three ceremonial baths. It requires the services of two priests. The fourth requires the services of two persons, one of whom must be a priest. The other may be a priest or a layman. It lasts for about half an hour. Nowadays, it is strictly confined to those who have come into contact with dead bodies. We will first describe the Pâdyâb.

I. Pâdyâb, the first form of purification.

The Pâdyâb is the simplest form of purification or ablution which a Parsee has to go through several times during the day. The word Pâdyâb is the modern Persian form of Avesta *paiti-âp* whose Pahalvi rendering is *pâdyâv*. It means "throwing water (âb) over (paiti)

the exposed parts of the body." The following is the process of the Pâdyâb : There are three parts of the process, which all together are known as *pâdyâb-kusti*. The central or the second part is the Pâdyâb proper, which is preceded and followed by a prayer. (a) The first part of the process or the ceremony is to recite a short formula of a small prayer. The person performing the Padyâb says at first *Khshnaôthra Ahurahé Mazdáo, i. e.*, "I do this for the pleasure of Ahura Mazda."¹ Then he recites the short formula of Ashem Vohu.² (b) Having recited it, he washes his face and the exposed portions of his body, such as the face, hands and feet. This is the Pâdyâb proper. He then wipes off his face and the other parts of the body. (c) Then he finishes the process by performing his *kusti*,³ *i. e.*, he unties and re-ties the *kusti* with the recital of its formula.

The following are the occasions on which a Parsee has to perform the Pâdyâb :—(1) Early in the morning after rising from his bed. (2) On answering calls of nature. (3) Before taking his meals. (4) Before saying his prayers.

The first thing that a Parsee has to do on rising from his bed is to recite the short formula of Ashem Vohu. This recital is held to be very meritorious as it reminds him as to how to move during the whole of the day in the path of purity and piety. The Hâdôkht Nask says :—

Question.—"What is the one recital of the Ashem which is worth a thousand of the other recitals of the Ashem in greatness and goodness and excellence?"

Reply.—"Ahura Mazda answered him : O holy Zarathushtra ! That, indeed, which a man recites standing up from sleep

1 This short invocatory formula is recited by a Parsee at the commencement of all his sets of prayers. It signifies that he undertakes to do all his actions for the pleasure of God, *i. e.*, so as to please Him, and for His Honour and Glory.

2 It is a short prayer formula in praise of purity and piety.

3 *Kustilis* the sacred thread put after the initiation of the *Naojote*.

..... praising good thoughts, good words and good deeds, renouncing evil thoughts, evil words and evil deeds." 1

Then he has to apply *gaómez* or cow's urine to the exposed portions of his body reciting its *nirang* or short formula.² Then he performs the Pâdyâb. Until he does all this, he is not to eat or drink anything. In the case of a wet dream, etc., the Pâdyâb must take the form of a bath and he is not to eat or drink anything before he bathes.

Another occasion, on which the Pâdyâb purification is necessary, is the time after answering the 2. Pâdyâb after answering calls of nature. calls of nature. This is indispensably necessary from the point of view of cleanliness. It is an occasion when there is every likelihood of some germs of impurity sticking to the uncovered portions of the body. So one must wash the exposed parts of the body before coming into contact with others. He cannot eat or drink without doing so. If a Parsee is in a place where he cannot obtain water, for example, while journeying, he may perform the Pâdyâb with pure sand or dust,³ which is believed to have a cleansing effect next to water. What he has to do is to take a little of pure dry sand or dust and rub it over the exposed portions of his body, such as the hands and face.

The third set of occasions during the day when one must perform the Pâdyâb is that before taking 3, Pâdyâb before meals. meals. To wash one's face and hands before meals is acknowledged by many as a mode

1 The Book of Ardâ Viraf, etc., by Haug. p. 308

2 Vide for this *nirang*, Spiegel translated by Bleck. Khordeh Avesta, p. 3.

3 The Mahomedans also use sand for their Wuzu when water is not available. This is what is called "tayammum (تَيَمُّمٌ) i. e., performing the Wuzu with sand instead of water, when the latter cannot be got." (Steingass' Dictionary, p. 344). In Marwar and Rajputana, where water is very scarce, they resort to what is called "the fiction of a bath" by dropping a stone in a well, saying *याडेडे पडे मीडेडे पडे* "your bath is tantamount to mine" (Jahveri, Jour. Anthr. Soc. IX, p. 221).

of cleanliness.¹ The priests, especially the officiating priests, who perform the religious ceremonies in the temples, and even laymen, on special solemn feasts, in addition to the Pâdyâb wash their right hands again before touching their food. At times, a servant, with a pot of water in one hand and a basin in the other, passes before all, pouring water over their hands.²

We said above, that there were two points of view from which purification was enjoined among the Parsees. The first point of view was that of Health and Cleanliness, and the second that of physical purity or cleanliness reflecting upon the mind as an emblem of mental purity. On the above three occasions, and especially on the first two occasions, the *Pâdyâb* was performed from the first point of view, *viz.*, Health or Cleanliness. On this last occasion, *i. e.*, on the occasion of prayers, it is generally performed with the second point of view, *viz.*, that physical purity is a reflex or an emblem of mental purity, though the first point of view is not altogether absent. A man, when he says his prayers, has the idea of the purity of mind before him. Prayer is a process to purify his mind. So, physical purification at the commencement reminds him of that mental purification.³

II. Nâhn, the second form of purification.

Nâhn is a higher form of purification. The Pâdyâb is a daily form of purification. The Nâhn is gone through on certain occasions, and therein, the help of a priest is necessary. The word *nâhn* is a contraction

1 Dr. Turner, the Health Officer of Bombay, in a communique dated 12th June 1912 to prevent the spread of cholera, advises the washing of hands with disinfectants before taking meals.

2 This custom of washing the hands before eating was common among the ancient Jews and is common even now among several tribes of the Mahomedans. The Hindus have generally a pre-dinner bath.

3 We see this custom of purifying the body, at least as a symbol, among many nations. A Mahomedan performs his *wuzu*, (وضو) *i. e.*, ablution before saying his *nimâz* or prayers. A Hindu has his *snân* or bath before his *pujâ*. A Christian's application of the sacred water on entering his church is a relic of the same custom.

of a word *snân* which, though we do not find it in that form in the Avesta, is found in the Sanskrit as स्नान (*snân*). *Snân* means "ablution, bathing." The word comes from the Avesta root *snâ*, Sans. स्ना (*snâ*), Latin Nare, Fr. Nager, meaning 'to bathe.' So, while the Pâdyâb is a purification of only the exposed portions of the body, the *nâhn*, being a bath, is the purification of the whole body. The process of this second and higher form of purification consists of several parts. They are the following: (1) The ordinary Pâdyâb-kusti, (2) The symbolic eating of a pomegranate leaf and the drinking of the consecrated *gaômez* or cow's urine, for the sake of convenience, we shall call this process "symbolic communion," (3) The recital of the Patet or Prayer of Repentance, (4) The final bath. Thus the Nâhn or Snân, *i. e.*, the bath proper, is preceded by three preliminary processes. We shall speak of them in their order.

At first, the person who has to go through the Nâhn ceremony performs the "Pâdyâb-kusti."¹ The priest, who officiates or makes the person pass through the ceremony, has also performed the Pâdyâb-kusti. After the performance of this, the candidate for the ceremony is made to sit on a stool generally made of stone. Wood is generally avoided in these higher forms of purification, because, being more porous, it is supposed to be likely to contain some germs of impurity. The priest who officiates at this ceremony must be a Bareshnumwâla priest, *i. e.*, a priest holding the Bareshnum,² and must be "with the Khub."³

He takes with him, in a metallic tray or vessel, the following consecrated things known as *âlât* (*lit.*, instruments or means) to the house of the person undergoing the Nâhn ceremony or to the place of the ceremony in the Fire-Temple, if the ceremony takes place there:—(a) Nirangdin, *i. e.*, the consecrated *gaômez* or cow's urine, (b) Cow's urine for application to the body,—a small portion of both of these is poured in small cups, (c) Bhasam,

1 *Vide* above, p. 176. 2 We will speak of this later on. *Vide* below p. 148

3 A liturgical qualification.

i. e., the consecrated ash of the Âtash Beherâm or the sacred Fire-Temple of the first grade, (*d*) A little sand, (*e*) A pomegranate leaf.

After the Pâdyâb, he makes the candidate "take the Bâj,"¹

2. Symbolic communion. (*a*) The pomegranate leaf.

i. e., recite the prayer of grace said before meals. After the recital of this prayer of grace, the candidate is made to eat or rather

chew a leaf of the pomegranate tree. The candidate takes the leaf not directly in his hands but on a *paiwand*, which, in this case, is a handkerchief or the skirt of his sacred shirt.

The pomegranate tree leaf, which is technically known among the Parsee priests as "urvarâm," (Sanskrit *urvarâ*, Lat. 'arbor.' Fr. *arbre*, a tree) or "the tree" is considered as the representative of the vegetable world which supplies sustenance to man. Among the ancients, the pomegranate symbolized the 'arc,' the allegorical story of which was compared with the various versions about Argus, Arguz, Aren, Arene, Theba, Baris, Laris, Boutus, Bœotus and Cibotus of the ancients (*Vide* A New System or an Analysis of Ancient Mythology by Jacob Bryant, Vol. III, p. 73). The 'arc' had something like its parallel in the "Damater of Demater" (*i. e.* the mother) of several ancient nations, which word typified "The womb of Nature." The "arc" gave forth a number of men and living creatures just as mother earth or the womb of Nature gives them forth. The pomegranate contains, within the area of its small size, hundreds—nay, thousands—of grains, and so typifies or symbolizes the womb of Nature. It is a symbol of fecundity and fertility. Again, the pomegranate tree is almost ever green. It bears leaves during the whole of the year. So, it is a symbol of an everlasting life. It was held to be sacred by the ancient Babylonians. From all these facts, we can understand why the leaves of a pomegranate tree were given to a child or to an adult at the *nâhn* or the sacred bath ceremony. When used in the Naojote ceremony of a child, its signification reminds one of the words used by a Christian child's god-parents in the baptism ceremony,

¹ *Vide* Spiegel, translated by Bleecck. Khordeh Avesta, p. 185.

viz., "It (the child) may so pass the waves of this troublesome world, that finally it may come to the land of everlasting life."

Then the candidate is asked to drink from a metallic cup a few drops of the Nirangdin or the consecrated urine of the bull. In that consecrated urine,¹ the priest adds a pinch of the *hasam*,² or the consecrated ash of the Fire-Temple. Before drinking it, he is made to declare, why he drinks that. He says in Bâj, *i. e.*, in a suppressed tone: "*In khuram pâki-i-tan, yaôzdâthra-i-ravân râ,*" *i. e.*, "I drink this for the purification of my body, for the purification of my soul." The words indicate that the few drops of the Nirang are drunk to signify symbolically, that the drinker undertakes to preserve during his life, not only physical purity but also mental purity, purity of life and action. He recites these words three times, and after each recital drinks a drop or two of the Nirangdin. This finishes what one may call, the symbolic communion. So, the person now completes or finishes the Baj, *i. e.*, recites the prayers which follow a meal. Having finished it, he performs the *Kusti*.

Then the candidate says his Patet or the Repentance Prayer.

As he has to go through a purifying or expiatory ceremony, he has to confess before God his sins and to repent for them. He purifies his body symbolically of its impurities. This purification is emblematical of the purification of the mind. So, for that mental purification, he must repent for all his sins. The word Patet is the contracted form of Avesta "paiti-ita," literally meaning "going back" (from paiti, Sanskrit, prati, La., re, 'back' and 'i,' Lat.' i-re to go). So the word *Patet* means 'going back' or 'receding from the transgression of the Law.' It corresponds to the Hebrew word *t'shûbâh* which also means 'returning' or 'going back.'³ It is a formula of

1 *Vide* Haug's Essays, 2nd Ed., p. 400, n.

2 *Vide* Ibid, pp. 570-71.

3 The Origin and Religious Contents of the Psalter, by Rev. Cheyne, p. 369.

confession, answering to the Buddhists' Pâtimokkha which literally means "the disbursement."¹

After reciting the Patet, the person retires to the bath-room. After reciting the short prayer-formula of Khshnaôthra Ahurahê Mazdâo Ashem Vohu, he undresses himself. Then placing his right hand over his head he takes the Bâj.² The priest then hands him from outside, with a spoon tied at the end of a long stick having nine knots and called *navgar* or *naogar* or *navgireh* (*i.e.*, a stick with nine knots), the following articles believed to have purifying effects. At first, he hands him three times the consecrated urine of the bull. It is rubbed over the body thrice. Then he gives him thrice a little sand. That also is rubbed thrice over the body.³ Then lastly he gives him thrice a little consecrated water called *Âv* (*i.e.*, the water). That also is rubbed over the body thrice. A few drops of the consecrated water is generally sprinkled over the new suit of clothes which the candidate has to put on after the bath. At times, for example, in the case of female candidates, the priest leaves in the bath-room the above three things beforehand and gives instructions to the candidate how to apply them to the body before the bath.

After the application of these consecrated purifying articles, the person bathes with water which itself is consecrated. A few drops of the water consecrated in the Nirangdin ceremony, when added to a potful of water, consecrate the whole water. Having finished his bath and having put on his trousers, the sacred shirt and cap, placing his *kusti* on his shoulders, he

1 *Vide* Buddhism by Rhys Davids (1882), pp. 162-63.

2 *i.e.*, recites the Srosh Bâj, beginning with three Ashem Vohu and *fravarâne* prayers. A Parsee was enjoined not to speak when bare-headed. Hence the necessity of covering the head with the hand, while reciting the formula.

3 It is believed that, at first, sand was used only as a substitute for water where water cannot be found. The Mahomedans are permitted to use sand for their "Wuzu." That sand is known as *khâk* (خاک) The Parsees also use the same word *khâk* for the sand. Sale, in his Koran, says, that the early Christians also used sand in Baptism when water was not procurable. (Sale's Koran 1891, Preliminary Discourse, p. 75.)

finishes the Bâj which he had commenced before the bath. Then he puts on his *kusti* with the recital of the necessary formulæ of prayers. This finishes the Nâhn ceremony of the sacred bath of purification.

The following are the occasions on which a Parsee goes through this form of sacred bath:—(1) The Naojote or the Investiture with the sacred Shirt and Thread, (2) The Marriage, (3) Women at the end of their period of accouchement, (4) The Farvardegân Holidays.

Of the above four occasions, the fourth was always voluntary. The third is the one with which women alone are concerned. The first two occasions, being the occasions of the two most important events in the life of a Parsee, are very important, and so all go through this form of the sacred bath. The sacred bath at the Naojote of a child is indispensable. The only difference in its case is, that, as the child has no sacred shirt and thread over its body before this occasion, its preliminary Pâdyâb consists of simply reciting the introductory formula and washing the face and the other uncovered parts of the body. It does not perform the *kusti*.

The second most important event in the life of a Parsee, when he goes through this form of the sacred bath, is his or her marriage. Both the bride and the bridegroom go through this on the marriage-day, either in the morning or in the evening, before the celebration of the marriage itself. This Parsee custom of having a sacred bath on the occasion of the marriage reminds us of the sacred bath among the ancient Greeks. Amongst them, among the ceremonies bearing religious character which preceded the wedding, an important part was played by the bath. Both bride and bridegroom took a bath either in the morning of the wedding day or the day before, for which the water was brought from a river or from some spring regarded as specially sacred, as at Athens, the spring of Callirhoe (or Enneacrunos)

While considering the subject of the Bareshnûm or the Darmesteter's great purification, in order to have a clear view. grasp of the purification as originally intended, we must bear in mind what Prof. Darmesteter says on the subject of the ceremonies about the disposal of the dead among the Parsis:¹ "The principle which governs the ceremonies of the first order is the fear of contagion, or, as the Avesta says, of the Druj Nasu, the Druj of Carrion. Death, that has once come, rests. The visible proof of it is given by the corruption which at once goes on in the body and spreads infection round about. It is represented in the form of a horrible fly, the fly which hovers over the corpses. All the ceremonies of this order can be summed up in two words, which are the same as sum up to-day all the prophylactic measures in the case of an epidemic:—(1) to cut off the communications of the living with the centre of infection, real or supposed; (2) to destroy the centre itself."

On the subject of purification itself, Prof. Darmesteter says: " 'Purity is, after birth, the greatest good for man' (Yaozdâo mashyâi aipi zânthem vahishtâ) is the principle which dominates the Vendidâd. This word, 'purity' (Yaozdâo), though it associates with itself a moral idea or impression, has equally, before all, at least in the Vendidâd, a conception purely physical; and the word *propreté* (cleanliness) shall be the most exact, if it has taken the moral reflex which the Zend expression has, and which, for example, the English word "cleanliness" has. The axiom 'Cleanliness is next to godliness' shall altogether be Zoroastrian, with this difference, that in Zoroastrianism 'Cleanliness is a form itself of godliness.'"

1 "Le principe qui domine les cérémonies du premier ordre est la crainte de la contagion ou, comme dit l'Avesta, de la Druj Nasu, la Druj-Charogne. La mort, une fois venue, reste: la preuve visible en est donnée par la corruption qui bien vite s'empare du cadavre et répand l'infection autour de lui: on se la représentait sous la forme d'une mouche horrible, la mouche qui bourdonne sur les cadavres (Cf. Farg. VII 2). Toutes les cérémonies de cet ordre peuvent se résumer en deux mots, ceux-là même qui résument aujourd'hui toutes les mesures prophylactiques en cas d'épidémie: 1° interrompre les communications des vivants avec le centre d'infection, réel ou supposé: 2° détruire ce centre même."—Le Zend Avesta, Vol. II, pp. 146-147; *vide* also *Ibid.* Introduction, page XII.

at Thebes, the Ismenus.¹ The Hindus also have a ceremonial bath before marriage.² We learn from Firdousi that this custom of having the sacred bath at marriage is an old Iránian custom. King Behrám Gour had taken his Indian wife Sepinoud to the Fire-Temple of Ader Goushasp for the purpose.³

The women at the end of the period of 40⁴ days of their

3. The occasion of Accouchement. Before doing so, they do not touch the domestic fire or go to the Fire-Temples or attend ceremonial gatherings. Not only do those, who have been in child-birth, but others who have come into contact with them, also go through this purification. Women among the ancient Greeks⁵ and Hebrews, and the early Christians⁶ had such purifications.⁷

The ten days of the Farvardegân Holidays fall at the end of the Zoroastrian year. On any one of these days, and especially on any one of the last five days, a Parsee went through this ceremony of purification. Up to a few years ago, these holidays were generally the occasions for this ceremony of purification; but now-a-days it is a custom more honoured in the breach than in its observance. Very few practise it in Bombay, but in the Mofussil towns, there are still some who go through this form of purification every year. These annual general occasions remind us of the general occasion for lustration (Lat. *lustrare* to purify) or purification among the ancient Romans.

1 "The Home Life of the Ancient Greeks" by Prof. Blümner, translated by Alice Zimmern, p. 137.

2 Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay, Vol. IX, p. 219.

3 "Le Livre des Rois" par M. Mohl, VI, p. 65.

4 The Hindus also have a bath for women at the end of 40 days after delivery (Jour. Anthr. Sty. of Bombay, IX, p. 218).

5 *Vide*, "The Home Life of the Ancient Greeks" by Prof. Blümner. Among the Greeks, both, the mother and those who had come into contact with her, went through a solemn sacred bath.

