











REPRINT FROM THE DASTUR HOSHANG MEMORIAL VOLUME

**ALLUSIONS TO WITCHCRAFT AND OTHER PRIMITIVE  
BELIEFS IN THE ZOROASTRIAN LITERATURE**

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NEW YORK

BOMBAY:  
PRINTED AT THE FORT PRINTING PRESS

1911  
7<sup>th</sup>

Iranians that we owe the general designation for magic. The word "Magic", as is well known, is derived from the Old-Persian *magav*<sup>1</sup>, and denotes "the (pretended) art of controlling occult forces and of producing effects contrary to the known order of nature".<sup>2</sup>

The purpose of this article is to gather all the more important allusions to Sorcery and Witchcraft and other practices included in the general term magic, contained in the Zoroastrian literature<sup>3</sup>, and to present also a concise exposition of certain other primitive beliefs prevalent among the ancient Iranians. The aim is merely to supply, for the time being, the need of a more general and exhaustive work; and for that reason, and because of limitations of space, this monograph is not intended to be comparative in its character. Only in cases where it seemed desirable to bring out a point more clearly, have I drawn attention to analogies among other races.

For the sake of convenience, the matter to be discussed has been divided into the following subdivisions: (1) Sorcery and Witchcraft; (2) Wizards, Witches, Kavis and Karpans; (3) The Evil Eye; (4) Nail-Paring and Hair-Cutting; (5) Noxious Creatures; (6) Miscellaneous Beliefs; (7) Spells and Exorcisms. A short discussion on the nature of these categories will precede each subdivision.

### 1. SORCERY AND WITCHCRAFT.

The belief in sorcery and witchcraft is one of the most universal and deep-rooted beliefs in the heart of man. It is found spread over such a vast area and has penetrated so deeply into the very soul of every people that, as John Wesley, the noted English divine, has said, "To give up the belief in witchcraft would be to

<sup>1</sup> The etymology and original meaning of this word are unknown. For a discussion see Bartholomae, *Air. Wh.* col. 1111 under *Magar*.

<sup>2</sup> *The New International Encyclopædia*, ed. by Gilman, Peck and Colby, 12. 678, New York, 1908.

<sup>3</sup> To this end the author has examined the contents of the Zoroastrian literature, as far as they were accessible through translations, printed texts and transliterated editions of manuscripts. The references include the Avesta proper, the Pahlavi commentaries and translations of Avestan texts, the other Pahlavi writings, both on religious and on non-religious subjects, and some specimens of the so-called Modern-Persian Zoroastrian literature of the Parsis, notably the *Sad-dar* and *Zirtusht-Nâmah*, those two latter books being sequels to the Pahlavi *Dinkart* and *Zât-spâram*.

give up the Bible".<sup>1</sup> The names under which this belief is known, vary according to the extent to which it occurs among the different races, and the designations are often chosen arbitrarily by the writers. The most frequent terms assigned to it are: Magic, Enchantment, Demonology, Satanism, Divination, Sorcery, Witchcraft and Phallicism. In Avestan the term usually employed is *yâthwa*, literally "sorcery".

The attitude which the ancient Iranians took towards the practice of sorcery and witchcraft was wholly hostile in its character. In this they coincided with the other races of remote ages, for no ancient race is known to have furthered or even to have tolerated the practice of sorcery and magic -- using that term in the sense of Black Magic<sup>2</sup>. Consequently, a spirit of hostility permeates in the highest degree the sacred books of the Zoroastrians, which is in perfect accordance with the doctrine of two supreme principles of this religion. To a worshipper of Ahura Mazda there is nothing more hateful and heinous than Ahriman and his creation. And we have the authority of the *Vendîdâd* (I. 14.) for the statement that Angra-Mainyu "who is all death, counter-created the evil work of witchcraft (*agha-yâtava*)", and of the *Bûndahishn* (28. 40.) that "of the Evil Spirit are the law of vileness, and the religion of sorcery".

As a product of Ahriman's wicked creation, the sin of witchcraft is anathematized by the Iranians as an abominable crime. In the Pahlavi book *Dînâ-i Maînôj-i Khirat* (36. 17.), for example, the Sage asks the Spirit of Wisdom, which sin is the most heinous, and the answer is given: "The practice of witchcraft (*ke jâduî* or *zandîkî kuned*)" and in the *Khvetûk-das*, witchcraft is called the most grievous sin of all.<sup>3</sup> How much the Iranians loathed sorcery

<sup>1</sup> Farrar, in Smith's *Dictionary of Bible*, s.v. "Divination", 1.445.

<sup>2</sup> "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." *Exodus*. 22.18.

"A man, also a woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death." *Leviticus* 20.27.

