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PARSIS AND RACIAL SUICIDE

by

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by

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Parsis and Racial Suicide

Parsis hold the proud record of being pioneers in various fields of activity: it is very much to be wished they may not prove pioneers in racial suicide through mixed marriages. Alexander destroyed our empire and many of our scriptures in B. C. 330. The Arabs almost obliterated us as a Zarathushtrian race in 651 A.D. Will it be left to history to record the dismal tale of the Parsis gradually and voluntarily extinguishing themselves from the 20th century onwards? Who can save the Parsis if they are resolved not to save themselves? Who can rescue an intelligent man, who in broad daylight and with wide open eyes is determined to hurl himself headlong into a well? We are heading for disaster at a terrific speed, which makes us uncomfortably realize that our communal existence can only be a matter of a few generations.

We Parsis, who settled in West India, were not the only refugees from Iran. About the beginning of the Christian era, a group of Iranians came and settled in Multan, and were known as the Mag-Brahmins. They were all absorbed in the larger Hindu race, and no trace is left of them, except a few lines in history. Another Iranian group came and settled also in North India: Tamerlane wiped them off, lock, stock and barrel. In all likelihood, other smaller Iranian groups were similarly absorbed in the larger Indian communities, so completely as to escape even the notice of history. Only that Iranian group, which came and settled at Sanjan in Gujarat, has had the good fortune to survive, and we are their descendants. Are we prepared to survive and continue the precious heritage of our illustrious forbears, or submerge ourselves, our religion and all that we hold most dear into the Indian Ocean? Are we determined to survive, and by our merits prove ourselves worthy of the survival, rather than choose the ignoble alternative of racial extinction through mixed marriages? It is for the Parsi upholders of such marriages to reply.

Our ancestors, on landing in India, were said to have promised the ruler of Sanjan that they would live like sugar in milk, that is, maintain cordial relations with all. Unfortunately this delightful tale is unauthentic. But whatever that may be, the Parsi advocates of mixed marriages seem to have misinterpreted the story to mean the absorption of the Parsis in the other communities as sugar in milk! But the story is self-explanatory and needs no comment. Amicability with all is commendable: extinction in all, especially when it is uncalled for and uninspired by a lofty ideal, is condemnable for its folly.

According to the Zarathushtrian laws and customs as they prevail at present, we do not proselytize others to our faith: at the same time we are going in for mixed marriages at breakneck speed. How long is our community to survive if the candle is thus being burnt at both ends?

Many years ago, we are told, a Parsi touring in Europe, met a Western savant, who was surprised that his interlocutor was a Zarathushtrian. "What!" said the savant, "Are you the follower of the Prophet of ancient Iran?" "Exactly" replied the Parsi. "You, you, the progeny of Darius and Noshirwan?" asked the astonished savant. "Quite so," replied the Parsi. "But," inquired the savant, "Were you not all finished by the Arabs?" "No," said the Parsi, "It is not so bad as that; a few of us are very much alive and thriving in West India, and still smaller number can be found in Iran". The savant was overjoyed at those unexpected revelation of the survival of Zarathushtrianism, and gave the Parsi a warm embrace. Evidently the European loved the Parsis far more than some of the Parsis do themselves. If the good savant had been alive today, he would certainly have been shocked at the idea of race-suicide by the Parsis.

At this stage we should like to rebut two charges that have been levelled against the Parsis: (1) We are supposed to be too exclusive and wish to remain isolated. In fact just the opposite is the truth. We are an amiable and adaptable race. Our amiability is due to our nature. Our adaptability is due probably to the thought that the welfare of a microscopically small race like ours depends on our earning the goodwill of the larger communities. With the exception of a few

occasions, in which non-Parsis are debarred from our ceremonies, we are perfectly adaptable, even to a fault: nay, a race more adaptable than the Parsis would be hard to find.

(2) We are also accused of holding the belief that our religion and our community are superior to all others. In reply we may state that in every community there is a hopelessly insignificant percentage of bigots, believing in their racial and religious superiority, and Parsis can be no exception to the rule. But the numbers of these Parsi megalomaniacs are diminishing rapidly, and blind faith gives way to enlightened reason. We only know that our religion is but one of the many faiths that lead to God, and our community is as good or as bad as any other. We are against mixed marriages not on the ground of our assumed superiority, **but because we emphatically maintain that our religion and culture deserve to survive and not be frivolously frittered away.** We only wish that our communal solidarity may not be shaken to the roots, and that as a unified and compact community, we may be left alone to serve God and man according to our own lights and to the best of our capacities.