6 St. Luke, II, 22.

7 *Vide*, Dalton's Ethnology of India (Bengal, the Meshmites) for a similar custom. *Vide* also A. Featherman's "Social History of the Races of Mankind," 2nd division, p. 87.

CHAPTER V.

THE BARESHNUM AND THE RIMAN.

III. BARESHNÛM, THE THIRD FORM OF PURIFICATION.

The subject of the Bareshnûm is very large and intricate. Its description varies a little in the different parts of the Vendidad.

I will treat the subject of the Bareshnûm under the following heads:—1. What is the Bareshnûm? Its meaning. Its original and present object. 2. A Description of the Bareshnûm, as given in the Vendidad. 3. Bareshnûmgâh, or the place of the Bareshnûm. The ancient Bareshnûmgâh and the modern Bareshnûmgâh. 4. The Process of giving the Bareshnûm. We will treat this third part under two heads:—(a) The preliminary preparation, and (b) The process proper. 5. The Retreat of nine full days after the Bareshnûm purification.

1. The Bareshnûm. Its meaning and object.

Firstly we will speak of: What is Bareshnûm? How it differs from the first two forms of purification? What is its meaning? What was the original object? What is its modern tendency?

What is Bareshnûm. Meaning of the word.

Bareshnûm is the highest form of purification. It differs from the first two forms in several respects:—(a) While the Pâdyâb is a work of one or two minutes, and the Nâhn, of about half an hour, the Bareshnûm, which originally had the object both of purification and segregation, lasted nine days. So, it is, at times, referred to in Parsee books as the *Bareshnûm-i-Noh Shab*, *i. e.*, the Bareshnûm of nine nights. (b) While the Pâdyâb requires no help of a priest, and while the Nâhn requires the help of one priest, the Bareshnûm requires the services of two priests. (c) While the first two can be performed in any ordinary house or in a temple, the Bareshnûm purification must be gone through in a particular open-air place. Such a place is called Bareshnûmgâh, *i. e.*, the place of the Bareshnûm. We will describe this place later on.

This form of purification has taken its name from the word *bareshnu* which means, 'top, head,' from Av. *barez*, Sans. *बर्ह* 'to be pre-eminent.' In the description of the process of the particular form of sacred bath gone through in this ceremony, as given in the Vendidâd (Chap. VIII, 40), it is enjoined, that the purification of the different parts of the body must begin from the *head* or the *top* (*bareshnûm*). The water is first required to be poured over the *head* from which the impurity passes down step by step. Hence the name. We will speak of these different parts of the body later on.

The original object of the Bareshnûm, as referred to in the Vendidâd, seems to be to purify those who had come into contact with a worse form of impurity—impurity which, from the sanitary point of view, may be deemed dangerous or infectious. For example, a man, who became unclean by coming into close contact with the dead or, through, what Dr. West calls "any other serious defilement,"¹ was, in ancient Irân, required to go through this purification. Some deaths occurred from infectious diseases, and so, the "contact," *i. e.*, the persons who had come into long close contact with such dead, were likely to spread contagion. They were, therefore, required not only to go through purification, but through segregation for nine days. Thus, it was a joint form of *purification* and *segregation*. The original object seems to have been latterly widened, perhaps from a point of view of greater caution. At times, it is difficult for medical men to determine, whether the disease of which a man dies is infectious or not. If it is difficult for an expert medical man to determine that, it must be more so for the ordinary class of people. So, for the sake of caution or safety, it seems to have been enjoined that the living, a short time after death, must keep themselves at a distance from all the dead, whether they died of infectious or of non-infectious diseases. Those, who had, for some purpose or another, to remain in a very long contact with the dead, had to go through the long form of Bareshnûm purification and segregation.

1 S. B. E. Vol. XVIII, p. 431.

“Lawful impurity has always physiological causes. Above all, the corpse is an impure object ... But he who speaks of impurity speaks of contagion: because the corpse engenders putridity and pestilence..... The purification has for its object the expulsion of this contagion which passes from the dead to the living, and from one living person to another; and the theory of impurity and of purification reduces itself in fact to a theory of hygiene.”¹

Further on, Prof. Darmesteter says: “During the purification, the impure remains isolated from the faithful (*i. e.*, from other Zoroastrians), whom he would (otherwise) defile, in a sort of lazaret..... One sees, that they (*i. e.*, the funeral ceremonies) are summed up in two words—two words of hygiene: (*viz.*,) to isolate the centre of infection, (and) to destroy that centre. What distinguishes the Zoroastrian conception from the European conception is this, that we busy ourselves in isolating and destroying the dead element only in case of diseases said to be infectious; (but) in Zoroastrianism death is always infectious and contagious.”²

Latterly, the original object of the Bareshnûm purification was still further widened. At times, it was enjoined for the physical purification originally intended, and, at times, it was intended to serve as a symbol for mental purification. It served as a kind of purification, both physical and mental which qualified one for some higher religious ceremonies. Now-a-days, the persons who go through this Bareshnûm ceremony are the professional corpse-bearers, who go through it, both before joining the profession and on leaving it. They come into contact daily with dead bodies of men, some of whom may have died of infectious diseases. Of course, after the removal of every corpse to the Towers, they are required to bathe, but, when they leave for good, or at least for a long time, their daily line of business, it is thought to be good and safe that they may go through this

1 Le Zend Avesta, Vol. II, Introduction, pp, X-XI.

2 *Ibid*, p. XII; *vide also Ibid*, p. 147.

higher form of purification, before they mix freely with others. So, one can understand the object of a corpse-bearer going through the purification and segregation on retiring from his professional work. Looking to the original object of the purification as referred to in the Vendidad, it is not easy to understand why he has to go through this purification before he joins his profession. But, it may be taken, that he is made to go through this form, in order that he may be prepared for his business which requires extreme caution so as not to spread infection, or that he may be given an idea of the form of purification necessary in case of those who come into direct contact with the dead. It may be with a 'protective' view. In the matter of the purificatory ceremonies of various nations, anthropologists occasionally speak of "the purificatory ceremony" as the protective theory. This may be an instance of the latter.

As to the priests, the Bareshnûm is necessary, both, for a person who wishes to be initiated for the priestly profession, and for a full-fledged priest, when he wants to officiate in, what may be called, the inner circle of higher ceremonies. In these cases, there is not the original idea of purification from impurities caught by having come into contact with dead bodies, but the idea of a sentimental and symbolic point of view or a protective point of view. Another reason, which may have, at first, led to the custom, may be this: It was one of the functions of a priest to purify those who had come into contact with the impurities of a corpse. He was, therefore, also known as an Yaozdâthragar, *i. e.*, purifier. That being the case, it was held advisable that he himself should have at first gone through this purification. Thus, latterly, the original object of the Bareshnûm as enjoined by the Vendidad, *viz.*, purification from the worst form of impurities like those arising from coming into long and close contact with the dead, especially the dead who died of infectious diseases, assumed also a symbolic signification. Thus, purification became a priestly function and was thought to be necessary for those priests who wanted to officiate within the inner circle of the Fire-Temple and at some of the higher forms of ritual. The original object, latterly, in process

of time, took another form. For example, a priest takes a Bareshnûm, and while doing so, declares that he does so for the "*tan pâk*" (purification of the body) of A, B, or C, who may be living or dead, *i. e.*, he goes through the ceremony, so that the physical or the spiritual body of that person, who is named in the ritual, may have the efficacy of the purification.¹ All this seems to be a later diversion from, or degeneration of, the original sanitary object of the Vendidad.

2. Description of the Bareshnûm as given in the Vendidad.

We find references to the Bareshnûm in three chapters of the Vendidad:—(a) The first and principal reference is in the 9th Chapter (§§ 1-57),² where it is treated at some length. To have a clearer grasp, this chapter must be read with its Pahlavi rendering and commentary.³ (b) The second reference is in the 8th Chapter (§§ 35-72).⁴ (c) The third reference is in the 19th Chapter (§§ 20-25).⁵

These three references seem to refer to three different forms of pollution, *i. e.*, to three different forms of greater or lesser contact—direct or indirect—with corpses, which, when going through decomposition, are centres of disease and infection. Of course, all persons have to come into some contact with the corpses of their dead relatives or friends for some time after death. But then, they must observe some rules or laws of health, so as not to endanger their own lives, and through themselves, the lives of others. If they do not observe these, there is a likelihood that they may, by some close contact with the dead bodies, catch some germs of disease or infection and transfer them to others. In case they fail to observe those rules by accident or for some unavoidable purpose, in order to avoid any danger, they must go through some purification which may lessen the chance of their infecting others and spreading the disease.

1 In the *taurobolium* purification of the Romans also, the priests went through the purification for "the benefit of others" (*vide* below, p. 163).

2 S. B. E. IV (1880), pp. 119-130.

4 S. B. E. IV, pp. 103-110.

3 S. B. E. XVIII, pp. 431-454.

5 S. B. E. IV, pp. 209-11.

The first reference (Vend. IX) seems to be an account of the purification of an extreme case of contact with a corpse—so extreme, that it requires to be carefully purified and isolated for ten¹ days, so that the least chance for the spread of infection may be avoided.

The following is an outline of the account:—When a person has become polluted or defiled by coming into contact with a dead body, he must seek a purifier who must be (a) righteous, (b) speaker of truth, (c) versed in the *mānthras* or holy scriptures, and (d) who has learnt from experienced persons how to purify others. The righteous man with these qualifications must find out a sanitary piece of ground. He must cut off the trees, if there be any, on that ground. The ground chosen must be dry, clean, without vegetation and the least frequented by cattle and men.

On the ground thus selected, nine *magas* or pits may be dug. Then these nine pits must be marked out by 13 *karshas* or furrows which have to be drawn by a sharp metallic instrument. Of these 13 *karshas*, the first must be drawn equidistant from the line of the pits. Then three *karshas* must be drawn round the first three pits. Then other three *karshas* round these first three and second three pits, *i. e.*, round the first six pits. Then, other three, round the nine pits together; lastly, the remaining three *karshas* round the central three pits. Then, the ground thus selected and marked out, or symbolically enclosed, must be covered over with sand or some such kind of dry or disinfecting earth.

Now follows an account of the purification. The purifier is to stand out of the *karshas* drawn as above, and is to ask the infected person or the candidate for purification to advance to

¹ It may be remembered here, that the period of 10 days is even now considered by medical men to be the period of incubation for an infectious disease. We speak of 10 days' quarantine (which originally was of 40 days). If a 'contact,' *i. e.*, a person who has come into contact with a person suffering from an infectious disease, is isolated for 10 days and, if he, within that period, does not develop that particular disease, he is considered to be safe to mix with others.

the pits. When the candidate has advanced to the first pit, the purifying priest is to say the words "*Nemaschâ yâ ârmaïtish izâchâ*"¹ and is to ask the candidate to repeat them. Each repetition of these words is said to weaken the influence of the infection. The purifying priest has to hold a *naôgar* or a nine-knotted stick in his hand and to fasten an iron or leaden receptacle or spoon at its end. He is then to get, at first, the two hands of the candidate washed thrice by means of *gaômez* or the consecrated urine poured on his hands by means of the above spoon. If that is not done carefully, the purification that may follow will not be effective or complete. The hand with which the candidate is to clean his whole body must be at first thoroughly cleaned and purified. Then the whole body may be cleaned and purified in a particular way, beginning with the head and gradually coming down to the feet. By this purification from head to foot, the evil power of pollution or infection, is said to run away from one part of the body to another, lower down, and, at last, it leaves the body through the lowest parts of the body, *viz.*, the toes of the feet in the form of a stinking fly. Then, when this is done, the purifying priest is to recite the Ahunavar and then the Kêm nâ Mazdâ prayers up to the words "*Astvaitish ashahê.*" The recital of these formulæ of prayers is said to be very efficacious and is said to have its good effect on the health of the body.

The above process of purification and the recital of prayers are to be repeated at each of the first six pits, to each of which the candidate is to advance step by step, and at each of which the evil power of pollution decreases step by step and the candidate gets purer. Having gone through this process of purification at each of the first six pits, the candidate is to advance towards the seventh pit, and is to sit at a distance of about $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches from it. The purification here is with sand or some sand-like substance. He is to rub his body with it 15 times. He is to wait there till the moisture—if any—of the application of the consecrated urine dries off. The sand is supposed to

¹ *i. e.*, Praise and commendation to Armaiti, *i. e.*, to the Purity of thought.

be a purifying substance and it serves to dry the moisture as well. Then he is to go to the seventh pit where he has to purify his body once with water. Then he is to advance to the eighth pit and purify his body twice with water. Then he is to advance to the ninth pit and there purify his body thrice with water. Then his body is to be fumigated with the smoke of the fuel of the wood *Urvásna*, *Vohû-gaona*, *Vohû-kêrêti*, and *Hadhânaépata* which were species of fragrant wood whose smoke was believed to have the quality of killing germs.

This finishes the purification proper. The candidate is now to put on his clothes and to retire to a house where he is not to come into physical contact with other persons. He is to remain aloof and away from fire, water, cultivated land, trees, cattle, men and women. He is to pass three days and nights in such isolation. On the fourth day, he is to wash his body at first with *gaômez* and then with water. Then, he is to continue in the retreat, as said above, for three nights more. On the seventh day he goes through a bath again as on the fourth day. He then again remains aloof for three nights more, and then, on the tenth day, has again a bath. Thus, for nine days and nine nights after the first Bareshnûm purification, he is to remain in a kind of isolation and retreat. After the final bath on the tenth day, he is deemed to be perfectly purified and can then mix with all men and women.

The person who purifies must be properly paid by the person who goes through the purification. His fee depends upon the position of the candidate. The purifying person on his part is required to be proficient in his work. If he is not, he is guilty of doing harm to others and is liable to great punishment.

The second reference to Bareshnûm in the 8th Chapter of the Vendidad applies to cases, not so serious as in the first reference. While in the 9th Chapter, the case is that of a person who is already supposed to have been defiled by a long contact with the dead (*hâm nacûm paiti-iristem*), here, in the 8th Chapter,

The second reference in the Vendidad VII, 35-72.

the case refers only to one who has accidentally come into slight contact with (*yâ naçâum ava-bereta*) a dead body. So in this second case, the purification is not so irksome as in the first case, both, in point of length of time and in the number of baths or purifications. The process enjoined in this case is as follows:—If the flesh of the dead body has been devoured off by a flesh-eating bird or animal before the person touches it, *i.e.*, if the body is a mere carcase of bones without the flesh on it, then, the most harmful parts of the body being done away with, there is less risk of catching any germs of disease from the corpse. So, in this case, he is simply to wash his body with *gaômez* and water. A simple bath of this kind is sufficient to purify him. But, if the flesh of the corpse is not eaten off and the body is there with all its decomposing parts on it, then, the chance of risk being somewhat greater, the process of purification is as follows:—Three *magas*, *i.e.*, pits must be dug, and the person is to purify his body with *gaômez* on each of them. Then a dog is to be taken near him. This process is to be repeated at a second set of three pits. He is then to wait for some time till the moisture of the *gaômez*, applied to his body and head, especially that on the head, dries up. Then, the person is to advance to a third set of three pits. He is to purify his body there, with water. The water must be poured over the different parts of his body from head to foot in a particular way which is the same as that described in the case of the great Bareshnûm purification. Then, finally, he is to recite one Ahunavar and the Kêmnâ Mazdâ prayer upto the words “Astvaitish ashahé.” The person then puts on his clothes and the *Kusti* or the sacred thread, reciting its allotted prayer. This finishes the purification.

There is a third reference to a higher form of purification, but it cannot strictly be called Bareshnûm because, therein, it is not enjoined that the bath should begin from the ‘bareshnu’ (head) which word has given the purification its name. It says that if a person has come into contact with a dead body,¹ or if a

1 In modern parlance, such as was used during plague operations in Bombay, such a person is called a ‘contact.’

person has come into contact with a 'contact'¹ he is to go through a process of purification. No pits are mentioned in this purification. He is to wash his body four times with *gaómez* and twice with consecrated water. He is to recite 200 Ashem Vohû and 200 Ahunavars. He is to pray for nine nights.

We find that there is a difference in the ritual, described in the three parts of the Vendidad. The tendency is to reduce the rigour and intricacy and to make the ritual simple. The difference may be due to various causes. It may be due (a) to the different views of different priestly writers (b) or to the changed times, when it was found permissible to reduce the rigour, (c) or to the change in places, the priests of one part of the country thinking it advisable to reduce the rigour. When we find that in a limited Parsee population of India, there are differences in ritual in places so close as Bombay, Udvâdâ and Naosari, Surat and Broach, we must be prepared to find them in a large population like that of Iran. As a matter of fact, the Pahlavi Epistles of Mânûshcheher do point to such differences in later times, in the matter of the Bareshnûm. Zâdsparam, the high priest of Sûkan in the South of Kirmân, was found fault with by his brother Mânûshcheher, the high-priest of the western country, for having made some changes in the ritual of the Bareshnûm.²

I have spoken above of a *karsha*³ or a furrow, of a *padân*, and of a *naôgar* or nine-knotted stick, and shall have to speak of them frequently later on. So, I will describe them here.

1 In the language of plague operations, a person who came into contact with a 'contact' was known as an 'evict,' and he also was asked to leave his house and to go to camp.

2 *Vide* Nâmakihâ-i Mânûshcheher by Ervad Bomanji N. Dhâbhar. *Vide* S. B. E. Vol. XVIII, p. 279, *et seq.*

3 Cf. The Boundary Lines of the Roman Lustrum. *Vide* my paper "The Kashas of the Iranian Bareshnûm and the Boundary Lines of the Roman Lustrum" (Journal of the Anthropological Society, Vol. VIII, pp. 520-35).

A *karsha* (Sanskrit कर्षः: *karsha*) from the root, 'karesh' (Per. *kashidan*, to draw) means 'a trench or a furrow.' The word has a technical meaning in Zoroastrian rituals. At times, sacred or consecrated things or materials are to be kept, for the time being, within a limited space or enclosure, so that persons other than the officiating priests may not come into contact with them. The person in charge of the things, placing the things on the ground, draws round it a temporary circle, trench, or furrow. Suppose, it is the consecrated urine or water that he carries, and, in travelling, he has to place these things aside for a time. Then, he places them on the ground and immediately draws, with a nail, a circle or furrow or trench round it. It need not be very deep. This process, *viz.*, placing the things within the circle so formed, indicates, that it is free from the contact of other undesirable persons or things. If somebody else steps within the circle—or touches it even from without the circle, in which case also the line of isolation is broken—the thing is said to have lost its efficacy of consecration. This *karsha* (or *kasha* as it is ordinarily spoken now) or circle of limit, has a double efficacy. Just as, when you shut a door of a room, you stop a person within from getting out and a person without from getting in, so when you draw a '*karsha*' or the sacred circle, you not only stop—anyhow symbolically—the pollution from without, affecting the purity of the consecrated substance within, but, in case the substance itself is undergoing decomposition and is impure, you stop the impurity from going out of the circle and spreading round about. For example, in the Bareshnûmgâh, *karshas* having these two different significations are drawn. (a) The officiating priests take into the Bareshnûmgâh '*nirang*,' *i. e.*, the consecrated urine, '*âv*,' *i. e.*, the consecrated water, and '*bhasam*,' *i. e.*, the consecrated ash of the Fire-temple. The priest who takes these there, first makes a circle on the ground with a nail or even at times with his forefinger, and then places the consecrated things within the ground thus enclosed. Now, in this case, the circle is believed to protect the consecrated things from the pollution outside or to preserve the efficacy of

the consecrated things from being lost. (b) Then take the case of the *karshas* round the pits or holes, where the person to be purified is to go through the different washings and the final bath. In this case, the *karshas* are meant to limit the circle of pollution. Here, a person who is considered to have been polluted or, to speak correctly, supposed to have been infected with an infectious disease, goes through his washings and baths, and the circles were originally intended to keep the infection confined within the limit, so that it may not spread. The furrows are supposed to be trenches which would prevent the polluted water from his infected body to run beyond that certain limit. The *karsha* that a corpse-bearer draws round about the corpse in the house before removing the body to the Towers is of a similar kind.