"For all incantations intended to destroy life, for magic rites with roots and for various kinds of sorcery a fine of 200 panas shall be inflicted." *Mannu* 9.290.

The ancient Babylonians seem to be an exception to this rule, for, according to Sayce, witchcraft and necromancy flourished in Babylon. The state religion was compelled to recognize it and to lend it its sanction and control.—A. H. Sayce, *The Religions of Ancient Egypt and Babylonia*, p. 319. Edinburgh, 1902.

<sup>3</sup> E. W. West, *The Meaning of Khvetûk-das*, *SBE*. 18.417.

is shown clearly by a passage in *Dīnkart* 8. 35. 13., where this practice is compared to the sin of unnatural intercourse "for which there is no atonement".<sup>1</sup> This passage asserts that those who perform unnatural intercourse are merged in sinfulness as the serpent Srôbâr (Av. *azhi sravara*) is in witchcraft.

Terrible punishments hereafter await those who have resorted to sorcery. According to the *Artâ Virâf Nâmak* they lacerate their breasts with their hands and feet; their feet stand on hot iron and dogs gnaw their bellies;<sup>2</sup> their tongues are cut away and their eyes are gouged out; snakes, scorpions, worms and other noxious creatures devour their brain, and from time to time they themselves seize upon their own body and gnaw their own flesh,<sup>3</sup> until at last they are forced to devour their own dead refuse.<sup>4</sup>

This attitude of the Iranians towards sorcery finds its justification in the disastrous consequences which were brought about by witchcraft. "Its nature, by which it is known and seen at once", says *Vendîdâd* 1. 14., in the words of Darmesteter's rendering, "is such that wheresoever they (the wizards) go forth and raise a cry of sorcery (*yâtuməntəm*), there (in the Haētumant region) the most deadly works of witchcraft (*yâtumastəma*) go forth; from there they come and kill and strike at heart and they bring locusts<sup>5</sup> as many as they want".<sup>6</sup> "Through sorcery" (*yâthwa*), states *Yasna* 8. 3., "the world of Righteousness is ruined", and the Selections from *Zâtsparam* (II. 7.) assert that destruction and injuries to mankind are due to it, while the *Bahman Yasht* (2. 26.) claims that "through witchcraft (*yâtûkêh*) the race of wrath rushes into the countries of Iran and everything encounters annihilation, direst destruction and trouble." Witchcraft is furthermore a source of apostasy, for according to *Bândahishn* 28. 4., Ahriman seduces men "into affection for himself and to disaffection for Ahuramazd" by their belief in witchcraft (*yâtûk-dînôih*), and, according to *Dīnkart* 7. 4. 72., mankind came to idolatry through the sorcery performed by Dahâk in Babylon. Sorcery is

<sup>1</sup> Vd. 1.11.

<sup>2</sup> AV. 76.

<sup>3</sup> AV. 81.

<sup>4</sup> AV. 35.

<sup>5</sup> See below under Noxious Creatures.

<sup>6</sup> "Le fléau créé contre le Saistân est l'abondance de sorcellerie; et ce caractère paraît par ceci que tous les hommes, qui viennent de ce lieu exercent l'astrologie: ces magiciens font venir.....la neige, la grêle, l'araignée et le sauterelle." Darmesteter, *LeZA*. 2.13.n.32.



also the cause of many a quarrel, as shown by a passage in *Dinkart* 8. 17. 6., which states that there are six modes of engaging in conflict: "through assault, false teachings.....and through speaking with wizards' spells (*yâtûk govishnâhâ*)".<sup>1</sup>

The demons in particular are said to have practised sorcery. Nôktargâ who was anxious to obtain the glory of Ferîdûn, is reported by the *Bândahishn* (31. 32.) to have created by magic a cow and to have fed her with the reeds on which the Glory had settled in the hope that by giving her milk to his sons they might come into possession of the much coveted prize of the divine splendor. The serpent Srôbâr, as already mentioned, was also skilled in this art.<sup>2</sup> The monster Azhi Dahâka of Babylon was another demon whose fame as a sorcerer seemed to have been world-wide. He was well-versed in witchcraft,<sup>3</sup> being the first one to glorify it,<sup>4</sup> and to introduce into the world "many ways of sorcery (*jâdûi*) and evil doing."<sup>5</sup> The *Dâtistân-i Dênîg* (37. 97.) relates that he had once escaped from the fetters of Ferîdûn and became through witchcraft a powerful demon, until Keresâspa, the Sâman, crushed his fiendishness with a cypress-club and "brought him back to the just law of the sacred beings". "His evil deceits done in Bâpêl" through witchcraft were a surprise to everyone.<sup>6</sup> Dûrâsrôbô, one of the five Karpau brothers, who were inimical to Zoroaster, was the fourth demon renowned for sorcery,<sup>7</sup> although his greatness in occult sciences does not compare to that of his predecessor Dahâk. It is related by the *Dinkart* (7. 3. 8.) that after the birth of Zaratusht,<sup>8</sup> this foul Dûrâsrôbô through his witchcraft cast such a fear into the mind of the child's father, Pôrûshâspo, that he asked the wizard to kill Zaratusht.<sup>9</sup> On another occasion, says *Dinkart* (7. 3. 32.) when the young child was playing with other infants, he and his brother Brâtrôk-resh terrified the children through sorcery in order to injure Zaratusht. The second of the five Karpau brothers, named Brâtrôk-rêsh, was likewise a magician. He was "the most far-