Our ancestors, when they first settled in India, wisely banned mixed marriages in order to preserve our racial traits and heritage, which were too precious to be lightly tampered with by indiscriminate unions with non-Parsis. The writer remembers that about half a century ago a Parsi Anjuman meeting was held in Bombay to voice its vehement protest at the marriage of a Parsi woman with a non-Parsi and the woman's action was denounced in unmeasured terms. Today the community finds itself helpless. The parents, even against their own wishes, have to climb down, or have the humiliation to see their protest flouted in their faces by their daughter in sheer derision. Threats of suicide and fasting unto death to force the parental consent are happily not in fashion among us, but the situation, as it is, is sufficiently provoking. And how does society take it? We have now arrived at a stage when mixed marriages are flagrantly and openly boosted and proclaimed from the house-tops in prominent journals, with illustrations of the smiling partners of such marriages, and the culmination of the tragedy is reached on finding

that the writer is — a Parsi! We are already in the danger zone; the menace to our community is overwhelming; and hence the urgency of this article.

Mixed Marriages

The causes of mixed marriages are thoroughly well known, they may only be referred to and discussed. After having received education (very probably co-education in cosmopolitan schools and colleges) upto the post-graduate level, our girls seek employment in offices, where they come into contact with non-Parsis. We live in an age of individualism, in which the girls, who have already arrived at the age of discretion (rather of indiscretion), are ill-inclined to be restrained by parental advice, but more disposed to take a rash and irretrievable step. The remedy lies not in keeping our girls ignorant, nor in compelling them to remain in veiled seclusion, **but in mild persuasion and advice.** Repression and vindictive measures will prove futile, and only add to the bitterness of the family.

Our boys were the first to set the bad example. Due notice was not taken of it by our community, in the belief that children born of a Parsi father and non-Parsi mother would after all be Parsis and admissible in the Parsi fold. Then Parsi girls followed the evil example, for evil is more readily followed than good. Then like Rip Van Winkle, we arose to find ourselves in a disquieting world, where we were scoffed at as hopeless old fogeys. But in fact it is not the Parsi father but his daughter, wedded to a non-Parsi husband, that stands to lose considerably by the step she has taken. She will probably dissociate herself from Parsi places of worship and sometimes even from Parsi society. If she becomes a widow with slender resources and a large family, her position will be truly unenviable. If she reluctantly returns to her parents, they will naturally be averse to bring up her children, the offspring of a non-Parsi father in their house. The children usually return to their paternal grandparents, whose surname they bear, and whose religion they follow. They will have the misfortune of being deprived of their mother's company except at fitful intervals. The danger is still greater when the Parsi woman marries a non-Parsi, following a proselytizing religion: in

that case the woman is almost sure to be proselytized herself. Hence, it is advisable for a Parsi girl to look before she leaps.

It may, however, be conceded that a mixed marriage is not a crime, for, had it been so, the law would have seen to it long ago. It is wrong to maintain that mixed marriages are bound to be unhappy. Such sweeping generalizations are untenable, for they are capable of exceptions. **We maintain that mixed marriages are condemnable for Parsis, calamitous to the very existence of our community, and detrimental to the interests of the Parsi girl, who thoughtlessly embarks on the perilous voyage.**

Champions of mixed marriages hold that such unions, promoted by "pure love", are justifiable. Pure love is a sentiment to be respected and not ridiculed; but all the same, it must be governed by reason, which is often thrown overboard at this precise critical juncture. Love and reason are opposite forces, but their co-operation will yield the best results. "Pure love" is the favourite expression of youth; but it must not be merely calf love, nor should it be indulged in to the utter disregard of reason. Reason also has its limitations: it cannot penetrate into the secret of God's existence, or into the mysteries of poetry, or the raptures of music; but for most of our worldly activities reason is the safest guide. The youth who falls in love without consulting his reason would realize before his temples are silvered by grey hair that he was led away more by impulse than guided by judgement. Love is blind: love is mad: true, but these are the demerits of love, and blind and mad love has never made an ideal marriage. Reason can never be banished, for it enables us to take an all-round view of the most momentous step in human life.