Most of these *karshas* are of a temporary kind, but in the Fire-temples, they are of a permanent kind. In the Yazashnagâh, where the Yaçna, Vendidâd, and Bâj ceremonies are performed, such *karshas* are necessary. So, there, they are of a permanent kind. There, the stone slabs, which form the pavement, have furrows, about two inches deep and two inches wide, cut in the stones. In the chamber of the Sacred Fire also, there are such permanent furrows cut in the stones of the pavement. These furrows are of the first kind, *i. e.*, they are intended to preserve the efficacy of the consecrated fire or articles and of the sacred ceremonies within them.

A *karsha* of this kind is generally known as a "*pâvi*." *Pav*² means sacred. So a *Pâvi* means a furrow which preserves the sacredness of the consecrated things or of the sacred ceremonies. When the efficacy

1 *Vide*, above, p. 55, "The Funeral Ceremonies."

2 Lit. pavan âv, *i. e.*, (that which is washed) with water. In the language of the ritual, they often speak of "making a thing *pâv*," *i. e.*, ceremonially clean. This is done by washing the thing from within and without three times. To make the water to be used in the ritual *pâv*, they first wash thrice the vessel which is to contain the water, then fill the vessel upto the brim with water, and then lastly, pour thrice, with the recital of Khshnaothra Ahurahê Mazdâo Ashem Vohû, further water and let it overflow.

of the consecrated things is encroached upon by somebody else going within the circle or within the limit pointed out by the *pâvi*, then the thing is said to be *avâv*, (*apâv*) *i. e.*, desecrated. In the phraseology of the ritual, the words "*pâvi karvi*" are at times used to signify the preparation of temporary furrows or the performance of religious ceremonies.

The word *padân* is Avesta *paiti-dâna*, *lit.*, that which is kept over (the mouth). It is *padân* 𐬨𐬀𐬎𐬌
Paiti-dâna or
Padân. in Pahlavi, *panâm* or *Penâm* in Pazend, *padân* in Persian. It is a piece of white cloth of cotton with two strings at the top to be fastened over the nose. It is a kind of mouth-veil put on at different times with different purposes. The priests put it on, when saying prayers before fire and the *myazd* or sacred things, so that their breath or saliva may not defile the sacred things before them. In this case, it resembles the covering which the ancient Flamines, the Roman fire-priests, were required to put on. At other times, it is put on, as it were, for a contrary purpose, *i. e.*, to prevent the outside defilement from coming to the person who puts it on.¹ For example, the priest put it on, in the Bareshnûmgâh, to prevent the defilement of the infected person, whom he purified, coming towards him. Some put it on even over the face of a corpse. Here also the object seems to be to prevent the defilement from the nose and mouth of the corpse spreading out. The Pahlavi Vendidad (XVIII, 1) says that it may be prepared of any material (*kolâ mandavami*). It may be two fingers (*angusht*) broad and should be of two layers of cloth.

Naôgar, or to speak more correctly, Naô-gireh is the technical name of a nine-knotted stick (*graom*
Naôgar, the nine-
knotted stick. *navapikhem*, Vendidad IX, 14). The use of such a stick in the purifying ceremony as a symbol, seems to

¹ This fact seems to be illustrated by what I saw in October 1918. The Medical authorities of the Parsee Fever Hospital directed, that nurses and other male and female volunteers, who attended influenza patients at the Hospital during its epidemic, may put on a mask or a double-layered cloth-cover over their mouth and nose, so that they may not catch infection from the patient.

have been suggested by a passage of the Vendidâd (XIX, 4). Zoroaster advances against Âhriman holding an instrument in his hand (*asâno¹ zasta drajimmô*). In the portraits of Zoroaster, drawn from some sculptures on the rocks in Persia supposed to be those of Zoroaster, he is represented as having a stick in his hand. This is perhaps in reference to the above passage of the Vendidâd. Some translators of the above passage of the Vendidâd speak of this instrument as a nine-knotted stick. Another instrument, with which Zoroaster is said to have advanced against Ahriman, is Ahunavar, *i. e.*, the short prayer of Yathâ Ahu Vairyô. That prayer is the spiritual weapon with which the prophet fights against the Evil Spirit, and the stick is the material symbol of it. In all religions, priests or bishops are made to hold some weapons, mostly the sword. These weapons are symbols of religious authority. Now Zoroaster's fight against the Evil Spirit is a kind of spiritual or mental purification. He fights to free or purify the world from his evil influences. So, the weapon also came to be used as a symbol in the Bareshnûm ceremony of purification, wherein also the purifier fights against the pollution brought upon by the Evil Spirit.

Now, as to the number nine, it was a sacred number among the ancients. It was supposed to be a symbol of a kind of perfection, because when multiplied by any number, the addition of the digits of the product always gives nine as the product. So, it was held sacred even amongst the ancient Zoroastrians. In the Bareshnûmgâh, the pits are, as we said, nine. The *karshas* or the furrows round the nine pits are nine. The isolation or the retreat after the Bareshnûm lasts for nine nights. So, the number nine also plays its part in the stick used in the purifying ceremony. The priest gives the consecrated articles to the candidate for purification by means of a spoon attached to such a nine-knotted stick. Perhaps, it was thought, that, in case the infection escaped from the infected person who is a candidate

¹ Harlez (Zend Avesta, p. 192) takes it to be an "arrow." Some take it to be "stones." Aspandîârji (Edition of 1900, p. 269) takes it to be *نیر* *nogar*. Others take it to be symbolical for *ahunavar*. (*Ibid*).

for purification, it might not reach the purifying priest and might be stopped at every knot of the stick. It might pass through the fibres of the stick but might be stopped at each of the knots. All this is symbolic, however we may try to understand it.

3. Bareshnûm-gâh or the place for the Bareshnûm.

Having spoken at some length on what is Bareshnûm and on its description in the Vendidâd, I will now speak of the *Bareshnûm-gâh*. The Bareshnûm being a form of purification for a person who came into close contact with a dead body—perhaps the dead body of a person who died of an infectious disease—it is natural that the place for this purification should be enjoined to be away from thickly populated parts of a town. It ought to be in a sequestered or the less frequented part of the town. The Vendidâd (IX, 1-11) enjoins, that it ought to be at a place, less frequented by cattle, beasts of burden and men. Again, it must be at the distance of at least 30 steps (*gâya*) from fire, 30 steps from the *barsam*¹ and 3 steps from the holy man. What is meant is, that it must be in a less frequented place and in a place away from religious places which are frequented by people.

Let us determine the distance mentioned here. It is required to be at the distance of at least 30 *gâya* from a religious place where liturgical services are performed. Now, according to the ancient Parsee books, each *gâya* *i.e.*, step, is made up of 3 *pâdha*, (Sans पाद Lat. *ped-s* or *pēs*, Fr. *piéd*, Germ. *fuss*, Pers. *pâi*, foot) *i.e.*, feet. Now each *pâdha* or foot is equal to 14 *êrézu*, *i. e.*, fingers. Each *êrézu* or finger is about $\frac{4}{5}$ of an inch.² So each *pâdha* (foot) comes to about $11\frac{1}{2}$ in., and each *gâya* (step) comes to about 2 ft. $9\frac{3}{5}$ in. Thus, when it is said that the

1 Sacred metallic rods used in ritual.

2 For a comparison of the Avesta measures with the Iranian measures mentioned by Herodotus and with modern measures, *vide* the tables given by me, in my कदीम इरानीयों, हीरोडोटस अने स्ट्रैबो मुज्य (i.e., The Ancient Irânians according to Herodotus and Strabo) pp. 93-95. *Vide* Rawlinson's Herodotus, I, p. 315.

Bareshnûmgâh must be at least 30 *gâya* from a place where religious services are performed, it means, in modern measures, that it must be at least (30 by 2 ft. $9\frac{3}{8}$ in. =) 84 feet. In other words, there must be no place of worship near the Bareshnûmgâh for about 84 feet. Holy men are required to keep themselves away from it by three steps, *i. e.*, by 8 ft. $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

The above figures from the Vendidâd speak about the distance of the nearest frequented place. The Revâyets follow the spirit of the Vendidâd, but increase the distance, and say, that it must be about 300 *gâyas* (steps), (Bareshnûmgâh dûr az sheher si-sad gâh shâyad)¹ *i. e.*, at the distance of about 280 yards from the city.

Again it is further enjoined, that, after having chosen a distant or less frequented locality, one must select there a piece of ground "where there is least water and where there are fewest trees, the part which is the cleanest and driest" (Vendidâd IX, 3).² In short, the driest and the cleanest place is enjoined for the purification, so that the impurities or germs of infection from the infected person may not increase and develop, and thus be a source of danger. In case, a place free of trees is not near at hand, the trees on the ground must be cut off to meet the requirement. The ground round about the Bareshnûmgâh must also be cleared of its trees, for a distance of about nine *vibâzu*. As each *vibâzu* is spoken of as containing 8 *vitashtis* and as each *vitashiti* is about 10 in.³, the ground so cleared off must be about $9 \times 8 \times 10 = 720$ in., *i. e.*, about 60 feet from all sides.

Having chosen the locality at a safe distance from the city, and at the distance of at least about 84 feet from the nearest inhabited or frequented place, and having made the place dry and devoid of trees, the next business is to lay out or arrange the Bareshnûmgâh. It should be laid out in the centre of the above-mentioned area of 60 feet. The arrangement consists of 3 kinds of work :—

1 Burjor Kamdin's Revâyet: Mr. Maneckji R. Uavâlâ's MS., dated 1061 A. Y. (A. D. 1692).

2 S. B. E. IV, (1880) p. 120.

3 *Vide* my "Kadim Irânians," p. 94.

- (a) Digging *magas* or pits at fixed distances from one another.
- (b) Drawing out the *karshas* or the furrows round the pits.
- (c) Covering the Bareshnûmgâh with sand or earth.

(a) At first nine *magas*, *i. e.*, pits or holes are to be dug in the centre of the ground beginning from the West and ending in the East. Each of these pits was to be two fingers (*êrêzu*), *i. e.*, about $1\frac{3}{8}$ in. deep, if the time of the purification was summer, but 4 fingers. *i. e.*, about $3\frac{1}{8}$ inches deep, if it was winter. At first, six such pits are to be dug at the distance of one step, *i. e.*, about 2 ft. $9\frac{3}{8}$ in. from one another. Then, at the other end of this set of 6 pits, a space of 3 steps, *i. e.*, about 8 ft. $4\frac{7}{8}$ in. is to be left undug. Then follows another set of 3 pits of the same depth and at the same distance from each other as those of the first set of six. The breadth of each of the nine pits is not given in the Vendidâd; but the depth being, as said above, $1\frac{3}{8}$ in. in summer and $3\frac{1}{8}$ in. in winter, let us suppose that the width also is the same, *viz.*, in summer $1\frac{3}{8}$ in., and in winter $3\frac{1}{8}$ in. The reason, why different sizes were enjoined in the different seasons, seems to be, that in summer, the heat being great, the ground, moistened by the water in the purification process, dries up earlier than in winter.

(b) The next important work in the preparation of the Bareshnûmgâh is that of drawing the *karshas* or furrows round the pits, to mark out the ground, beyond which the pollution or infection may not pass. The infected person is to have his baths in such a way that the water running from his infected body may not run further from the place and not pollute further ground. So, the ground must be marked out and proper channels or furrows for the water must be made. These channels may serve as limits for confining the pollution or infection in a particular place.

At first, one large *karsha* is to be drawn round the whole limit of the Bareshnûmgâh with a sharp metallic instrument. (Vendidâd IX, 10). It must be at the distance of 3 steps (*gaya*),

i.e., about 8 ft. $4\frac{2}{5}$ in. from the long row of pits. Then, 12 *karshas* must be drawn round the pits themselves in the following order : (a) Firstly, 3 *karshas* round the first 3 pits; secondly 3 *karshas* round the first six pits; thirdly 3 *karshas* round all the nine pits. Then, lastly, 3 *karshas* round the inner, *i.e.*, central three pits.

(c) Having prepared the pits, on each of which the candidate has to purify his body, and having enclosed the ground, the Bareshnûmgâh must be covered with some earth or sand. The candidate for purification has to go through the purifying process on each of the pits. Going through that, he has to cross that pit and go to the other or the purer side of the pit, leaving behind, in the pit just crossed, any pollution that had passed away from his body. So, he must have purer and cleaner ground to stand upon, after crossing the pit. This was secured by having the ground covered with sand or such other moisture-absorbing clay or earth.¹

Taking the distances as given in the Vendidâd and as described above, the figures for the length and breadth of the Bareshnûmgâh and for the space occupied by the pits, the intervening spaces, and the furrows come to these :—

The breadth of each pit is $3\frac{1}{5}$ in. in winter and $1\frac{3}{5}$ in. in summer. We take the largest breadth for winter months in our calculations. As there are altogether 9 pits, they occupy altogether ($9 \times 3\frac{1}{5}$ in. =) $28\frac{4}{5}$ in. = 2 ft. 4 in. Then the distance between each pit being 2 ft. $9\frac{3}{5}$ in., as here are 7 intervals or distances between these 9 pits, they occupy in all (7×2 ft. $9\frac{3}{5}$ in. =) $235\frac{1}{5}$ in. = 19 ft. $7\frac{1}{5}$ in. Then the distance between the first set of 6 pits and the second set of 3 pits being 8 ft. $4\frac{4}{5}$ in., the length of the ground occupied by the whole set of pits comes to (2 ft. $4\frac{4}{5}$ in. + 19 ft. $7\frac{1}{5}$ in. + 8 ft. $4\frac{4}{5}$ in. =) 30 ft. $4\frac{4}{5}$ in. Then the first and the most distant *karsha* or furrow being 8 ft. $4\frac{4}{5}$ in. from all sides of the pits, allowing the space of 8 ft. $4\frac{4}{5}$ in. from the space (30 ft. $4\frac{4}{5}$ in.) between the first and the ninth or the last pit, *i.e.*, on the East and on the West, the whole length of the

¹ Vendidâd, IX, 11.

ground from East to West comes to (30 ft. 4 in. + 8 ft. $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. + 8 ft. $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. =) 47 ft. $2\frac{2}{5}$ in. Coming to the breadth (north and south), as the first and most distant *karsha* or furrow is to be 8 ft. $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. on both sides from any one of the pits, taking the pit to be a square and therefore its length to be the same as its breadth, *i.e.*, $3\frac{1}{5}$ in., we have the breadth of (8 ft. $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. + 8 ft. $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. + $3\frac{1}{5}$ in. =) 17 ft. $\frac{4}{5}$ in.

From all these calculations, we learn that the Bareshnûmgâh, as enjoined by the Vendidad, must have the surrounding ground of the distance of about 60 ft. from all its sides, cleared off of its trees, and that the space in it to be occupied for the purpose of the purification ceremony itself should be 33 ft. $2\frac{2}{5}$ in. in length from East to West, and 17 ft. $\frac{4}{5}$ in. in breadth from North to South. The accompanying sketch presents a plan of the Bareshnûmgâh, enjoined as above by the Vendidad.

Now, as the modern Bareshnûm purification has changed somewhat from the original one of the Vendidad times, in its object and in the matter of the persons who should take the Bareshnûm, so has the modern Bareshnûmgâh changed from the original Bareshnûmgâh of the Vendidad times. Again, even at present, some of the rigid injunctions are more honoured in their breach than in their observance. We will here examine the changes, which are especially in the following points: (a) Its locality. (b) Its area. (c) The form of its *magas* or pits (d) The distance between the pits.

(a) Firstly, as to locality, the present Bareshnûmgâhs are not always away from the city. It is only at Naôsâri, the old head-quarters of the Parsee priesthood, that the old injunction of the Vendidad is followed and the Bareshnûmgâh is situated at some distance from the closely inhabited part of the town. Even at Naôsâri, the ground round about, of the distance of about 60 ft., is not cleared off of its trees. Now-a-days, the Bareshnûmgâhs are attached to many Fire-temples, because the original purpose of the Bareshnûm, *viz.*, that of purifying only the infected, has lost much of its importance, and the Bareshnûm is looked at, as

a form of purification necessary for the performance of liturgical services and ceremonies in the Fire-temple. It is mostly the priests that now-a-days take the Bareshnûm. So, the original requirement of the infected person being kept apart from frequented quarters of the town no longer exists. Thus, the Bareshnûm being a more frequent form of purification, and being the requirement for a priest, the Bareshnûmgâhs are now attached to the Fire-temples.

(b) The area of the modern Bareshnûmgâh also is much smaller than that described in the Vendidâd. It varies in different towns. According to the Vendidâd, the row of pits was in the centre of the area. In the modern one, it is nearer to the northern boundary.

(c) As to the form of the *magas*, we have no pits at all. They are replaced by sets of small stones. Each set consists of 5 stones. The space between each set of pits as enjoined by the Vendidâd was $9\frac{3}{4}$ in. That space is now replaced by sets of 3 stones each.

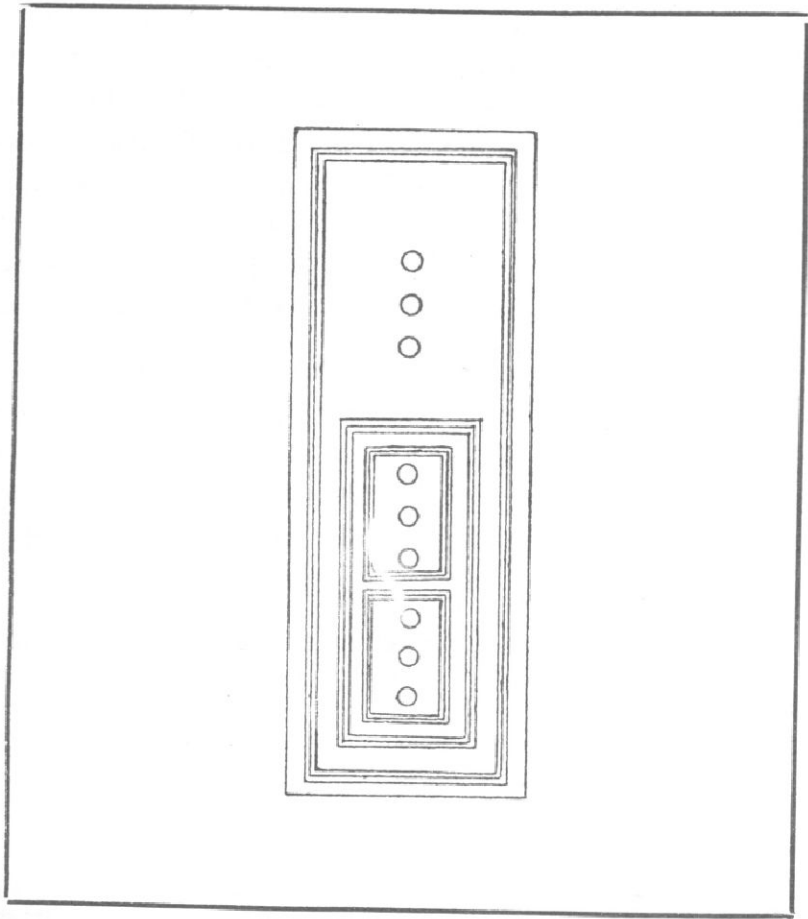
(d) The *magas* or the pits having been done away with, the distances, mentioned in the Vendidâd, between each of the pits, *viz.*, $9\frac{3}{4}$ in., and between the first set of six pits and the second set of three pits, *viz.*, 8 ft. $4\frac{1}{2}$ in., are not observed. The omission of the small distances between each of the pits or their modern substitutes, *viz.*, the sets of stones, is not noticeable; but the omission to observe the greater distance between the first six and the second three pits is easily marked. In the modern Bareshnûmgâh, all these sets of stones—both those representing the original pits, *viz.*, sets of 5 stones, and those representing the original empty spaces between the pits, *viz.*, sets of 3 stones—are only about 6 in. apart.