<sup>1</sup> For an explanation of this phrase see below p. 406.

<sup>2</sup> Dk. 8.35.13.

<sup>3</sup> Dk. 9.10.3.

<sup>4</sup> DD. 72.3.

<sup>5</sup> Ag. 65.

<sup>6</sup> Dk. 7.4.72.

<sup>7</sup> Dk. 7.3.4.; ZN. 202.

<sup>8</sup> When quoting Pahlavi writings I use Zaratusht for the Zarathushtra form of the Avesta.

<sup>9</sup> For an exhaustive discussion of the miracles preceding and following Zoroaster's birth, see

A. V. Williams Jackson: *Zoroaster, the Prophet of Ancient Iran*, p. 23-29, New York, 1899.

seeing as to witchcraft in his district",<sup>1</sup> and a powerful chief of the magicians".<sup>2</sup> Afrâsyâb, the Turk, is said by the *Aogemadaechâ* (65.) to have vainly tried to escape through witchcraft (*yâtu-sâri*) the onslaught of Astôvidhâd, the demon of death. The whole Turanian race was accused of sorcery, for a legend says that on seeing the partiality of the Holy Ox in settling their land-disputes with the Iranians, the Turanians proceeded to destroy by witchcraft the object of their anger.<sup>3</sup> Another demon well versed in magic was Akht, the wizard, who asked thirty-three enigmas of Yôsht-î-Fryânô,<sup>4</sup> and the same ill repute was borne by Vidrafsh, the magician, who with a weapon forged by witchcraft killed in the battle of Vishtâspa against the Hyaonians the commander-in-chief of the Iranians, Zarir.<sup>5</sup> Mahrkûsha was the last male demon to be accused of witchcraft, it being stated in the *Dînkart* (7. 9. 3.) that "most of mankind perished through the winters and witchcraft of Mahrkûs".

The harlot as a personification of lustfulness is also connected with sorcery, as shown by the following Avestan prayer contained in *Yasna* 9. 32. "O Haoma, hurl thy mace against the body of Jahi devoted to magic—(*yâtumaitiyâi*)". Even Zoroaster's own mother, Dûktaub (Av. Dugdhâvâ), the most pure of maidens, did not escape this terrible accusation of using enchantments. Tradition relates that when the demons realized the futility of their attempts to kill Zaratusht's mother, they caused Winter, the Demon of Pestilence, and Oppressive Enemies to invade the district, and claimed that Dûktaub, through her witchcraft, brought these disasters upon her tribesmen.<sup>6</sup> How susceptible people were in those days to this accusation is clearly demonstrated by the fact that no persuasions or proofs could clear Dûktaub in the eyes of her countrymen. The people demanded that she leave the district, and Dûktaub was forced to submit.<sup>7</sup> In like manner, Zoroaster, the prophet himself, had on one occasion to suffer from the consequences of such an accusation. The *Zartusht-Nâmâh* (895-940) relates that the wise men of king Gushtâsp, jealous of Zaratusht's success at court, accused him of

<sup>1</sup> Dk. 7.3.21.

<sup>2</sup> ZN. 330.

<sup>3</sup> Dk. 7.2.63.

<sup>4</sup> YF. 4.10.

<sup>5</sup> YZ. 74.99.

<sup>6</sup> Dk. 7.2.6.7.

<sup>7</sup> Dk. 7.2.9.

practising sorcery. All proofs being against him, the prophet was cast for a time into prison, but finally released by a miracle.