Love is an instinct, and instinct, say the protagonists of mixed marriages, cares not for distinction between Parsis and non-Parsis. Scientifically speaking, love is an instinct in an animal of one sex to seek the society of an animal belonging to the other. The instinct is irresistible in an animal, but in an educated human being it is controlled and guided by reason. Eating, drinking and sleeping are also instincts, but reasonable people do not eat like swine, drink like fishes, nor sleep till the sun is high up in the heavens. There is no

reason why love, though the most powerful and sacred of instincts, should be an exception to the rule. "But", say the advocates of mixed marriages, "love is divine." Exactly, so is reason. In the "Ahura-mazda Yasht", where God recounts His names, He says — "Ahmi khratush... Ahmi chistish" (I am reason... I am wisdom). In the First Episode General of John (IVB and 16), God is love; but Stoic philosophy realized godhead in reason, and later Judaism considered wisdom a divine attribute. And indeed we need both these divine attributes, love and reason, in perfect unison in our career through life, and particularly while choosing a partner in matrimony.

Advocates of mixed marriages have trotted forth the theory, that their aim thereby is to bring about world-unity and universal brotherhood. In fact, no greater chimera ever escaped the human brain. They visualize the goal as within easy reach if all people in the world were to intermarry, irrespective of caste, creed or country. In their opinion, by this device, religions would be automatically abolished, and a potent cause of communal mischief would be quietly eliminated. So it seems that, according to their logic, decapitation is perhaps the only remedy for a headache! However, it is our firm belief that the cherished goal of world unity can never be attained at the cost of a community, great or small. We Parsis certainly aim at communal solidarity, but simultaneously, we are staunch nationalists and internationalists, and finally, like all cultured people, we consider universal brotherhood as our ulterior aim in life. But we refuse to be lured by a so-called world-unity, which spells the dissolution of our own community. The writer may be accused of being a communalist, but this article maintains that **world-unity is the fulfilment of communal and national life, and is not to be attained by the extinction of a community or nation.**

World-unity is a noble end to be achieved by the noblest means. Mixed marriages mean an admixture of blood, while what world-unity needs is a fusion of hearts: the former is a physical process, the latter a spiritual ideal. Mixed marriages are said to be altruistic in their aim: if so, they are a species of senseless altruism and misdirected philanthropy. Mixed marriages absorb the small communities, while the goal is left as distant as ever.

The Emperor Akbar started a new eclectic faith, called the "Din-e Ilahi," based on the idea that all religions were good and true, and led to the Supreme Being. But finding the relations between his Hindu and Muslim subjects not what they ought to be, he buttressed his eclectic faith by the social policy of encouraging Hindu-Muslim matrimonial alliances, with the result that his faith and his harebrained scheme collapsed before the end of his life.

But why are champions of mixed marriages so frightened of diversity of creeds and communities, and so anxious to absorb them all? Diversity is natural to life, and the fact is that it is diversity that makes unity possible. Diversity is a necessity in the world for we need it, for instance, in our food, habitation, our studies, our professions, and in the various walks of life. Variety in fact is the very essence of life. If a musician were to play on only one key of the diapason, it would be a dull monotonous affair, but matters would brighten up by playing on all the keys, and music would then be a concord of sweet sounds. Each key has a right to exist in the harmonium: their co-operation at the hands of a skilful musician creates harmony through the unified song: any attempt to destroy the individuality of a key at the hands of a bungler would only end in a discordant jumble. A truly enlightened man should recognize the importance of every position in life, and seek to synthesize one position with others, so as to bring about a unity.

Unity in Diversity

The goal of all cultures in general and of India in particular is "Unity in diversity". Diversity of religions, communities, countries, languages, colours have all to be taken for granted and respected as such, and synthesized into a world-unity, for we cannot have one country in the world, as we cannot hope to have one community in the world, as dreamt of by the protagonists of mixed marriages. We aim at a world-unity in which no community or religion is absorbed in the whole, but a unity in which the right of every community or religion to exist is recognized, and to which each contributes its mite.

Countries are often formed by the interposition of mountains and rivers. The Himalayas divide India and China as the Pyrenees separate France from Spain, and the English Channel, England from France. Are we to launch on the quixotic adventure of wiping out these "obstacles" with a view to having one country in the world? Is not world-unity possible in spite of mountains and rivers, especially when the miracles of modern science have practically brought the whole world together? Thus diversity is natural to and indispensable in life. Life is like a chessboard with 64 white and black squares. If the squares are all of one uniform colour, white or black, the game cannot be played. Similarly we need diversity to play the game of life, and to see the oneness of the Divine Soul in the multiplicity of creation. Unity is oneness, concord, agreement, harmony. **Unity is impossible through mixed marriages**, which only beget uniformity, which is a stereotyped, monotonous sameness. Unity is a moral virtue and vibrates with life; uniformity is a mechanical process which leads nowhere.