Taking the replacement of the Vendidâd *magas* by sets of

Sets of small stones at present, there must be nine sets of stones in the modern Bareshnûmgâh. stones, each of 5 stones, to represent the 9 pits of the older Bareshnûmgâh, and nine sets of stones, each of 3 stones, to represent the intervening

spaces between the pits—in all, 18 sets of stones. But instead of these 18, we have 21 sets in the modern Bareshnûmgâh. The extra three are made up of two sets, each of 3 stones, and one of 5. The first extra set of 3 stones is in the front of the long row of stones, *i. e.*, in the west end of the row, and it is on this set, that the purifying priest places his nine-knotted stick, and commences the process of preparing the Bareshnûmgâh or drawing the *karshas*. The second extra set of 5 stones is at the other end of the long row on the east, and it is on this set that the candidate takes his final bath. These 5 stones are generally replaced by a broad large stone, so that the person can conveniently stand or sit on it and have his bath. The third or the final set of three stones forms the furthest end of the row on the east. It is provided for the bather to stand upon, after his final bath on the large stone, to dry his feet before putting on his shoes.

It seems, that, according to the Vendidâd, in ancient times, at each time that there was a case of a person who had become infected by coming into contact with a dead person in a prohibited way or in a way other than the proper or prescribed way, a Bareshnûmgâh was laid out. A piece of ground was selected, pits were dug, and the *karshas* or furrows were drawn. It appears, that the cases were rare, and so, the necessity of preparing the Bareshnûmgâh arose rarely. But latterly, when the original object of the purification was changed, and its use and object were extended, a permanent thing was wanted. Now-a-days, the Bareshnûm purification is a rare and uncommon thing for the laymen, but common with the priests, who want to qualify themselves for performing religious ceremonies in the inner circle of the temples. So, in the modern Bareshnûmgâh, much of the arrangement enjoined in the Vendidâd is given a permanent form. As said above, they have done away with the digging of the nine *magas* or pits and replaced them by 9 sets of stones; and the intervening spaces between the pits are permanently replaced by sets of stones. It is only the *karshas* or the furrows that are newly made on each occasion of the Bareshnûm, and that part of the process only is now-a-



Plan of the Bareshnûmgâh.
As enjoined in the Vendidâd.

days technically known as "preparing the Bareshnûmgâh." Again, in the modern ritual, there is no fumigation.

Plans of the Bareshnûmgâh are given by Anquetil du Perron,¹ Harlez,² Spiegel,³ Darmesteter,⁴ and West.⁵ But they are all faulty in one respect. They point the arrangement of the pits in the direction North to South, thus indicating, that the candidate for purification enters from the North and advances to the South. But as a matter of fact, the direction is from West to East. The candidate enters from the West and advances to the East. Again, the plans of Prof. Darmesteter and Dr. West are further faulty, in this, that they point out the last 3 *karshas* to be round the last set of pits. But this is not so. These last three *karshas* are round the central set of the 3 pits.

The plans given by all these scholars do not give clear separate ideas of (a) what a modern permanent Bareshnûmgâh is, and (b) what it appears to be when prepared at the time of giving a Bareshnûm to a candidate. I give a plan which gives a view of both, and I will illustrate the process of giving the Bareshnûm by references to it.

4. The Process of giving the Bareshnûm.

Now we come to the subject of the process of giving the Bareshnûm. I will at first speak (A) of some requisite preliminary preparations and then (B) of the process itself.

The preliminary preparations consist of the following:—

(A.) Preliminary Preparations. (a) Preparing or consecrating the requisites for the purification. (b) Preparation on the part of the particular priest who gives the purification. (c) Preparation of the Bareshnûmgâh. (d) Preparation of the candidate.

1 Zend Avesta, Tome II, p. 546.

2 Avesta, Introduction, p. CLXXVI.

3 Avesta, Erster Band, Vendidad, p. 295.

4 Le Zend Avesta: Deuxieme volume, p. 162.

5 S. B. E., Vol. XVIII, p. 435.

At first, two Bareshnûmwâlâ¹ priests who have previously

(a) Preparing necessary requisites for the Bareshnûm.

performed the great *Khub*² ceremony, carry to the Bareshnûmgâh, the following consecrated articles required for the Bareshnûm:—

(a) The Nirangdin, *i.e.*, the consecrated urine of the cow. (b) The Âv, *i.e.*, the consecrated water. (c) The Bhasam,³ *i.e.*, the consecrated ash of the Sacred Fire of the Âtash Behrâm. Besides these consecrated things, the following utensils and articles are required in the Bareshnûmgâh:—(d) Two potsful of water. (e) Two metallic cups. (f) The leaf of a promegranate tree. (g) Two Naôgars, *i.e.*, sticks having nine knots. One of these two sticks has a metallic spoon at one end tied with a *kusti* or sacred thread. Another stick has a metallic nail similarly tied at one end. The first three consecrated things are placed within a *pâvi*.⁴ This *pâvi* is on the south side of the Bareshnûmgâh (place marked Z in the plan).

Having placed the above consecrated articles and other

The purification of the utensils and of the water.

necessary things into the Bareshnûmgâh, the two priests perform the *kusti-pâdyâb*, and put on the *padân*. Then one of them first makes *pâv*,⁵ *i.e.*, cleans ceremonially the two small metallic cups. In one of the cups, he pours the consecrated urine and throws into it a pinch of the Bhasam or the consecrated ash. Then he makes the two water-pots *pâv* and pours into them a few drops of consecrated water. A few drops of consecrated water consecrate all the water in the pots.

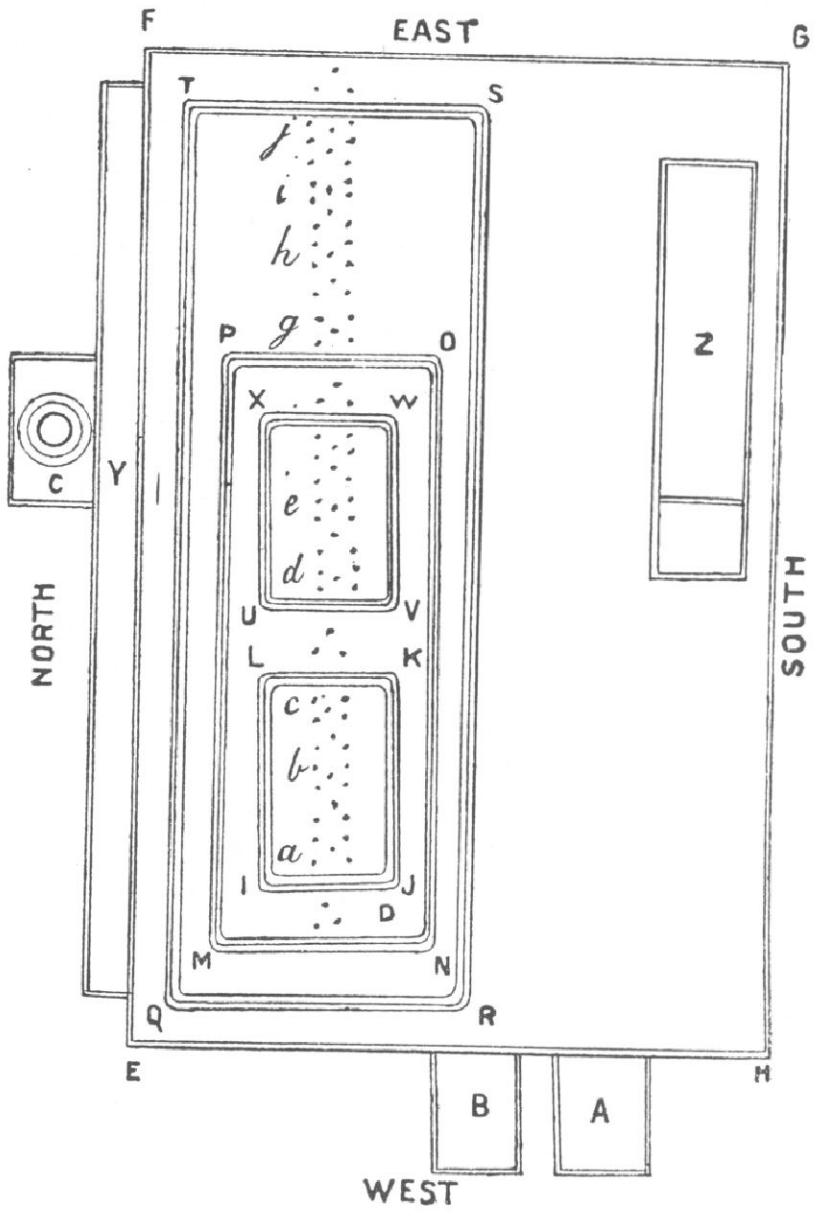
1 *i.e.*, the priests who have themselves gone through the Bareshnûm purification and who observe all the required observances.

2 The *khub* ceremony requires the recital of the Yaçna and the observance of certain ceremonies.

3 भस्म स्नान is said to be a special purification ceremony among the Hindus. भस्म शयिन is one of the several names of Shiva, because he sprinkled ashes over his body. विभूति is their sacred ash (Calcutta Review of Jany. 1905).

4 *Vide* above, p. 109.

5 *Vide* above, p. 109.



After preparing the requisite things as said above, the priest

(b) Preparation on the part of the particular priest who gives the purification bath.

himself takes a bath in the Bareshnûmgâh. He purifies himself with consecrated water before purifying the candidate. One of the above two pots of water is for his use and the other for the subsequent use of the candidate. He goes to an adjoining place enclosed by a *pâvi* (marked C on the plan), recites the formula of Khsnaothra Ahurahê Mazdâo Ashem Vohû, and then unclothes himself. He places his clothes at a little distance from himself on a set of three stones. In doing so, he removes his turban with the *padân* hanging over it. Then, sitting on a big stone, he bathes with the consecrated water contained in one of the two pots placed before him by the other priest on a set of three stones. The other priest sprinkles a few drops of the *âv* or the consecrated water on the clothes of the priest. Thus, he symbolically purifies with the consecrated water his clothes also. On finishing his bath, he puts on his clothes and in so doing, he puts on his turban with the *padân* hanging over it. Then throwing his *kusti* on his shoulders, he recites the Kemnâ Mazdâ prayer and then puts on the *kusti*, reciting the Nirang-i-Kusti.

Having bathed with the consecrated water, the priest now proceeds to "prepare the Bareshnûmgâh." (c) The preparation of the Bareshnûmgâh. As said above, in the modern Bareshnûmgâh, the place is all ready with the 9 pits, now-a-days replaced by 9 sets of 5 stones each and with the intervening sets of 3 stones each. What is left undone is the drawing of the *karshas* or the furrows which is technically known as "preparing the Bareshnûmgâh." He proceeds to draw the *karshas* as follows: He takes the two Naôgars or the nine-knotted sticks, in his hands, the one with the metallic nail at the end in his right hand, and the other with the spoon in his left hand. Then, going to the place where the sets of stones commence, he places the nailed end of the first stick on the first set of 3 stones—the first extra set marked D in the plan—and stands facing the East. He then recites what is

technically called the Dasturi, *i. e.*, he declares, that he performs the ceremony as enjoined by the Dasturs. In this recital, he first recites Khshnaôthra Aîurahê Mazdâo, one Ashem Vohu and five Yathâ Ahu Vairyôs, and then recites in Bâj, *i. e.*, in a suppressed tone, the Dasturi formula.¹ Then he recites loudly three Ashemvohus, and takes the Bâj of Sraôsh upto the words "Vidhvaô mraôtû." Then saying the word Ashem, once loudly and for the second time in a suppressed tone, he goes to the north-west corner of the limit of the Bareshnûmgâh (marked E in the plan) and draws one *karsha* with the nailed end of the nine-knotted stick round the whole boundary, beginning with the northern side. Some draw this *karsha* within the permanent *pâvi* which shows the inner boundary of the Bareshnûmgâh and others draw it out of the *pâvi* on the inside of the boundary. He slowly proceeds from West to East (E to F in the plan), reciting four Yathâ Ahu Vairyôs during the process. Then he continues on the eastern side (F to G), then on the southern side (G to H), and lastly on the western side (H to E), reciting three Yathâ Ahu Vairyôs each time. Thus, completing the quadrangle, he draws the first large *karsha* referred to, as said above, in the Vendidâd. Then, he goes back to the row of stones and draws 12 *karshas* round about them. At first he draws three *karshas* round the first set of the three pits (I J K L), each represented in the modern Bareshnûmgâh by three sets of 5 stones and shown in the plan by 5 dots. Then, he draws 3 *karshas* round the first six pits, as marked M N O P in the plan; then, thirdly, round all the nine pits as marked Q R S T in the plan. Lastly, he draws three other *karshas* round the middle set, as marked U V W X. When these 13 *karshas* are drawn, the Bareshnûmgâh is technically said to have become *taiyâr* (تایار) *i. e.*, ready for the purification ceremony of the candidate. The priest, who thus prepares it, finishes the Bâj of Sarosh, the first portion of which he had recited at the commencement of the work of preparing the Bareshnûmgâh.

¹ Herein, he says, that he performs the ritual as enjoined by the Dasturs. *Vide* above, p. 62, "The Funeral Ceremonies."

The candidate for purification first takes his ordinary bath in the morning with the necessary ritual, either at his house or at the Fire-Temple. At Naosari, he takes this preliminary bath at his own house, and then goes to the Bareshnûmgâh. As it is a small town, and there are quarters which are strictly Parsee-quarters, and the distances to the Bareshnûmgâh and the Fire-temples are not great, one can easily walk from his house to the Bareshnûmgâh, and from there to the Temple, where he has to pass nine days in a kind of retreat. But Bombay being a large city, it is not possible to go from one's house to the Bareshnûmgâh, in a Temple without running the chance of coming into contact with non-Zoroastrians, from whom he is to keep aloof. So, in Bombay and in other large centres of population, the candidate—and when one speaks of a candidate, he is almost always a priest who goes through the ceremony to qualify himself for the performance of certain religious ceremonies—takes the preliminary bath at the Temple. He puts on a newly washed set of clothes. Then, he goes to the Bareshnûmgâh. If a long interval has passed since his preliminary bath, he performs the *Kusti-Pâdyâb*; if not, he need not perform that.

Then he takes his seat on a piece of clean cloth on the ground within an enclosed *pâvi* (A in the plan) outside the Bareshnûmgâh proper. Then, he is made to say the Bâj, or prayer of grace, and is given a pomegranate leaf to chew, and a little consecrated urine to drink in one of the two metallic cups referred to above. He then finishes the Bâj and recites the Patet. The process is the same as that in the Nâhn ceremony or in the second form of purification. So, I need not describe it in detail here.¹ He goes through this preliminary preparation before the technical "preparation of the Bareshnûmgâh."

Now, we come to the subject proper of the process of the Bareshnûm ceremony. Two priests are required for the purpose.² As said above, one of the priests, the purifier, has himself

(B) The process proper of the Bareshnûm.

1 *Vide* above, pp. 94 *et seq.*

2 Yaôshdâçragar dô gan âvâyad (Pahl. Vend. IX, 32); one of them has performed the *khûb*.

gone through a purification with consecrated water. He has 'prepared' the Bareshnûmgâh for the purification. The candidate himself is now ready. The second priest now goes in a *pâvi* (Y) outside the Bareshnûmgâh proper, and holds a dog by a chain in his hand. The candidate is now about to enter into the Bareshnûmgâh; but before he does so, the priest who is to purify him retires into the *pâvi* (Z) wherein the consecrated articles are kept. An infected person is supposed to step into the Bareshnûmgâh; so, not only should the consecrated things, but also the priests who are to purify him and to give him a bath of purification are supposed to keep themselves out of the chances of infection and pollution. The *pâvi*, which is prepared by drawing a *karsha* or a furrow round about, protects them.

The candidate now rises from his seat on the ground, leaves the *pâvi* wherein he ate and drank the consecrated things, and steps into another *pâvi* (B). Coming in there, he takes the Bâj. He recites Khshnaôthra Ahurahê Mazdao, Ashem Vohu.¹ Then he recites the bâj, *i. e.*, in a suppressed or muttering tone. "Humata, hukhta, .hvarshta, hu-manashnê hu-gavashnê, hu-kunashnê.....².....tan pâk," *i. e.*, "(I go through this ceremony) with good thoughts, with good words and good deeds,³ and I do this with the intention that the good of this may result to the body of (such and such a person)."

This is a later change, development, or rather, degeneration. The original object of the purification, *viz.*, purification from a kind of pollution or infection, was lost, and the ceremony became a kind of qualification for the performance of some ceremonies. The priests go through this, and are paid for that and for the subsequent ceremonies, Yaçna, etc. At first, they recited the name of the person who had asked them to perform the ceremonies in certain formula recited in the prayers. But latterly, they began to recite his or her name in the purification ceremony itself.

¹ Amat Yaôshdaçragar Yasht la kard Yekvimunet lâ Shayad (*ibid.*) Dastur Jamaspji takes the word "Yasht" here for *khâb*, યુગ પેહેલવી વંદીદાદજુ યુગરાતી વાંચણ તયા તરજુમે, by Dastur Kaikhosru, p. 106.

² Here, he names the person, for whose *naiyat* or intention he takes the Bareshnûm. If it is for himself, he says so. *Vide* above p. 102, n. 1.

³ The words are here repeated in their Pazend form.

The candidate then unclothes himself. He is not to speak anything now. If he has to say anything, he must speak in *Bâj*, i.e., in a suppressed tone. Having unclothed himself, he seats himself on the first set of 5 stones (*a* in the plan) which represent the first *maga* or pit of the original Bareshnûmgâh of the Vendidad. While proceeding to the seat, he covers his head with his right hand, because a Zoroastrian is enjoined not to walk bare-headed. With another hand, he tries for decency to cover his private part.