The inference that the Evil-Spirit, Ahriman, practised sorcery can be drawn from the nature of the technical term for the verb "to create" that is used to denote the act of "creating" by Ahriman. The Avesta uses in such cases the expression *fra-kərəntat*, which is usually rendered by "counter-created" or "mis-created". In an article which appeared in the Spiegel Memorial Volume<sup>1</sup> I have shown that this expression has a derogatory meaning and that it is used to differentiate the "act of creating" by Angra-Mainyu, which is unlawful and pernicious, from that of Ahura Mazda, which is lawful and beneficial. The nature and character of Ahriman as well as that of his creatures are so heinous and horrible that they warrant the assumption of a creation by magic and witchcraft. It is therefore permissible to translate *fra-kərəntat* by "created through witchcraft", as was done by Darmesteter<sup>2</sup> in his first translation of the Vendidad. Of the many Ahrimanic creatures, the most important for our consideration are the serpent in the river, the locusts, ants, the Pairikâ Khnâthaitî, the evil work of witchcraft, menstruation, and the evil-eye, all of which are mentioned in the sacred books of Zoroastrianism.<sup>3</sup>

The struggle against witchcraft and its adherents forms a very interesting part of the Zoroastrian belief in sorcery. Ahura Mazda is said by the Selections from Zâtsparam (I. 4.)<sup>4</sup> to have been engaged in a conflict with Ahriman in order to keep away the arch-fiend from his territory and that he accomplished this "through pure words that confounded the witchcraft (*yâtûig startako karto*) of the enemy", and the same source states in another connection (Zsp. II. 7.) that the supremely-benefiting Fire struggles, as an assistant to Srôsh, with the spiritual fiend, and watches — especially at night — the "celebration of witchcraft". Zaratusht has, according to Dinkart 7.5. 8., disclosed to mankind the rites of driving out pestilence and of disabling sorcery and witchcraft,

<sup>1</sup> Leo, J. Frachtenberg, *Etymological Studies in Ormazdian and Ahrimanic words in Avestan*, pp. 269-289. Bombay, 1908.

<sup>2</sup> ZA. SBE. 4. Oxford, 1830.

<sup>3</sup> Vd. 1.2.4.6.9.13.17; 20.3.6.7.9.

<sup>4</sup> E. W. West. *The Selections of Zâd-sparam in Avesta, Pahlavi, etc. Studies in Honour of D. P. B. Sanjana*, First Series, p. 44., Strassburg, 1904.

and a Vendîdâd passage calls the Mazdayasnian law "a good remedy against the slaying by witchcraft (*yâtughnîm*)".<sup>1</sup>

The horror of the crime of sorcery made the true Zoroastrian anxious to avoid it and actuated him to repent it even in cases where no offence took place. The *Patîts*, for example, the Zoroastrian confessional formulæ, contain invariably the following phrase: "I repent with thoughts, words and deeds all my sins belonging to the grade Âgeret.....Yâtu etc."<sup>2</sup> or "I repent the utterance of magical spells,<sup>3</sup> the practice of magic, the worshipping of sorcerers,<sup>4</sup> and the teaching of witchcraft"<sup>5</sup>. Even at the moment when the Mazda-worshipper is to enter into matrimonial life, he is reminded of the crime of sorcery, as we know from the Nikâh, or marriage-prayer, which closes with the words, "Let one praise the Pure and drive away Sorcery".<sup>6</sup>

It is to be greatly regretted that so many *Nasks* of the original Avesta were lost or destroyed. From the short extracts of them given in the *Dînkart*, we can infer that they contained highly valuable information on the practice and nature of witchcraft, which is not to be found in the *Nasks* that escaped destruction. The *Nikadûm Nask*, for instance, gave an exposition of the existence of many kinds "of speaking with wizards' spells",<sup>7</sup> and it contained also a discussion of the possibility of "inflicting the death penalty upon children for speaking with wizards' spells when in company of their guardians, and also upon a woman, when she is her own guardian".<sup>8</sup> The "speaking with wizards' spells" (Av. *yâtuxtay*, Phl. *yâtûk govishnîhâ*) as noted above, was classified as one of the six modes of engaging in conflict and was looked upon as a very grave offence<sup>9</sup>. The form of such a spell, as preserved in the Pahlavi book *Farhâng-i Oim aêvak* (Reichelt's ed. 25a; Hoshangji and Haug's ed. 34. 3:72. 10.) was: (*ka gôwet ê kut*) *paê yâtûkih ape murnjinêm* which West translates: "(When one

<sup>1</sup> Vd. 3.41, ed. N. L. Westergaard, p. 360. For a discussion of *yâtughnîm* see Bartholomac, *AirWb.* col. 1281.

<sup>2</sup> *Patet Qod* 3; *Patet Erânî* 10; *Patet Aderbat* 5, in Spiegel, *Khordâ-Avesta* 207-229.

<sup>3</sup> "Paroles de sorcellerie", Darmesteter, *LeZA.* 3.173.

<sup>4</sup> "Enseigner la magie," loc. cit.