The larger communities lose little or nothing by mixed marriages: **it is the smaller one that is swamped or overwhelmed, so as to lose its communal identity.** Nay, the bigger communities even gain in volume by such marriages, as the ocean gains in bulk by the absorption of the stream, while it is the stream that is lost beyond recognition in the process. The bigger communities can afford to sleep over this matter, which is of vital importance to the Parsis, who must "awake, arise or be for ever fallen."

How can mixed marriages attain the goal of world-brotherhood, and if attained, how many millennia will be needed to establish a creedless colourless race, which will never be guilty of communal or religious trouble, for the evident reason that no community or religion will be left to fight over? And at what cost are we to have this world-unity? At the cost of our beloved religion and community, to preserve which our ancestors trusted the winds and the waves, and faced danger and death? Why pursue the noblest of ideals, the goal of all religions, through the absurd process of mixed marriages? Are all moral and spiritual means of establishing world-unity exhausted that we resort to mixed marriages, which, when practised on an ex-

tensive scale, will spell the extinction of our little community, while the goal is receding in the distant horizon?

No Short Cut to Unity

We need not create diversity when there is none, but we should not be daunted by diversities, which already exist through which it is our duty to establish unity. Diversities are evidenced at a glance; unity is to be laboriously accomplished. There are no short cuts to unity. Unity is not a physical but a moral problem, to be solved if and when we are morally qualified. Why then should our community rush into a blind alley, ingress to which is easy enough, but egress from which is highly problematical? The only certainty of escape through this perilous impasse would be through the extinction of our little community.

History shows that mixed marriages have not been able to prevent wars between two countries. England and Germany are both Protestant in religion and of Teutonic stock by blood and language. Inter-marriages between people of these countries were perfectly natural, and yet they could not prevent the red ruin of the two World Wars of the present century. Even if mixed marriages promised an El Dorado of peace and plenty, what is the gain to our little community — elimination from the map of the world? In political history, we sometimes find the "Great Powers" negotiating world-peace by the wholly unmerited sacrifice of small, innocent and even a non-belligerent State for reasons of "expediency." Mixed marriages are a similar venture for world-unity and profitable to the great races, but ruinous to small ones. Why should Parsis voluntarily prefer to be the Paschal Lamb of history?

There are, however, several approved ways of achieving world-unity. The first is the political approach, the favourite of men of law and politics. The idea of world-unity by peaceful arbitration between countries had been tried for centuries, but without the success it deserved. Its modern representative is the UNO — an organization of united nations trying to arbitrate on world politics, trying to eliminate war and promote peace. All such well-meant endeavours deserve

our best encouragement, even when they meet with partial success. Unfortunately political solutions are never final, for the UNO often finds that when one head of the Hydra is demolished, two others sprout in its place: evidently only a Hercules is needed to settle the question beyond dispute. Besides, some members of the UNO may not have cultivated a world-outlook, and may be subordinating the interest of their own country. Despite the UNO, wars are still going on, and we feel we are seated on the crater of a volcano, which may explode any moment, and overwhelm the world with death and destruction. Still the UNO must be commended for what it has achieved, but we must be on the look-out for other approaches to supplement it.

The cultural approach is the best in the eyes of lovers of learning. Let knowledge lead to love. Love between two countries is facilitated by mutual knowledge of their literature, art and philosophy. It is ignorance that leads to hostility. It must be admitted that there are glaring exceptions of the two World-Wars, to the rule as seen again in the outbreak wherein England came to death-grips with Germany, though culturally both were intensely close, and great admirers of each other's literature. But, in spite of exceptions, the rule stands — true culture is not merely intellectual and aesthetic, but moral; and therefore, it includes peace and harmony. Hence the higher our culture, the closer we must be to the goal of world-brotherhood.

Religious unity is not to be achieved by the prevalence of any one particular religion, for that would deluge the country with blood. This experiment has often been tried before, and we have grown wiser by the results. What is wanted is a growth of spirituality, which instinctively realizes the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. This sounds platitudinous, but this sublime platitude has never been practised on a universal scale. To realize the Lord in all creation, and all creation in the Lord is a precept meant for highly evolved souls.