The candidate for purification having taken his seat in the *pâvi* or enclosure formed by the *karshas* or furrows, the cause of infection is, as it were, confined within that space. As the infection is not expected to spread, the purifying priest now comes out of the *pâvi*, where he had taken his refuge for the sake of safety. He goes to the candidate to purify him, but always takes care to stand out of the *pâvi* formed by the furrows in which the candidate is seated. He holds the nine-knotted stick with the spoon in his right hand, and the second stick with the metallic nail in his left hand. Then, the candidate places his right hand on his head. The reason why he now puts his right hand on his head is that a Zoroastrian is asked not to speak with an uncovered head.¹ When he has to say

1 We learn from Herodotus, that the ancient Persians always kept their heads covered. He speaks (Bk. III, 10-12), of the battle, which the Egyptians fought with the Persians at the Pelusiac mouth of the Nile, and in which Psammenitus, son of Amasis, was defeated, and of his visit of the battlefield. There he says, "Here I saw a very surprising fact, which the people of the country informed me of.....The skulls of the Persians were so weak, that if you should hit them only with a single pebble, you would break a hole in them; whereas those of the Egyptians are so hard, that you could scarcely fracture them by striking them with a stone. The cause of this, they told me, is as follows, and I readily assented; that the Egyptians begin from childhood and shave their heads, and the bone is thickened by exposure to the sun.....And the reason why the Persians have weak skulls is this; they shade them from the first, wearing tiaras for hats. Now, I myself saw that such was the case; and I also observed the same thing at Papremis, with respect to those who were slain with Achæmenes, son of Darius, by Inarus the Libyan." Bk. III, 12. H. Cary's Translation, Bohn's Series, 1889, p. 174.)

While saying prayers or performing religious ceremonies, a decent head-dress was unvoidably necessary. Herodotus says: "When any one wishes to offer sacrifice.....he invokes the god, usually having his tiara decked with myrtle." (Bk. I, 132, *Ibid*, p. 60.)

anything with an uncovered head, for example, during the bath, he places his right hand over his head, and then says what he has to say. Now, as the candidate has to speak something, as we will see later on, he has to cover his head temporarily with his hand.

The priest who has advanced to purify him now places the spoon-end of the nine-knotted stick on his hand which covers the head. The candidate then places his left hand over the spoon. Care must be taken that the hands of the candidate only touch the spoon, *i. e.*, the metallic part of the stick, and not the wooden part, which, being porous, is likely to catch germs of infection from him. The priest then recites three Ashem Vohûs and the Bâj of Sraosh up to "Vidhvâo Mraotû," and with the word Ashem (*i. e.*, Purity), removes from the head the spooned stick. Then going to the *pâvi* where the *âlât* or the consecrated things are placed, and taking, in one of the small metallic cups above referred to, a little of the *Nirang*, goes to the candidate again, pours a little of it in the spoon,¹ and drops it in the hand of the candidate who applies it to his whole body. He repeats this three times.

The Vendidâd (IX, 15-26) enjoins that the application must not be haphazard, but in a particular way beginning from the top of the head to the tip of the toe. It says, that, at first, both the hands must be cleaned or purified with the *Nirang*, so that, with those clean hands, he may clean all the other parts of the body. It says (IX, 15): "At first, both his hands must be washed. If both his hands are not washed at first, he makes his whole body unclean." The *Nirang* after its application to the hand, must be applied to the other parts of the body in the following order: The head, the front part of the face between the brows, the back part of the head, the cheeks, the right ear, the left ear, the right shoulder, the left shoulder, the right arm-pit, the left arm-pit, the chest, the back, the right nipple, the left nipple, the right rib, the left rib, the right hip, the left hip, the private parts, (if the candidate

1 Vendidâd IX, 14.

for purification is a male, the application must first be on the hind part and then on the front part; but if a female, it must begin on the front and then on the hind part), the right thigh, the left thigh, the right knee, the left knee, the right shin of the leg, the left shin of the leg, the right ankle, the left ankle, the right instep, the left instep, the right sole of the foot, the left sole of the foot, the right toe, the left toe.

The Vendidâd adds, that, with such an application, the Druj-i-Nasu, *i. e.*, the Evil of infection or—to speak in modern scientific language—the microbe of infection leaves the particular part of the body thus cleaned and runs down to the next named part, and, at last, leaves the infected person at the foot, making good his escape in the northern direction.

Now-a-days, the application is not so systematic and not in the same successive order as enjoined in the Vendidâd. It differs in several points:—

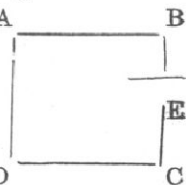
(a) Firstly, it is a hasty application or rubbing of the Nirang from head to foot. (b) Secondly, the Vendidâd enjoins the priest who purifies the candidate to throw or sprinkle the Nirang gradually upon the different parts of the body, one after another. That process would require a very large quantity. But in practice now, the priest gives at once a little quantity, about a tea-spoonful at the most, in the hollow of the hand of the candidate who applies that quantity over all the parts of the body. (c) Thirdly, in modern practice, the priest drops the Nirang in the hands of the candidate three times at each pit. This triple process of dropping it is, perhaps, to replace, and to make up for, the abandonment of the very long and intricate process of the application as enjoined in the Vendidâd. (d) Fourthly, it is enjoined, that the words “nemaschâ yâ Ârmaish izâchâ” (*i. e.*, praise and commendation to Armaiti, *i. e.*, to the Purity of thought) are to be recited by the priest and repeated by the candidate before the first application or washing, but, in practice, they are recited after the first triple application.

Then to proceed in our description of the process of the Bareshnum, the priest, after dropping the nirang into his hands,

retires again into his *pâvi* or enclosure where the *âlât* or the consecrated articles are placed. The candidate is isolated within the *karshas* or the furrows. The isolation is shortly to be broken or dissolved by the other priest who is to present a dog before the candidate.¹ If that is done, the purifier himself, coming within the circle of pollution or infection, is likely to catch infection. So, he retires within his enclosure (Z) of isolation for safety. The other priest then advances with a dog held by a metallic chain, and keeping himself at a distance beyond the *pâvi*,—in this case the first and distant *karsha* or furrow,—presents the dog before the candidate who then touches with his left hand the left ear of the dog.

I will say a few words here on the use of the dog in this purification ceremony. In the 9th chapter of the Vendidad, where a lengthy description of the Bareshnûm purification is given, we find no reference to the dog. But it is in its Pahlavi commentary that we find it. There, on the authority of the later commentators, it is said, that “when they (the candidates for purification) pass from one pit to another, the dog may be held before them once.”² The 8th chapter of the Vendidad (§, 37-38) also enjoins the presentation of a dog before the candidate. The description of the 8th chapter, though it refers to the Bareshnûm purification, refers specially to the case of an inferior kind of pollution or infection. It is the case of a person who has merely “touched the corpse of a dog or of a man.” But the case in

1 The isolation of the *pâvis* is said to be broken or dissolved when a contact is made between a person or persons or a thing or things within the *pâvi* and between a person or persons, or a thing or things outside the *pâvi*. For example, suppose the adjoining figure represents a space enclosed in a *pâvi*. The lines AB, BC, CD, DA represent the four furrows of the *pâvi* on the four sides. Now suppose a stick or a handkerchief falls on one of the *pâvis* in the way shown at E. Then, the *pâvi* is said to be connected and so the isolation is said to be dissolved or broken.



2 “Amat min magh gan magh vazlûnd ayokbâr kalbâ vakhduniyen” Pahlavi Vendidad IX, 32. Vide the Pahlavi Text of the Vendidad by Dastur Darab P. Sanjana, p. 186, l. 6; S. B. E. XVIII, p. 451.

the 9th chapter is rather a more serious case—the case of a person who has not simply touched the body but is actually “defiled by the dead.” In this latter case, he is supposed to have come into greater contact with the corpse and to have disregarded the observances and restrictions enjoined by the then sanitary authorities in the matter of isolation. So, when in the first case (Vendidâd VIII), *viz.*, that of merely touching the body accidentally or for some purpose under proper observances, he is to go through mere purifications and baths, in the latter case (Vendidâd IX) of an actual defilement, he is not only to go through the purification, but also through an isolation for 9 days and nights. He was to remain aloof, as we will see later on, for a period of full 9 days and 9 nights, *i. e.*, about 10 days.

Now, the question is: why was it enjoined that a dog should be presented before the candidate for purification? One cannot speak with authority or certainty, but can advance a probable reason by analogy or inference. The reason seems to be the following:—Of the several means and ways to be adopted to do away with the spread of disease or infection, one was the speedy consumption of the body that was the centre of disease or infection. Consumption by the flesh-devouring animals was one of such ancient prevalent ways. In the Vendidâd, we find a reference to the old primitive way when corpses were exposed on tops of mountains, so that flesh-eating birds and animals, like vultures and dogs, who served as scavengers of Nature may devour the flesh. The dog was a domestic animal useful to the ancient Iranian in many ways. He served as a policeman to guard his house, to guard his fields, to guard his flock. Not only that, but it served him, as said above, as a scavenger of Nature in eating away the flesh of the corpse of a deceased person which otherwise would have gone on decomposing, and then endangering the health of the town. So the dog was, in the eyes of an ancient Iranian, a very dear and useful animal. What is very dear and useful whether that be a man, an animal, or a thing is, as it were, in one sense, sacred. The dog therefore became a useful and sacred animal in the eyes of an Irânian.

His great and important services were those of stopping decomposition and of stopping the spread of disease and infection. Such being the case, one of the several objects, why on the death of a person, the dog was brought before the corpse for *sagdîd*, was, that the dog may see, that a person was dead and that a prey was ready for him. He may, by instinct, know, what was waiting for him. The second object, which arose from the first object and from all the above considerations, was rather more symbolic. The dog, being the scavenger of Nature, and as such, as said above, one of the means for the prevention of the spread of disease and infection, one of the means for keeping pure the earth, air, and ground of God, was the symbol and type of purification. Other thoughts and ideas seem latterly to have been associated with the dog, on account of his other characteristics as a faithful domestic animal. So, from all these considerations, he was brought before a corpse and made to see the corpse. His very eyesight was, as it were, a means of purification. So much for his presence before the corpse.

From the view of his presence before a corpse which was a great centre of putrefaction, infection and disease, the view of his presence before a person who was polluted and infected and who was therefore another, though lesser, centre of infection and disease, was only one step. The dog was a means, a channel, an instrument for purification, for keeping the air, earth and water of God pure. Here, in the *Bareshnûmgâh*, there is a candidate, who coming into contact with a corpse seeks purification, so that, being purified, he may not continue to be a source of danger to those round about him. So, the dog's presence there was thought necessary to emphasize the original object of purification. The dog was one of the instruments of Nature in keeping its products pure. Here is a person, who to avoid any chance of infection, lest his infected condition may be a source of danger, goes through a form of purification.

Thus, the presence of the dog before the person, who very likely was as infectious as a corpse, was symbolic and significant.¹

Now there does not seem to be any particular significance in the candidate touching the *left* ear of the dog with his *left* hand. As we said above, the candidate had now and then to keep his head covered with his right hand. Again, the dog had to be presented to him from beyond the furrows on his left. So, it is only his left hand that was conveniently available. It is perhaps to preserve harmony or uniformity, that he touches the *left* ear of the dog. Perhaps, it is convenient also on account of the position of the dog. As we said above, the west is the side from which they enter the Bareshnûmgâh, and the candidate proceeds to the east. The priest, who fetches the dog, also comes in from the west. So, the dog, when it is made to stand on the left side of the candidate, with its face towards him, has his left ear conveniently near. There seems to be no other particular signification for this. As to the reason, why the candidate touches the *ear*, it seems to be only to draw its attention to himself. In the East, they generally twist the ear of a person to make him look a little sharp if he is careless or indolent. The

1 It appears, that among some other nations also, the dog was used in the ceremony of purification. "The Bœotians had a custom to pass between a dog cut in half, as a means of purification. Liebrecht (Liebrecht zur Volkskunde, p. 350) sees here a purifying new birth brought about by a sacrifice. He points out that dogs were often employed as Purification-Sacrifices among the Greeks and Romans" (Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay, Vol. III, p. 360; "The dog in Myth and Custom, Extract from Mr. E. Tyrrel Leith's Notes.") Mr. W. W. Fowler, in the paper on the Roman Lustration (Purification) in his "Anthropology and Classics," describes, on the authority of Livi, a Macedonian method of the lustral process for purifying an army. He says that the method was "to march the whole host in spring before a campaign between the severed limbs of a dog" (p. 108). Cf. The primitive way of making covenants in the Old Testament (Genesis XV, 10, 17. Jeremiah XXXV, 18 et seq.), wherein the contracting parties passed between the two parts of a sacrificed animal. Some attribute this to what they call a "purificatory theory" and others "a protective theory". Vide Sir James Frazer's "Folklore in the Old Testament."

ear of a child is twisted by a parent or teacher to make it look a little sharp.

The candidate is not to let his left hand touch his body. His hands were cleaned in the above process of the first purification by the *nirang*. Having come into contact with something else, which, in its turn has not been washed, a part of the purity of the hand is said to have been lost by a touch to the dog. So, he must not apply it to his body before purifying it. This he does at the early stage of the next or second stage of purification at the second set of 5 stones which represent the next *maga* or pit.

On the dog being removed from near the candidate, the isolation of the candidate within the furrows is secured and the priest gets out of his *pâvi* or enclosure with the spooned nine-knotted stick in his hand, and recites the Kem nâ Mazdâ prayer upto the word Ashahê. Then while reciting the next word 'nemaschâ yâ Ârmaitish izâchâ' points with his above stick to the second set of 5 stones (marked b, in the plan) which represent the second *maga* or pit referred to in the Vendidad. That means an intimation that he should now advance further. The candidate thereupon repeats the words 'nemaschâ yâ Ârmaitish izâchâ' and advances towards that set. On his taking his seat there, the priest repeats thrice the above described process of handing some *nirang* for fresh application. The candidate applies it to the whole of his body as described above. The priest again retires to his *pâvi* (Z). The second priest again advances towards the candidate with the dog. The candidate again touches the ear of the dog. The priest with the dog retires and the first priest again gets out of his *pâvi*, advances towards the candidate, recites the abovesaid Kem nâ Mazdâ prayer as described above, asks the candidate to advance to the third set of 5 stones and gives him the *nirang* for application. Then the priest with the dog again advances. Thus the same process, with the above details and particulars, is gone through altogether for six times on the first six sets of pits which are repre-

Repetition of the application of *nirang*, etc.

sented in the modern Bareshnûmgâh by the first six sets of 5 stones (a, b, c, d, e, f in the plan).

On coming to the seventh *maga* or pit (*g*) or the seventh set of 5 stones, the application to the body is not that of the *nirang*, but that of mere sand (khâk خاك).¹ The details of the process are the same as those described above in the case of handing the *nirang*. This is done 18 times, *i.e.*, the sand is given 18 times for application. The modern Bareshnûmgâh is covered over with sand which is renewed occasionally. So, it is some of this sand that the priest gives to the candidate. Having given this 18 times, the priest again retires to his *pâvi* (*Z*) and the other priest with his dog advances and the same process of touching the dog is gone through.

Then the first priest again gets out of his *pâvi* for the 8th time. At this time, before reciting the Kem consecrated water. *nâ Mazdâ* prayer as described above, he utters "Ahunem vairîm tanûm pâiti," (*i.e.*, the prayer of Ahuna Vairya or Yathâ Ahû Vairyô protects the body") and then recites the Yathâ Ahû Vairyô formula once. He then asks the candidate, as before, to advance to the 8th pit or set of 5 stones (*h*). On the candidate taking his seat there, the application to the body is neither that of *nirang* nor of sand but of *âv*, *i.e.*, consecrated water. This he does three times. The candidate applies the consecrated water to his body as he had previously applied the *nirang* and the sand. The first priest retires into his *pâvi* (*Z*) and the second priest with the dog advances, and the same process is gone through as before. Then, the first priest getting out of his *pâvi* recites "Ahunem Vairîm tanûm pâiti, Yathâ Ahû Vairyô and Kem *nâ Mazdâ*" as at the eighth stage of the process and asks the candidate to advance to the ninth pit or the 9th set of 5 stones (*i*). Here again he gives him thrice the consecrated water for application as at the 8th set of stones. The whole of the process is the same. But there

¹ *Vide* above p. 94, n. 3, for the use of sand as a purifier among the Mahomedans also.

is this difference, that at this 9th pit or set of stones, the whole process is repeated or gone through twice.

Then again the first priest gets out of his *pâvi*, recites "Ahunem Vairim tanum pâiti, Yathâ Ahû Vairyô and Kem nâ Mazdâ" prayers, as he did three times before (once at the 8th stage and twice at the 9th stage), and asks the candidate to advance to the final stage, i.e., the final or the tenth set (*j*) of 5 stones, which, in the modern Bareshnûmgâh, is generally replaced by a large broad stone on which one can conveniently sit and bathe. Here again, the priest gives thrice the consecrated water for application and the same process is gone through. But, the process of the recital of the prayers by the first priest and the application of the consecrated water by the candidate is repeated or gone through thrice. The process of the presentation of the dog before the candidate by the second priest is gone through twice.

The first priest, after giving the consecrated water for application for the last time on the last stage, places the small metallic cup on the ground out of his *pâvi*, and makes a small *pâvi* round the cup. He then brings out of his *pâvi* the second pot of water which is consecrated by the addition of a few drops of *âv* or consecrated water and pours a little water out of it into the abovenamed small metallic cup. Then, taking the pot before the candidate he pours gradually the water out of the pot upon his body. He must take care, that, in doing so, he himself is not besprinkled with water. He must stand beyond the *karsha* or the furrow. This is the final bath. He then once more retires to his *pâvi* and the other priest presents the dog again before the candidate for the last time. He touches it, keeping his hand thus touched, apart. The dog being removed and the contact broken, the first priest gets out of his *pâvi* and recites once more "Ahunem Vairim tanum pâiti and Yathâ Ahû Vairyô and the Kem nâ Mazdâ" prayer upto 'Nemaschâ yâ Ârmaitish izâchâ.' The candidate repeats these last words after the priest.

The following table gives a list of the above details of the applications, etc., in the process of the Bareshnûm purification, according to the modern practice:—

A table showing the number of applications.

| No. of the Maga (pit), or the stage, or set of 5 stones. | Kind of the consecrated substance applied. | No. of applications. | Prayer recited. | The presentation of the dog. |
|---|--|----------------------|--|------------------------------|
| 1st stage ... | Nirang | 3 | Kem nâ Mazdâ 1 | Once. |
| 2nd " ... | Do. | 3 | Do. 1 | " |
| 3rd " ... | Do. | 3 | Do. 1 | " |
| 4th " ... | Do. | 3 | Do. 1 | " |
| 5th " ... | Do. | 3 | Do. 1 | " |
| 6th " ... | Do. | 3 | Do. 1 | " |
| Intervening space represented in the modern Bareshnûmgâh by 3 stones. | | | | |
| 7th stage ... | sand ... | 18 | Ahunem Vairim tanûm pâiti, Yathâ Ahû Vairyô and Kem nâ Mazdâ 1 ... | " |
| 8th stage ... | âv (water 3 | 3 | Do. 1 | " |
| 9th stage, Process repeated. | âv 3 } | 6 | Do. 2 repeated twice. | Twice |
| | âv 3 } | | | |
| 10th or the final stage. | âv 3 } | 9 | Do. 3 repeated thrice. | Thrice |
| | âv 3 } | | | |
| | âv 3 } | | | |

This table shows that there were altogether 18 applications of *nirang* or consecrated urine of the ox, 18 of *khâk* or sand and 18 of *âv* or consecrated water. The first priest recited the Kem nâ Mazdâ prayer only six times and recited that prayer with Ahunem Vairim Tanûm pâiti and Yathâ Ahû Vairyô seven times. The dog was presented before the candidate 13 times.