<sup>5</sup> "S'enquérir de magie," loc. cit.

<sup>6</sup> Fr. Spiegel, *Khordâ-Avesta.* 3.233.

<sup>7</sup> Dk. 8.17,6; 19.2.; 20.39.

<sup>8</sup> Dk. 8.20.83.

<sup>9</sup> See above, p. 403.

says) I will destroy thee by witchcraft" <sup>1</sup>. The *Nask* from which this quotation is taken treated also the subject "of evidence of witchcraft, of the infliction of the death penalty on account of entertaining fondness for witchcraft and for laughing at it" <sup>2</sup>. It contained likewise a summary of the practice of witchcraft "as far as the moderate and justifiable production of mutual afflictiveness thereby was concerned" <sup>3</sup>. The *Sakâdum Nask*, moreover, is reported to have given a discussion of the "manifest indications of witchcraft and ordeals" whereby a person accused of witchcraft could be incriminated or acquitted on such a charge; <sup>4</sup> and finally, the *Spend Nask* contained "a collection of different opinions about sorcery" <sup>5</sup>. We must not neglect, moreover, to state in conclusion that there is a gloss: *yâtuwata* = *yâtûk govishnîhâ* found in the *Farhâng-i-Oîm-aêvak* (Reichelt's ed. 25a; Hoshangji and Haug's ed. 34. 3 : 72. 10). This completes the list of practically all passages in the Zoroastrian literature that allude to the practice of sorcery and witchcraft.

From what has been said above, it can be seen that the Iranians (as they appear to us from their religious writings) were confronted with the primitive belief in sorcery and witchcraft from the earliest times. They held it, however, in accordance with the pure principles of their lofty religion, in extreme abhorrence, putting it on an equal footing with the three great sins, which the Mazdayasnian religion deems inexpiable <sup>6</sup>. The practice of sorcery undoubtedly existed in ancient Iran, being present subconsciously in the minds of the people even in the days of Zoroaster. It did not, however, play as important a role as among the other races, owing to the strict adherence of the Iranians to the Mazdayasnian religion and to its sound and simple teachings. But, later on, when the influence of Zoroastrianism began to decline, the belief in sorcery assumed larger proportions, and became a powerful factor in the everyday life of the Iranian. This latter point is substantiated by the fact that in the Avesta proper the allusions to sorcery and witchcraft are quite scarce, whereas in the Pahlavi and other post-Zoroastrian writings there are numer-

<sup>1</sup> E. W. West, *Pahlavi Texts*, *SBE*, 37.40. n. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Dk. 8.19.64.65.

<sup>3</sup> Dk. 8.20.39.

<sup>4</sup> Dk. 8.42.1.3.

<sup>5</sup> Dk. 7.8.6.

<sup>6</sup> Vd. 1.11.12.16 ; Dk. 8.35.13.



ous references to it, showing thereby that the Iranians too — as so many other races — had finally become the victims of the mysterious fascination of Magic.

## 2. WIZARDS, WITCHES, KAVIS AND KARPANS.<sup>1</sup>

The belief in wizards and witches, that is to say, in individuals who exercise some mysterious dread power over others, has sufficiently been indicated in the preceding chapter to require any further introduction. A belief in such beings has existed at different times among every people, and the nature attributed to the idea of them has varied only according to the individual conceptions of magic. The Iranian sorcerer (Av. *yātu*, Phl. *yâtúk*, Persian *jâdú*) differs in no respect from his compeer in the other races. He is a human being whose mind is bent solely upon harming his fellow-creatures. The witch (Av. *pairika*, Phl. *parík*, Persian *parî*)<sup>2</sup> is the feminine counterpart of the wizard, and has a somewhat different nature in ancient Persia from that usually assigned to her. She corresponds more to the idea of an enchantress, and is represented as a beautiful, supernatural female, whose rancor is aimed chiefly at seducing the Mazdayasnian from the true religion by means of love-artifices.<sup>3</sup>

The Kavis<sup>4</sup> and Karpans, who are commonly associated with this evil company in the formulaic anathema of the Avestan texts, hold a somewhat different position than the two preceding in the Zoroastrian hierarchy of malignant creatures. These names were originally applied to the priests and kings of the non-Zoroastrian faith.<sup>5</sup> They afterwards became the enemies both of the people and the Mazdayasnian religion, and they evinced an exceptional hatred

<sup>1</sup> Of the vast number of demons only such are considered in this paper as are expressly alluded to as wizards or witches.

<sup>2</sup> Her name appears still in Modern Persian as *Peri*, a kind of fairy, and is familiar through the lyric in Moore's *Lalla Rookh*: "There stood a Peri at the Gate."