If we are determined to have one religion in the world as leading to world-unity, it may preferably be the Religion of

Humanity. It contains the quintessence of every revealed religion, without the necessity of prophets and scriptures, rites and ceremonies. It is enough that we are essentially and truly religious. We are free to follow our own revealed religion enthusiastically, but we should see that it completely embodies all the principles of the Religion of Humanity.

The last method is popularly known in our country as "emotional integration." It has a secular outlook but a religious attitude to life. It is based on the thought that we are all incomplete, but that we can be integrated into a whole by displaying the emotions of love, mercy, non-violence, toleration etc. to one another.

In-breeding and Out-breeding

It would be interesting to examine what science says on the subject. Endogamy (in-breeding) and Exogamy (out-breeding) both have their advantages and disadvantages, on the whole we admit that the balance tilts slightly in favour of out-breeding. The stock of flowers and trees is definitely improved by grafting between the same species of other countries, and we get more beautiful odoriferous flowers, and more fruitful and overspreading trees. Cross-breeding between horses or cows of different countries generates a better stock of swifter and more spirited horses, or cows yielding a larger supply of milk. But it is most dangerous to apply the laws governing vegetation and animals to human beings, for flowers and trees, horses and cows have no conscience, reason or character, but only colour and perfumes, strength and speed. Some animals indeed show gleams of intelligence like ape; or of sagacity like elephants; some even show a remarkable measure of virtue like dogs and horses, who can be faithful to their masters. Still animals are on a very low scale of evolution, and can indeed never become philosophers or saints. Man alone takes the cake in character and in reason, and man is truly far more esteemed for his intellect and integrity than for vigour and vitality. Just because cross-breeding is beneficial to the animal world, as producing stronger and speedier creatures, it would be absurd to argue that out-breeding would be profitable to human beings in begetting men and women of high talent or virtue.

It is within the limits of possibility, to infer that out-breeding may produce health and vigour in human beings, but we have no grounds to infer about its begetting intelligence and virtue. Hence the law governing the lower order of creation should not be blindly applied to man, the noblest of creation.

Close in-breeding through consanguineous marriages (cousin-marriages) is, according to science, definitely injurious, though recommended in the Zarathushtrian religion. Science disapproves of cousin-marriages on the ground that harmful ancestral traits, like insanity, tuberculosis, epilepsy, drunkenness, weak eyes etc. are almost sure to be transmitted to posterity. Had one of the partners been an outsider to the family, the injurious ancestral traits would have been considerably modified or even nullified by the union: on the contrary, in the case of cousin-marriages the harmful trait stands the chance of being accentuated, as it is transmitted to the next generation. At the same time it must be remembered that cousin-marriages are commendable as they tend to preserve, enrich and transmit to the future generations some excellent family traits like retentive memory, love of music, nobility of character, charitable instincts etc. and help to preserve the homogeneity of blood and ancestral traditions in a royal or aristocratic family. But by and large, the dangers of cousin-marriages are far greater than their advantages.

But let us get down to brass-tacks, and inquire what science has to say about mixed marriages. One great instance in favour of in-breeding has been quoted by **Sir F. Galton**, the father of Eugenics. He says that in ancient Attica in Greece between B.C. 530 to B.C. 430 from 45,000 free-born males were born by in-breeding 14 of the most illustrious men of all time. The government was so vigilant about in-breeding that if an Athenian dared to marry an alien, both were reduced to slavery and their property was confiscated. But let us not generalize too hastily in the matter. Prof. E. M. East, an authority on the subject, observes that it was close in-breeding that produced the notorious Jukes family, packed with paupers and prostitutes, madmen and criminals. The family cost the state of New York over 1½ million dollars in 75 years upto 1877. A great advantage

of out-breeding can be seen in the rise and growth of America. The Americans are the product of the various European-Christian peoples, who, escaping religious persecution at home, fled and settled in America permanently since the 17th century. By out-breeding was generated the present great American nation.