After the recital of the final *Kem nâ Mazdâ*, as said above, the priest fetches the candidate's new set of clothes before him. It was placed aside in the *Bareshnûmgâh* beforehand. He pours over that suit a few drops of consecrated water from the small metallic cup which he had filled up just a little while ago. Thus, he consecrates the candidate's clothes before he puts them on. He pours the rest of the water out of that cup upon the left hand of the candidate, which had remained uncleaned since he had touched the dog for the last time with that hand. The priest then retires to his *pâvi* again. The candidate now puts on his suit of clothes and places his *Kusti* or sacred thread over his shoulders. He then puts on his *Jâmâ* or a loose linen overcoat which forms the upper garment of a Parsee's full dress. This garment has always long sleeves. While putting it on in the *Bareshnûmgâh* after his bath of purification, he is not to pull up these long sleeves, but is to keep them hanging. Then the priest comes out of his *pâvi* with his two nine-knotted sticks in his hands. The candidate then throws the loose low skirt of the right-hand side of the loose hanging gown (*Jâmâ*) on his left shoulder, placing his left hand under it over the shoulder. The priest places the spooned end of one of his knotted sticks over the abovesaid skirt of the gown. The candidate places his right hand covered with its hanging sleeve over the above said spooned end of the priest's knotted stick. In all this, care must be taken that the candidate's sleeves and clothing touch only the metallic spoon but not the wooden part of the stick. Then the candidate finishes the *Bâj* which he had taken when he had just entered the *Bareshnûmgâh* for purification and just before removing his clothes.¹

When the candidate has individually finished the *Bâj*, he and the priest jointly again finish the *Bâj*. Having done so, the priest makes the candidate recite the following formula :—

“Zadeh nasash, sar o tan pâk ashahê ravân (he repeats the words three times), sag asho harbad pâk.” (These words also

¹ Vide above, p. 125.

are repeated thrice). The words mean, "The Nasu, *i. e.*, the Evil Spirit of pollution is put down. The head and the body, (*i. e.*, the whole body) have become purified. The soul has been purified. The dog is holy, the priest is holy."

When these words are repeated, the priest lifts up his knotted stick from the shoulder of the candidate who now puts on the sacred thread that was hanging over his shoulders, reciting the Nirang-i-Kusti. This finishes the ceremony of the Bareshnûm purification.

5. Retreat after the Bareshnâm.

Though the purification proper is finished, the candidate has still to wait for full nine days and nights. Retreat of 9 days. before he goes to his usual avocation.¹ After the purification, he retires from the Bareshnûmgâh to the Dar-i-Meher or Fire-temple. Some temples, for example the temples at Naôsari, have a separate place for the purpose, which is called *nâhnkhâneh* (نانه) *i. e.*, the place for *nâhn*. It is so called because the Bareshnûm is also ordinarily known as *nâhn*, the name by which the second purification is known. There, he has still to remain aloof from the others. He is not to come into contact with anything. His food and water are to be served to him in his plates and cups by other persons. He has to take his meals during the day-hours. He is to eat with a spoon in a gloved hand and not to use his fingers. He has a separate suit of clothes for the purpose of his meals. He has to say his prayers for the most part of his time, especially at the commencement of the 5 *gâhs* or periods of the day. The first three nights must be, as it were, nights of 'vigils,' *i. e.*, when he sleeps, he must sleep in a watchful or wakeful mood, so as not to let his sleep be disturbed by worldly thoughts. If he is disturbed by a nocturnal pollution during the first three nights, he has to repeat the whole of the Bareshnûm purification referred to above.

If the Bareshnûm is gone through for being qualified to perform the *Nirangdin* ceremony which is the ceremony for

¹ The Old Testament (Numbers XIX) seems to enjoin seven days.

the consecration of the *gaómez* or cow's urine, a nocturnal pollution during any of the nine days and nights of the Retreat vitiates the whole Bareshnûm which, in that case, is to be repeated. The priests in this ceremony are expected to pass their time in pure mental thoughts, in devotion and prayer. A wet dream is a proof that they have not done so. So, they are disqualified to perform a religious ceremony in which *gaómez* (urine) and *âv* (water) are consecrated for the purification—both physical and mental—of others. If those who consecrate a thing are not mentally pure, the things consecrated by them are not expected to have the influence of purifying the body and elevating the mind of others. He only, who is himself pure—both physically and mentally—can make others pure, both physically and mentally. In the case of the initiates or candidates for priesthood (*nâvar*), a similar state of mental purity is expected for a much longer time.

Again, the candidates are not to sit, rest or sleep on wooden chairs or benches or beds, when in the Retreat. They spread their beds on the floor. Wooden things are all avoided. They are not to use water for any purpose except for drinking. They are to perform their *pâdyâb* also with the application of a little *gaómez*. They observe the dry system and use a kind of clay instead of sanitary paper.

On the fourth day, after their great Bareshnûm purification, they are to go through a bath which is known as the first *navshu*, i.e., the first bath (or, wash 'shu') out of the nine nights of the Isolation or Retreat. The process is as follows :—

The *navshu* baths. In the Bareshnûmgâh or in any other clean place covered over with dry sand, a *pâvi* or enclosure is made by drawing three *karshas*. A set of three stones is placed therein for the candidate to sit on to bathe. Then a priest with the Bareshnûm, who has performed the Khûb, makes *pâv*, a water-pot and a small metallic cup. The water-pot is then filled with ordinary pure water. A few drops of the consecrated water are put into it. This consecrates all the water. In the metallic cup is poured a little of the consecrated *gaómez*. The candidate

then goes to the place and undressing himself, puts his clothes in an adjoining *pâvi*. He then takes his seat on the above-mentioned set of three stones, facing the east. Then the priest who is to give him the supplementary sacred bath, brings the metallic cup containing *gaomez* before him, and places it out of the *pâvi* of the candidate drawing a *pâvi* or *karsha* round about the cup. The candidate then places his right hand over his head and takes the *Bâj* of Sarosh, beginning with 3 *Ashem Vohus*. Reciting the *Kem nâ Mazda* upto the word *Ashahê*, he takes the metallic cup before him and applies the *gaomez* thrice over his whole body. Having done so, he removes the cup out of his own *pâvi*. The priest then brings the pot of the consecrated water and places it before him, drawing a *pâvi* round it. He pours a few drops of the consecrated water out of the pot upon the newly washed set of clothes which the candidate is to put on after his bath. He thus consecrates the clothes also. The candidate then bathes himself. Then, putting on his clothes and placing his sacred thread over his shoulders, he finishes the *Bâj*, facing the sun. He then puts on his sacred thread. This finishes the first *navshu* bath. If the candidate has gone through the first great *Bareshnum* purification in the *Hâvan-gâh*, *i.e.* in the morning, he must have his first *navshu* in the morning of the fourth day. If he has gone through it in the *Uziran-gâh*, *i.e.* in the afternoon, his *navshu* bath must be had in the afternoon.

After the *navshu* bath, the candidate again returns to his place in the Fire-temple and observes the regulations in the same way as during the first three days. He then has a second *navshu* bath on the seventh day. The process is all the same, but with this difference, that at this second *navshu* he is given two pots of water. The second pot need not be as large as the first. A small one is generally given. Then again, three more days of retirement are observed. The above process is gone through on the tenth day, but with this difference, that in this third *navshu*, three pots of water are given him to wash his body with. After this final bath, he is free to come into contact with all.

We said above, that it is generally the priests now-a-days who go through the Bareshnûm purification ceremony, and that, that ceremony is held to qualify them for the performance of several liturgical ceremonies. So, to qualify themselves for these, they perform, in the morning of the 11th day,¹ what is called the *Khûb* ceremony. It consists in the recital of the whole of the *Yaçna*, accompanied by its ritual. A priest who has himself performed the *Khûb* previously, makes him get through this *Khûb* ceremony. This finishes the whole of the Bareshnûm,

The Bareshnûm purification, as well as the Nâhn purification, can be gone through the day-time only, and not at night.² Again the Bareshnûm purification, in modern practice, is gone through only during the dry season³ and not during the rains. The Naôsari priests stop it from roz Behrâm, month Âbân (the 20th day of the 8th month), up to roz Behrâm, month Farvardin (the 20th day of the 1st month), of the subsequent year. Among the priests of other towns, the days vary somewhat. The reason seems to be this. As said above, it is enjoined that the place of the Bareshnûmgâh must be dry and free from moisture. But the rains prevent the ground from assuming this state of dryness. Even in the ordinary dry season, if it rains out of season, the purification ceremony cannot be gone through. Not only that, but even if it rains continually for a day or two, during the nine days and nights of the Retreat, one is to abandon his course of Retreat and to repeat the whole Bareshnûm from the very commencement when the weather gets dry and the Bareshnûmgâh gets free of moisture. The reason for vitiation is, that, owing to the continuous rain, he is not likely to avoid rain water falling upon him while going out for purposes of nature to the proper places which are generally

1 In some towns, they do this in the morning of the 10th day itself after the third or final *navshu* and then an ordinary bath.

2 Pahl. Vend. IX, 32 *amat shap patas dayan ya'unet la shâyad*, *Dastur Darabji's Text*, p. 187.

3 *Ibid*, *amat dayan mag-i pavân gomiz vârân vâdunyen la shâyad*.

detached from the Temples, and while going to the Bareshnûmgah for his first, second or third *navshu*.

A priest, who has gone through the complete Bareshnûm purification including the final *Khâb* ceremony, is said to be a Bareshnûmwâlâ priest, *i. e.*, a priest with the Bareshnûm qualification. He is said "to hold" that qualification as long as he observes certain rules and observances enjoined by custom to be held. A priest may hold that qualification for years together, or his qualification may be vitiated or made defective in a short time. When holding the Bareshnûm, he is qualified to perform the religious ceremonies of Bâj, Yaçna, Visparad, and Vendidâd, which are generally performed in a Fire-Temple. If he does not hold the Bareshnûm, he cannot perform these, but can perform ordinary ceremonies, such as the Naôjote, Marriage and Âfringân.

The non-observance of the following regulations and observances vitiate the Bareshnûm: 1. Eating of food cooked by non-Zoroastrians. 2. Non-observance of the Bâj. 3. Long travels and voyages. 4. Swearing or taking oaths. 5. Falling off of the turban from over the head.

Bareshnûmwâlâ priests are required to abstain from food cooked, and water fetched, by non-Zoroastrians. Custom in India has gone even further and has enjoined that food must be cooked and fetched by a member—male or female—of the priestly class. Even the holy bread (*Darûn*) which they consecrate in the Bâj, Yaçna and the Vendidâd ceremonies must be prepared by members of the priestly class. Upto a few years ago, even the laymen abstained from food cooked by non-Parsees.¹

1 It is said, that about 50 years ago, when the late second Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, Bart., entertained H. R. H. the late Duke of Edinburgh, the uncle of His Majesty King George, at his bungalow at Khandala (thereafter named as the Duke's Retreat), he had separate tables for His Royal Highness and party and for himself.

They must commence and finish several daily functions of necessity, with the recital of the Bâj. Some of these functions are the meals, baths and calls of nature; which all have their proper *bâjs* or recitals to be made at the beginning and end. These recitals do not take a long time, but they generally begin and end with the *Pâdyâb-Kusti*. The non-observance of these regulations vitiates the Bareshnûm.

2. Observance of the Bâj.

Long travels vitiate a Bareshnûm. It is generally so, in the case of long railway travelling. The reason seems to be that while so travelling, it is not possible for the Bareshnûmwâlâ priest to observe the above rules and regulations about saying the Bâj on the necessary occasions or functions. For example, he must perform the *Pâdyâb-Kusti* before his meals. To do that, he must have pure clean water fetched by himself or by a Zoroastrian. He must tie and untie his sacred thread. While doing so he must avoid contact with a non-Zoroastrian. All these cannot be done in a long journey by a railway train.

3. Long travels and voyages.

Long voyages also vitiate a Bareshnûm; not only that, but they are held to disqualify a priest on his return to his town for performing the *Yaçna*, *Vendidâd*, *Bâj* and such other higher liturgical ceremonies.

This is an old Irânian custom referred to by Tacitus, in his account of the Parthian King Valkhash (Vologeses) and his brother Tiradâta (Tiridates), the King of Armenia, who lived in the time of Emperor Nero and who belonged to an orthodox priestly family. They were both kings as well as priests. When called to Rome by Nero, to receive his crown as King of Armenia from his own hands, Tiridates refused on account of his religious scruples to go by sea. Tacitus says on this point: "Neither would his (Vologeses') brother Tiridates refuse coming to Rome to receive the Armenian diadem, but that the obligation of his priesthood withheld him: he would, however, go to the standards and images of Cæsar, and there, in

The version of Tacitus on the subject of long voyages.

presence of the legions, solemnly receive the Kingdom."¹ Subsequently when Tiridates did go to Rome, he went by land instead of by sea. It is said that even Valkhash (Vologases) refused to go to Rome by sea, when called by Nero.

The reason seems to be this: The Zoroastrian books, and among them, the Vendidad especially, enjoin that no impurities may be thrown into water. If a Zoroastrian finds some rotten thing thrown into water, it is his duty to get into the water and remove it (Vendidad VI, 26-27), lest it may infect the water and endanger the health of the living. Herodotus refers to this old Iranian view when he says: "They (the Persians) neither make water, nor spit, nor wash their hands in a river, nor defile a stream with urine, nor do they allow anyone else to do so"² Strabo also refers to this custom and 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."³ In long voyages by sea, a Zoroastrian priest may have to commit nuisance therein and throw impurities in the sea. So, he is prohibited to go on long voyages. If he does, not only is his Bareshnum vitiated, but he is prohibited from going through it again. This prohibition seems to stick to the letter and not to the spirit of the original commandment. The prohibition to throw impurities in water was originally in the case of the fresh water of streams and rivers. Herodotus and Strabo refer to the fresh water of rivers. So far, it was good and sanitary. But as it generally happens in the matter of many commandments, the field of operation for the above wholesome regulation was widened and made unduly strict in later times, even as early as in the times of the Parthian dynasty.

1 Works of Tacitus (The Oxford Translation), Vol. I. The Annals, Bk. XV, 24. *Vide* the translation of A. J. Church and W. J. Brodier (1891), p. 296.

2 Bk. I, 138, Carey's translation (Bohn's series 1889), p. 52.

3 'The Geography of Strabo' (translated by Hamilton and Falconer, 1857). Vol. III, p. 137; Bk. XV, chap. IV, 16.

If a priest holding the Bareshnûm has to go to a court of justice, and there to swear or take an oath, his Bareshnûm is vitiated, and he has to go through it again if he wishes to continue his profession. This custom also seems to be a very old Irânian custom. We find references to it in old Parsee Books. Âdarbâd Marespand¹ asks his readers not to swear. The prohibition seems to rest on the oft-spoken characteristic of an ancient Irânian, *viz.*, to speak the truth and nothing but the truth—a characteristic referred to by Herodotus,² Xenophon,³ Strabo,⁴ Plato,⁵ and Nicholas Demoscenes.⁶ To speak the truth was considered, as it were, the birth-characteristic of an ancient Irânian. His word must be taken as true by the opposite party. If it was not, and if he had, in order to support it, to swear or to take an oath, that was, as it were, a slur upon his character. If he yielded and swore, he, as it were, showed his want of self-respect. This being the view, an ancient Zoroastrian was prohibited from taking an oath. The modern custom seems to be a relic of the old idea. So, if a priest has to go to court and unavoidably to take an oath, he is supposed to have gone against an old commandment, and therefore, his Bareshnûm is vitiated. Hence, Parsee priests generally avoid going to courts, especially during the monsoon months, when, owing to the rains, **they cannot** go through the Bareshnûm ceremony again to qualify themselves for the performance of the inner ceremonies of the Temple. They are very careful to avoid any action that may vitiate their Bareshaum during the rainy months, because the Farvardegân holidays, during which their services are in greater demand and better paid, occur at the end of the season.

The Parsee priests generally wear white turbans. If the turban falls off from their head, even accidentally, that vitiates the Bareshnûm of the priest. The reason seems to be this: **Firstly**, all Zoroastrians are required to have

5. Falling off of the turban. The turban and the *padân*, the insignia of priesthood.

1 Pand-nameh, 42.

2 Bk. I, 136, 137.

3 Cyropœdia, I, 20.

4 XV. ch. III, 18.

5 Alcibiades, I, 121.

6 Fragment, 67.

their heads covered. It is improper to remain with head uncovered. So the falling off of the hat interrupts the observance of the custom. But the most important thing is this, that the turban and the *padân* are, as it were, the insignia of the office of priesthood. When that insignia falls off from the head, he is, as it were, deposed from his sacred office. So, his Bareshnûm, which qualifies him for that office, is considered to be vitiated, and he has to repeat it, if he wishes to continue to perform that sacred office. This custom seems to be an old custom common among some other ancient nations. "In the old religions, one so often finds that the celebrant and assistants officiated with shrouded heads The Flemings of Jupiter were forbidden to present themselves in public or even to go out into the open air without their skull-caps, and that, too, by a law so stringent that Sulpicius, when his tuft fell off accidentally, was deposed from his sacred office."¹

The *padân* or the piece of cloth, which a Parsee priest puts over the face while performing religious ceremonies, is also held as an insignia of the qualification of the Bareshnûm. Though it is put on by the priests in other ceremonies also wherein the Bareshnûm qualification is not necessary, still, in the phraseology common among the priests, "*padân bândhvu*," i. e., to put on the *padân*, means to be qualified to officiate with the Bareshnûm. When the head-priest permits the subordinate priests to go and officiate in the Yazashnagâh of the Temple, he says, "Put on the *Padân*." When he wants to prohibit somebody from officiating there, he says, "Do not put on the *Padân*." So when one pulls off the *padân* from over the face of a priest, or when he takes off or throws off the turban from over his head he deprives him of his qualification and is responsible for the action. The Bareshnûm of the priest, so deprived, is vitiated.

IV. Riman, The Fourth Form of Purification.

As said above, the Bareshnûm purification though originally a purification for those who had come into contact with the dead, especially the dead who died of infectious diseases, has, now,

Riman purification. Its process.

¹ "Good Words" June 1893, p. 389 : Article on "Hats and Caps" by Geoffrey and Winterwood.