<sup>3</sup> A. V. Williams Jackson, *Die Iranische Religion in Grundriss der Iranischen Philologie*, 2.665. Strassburg, 1896-1904; Bartholomae, *AirWb.* col. 864 under *pairiká*.

<sup>4</sup> It must be borne in mind that the Avesta makes a distinction between good and wicked Kavis. The good Kavis like Kavi Vishtâspa, Kavi Usan are mentioned in Ys. 12.7.; 46.14.; 51.16.; 53.2.; ; Yt 5.45.108.; 13.132.; 19.71.; etc.

<sup>5</sup> Ys. 61.3.; Vd. 18.1.; 21.1. See also Darmesteter, *LeZ.A.* 1. 261.; Haug, *Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings and Religion of the Parsis*, 3d. ed. (edited by E. W. West) p. 239. London, 1884.; and Bartholomae, *Air, Wb.* cols. 454, 666.

towards the prophet and his immediate family.<sup>1</sup> Tradition renders these two names as “blind and deaf” (to the teachings of Zoroaster).

In accordance with the vicious nature of the wizards and witches, the Zoroastrian writings represent them as creations of Angra-Mainyu. The Pahlavi *Dînkart* (9.24.16.) relates that the Evil-Spirit once roared thus: “I have produced for the annoyance of any upholder of that (Ahuramazdian) religion 99,999 wizards”. Another passage, in the *Dâtistân-i Dênig* (37.55.) says that “the fiend of the gloomy race produced affliction of many, (namely) the witches of nature”, and, according to *Vendîdâd* 1.9., Angra-Mainyu created the witch Khnāthaiti, who clave unto Keresâspa. The *Shatrôihâ-i-Airân* refers to Ahriman as a sorcerer full of destruction, who built the city of Amui, the home of Zaratusht, the Spitama;<sup>2</sup> and in addition to these references, the *Dâtistân-i Dênig* (39. 11.) mentions the fact that as soon as Ahriman came upon the creatures, demons and witches rushed upon the earth.

The nature of the witches is partly described in the holy books. According to Yasht 8. 8., they fly in the shape of falling stars between the earth and heavens, and the later writings depict them as “overspreading the light and glory of the shining luminaries”,<sup>3</sup> as “opposing the celestial sphere and the constellations of the Zodiac”,<sup>4</sup> and as trying “to cut and break up the road and passage of the sun, moon and stars”.<sup>5</sup> Another Pahlavi tradition, contained in the *Dâtistân-i Dênig* (24. 5.), says that they collect the crimes and sins of a person that are unatoned for, and bring them to the accounting on the third night of one’s death. To the wizards was ascribed the faculty of killing persons<sup>6</sup>, of bringing diseases upon them<sup>7</sup>, and of using the nail-paring which was thrown away without performing the prescribed rites, as deadly weapons against the bird Ashôzushta, as described below.<sup>8</sup> These wizards were renowned as physicians, and their medical prowess was often resorted to. *Dînkart* (7. 2. 53.) narrates that when Dâktaub, the mother of Zaratusht, was rendered sickly by the demons, she went

<sup>1</sup> E. W. West, *Pahlavi Texts*, *SBE.* 37. 111. n. 4.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. Modi, *Shatrôihâ-i-Airân* translated with notes, p. 59, Bombay, 1899.

<sup>3</sup> DD. 37.56.                      <sup>4</sup> MKh. 49.16.                      <sup>5</sup> MKh. 49.13.14.

<sup>7</sup> Dk. 8.42.1,                      Vd. 17.10. ; Bd. 19.19. ; Sd. 14.10. See also p. 426.

<sup>8</sup> Vd. 7. 3.

to consult a wizard-physician, named, Storko.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately, she was deterred by Ahuramazd, who warned her that the medical treatment by a wizard would mean destruction to her. The *Selections from Zât-sparam* (18. 1.2.5.) relate that when Zaratusht was declared by the Karaps to be foolish, senseless and secretly corrupted, his father went with him to a wizard to have him cured. The wizard, as the story goes on, urinated into a cup and offered it to Zaratusht in the hope that by drinking this potion the prophet would become really polluted.

Wizards were known also as astrologers and interpreters of signs. The *Selections from Zât-sparam* (14.16.17.) tell that Zaratusht laughed aloud at his birth. The father wished to know the reason of this uncommon phenomenon, and he asked a wizard who answered him thus: "He who laughs during his birth does so, because he sees Righteousness as his end". In another passage Pôrûshâspô is said to have asked a Karap wizard for an explanation of the marks and specks on Zaratusht's body<sup>2</sup>. The *Yâtkâr-î Zarîrân* (35-39) describes how King Vishtâsp asked Jâmâsp, the foreteller, to foretell from the stars the probable results of his battle with the magician Arjâsp of the white Hyaonas. The prophecy did not please the King, and he angrily exclaimed: "You magician, you deceitful slave, you are not right, since your mother was a sorceress and your father a liar"<sup>3</sup>.