The present author deliberately cuts the question short, for he considers it odious to dwell upon the disadvantages of in-breeding and out-breeding as applied to the various prominent races of the world, as that would involve a description of their demerits. Whenever a nation has been conquered, there is blood adulteration between the conqueror and the conquered. In the strictly biological sense, this out-breeding has its own advantages, though on this ground none but fools and traitors can ever wish to see their country conquered. In-breeding and out-breeding run almost neck and neck, and it is often difficult to assign superiority to either. Very often, circumstances, favourable or adverse, play a decisive part. Besides, geniuses are above every rule, and neither in-breeding nor out-breeding can explain the rise of a Shakespeare or a Napoleon. Finding that there are Davids of the one and Goliaths of the other among instances of in-breeding and out-breeding, some writers on the subject propose a compromise between the two, and suggest that a period of out-breeding should be followed by another of in-breeding to stabilize the advantages gained; and so on alternately as Romanticism is followed by Classicism in literature, and Liberalism by Conservatism in politics. But though this looks wise enough on paper, it is an uncertain and even a dangerous game to play in life. How are people to know which period, of in-breeding or out-breeding, prevails at present, how long it is to continue, and when and how it is going to lead? Is it to be left to natural impulses or to an ordinance of government? Is the government authorized to determine and announce such periods, and can it be sure that its fiat on the subject will be implicitly obeyed?

It seems that science is indecisive on the subject of in-breeding and out-breeding, but we Pars's should know what can be beneficial or detrimental to the interests of our community. This article is

meant particularly for Parsis, and we hold that they should not dream of marrying outside their community. Those who love and esteem their community and wish for its continuity will never think of doing otherwise. Parsis should try to maintain a high standard of health, intelligence and morality, so that even if they go in for cousin-marriages (which are undesirable, as shown above) they can only transmit health, intelligence and virtue to future generations. When we claim to survive as a race, we must justify our right to do so by character and merit. A few suggestions, however, amalgamating the merits of in-breeding and out-breeding, may be made in this connection.

It is said that out-breeding is as good as, if not better than, in-breeding. In that case it would be advisable for the Parsis of Gujarat to enter into matrimonial relations with Parsis living in U.P., Bengal, Madras, Burma, Ceylon, and in fact, with Parsis living all over India. They may choose partners in life from the Zarathushtrians of Iran, England, America and practically from the world, provided that these partners are Zarathushtrians, good and true. Bombay is a cosmopolitan city often visited by Zarathushtrians from Iran, England, America etc. Indian Parsis may thus be sure of a wider scope for selection. Parsis from these alien lands will bring with them a dissimilar environment, a refreshing atmosphere, a novel culture, which will serve the purpose of out-breeding, when wedded to our rather conservative outlook.

Commendable Movement

There is at present a commendable movement among the Parsis of the West to establish central bureaus, which will gather in a directory the names, degrees, professions, addresses etc. of their co-religionists, living in different cities of Europe and America. This will facilitate correspondence and, we hope, matrimonial alliances as well among the Parsis of the West, who would naturally find it too expensive to come over to India to seek partners in life. The bureaus would do well to keep a list of Parsis, who are qualified Ervads (Priests), though serving in the lay professions. In case a Parsi child in Europe or America is to be invested with the sacred

thread, his parents can arrange to take him to the nearest Ervad available, who should consider it his religious duty to perform the Navjote ceremony. If Parsi youths and girls in the West are desirous of marriage, and if the Ervad is not within easy reach the partners may go in for civil marriage, which may subsequently be confirmed by the marriage ceremony according to Zarathushtrian rites, performed by two Ervads. All facilities must be provided to Parsi youths and girls desirous of marriage in Western countries. Difficulties there will certainly be, but these obstacles, like hurdles in a hurdle-race, are meant to be surmounted, and no one, endowed with enthusiasm and a firm resolution, will ever think of succumbing in the struggle. Where there is a will, there is a way.

What is wanted is an ardent desire to maintain our communal existence. We must set our house in order before it is too late. Above all, mixed marriages should be scrupulously avoided. Tuberculosis is curable at the initial stage, but not when it has reached the galloping crisis. That is a time when prayers only can be offered for the patient, who is now beyond any medical relief. We appeal to all Parsis to settle the question of mixed marriages before it settles us by ringing the death knell of our small but time-honoured community. We have high respect for communities and wish them well, and pray that this article may not be misinterpreted as written by a rank communalist. **We wish to survive as a community not to be a thorn in the flesh of other communities,** nor be a nuisance to government by demanding various rights without thinking of discharging their corresponding duties. **We wish to stand up as a consolidated community,** not to serve ourselves but to serve our country and the world. We are more anxious to achieve world-unity than are some misguided Parsis, who wish to reach the goal through mixed marriages. But through marriage among our co-religionists we aim not to create a motley miscellaneous crowd, but a true brotherhood of communities, not a heterogeneous hotch-potch, but a genuine harmony with the world.