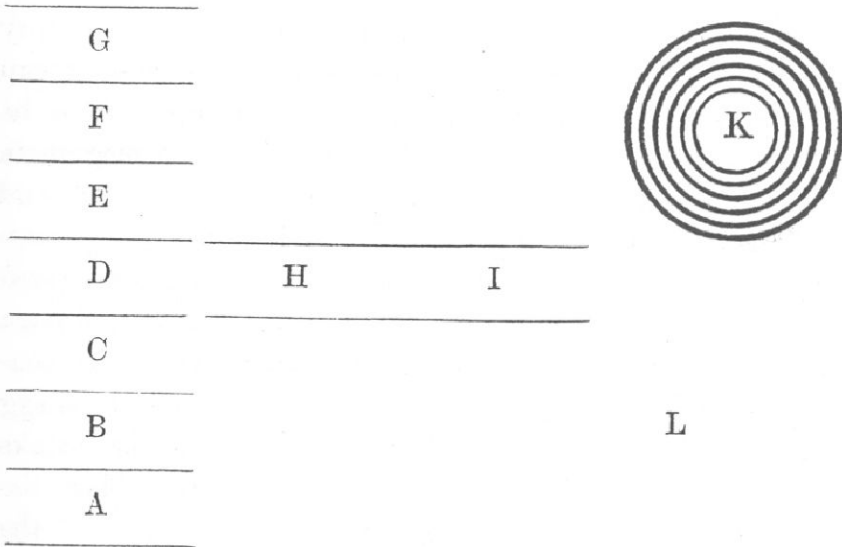
with its accompanying retreat and Khub ceremony, come to be a form of purification for the priests who wish to perform the religious ceremonies of the inner circle of the Temple. So, now-a-days, those who have come into contact with dead bodies, in ways that have been prohibited, have to go through a comparatively simpler form of purification. It is known as *Riman* purification. We will describe it here shortly :—

The word *Riman* ریمان P. ریم comes from 'rim,' (Pahl. ریم P. ریم or رِم from Av. root ri ر Sans. र्ण to ooze, to be foul, to desecrate) *i.e.*, pus, filth. This word seems to be the same as English 'rheum' meaning "serous fluid secreted by mucous glands." So 'riman' is one that has become polluted by coming into contact with filth from dead bodies. In this form of purification, the services of two persons are required, one of them must be a priest, the other may be a layman. In order to be qualified to purify a *riman* (*i. e.*, the person supposed to be polluted or infected) by this process of purification, the priest must perform the *Kháb* ceremony. The efficacy of his *Kháb* ends with the purification. If he has to perform other ceremonies which require the *Kháb*, he must repeat the *Kháb* ceremony. In the *riman* purification, the *âlat*, *i. e.*, the consecrated things and the other requisites required, are the same as those in the *Bareshnûm*.

The place of the purification must be one which is the least frequented by people. On such a place, the priest has to prepare altogether nine *pâvis* or enclosures. While preparing these, he is to bear in mind the position of the sun and the direction of the wind. The *Pâvis* must be so drawn as not to let the shadow of the *riman's* body fall over the purifier, and thus deprive him of the heat and light of the luminary. Again, they must be so arranged that the direction of the wind may not be from the *riman* to the purifier, lest it may carry any germs of disease from the infected person to the priest. The *pâvis* may be prepared either by digging in the ground, or by spreading sand on the ground in a way which may form a

The place for this purification.

furrow. Generally it is done in the second way. Seven of the *pâvis* must be in one line and two others in a line by the side of this row adjoining the central part of the row. A tenth circular *pâvi* must be drawn at a distance with six circular furrows. A set of three stones are to be arranged outside this circular *pâvi*.



The above plan gives an idea of the place. In the *pâvi* A, the priest first places all the *âlât* or the consecrated requisites. He then performs the *pâdyâb* and then fetches water from a well in two pots previously made *pâv* or purified by three washings. One of these two pots is large and the other small. Then he puts on tight trousers known as *ijâr* and also the *padân*. Then, as in the case of the Bareshnûm, he makes two small metallic cups *pâv*, and, after having dried them, pours in one a little of the *nîrangdin*, i. e., the consecrated urine and the *bhasam*, i. e., the sacred ash, and into another a little of the urine for external application. He then makes the two water-pots *pâv* and throws a little of the *âv* or consecrated water into them. The priest then retires to his *pâvi* wherein the *âlât* are placed. Then the *rîman*, i. e., the person who seeks purification, undresses himself at a distance and buries his clothing in the ground. He then comes and takes his stand in the *pâvi* G allotted to him. The

second person who has accompanied the priest and whose standing place is somewhere about L gives to the person who is *riman* all the necessary instructions as to where to seat himself, etc. He gives these instructions by a show of hands and signs. He is not to speak anything.¹ He must not go so near the *riman* as to let his shadow fall upon himself or to let the wind blow from his direction towards himself. The priest then pours the consecrated urine from the small metallic cup into an empty shell of an egg. This is done to avoid even a drinking cup coming into contact with the lips of the person supposed to be infected. He places the shell so filled and a leaf of the pomegranate in the *pâvi* (marked I.) The second person lifts these up and places them in the *pâvi* F. He, by signs, instructs the *riman* to chew the pomegranate leaf and then to drink the consecrated urine three times from the shell of the egg. The *riman* must avoid touching his lips with the shell but try to pour the consecrated urine into his mouth, so that even the shell of the egg may not catch any germs. Having drunk from it, he breaks the shell and buries it in the ground near his place. Then the priest advances from his *pâvi* A to the third *pâvi* C with the *navgireh* in his right hand and the small metallic cup containing the consecrated urine for application in his left hand. From there, by means of the long *navgireh* or the nine-knotted stick, he pours the *gaomez* in the hands of the *riman*. He must throw it quickly so that the falling liquid may not even form a current which can transfer the infection. The *riman* then applies the *gaomez* to his body 15 times. Having given the *gaomez*, the priest comes back to his first *pâvi* A, takes a little sand from there and goes to the third *pâvi* C again, and gives as above the sand to the *riman* 15 times. The *riman* rubs the sand over his whole body. The priest then coming back to his *pâvi*, takes the small pot of consecrated water with him and similarly pours that water to the *riman* 15 times for application as above. He then coming back to his *pâvi* takes

¹ Compare what is said of the restrictions in the Plague of Florence in 1340: "Nor was it (plague) given by conversation only with or coming near the sick, but even by touching their clothes or anything that they had before touched" (Quoted in the *Times of India* of 27th December 1898).

the large pot of water and places it in the *pâvi* I. The second person takes it from there and instructs the *riman* by signs to leave his *pâvi* G, and advance to the place of his final bath K. The *riman* does so. Then the second person, standing at some distance from him, pours from the pot gradually the water on his body. He is to take care that he is not besprinkled with any water from the body of the *riman*. He is to pour the water three times over his body. Thus washing his body, the *riman* puts on a new suit of clothes fetched near him by the other attendant. He then puts on the sacred thread reciting its usual *nirang*. This finishes the process and the person is now purified.

Old Iranian Purification and Modern Plague Operations.

All the Iranian injunctions about purification as enjoined in the Vendidâd, and to a certain extent, as observed now, appear to have at first the object of securing safety from the disease. They seem to have been framed in the times of a great epidemic. The plague operations of modern times in India, especially in the first two or three years of the plague, have shown, that these injunctions had their use in those early times, and have their use even now, if observed in the spirit and not in the letter. We would compare here some of the above injunctions with modern regulations, enjoined in the times of plague in its early stages in Bombay in 1897 and 1898. Some of these were enforced so strictly that they even led to public riots.

The houses where plague cases occurred were disinfected.

1. Purification or disinfection of infected houses.

In case of tents, they were removed and sterilized. A number of houses were fumigated with sulphur and other substances.

There is a corresponding injunction in the Vendidâd to fumigate the house or to remove the house if removable, *i. e.*, if it is a hut or a tent. The dwellers were to leave the houses for a time.

3. The *Hamrit* of the Parsee books and the "Contacts" of modern times.

Those who came in contact with plague cases, for example members of the family in which a plague case occurred, were called "contacts" by Plague officers. There were separate isolated "Contact camps" for them. The regu-

lations for these people were at times so hard that they caused great heart-burning. In a Parsee camp at Dadar, it was enjoined by a Plague Medical Officer in charge of the district, that the inmates of the camp must not be allowed to move out of the camp and to go to the bazar to fetch their daily things, but that a person—an outsider—may be appointed to take orders from these people and fetch things for them. As the Secretary of the Institution that erected these camps, I had to protest to the Plague Committee against too hard an enforcement of this rule, and relief was granted. But, I think that the European Medical Officer was a better follower of the Vendidad in this matter than myself.

Those, who did not come into contact with plague cases, but came into direct contact with the "contacts," were called "evicts," and they also were asked to go out to camps. Both these classes of people had to remain in camp for at least a period of 10 days known as the "incubation period." The "contacts" were asked to hold little intercourse with others outside the camp. The "evicts" were allowed to go out, but were carefully watched. These "contacts" of the modern plague phraseology were the "*hamrits*," and the "evicts" were the "*patrits*" of the old Parsee books. According to the Vendidad also, the immediate "contacts" had to go through a purification-isolation for 10 days.

In the first years of the plague, people leaving infected towns and districts were made to go through a bath with disinfecting substances. On railway stations like that of Anand, passengers had to get down and go through such baths before proceeding further. In some places they had to go through fumigation. For example, the Baroda State had ordered at one time, that people going to Naosari, one of the towns under its jurisdiction, and the headquarters of the Parsee priesthood, were, before they went to the town, to go through fumigation in a house adjoining the station. It is said, that even the Head Parsee Priest of the town, on returning to

3. The *Patrits* of the Parsee books and the "Evicts" of the modern times.

4. The baths and fumigations of the Vendidad and of modern times.

Naosari from a visit to an adjoining town, was made to submit to this fumigation ; and he took some offence at this compulsion, not remembering, perhaps at the time, that what he was enjoined to do, was a form of the injunction of his own Vendidâd, where a person, after passing through the Bareshnûm purification, was enjoined to go through a fumigation (Vendidâd, IX 32). The *Yaôzdâtar*, i.e., the priest or the officer who made the person pass through the purification, was required to be a person well versed in his work of ensuring perfect purification. If he did not know his work well or if he failed in his duty, he was condemned as a man who brought disaster upon his city (Vendidâd IX, 51).

It is said¹ that in the 14th century, at the time of the plague in A.D. 1340 at Florence, it was believed that even conversation with an infected person transferred disease from one to another. In the *riman* purification, it is a custom that the purifier and the person going through the purification must not speak, and the former must take his stand in a position which would avoid even the current of wind from the latter.

As in the Vendidâd, so now-a-days, things, that are supposed to have come into contact with the dead body of an infected person, are enjoined to be rejected, or if used, to be used only after certain disinfection. (Vendidâd, VI, 42-43 ; VIII, 12-15 ; 28-35 ; 73-75).

Scientific opinion believes that plague germs remain buried in the ground together with the dead body and thrive again after a number of years on getting an opportunity. " Even after the lapse of several hundred years microzymes, or disease-producing organisms, were found to be alive and as active as ever and became the cause of death to hundreds of workmen engaged in digging up ground which had been a burial place of some who had died of the plague of Modena, 300 years before. In fact,

5. Conversation with the infected.

6. Destruction of things suspected of contact.

7. Burial prohibited.

¹ Vide above, p. 148, n. 1.

the plague started anew and so killed thousands more."¹ It is with this idea that burial seems to have been prohibited in the books of the Parsees. Herodotus refers to this ancient prohibition (I, 140). Strabo also refers to it (Strabo's Geography Bk. XV, chap. III, 20). According to the Vendidâd, the place where a corpse is buried is not considered to be pure and safe to live upon, for a period of at least 50 years from the time of the burial (VII, 48).

As said by Prof. Darmesteter, with the Irânians, the question of a man's death was not the question of his death alone. "In the death of a man, there is more involved than the death of one man: the power of death, called forth from hell, threatens from the corpse, as from a stronghold, the whole world of the living, ready to seize whatever may fall within his reach, and 'from the dead defiles the living, from the living rushes upon the living,'—When a man dies in a house, there is danger for three days lest somebody else should die in that house."²

"The notion or feeling, out of which these ceremonies grew, was far from unknown to the other Indo-European peoples: what was peculiar to Mazdaism was that it carried to an extreme, and preserved a clearer sense of it, while elsewhere it grew dimmer and dimmer, and faded away. In fact, when the Greek, going out of a house where a dead man lay, sprinkled himself with water from the ἀφαιδίου at the door, it was death that he drove away from himself. The Vedic Indian, too, although his rites were intended chiefly for the benefit of the dead, considered himself in danger and, while burning the corpse, cried aloud: 'Away, go away, O Death! injure not our sons and our men!'" (Rig-veda X, 18, 1).³

I will close this subject with a short account of purification among the ancient Hebrews and Romans, with a view, that the reader may see, at one glance, some points of similarity, between the Irânian purification and the Hebrew and Roman purification.

1 "Scientific American," 1888.

2 Sad-dar. Chap, LXXVIII. S. B. E., Vol. XXIV, p. 341.

3 S. B. E., Vol. IV, Vendidâd, Introduction V, 3, 1st ed., p. LXXXVI.

With reference to the similarity between the purificatory regulations of the Irânians and those of the ancient Hebrews, we read in the Old Testament, of the unclean being removed out of the camp. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, "Command the children of Israel, that they put out of the camp every leper, and everyone that hath an issue, and whosoever is defiled by the dead: Both male and female shall ye put out, without the camp shall ye put them; that they defile not their camps, in the midst whereof I dwell."¹ We find some points of resemblance as follows:—

1. In place of the consecrated *gaomez*, the Hebrews had what they called the "water of separation." It was produced as follows: An unyoked spotless red heifer was slayed in the presence of the priest who sprinkled her blood before the tabernacle seven times, and burnt her with all her skin, flesh, blood, and dung. Cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet which, as it were, here took the place of the *urvâsna*, *vohû-gaona* and *vohû-kereti* of the Vendidâd, were burnt with the heifer.² A man that was clean was to gather up the ashes of the heifer so burnt, and was to "lay them up without the camp in a clean place.....for a water of separation" which was "a purification for sin."³

2. The Irânian Bareshnûm, the purification of one who had come into contact with the dead, lasted for full nine days. The Hebrew purification lasted seven days. "He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days." As in the Irânian Bareshnûm, so in the Hebrew purification, there was one purification on the third day (the first *navshu* of the Bareshnûm) and the second on the seventh day. As the unclean man in the Irânian Bareshnûm is asked to keep himself away from a place of worship, so among the Hebrews, he was to keep himself away from the holy tabernacle. Among the Hebrews, even one, who "toucheth a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days."⁴

1 Numbers V, 1-3.

3 *Ibid.*, 9.

2 Numbers XIX, 2-6.

4 Numbers XIX, 11 and 16,

3. Ashes played an important part in the purification ceremonies in both. In place of the ashes of the burnt heifer, the Irânians had the *bhasam* or the ashes of the sacred fire of Atash Behrâm.

4. Among both, if a man died in a tent, the tent became unclean. Among the Hebrews the uncleanness extended to "all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there."¹

5. Among the Irânians, the *yaôzdâtar* or the purifier is required to take all possible care to secure himself from any contact with the unclean. Among the Hebrews also, the purifier, the person "that sprinkleth the water of separation," is required to wash his clothes. He was taken as "unclean until evening."

6. Among both, any person, whom the unclean touched, himself became unclean.

The ceremony of the Bareshnûm purification of the ancient

The Irânian purification and the Roman purification.

Persians and the modern Parsees reminds us of two kinds of purification known to the ancient Romans.

(1) One was that of the *taurobolium* or blood-bath in the worship of the Mother, the goddess Cybele which worship the Romans are said to have admitted into Rome from Prygia, with all possible pomp and dignity, in order to have its protection and help against Hannibal who was overrunning Italy. The *novena* or the fast of nine days in this ceremony reminds us of the nine days' (*nôh-shab*) Retreat of the Bareshnûm ceremony. In the ceremony of Cybele, "the votary was placed in a pit covered with a grating of planks pierced with holes, on which a bull and a ram were slaughtered, so that the blood dropped through on to the recipient below."² Thus, we see, that pits or holes and bulls had their use in the Roman *taurobolium*, just as they had in the Irânian Bareshnûm. The worship and ceremony of this goddess are connected by some with the worship of Mithras which had

¹ Numbers XIX, 14-18.

² *Journal. R. A. S.* of 1917, p. 704. Article on "The Most Ancient Goddess Cybele," by Mr. F. Legge.

spread in the West. This Mithras of the West was the Mithra of the ancient Irânians, and it must be remembered, that, even now, the temple, where the Bareshnûm purification ceremony is gone through, is spoken of as the Dar-i-Meher, *i. e.*, the Port or the Gate of Mithra, Meher being the later Persian form of Mithra. The ancient Irânian worship of Mithra, the Yazata or Angel of Light, while passing to the West had much degenerated. Here, we have an evidence of this. When the Irânians used and continued to use the Gaomez, the urine (mez) of the cow or the bull (gao) after consecration, the borrowers of the mysteries or the rituals in the West resorted to blood sacrifices in which they slaughtered bulls. It is possible, that the degeneration in the West may have reacted to some extent here and there on Irân, but, on the whole, the original object of purification, the physical, mental and moral purification, was not lost sight of but was always in view. Of the Roman celebration of the goddess Cybele, it is said, that (a) "it was thought to have a magical effect on the votary, who often records on votive tablets and altars that he or she has been by it 'reborn unto eternity.' (b) It also seems to have been performed, like the Catholic Mass, for the benefit of others, since we hear of its being celebrated for the health of the emperor, the success of the Roman arms, and other like purposes."¹

We may say that upto about 60 or 70 years ago, as in the case of the Cybele celebration among the Romans, so among the Parsees, very young girls, of the age of about ten or under, went through the Bareshnûm purification. Even now, some priests go through the purification for, what Mr. Legge speaks of, as "the benefits of others."

(2) The second Roman purification of which we are reminded is that known as the "lustratio." A paper on "Lustratio" by Mr. Fowler² suggests many thoughts of similarity:

(a) As among the Parsees, so among the Romans, the original idea of purification or lustratio arose from the idea of

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 704.

² "Anthropology and the Classics," by W. W. Fowler, edited by Mr. R. R. Morett.

removing impurities caught from "some mysterious miasmatic contamination,"¹ corresponding to the Druj-i-Nasush of the Irânians.

(b) Water, bull's blood, fire, sulphur, laurel, wool, and pine twigs formed some purificatory materials among the Romans. Water, bull's urine, fire, or rather its product, ashes, and some fragrant plants for fumigation were the materials among the Irânians. The Romans also used "strips of the skin of a victim." The Irânians had nothing of the kind of victims or animal sacrifices. They had the consecrated urine of the bull. The Romans had a cake also as a holy ingredient. Among the Parsees, the candidate had to chew a pomegranate-leaf, but the purifying priest wanted *darûns* or sacred breads for performing the *khûb* which qualified him to do his work of purifying the candidate.

(c) The Romans associated their *lustratio* with processions, or "slow-ordered movements in procession, so characteristic of the old Roman character." In the case of the Bareshnûm among the Parsees, in an old Parsee centre of priesthood like Naosari, we find that, at times, some parents invite their near relatives and friends at the Bareshnûm to witness the purification of their son when he goes through the Bareshnûm, which precedes his initiation into priesthood. Those assembled then follow after purification, the candidate on foot, forming a small procession to the temple where the candidate goes through his nine days' retreat.

(d) In the case of the Roman *lustratio* Mr. Fowler draws a line "between a magical period and a religious period."² In the case of the Irânian Bareshnûm I would distinguish the periods as physical and spiritual (*tani va ravâni*). At first, the Bareshnûm was meant as a purification from the contact with the dead or from physical impurities, and then a spiritual signification began to be added. Among the Romans the idea of purification was extended from men to animals and even to armies and cities. With this extension of ideas, the periods

1 *Ibid.*, p.170.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 171.

of lustration, which came to be known as *lustrums*, came to be utilized in the case of armies, for reviews of troops, and in the case of cities, for taking the census. The ancient Hebrews also had, in their purificatory ceremonies, some connection with their system of census. The very name 'Numbers' for one of their Old Testament books signifies that.