Wizards and witches were especially dreaded for their malicious vindictiveness towards pregnant women and newly-born children. Thus the *Dînkart* (8.38.6), *Shâyast lâ-shâyast* (12. 12.) and the *Sad-dar* (16. 1-4.) are unanimous in advising the maintenance of a fire for at least three days and nights in a house that shelters a pregnant woman, or a woman recently delivered of a child and of a newly-born child, "in order that the wizard and witches may not do any harm unto them"<sup>4</sup>.

The Iranian wizards and witches, like those believed in by other races, give birth to various noxious creatures. We are told by the *Bândahishn* (23. 1.) that when Yima lost the glory of his

<sup>1</sup> See also *Zsp.* 14.3.4.

<sup>2</sup> *Zsp.* 16 2.

<sup>3</sup> *YZ.* 51.

<sup>4</sup> The custom of burning a light day and night for the protection of a newly-born child is quite universal. See Elworthy, *The Evil Eye*, p. 425f.

sovereignty, he fled with his sister Yimak from the country. A witch and a demon who were sent by the demons to overtake the fleeing couple, won their confidence, and the four continued the journey together. After a certain period the wizard married Yimak, while Yima espoused the witch. Various noxious creatures, such as the bear, Gandarep, Gôsâbar, the tortoise, frog, and others were said to have been the offspring of these unions. The terrified Yimak wished to divorce the demon, and one day when Yima and the wizard were intoxicated, she changed garments and places with the witch and lay down with Yima, performing thereby the *Khvêtûk-das* (Av. *vaêtvadatha*), the next-of-kin-marriage, which was looked upon, later on, as a powerful means of smiting wizards and witches.<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to note that, according to the Zoroastrian belief, the negro owes his origin to such a union. The Pahlavi tradition relates that, during the reign of Azhi Dahâka, a young woman was admitted to a demon and a young man coupled with a witch. On seeing each other, they had sexual intercourse and "owing to this one intercourse the black-skinned negro arose".<sup>2</sup>

The sacred books of the Zoroastrians mention many individual wizards and witches whose names are handed down to posterity through some great malicious deed. Mahrkûsha, mentioned above, was one of these. The *Dînkart* (7. 9.3.) states that he was a powerful wizard who brought awful winters into the world, so that within three such winters a greater part of men and animals perished miserably. Another famous wizard, according to *Dînkart* (2.6.8., 7.1.38.39., 9.23.5.), was Frasiyâv or Frangrasiyak, the Tûr, (equivalent to *Franrasyan* in the Avesta), who tried to obtain the glory of Kaî Khosru. Of world-wide fame was also Akht, the sorcerer, called by *Zât-sparam* (23.10.) *Kâbed-ûs spâê*, who killed many inhabitants of the City of Enigma-Expounders (*Shatrô-î Frashnô-vajârâno*) for not being able to answer his thirty-three questions and who was in turn slain by Yôshtî-î-Fryânô, the pious<sup>3</sup>. The same Akht was known likewise as "the enemy of good men", and as one who "refused to practise the *Khvêtûk-das*".<sup>4</sup> Not

<sup>1</sup> E. W. West, *The Meaning of Khvetuk-das* SBE. 18,418-420.

<sup>2</sup> Bd. 23.2.

<sup>3</sup> YF. 1.2. etc.

<sup>4</sup> E. W. West, *The Meaning of Khvetuk-das*, SBE. 18,411.

inferior in iniquitous practices, according to the *Yâtkâr-î Zarîrân* was the sorcerer Vidrâfsh. It is related that he was sent by Arjâsp, the king of the Hyaxas, at the head of a large army against the Iranians. In the battle that took place, he killed by means of a magic weapon, the Iranian general, Zârîr, and many other noble Iranians, until he met death at the hands of Bastûr, the youthful son of the Iranian chief<sup>1</sup>. The demon Kundak is called by *Bândahishn* (28.42.) "the steed of wizards" and Nâmûn, the grandfather of Aûzôbô, is spoken of by the same book (31.35.) as sorcerer, although no spiteful deed is recorded of him.