(e) Among the Romans, February was the month of purification. The month was so called from *februare* (to purify). Among the Parsees, the last ten days of the year are generally the days for the second kind of purification, *viz.*, the *nâhn*.

(f) The Romans had, what are known as, their "boundary-lines" in their wholesale purifications of cities. These boundary-lines correspond, to a certain extent, to the Irânian *Kashas*.¹

The ancient Egyptians also had some purificatory ceremonies for their priests. According to Maspero,² the officiating priest must carefully wash—*nabu*—his face, mouth, hands and body; and so necessary was this purification, that from it, the professional priest derived his name *nibu*, *i.e.*, the washed, the cleaned. Similarly, at times, Parsee priests were spoken of as *nâhniâs* from *nâhn*. Water, in which natron etc. had been dissolved, was used as a purifying agent, both for application and drinking. Such water was perfumed with specially prepared incense.³

1 *Vide* my paper on "The Kashas of the Irânian Bareshnûm and the Boundary-lines of the Roman Lustrum," *Journal of the Anthropological Society*, Vol. VIII, No. 7, pp. 520-30.

2 "Dawn of Civilization," p. 123.

3 A short History of the Egyptian People by Dr. Budge, 1910, p. 200.

CHAPTER VI.

PURIFICATORY PROCESSES AND CUSTOMS IN DAILY LIFE.

We will now speak about the purification of things infected, or supposed or suspected to have been infected, and of the purificatory processes or customs observed in daily life.

Not only is purification necessary for a man who has come into contact with a dead body, but it is necessary in the case of the house where such a death has taken place and in the case of things that have come into contact with such a dead body. In the case of the house, it is enjoined, that, after the removal of the dead body, the house may be purified, or, to speak in modern terms, may be disinfected or fumigated, by burning in it the wood of trees like *urvāsana vōhugaona*, *vōhu-kereti* and *hadhā naepata*.¹ The smoke of the burning wood of these trees was believed to have possessed a disinfecting result. In the case of removable houses, such as tents and huts, it was enjoined that they may be removed from the place where death took place and then disinfected as above.²

Besides the house, there are other inanimate things, which also get defiled, and they, in their turn, are likely to be the medium of infection. So, just as men require purification, these things also require purification, though that purification is of a simple nature. The following are the injunctions of the Vendidād for the purification of these things:—In the case of the bedding of the deceased, if it is spoilt by any excretions of the deceased, it must be rejected altogether. If it is not so spoilt, it may

1 Vendidād, VIII, 1-2. These Irānian plants seem to have had the same properties as the *hyssop* of the Bible (Old Testament, Numbers XIX, 18).

2 Vendidād, VIII, 3. Cf., the Old Testament, Numbers XIX, 14-18, "When a man dieth in a tent: all that come into the tent, and all that is in the tent, shall be unclean for seven days..... And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water (*i. e.*, 'the water of separation' made of the ashes of a red heifer) and sprinkle it upon the tent."

be disinfected with cow's urine and used again.¹ If the bedding consists of things made of leather, there must be three washings with cow's urine, three rubbings with some disinfectant clay and finally three washings with water. It must then be exposed in the air for three months before being used again. If the bedding consists of linen things, all the above cleanings and washings must be made six times and the exposure in the air must last for six months.² If wooden things, fodder and grain have come into contact with dead bodies, a certain portion of these, that may have come into direct contact with the impurities, shall be rejected, and the rest must be purified and exposed in the air before being used.³ In the case of metallic utensils, the purification depended upon their specific gravity. Gold being the least porous, and so the least likely to hold infection, golden utensils required only one purification; silver ones, two; iron three, and so on.⁴

In the consideration of the principle of purification, one fact must be borne in mind, and that is, that, according to the old Iranian idea which to a great extent may be considered the modern hygienic idea, not only does death spread uncleanness, but whatever goes out of the body also spreads uncleanness. So, the following things are unclean and require a kind of purification:—(a) Breath or saliva from the mouth; (b) Nails of the fingers or toes, when separated from the body; (c) hair when cut from the body; issues both from males and females.

If a person drank from a cup or vessel, touching the cup or vessel with his lips, no Zoroastrian must drink from that cup until it is washed with water. This is enjoined to avoid the risk of catching the germs of any disease, which the first drinker may be suffering from.

(a) Uncleanness of breath or saliva. Pollution of drinking from the same cup.

1 Vend. VII, 12-14.

2 *Ibid.*, 15.

3 *Ibid.*, 28-35.

4 *Ibid.*, 73-75. Cf. Old Testament, Numbers XIX, 15, where open vessels in the tent where a man died, were taken to be unclean.

These germs may have passed with his saliva to the sides of the cup.¹

Glass or metallic cups from which one person has drunk, touching it with his lips, must be washed and purified. It is after this washing that another person can safely drink from it. In the case of cups made of clay, the clay being porous and so likely to imbibe germs of disease, it is believed, that they are not likely to be sufficiently free from the danger even after washing. Porcelain though glazed, has some risk. So, custom has enjoined that priests, observing the Bareshnûm, who are expected to observe all forms of purity, must not eat or drink from clay, wooden and porcelain vessels or cups.

The breath or the saliva being unclean, it is a Parsee custom, that when a priest goes before the sacred fire or when he says his prayers with the *myazd*, or the sacred offerings like fruit, flowers, etc., before him, he is to put on a *païti-dânâ* or *padân* over his face,² so that the sacred fire or things may not be polluted. Again for this reason, the Parsees are not to extinguish the fire or a lamp by their breath, *i.e.*, by blowing over it.³

1 The following paragraph in a Medical Journal shows that the above injunction is very useful from the point of health: "An educational journal contains a warning against the common drinking cup in school, as a means of infective contact. The children should be instructed to provide themselves with individual drinking-cups. Parents must be given to understand, that if the child does not have a drinking cup, it will not be possible to drink in school. The mouth of every consumptive contains the germs of the disease, and the transference of these germs from the sick to the healthy child by means of the common drinking-cup is the easiest accident possible."—*Good Health*, September 1905.

2 This custom is alluded to in the Pahlavi commentary of the *Vendîdâd* (*Padâm-i-vini ayônâk* or *Ayôtâk*), *i.e.*, the *padân* must properly be over the nose. (XVIII, 1).

"This [principle] appears not to have been peculiar to the Zoroastrian Aryans, for the Slavonian priest in Arkona was enjoined to go out of the temple, whenever he wanted to draw breath 'lest the presence of the god should be defiled by contact with mortal breath.'" (Darmesteter, *S. B. E.* IV, 1st ed., p. 168, n. 7)."

3 The *Revayets*; Strabo Bk. XV, Chap. III, 14. The Taziks still observe this custom.

When nails are pared or hair cut, they must not be thrown at haphazard, but they must be buried carefully in the ground. The Vendidad (XVII) enjoins, that they must be buried in a dry place at some distance from the house in a well-dug hole. It further enjoins that they should be buried with the recital of a certain formula of prayer. According to the modern practice, it is the priests only—and of those also very few—who bury the nails with the recital of the Bâj. The hair are rarely buried but they are carefully cast aside. When the head is shaved or the hair cut, it is usually the practice, to bathe after the process.¹

Issue makes the person, whether male or female, unclean. Not only the person, but those who come into contact with him or her, before he or she has purified himself or herself with a bath, gets unclean. In the case of a male, wet dream or sexual intercourse makes him unclean and he must bathe before he mixes with others. This practice is still observed generally. In the case of priests, wet dreams vitiate the efficacy of certain religious ceremonies in which they may be engaged. Sexual intercourse necessitates a bath for women also. The monthly issue or discharge requires greater restrictions on the part of women.

As said above, according to the Iranian views of cleanliness and uncleanliness, whatever emanates from human body is dead, and so, likely to do harm to the living. So, like nails of hands and feet, and hair, women's menses fall under the same category, and fall under the heading of things that are under the influence of Ahriman, or the Evil Spirit. They are harmful to the health of the living, and harmful

¹ It is likely, that some other ideas are latterly attributed to the custom of burying the nails and hair. *Vide* my paper on "Two Iranian incantations for burying hair and nails" (*Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, vol. VIII, pp. 557-72. *Vide* my "Anthropological Papers," Part I, pp. 340-354).

even to the women if not properly guarded and taken care of. So, the first care is to provide proper places for women under this condition.

It appears that in ancient Irân, just as every village or a street in a large town had a separate *margzâd*, *i. e.*, mortuary, where people took their dead from their houses, for the performance of the necessary funeral rites and ceremonies before their removal to the Towers of Silence, so every village or street had also a *Dastânistân*,¹ or, a house for the women in menses. It was not convenient in every house to provide proper accommodation for them, so, a common house in the village or street was provided. It was enjoined that such a place should be about 15 *kadams* (about 13 yards) distant from household fire, water and places of worship, and 3 *kadams* (about 2½ yards) distant from places frequented by men. (Vend. XVI, 2).

They were not to touch anything. Things that they touched became unclean. If they had their children with them, and if these children were to be taken out of the *Dastânistân*, their hands were first to be washed, and then their whole bodies to be washed with water. If a person touched a woman in her menses, he became unclean. If he did that by chance or unintentionally, he was to purify himself by a bath with *gaomez*, (*i. e.*, cow's urine) and water. If he did that intentionally, he was to be punished and that punishment increased in proportion as his fault was for the first or the second time and so on (Vend. XVI. 14-26). If a person had sexual intercourse with a woman in menses, that was a heinous offence deserving great punishment. The 18th chapter of the *Vendidâd* enjoins the performance of several good acts of righteousness in expiation of this most heinous of crimes.

The ordinary period of menses was thought to be three days in the least and nine days at the most. She was, under no circumstances, to stop the issue when in the ordinary course of menses. If she stopped the issue by any artificial means, for

¹ The word *dastân* (menses) comes from Av. *dakhshta* meaning a sign *Chitra* (चित्र), another Av. word for menses, also means a sign, a seed.

example, by the use of medicinal drugs, it was a sinful act, as it was likely to affect her health. When she found that she was free from further issue, she must wait one day more before she purified herself. If, after nine days, the woman did not find herself free, she must consider, that it was not her usual monthly course, but was some other illness. Such an extraordinary issue was supposed to be the work of Âhriman or the Evil Spirit (Vend. I, 18-19).

Women in menses were to be given only a certain quantity of food, lest any increase of it may cause greater flow or stronger issue. The Vendidâd speaks of two *dânarés* (*i. e.*, about 1,400 grains) of corn and two *dânarés* of animal food. The persons giving them food are to do so from a distance and not to touch them. They were to take their meals in utensils made of metal and not of clay or wood, because the latter, being more porous than the former, are likely to secrete the impurities and thus likely to do harm to the health of those who later on used these utensils again. Again, they are not to use their naked hands for eating, but they are to put on *dastânehs* (gloves) or *kissehs* (*i. e.*, glove-like bags) over their hands and then to eat by means of spoons.

On the day after that on which the issue stops, she has to Purification from menses. purify herself by a bath before coming into contact with other persons and things. The Vendidâd enjoined, that she was to bathe or wash herself with *gaómez* and water on three *magas* or pits like those mentioned in the purification ceremonies of the Bareshnûm. Her bedding and outer clothing also were to be washed and cleaned. Those who came into contact with her had also to wash themselves. It seems, that in the times of the Vendidâd, some expiatory ceremony was performed by the women in menses after their purification, *e. g.*, that of destroying a particular number of little noxious creatures that were thought capable of doing harm to mankind. It seems, that at first, this expiatory ceremony was enjoined in the case of extraordinary issues which were the result of the work of the Evil Spirit. The woman's carelessness for

her health or indifference for the ordinary laws of health was, as it were, the work of the Evil Spirit. So, some punishment or expiation was necessary for such carelessness. Then, latterly, by some unknown process or for some unknown reason, the expiation was extended even to the cases of ordinary menses.

Among the Pahlavi books, the Bundelesh (III, 7) speaks of menstruation as the work of Âhriman. The Pahlavi books on menses. Shâyast-lâ Shâyast (Chap. II, 17, 76) considers the things used by a woman in menses as unclean. Things with which she is in contact just at the time when she knows that menstruation has begun, do not become unclean. For example, if she is on a carpet, and there feels or knows for the first time that she is in menses, the carpet does not become unclean (Chap. III, 2). Similarly, whatever objects that be on her body just at that time,—her necklace, earrings, garments, etc.,—are not unclean if immediately removed; (Chap. III, 4) but if they are not removed immediately, or if they are taken in, or put on afterwards, they become unclean. Her look vitiates the purification of the *pâdyâb* and consecrated things. When the issue stops, she must at least wait for one day before she bathes and purifies herself. Things that pass through her hand may be considered clean after being washed with *gaômeh* and water.

The Persian Sad-dar (Chaps. XLI and XLVIII) also speaks of the above and similar other injunctions. The injunctions, of the later writings are more strict. Dastur Darâb Pahlân, in his Persian Farziât-nâmeh, gives the following injunction, based on what he calls Pahlavi Zend and Pazend writings. (1) On finding the symptoms, the woman is to change at once her ordinary clothings. (2) She is to seek a sequestered place and keep herself away from, or not see, water, fire, holy man, the sun, moon, sky, mountains, stars and trees. (3) Whatever she sees, suffers harm or diminution (*jurm* جرم). (4) While eating, she must put on, on her hands, a piece of old cloth (*raku* ركو) and eat with a spoon; while drinking, she must not let a single drop of water fall over her body. (5) She must thus keep herself aloof for

from three to nine days, and then wash herself with *gaomez* and water. (6) If she has unwittingly failed to observe any of these regulations, she is to say a *patet* or repentance prayer. *Dvâzdah hamâst*¹ is the proper atonement for her faults in this matter. She may recite that or ask a priest to recite that on her behalf. On the subject of all these notions, Prof. Darmesteter says, "The origin of all these notions is in certain physical instincts in physiological psychology, which is the reason why they are found among peoples very far removed from one another by race or religion. But they took in Persia a new meaning as they were made a logical part of the whole religious system."²

At present also, most of the Parsee women generally observe the above practices. There are no separate Dastânistâns or houses for menses in Parsee towns or streets, but generally a sequestered part of one's own house is chosen for the purpose. The down-floor of the house was thought to be the proper place. But nowadays, in a crowded city like Bombay, the down-floor, instead of being a quiet and healthy place, such as that contemplated by the early injunctions of the *Vendidâd*, is generally quite the contrary. So, most women in menses pass the period of menstruation on their upper floors, but in an isolated way. Every family has a separate iron cot for the occasion and a separate bedding, etc. They are supplied their meals from a distance by others and they neither come into contact with others, nor do they touch other things or do household work. The very rigorous isolation enjoined by the later books is not observed, but anyhow, some kind of isolation and separation is maintained by the generality of women. In the matter of taking food, very few use spoons now, though upto about 25 years ago, that was generally the case. In the matter of purification, they observe the bath enjoined by the early books, but the *Vendidâd* injunction of bathing over the three *magas* is

1 This ceremony, which nowadays consists of 12 times (*dvâzdah* دوازده) 12 recitals of the *Yaçna*, is performed by priests.

2 S. B. E. IV (1880). Introduction, p. XCII.

not observed at all. A separate place for bathing and for purposes of nature for women in this condition is generally provided in Parsee houses. No expiation ceremonies as those hinted at in the Vendidad are observed now, but, up to twentyfive or thirty years ago, women after their purification by a bath got a Patet, or an atonement prayer, recited by a priest, with a hope that if any injunctions enjoined to be observed in the matter of isolation may not have been observed, the fault may be pardoned.

Issues or discharges caused ceremonial impurity among the ancient Hebrews and Christians also. (Leviticus, XV). A difference was made between short issues, the result of sexual intercourse or wet dreams and "running issues." In the former case, an ordinary bath brought about purification. In the latter case, a strict isolation was enjoined, and persons or things, that came into contact with the person, his bed, or his things, were held unclean. Earthenware that came into such contact was to be destroyed and wooden things to be "rinsed in water." Even after the close of the running issue, the person was to remain isolated for 7 days, and, on the eighth day, he had to seek an atonement, "the atonement for her before the Lord," at the hand of a priest and to make offerings. As to the "contacts" or the persons who had come into contact with the persons who had issues or discharges, they also became unclean. Water was a purifier in their case, and in addition, time itself was a purifier. If such unclean persons or things were left to themselves "until the even", they got purified, as if by the action of the moving purifying air. The children, who remained with the mother during the state of her above uncleanliness, had also to be purified. The Deuteronomy (XXIII) also speaks of these issues and their uncleanliness. It appears that the laws of the Hebrews were to a certain extent more strict than those of the Persians. For example, persons who had *polluta nocturna* were asked to pass the succeeding day out of the Hebrew camp and to return by evening.

We find a reflex of the notion of the ancients on this point, as given by Pliny in his Natural History (Bk. VII, chap. XIII)¹, in the later regulations as summed up in the abovementioned Farziât-nâmeh (فرضیات نامہ) Pliny says: "It would indeed be a difficult matter to find anything which is productive of more marvellous effects than the menstrual discharge. On the approach of a woman in this state, must (*i. e.*, wine pressed from the grape) will become sour, seeds which are touched by her will become sterile, grafts wither away, garden plants are parched up, and the fruit will fall from the tree beneath which she sits. Her very look, even, will dim the brightness of mirrors, blunt the edge of steed, and take away the polish from ivory. A swarm of bees, if looked upon by her, will die immediately; brass and iron will instantly become rusty and emit an offensive odour, while dogs which may have tasted of the matter discharged are seized with madness, and their bite is venomous and incurable. In addition to this, the bitumen which is peculiarly tenacious and adheres to everything it touches, can only be divided into separate pieces by means of a thread which has been dipped in this virulent matter. It is said that the ant, even an insect so extremely minute, is sensible of its presence, and rejects the grains which it has been carrying and will not return to them again." Pliny says in another chapter (Bk. XXVIII, ch. 23), "Young wives are injured immediately by the touch of a woman in this state; and both rue and ivy, plants possessed of highly medicinal virtues, will die instantly upon being touched by her. Much as I have already stated on the virulent effects of this discharge, I have to state in addition that bees, it is a well-known fact, will forsake their hives if touched by a menstruate woman; that linen boiling in the cauldron will turn black, that the edge of a razor will become blunted, and that copper vessels will contract a fetid smell and become covered with verdigris, on coming in contact with her. A mare big with foal, if touched by a woman in this state, will be sure to miscarry; nay even more

1 *Vide* Bostock and Riley's Translation (1858) Vol. II, pp. 150-52.

than this, at the very sight of a woman, though seen at a distance even, should she happen to be menstruating for the first time after the loss of her virginity or for the first time while in a state of virginity Fire itself even, an element which triumphs over every other substance, is unable to conquer this. Indeed, so pernicious are its properties, that women themselves, the source from which it is derived, are far from being proof against its effects; a pregnant woman, for instance, if touched with it, or indeed if she so much as steps over it, will be liable to miscarry."

The later Parsee writings attribute many of the above-said noxious effects referred to by Pliny to the menses of women. The injunctions of the Vendidad do not go to such an extent. Much seems to have been borrowed latterly.