Of the witches, whose names the Zoroastrian writings handed down to us, the most harmful was the enchantress *Khnâthaitî*, who, according to *Vendîdât* (1.9. : 19.5.) clave unto Keresâspa. Another famous witch, so *Yasht* 8. 51,53,54. tells us, was the Pairikâ Duzhyâyrya, an embodiment of famine, who waged eternal war against the material world of Ahura Mazda and who was successfully opposed by the rain-star, Tishtrya. The third and not the least in this trio, according to the Pahlavi romance *Artakshâr-î Pâpakân*<sup>2</sup> (9.17.), was the daughter of Ardavân, who attempted to poison her husband at the suggestion of one of her brothers.

In some instances, the special names of witches have not come down to us. The *Selections from Zât-spâram* (12.17-25), for example, relate that when Sritô out of compassion refused to slay the Holy Ox, Kaî-Us sent him to a jungle "in which there dwelt many chiefs of witches". These witches hardened his feelings and he killed the ox. But afterwards a feeling of remorse seized upon him and he begged the King to have him put to death. Kaî-Us sent him to a jungle inhabited "by a witch in the shape of a dog". Sritô killed this witch, but she divided herself into two. He then constantly slew these witches, "until there were a thousand of them, and this hoard finally killed Sritô".

Some idea of the nature of the Kavis and Karpans, who belong to the ribald crew, can be gained from the Zoroastrian *Gâthâs*. According to *Yasna* 32.12., 44.20., they are evil creatures, whose "curse has slain the King's life", and who "love Grehma above Righteousness". They unite themselves with power in order to

<sup>1</sup> YZ, 3,22.48.73.74.99-107.

<sup>2</sup> D. D. P. Sanjana. *The Karnamê i Artakshâr-î Pâpakân*. Bombay, 1896.



destroy the life of men by their evil deeds.<sup>1</sup> They crush mankind, and "their inspiration enables the tyrants of the provinces to continue their pernicious rule".<sup>2</sup> "They are enemies of creation", says Yasna 51.14., "they do not grant complete harvests from the fields", nor do they give "perfect pasture to the Kine", and they diffuse woe by their teachings.

The later Zoroastrian writings, in which their names are mentioned merely formulaically, know nothing more detailed about the malignant disposition of the Kavis and Karpans towards mankind. An exception, however, is found in a passage in the *Selections from Zât-spāram* (15.2.) which states that "the Karaps and Aûsikhshes were the devastation of Iran". Otherwise these beings, especially the Karpans, are represented by them as spiteful creatures, whose harmful deeds are aimed solely at Zoroaster and his mother. The above mentioned canon (*Zsp.* 15. 3.) relates that the leaders in this struggle against the prophet were five brothers belonging to the same Karpan family, and it mentions their names as : Brâdrûkhsh, Brâdrôyisn, Brâdrêsh, the Tûr, Hazân, and Vadast. Other versions, when narrating the iniquitous deeds of the individual brothers, give their names as : Dûrâsrôbâ, the wizard,<sup>3</sup> Brâdrôk-rêsh, the Karap, "who was great in destroying the righteous,"<sup>4</sup> Brâdavaxhsh, "the heterodox wizard, who put to death the best of men,"<sup>5</sup> Vaêdvoist, "the enemy of all sacred things,"<sup>6</sup> and Zâk.<sup>7</sup>

There are many passages in the sacred books that deal with the animosity of the Karpans against the Spitama family to which Zarathushtra belonged, and they seem to echo some distant note of priestcraft and reform. The *Dinkart*, for example, according to its own statement in the introductory chapter (*Dk.* 5.2.3.), tells "about wizards, witches, tyrants, Kings and Karpans, who have produced outrage for Zaratusht during his birth and childhood with a desire for his destruction". We know from the same canon (*Dk.* 7.2.9.) that first his mother was chiefly exposed to their rancor. They accused her of witchcraft and induced her countrymen to banish her from the district. As soon as she became pregnant they afflicted her with a painful fever so that she

<sup>1</sup> Ys. 46.11.

<sup>2</sup> Ys. 48.10.

<sup>3</sup> Dk. 2.42-44. ; 7.3.4.5.7.32. ; Zsp. 19.1.

<sup>4</sup> Dk. 7.3.21.32. ; 8.35 13

<sup>5</sup> DD. 72.8.

<sup>6</sup> Dk. 7.4.21.

<sup>7</sup> Dk. 7.4.64.

might have to seek medical treatment from a wizard.<sup>1</sup> When they saw that they could not prevent the birth of the child, the wizards at once concentrated their attacks upon the infant. The *Selections from Zât-sparam* tell us that during the mother's parturition seven Karpan-wizards sat at the foot of the bed.<sup>2</sup> After the child's birth, thus the tradition goes on, the father Pôrûshâspô, whose kinsmen were wizards, according to *Dinkart* 5.2.4., invited Dûrâsrôbô to inspect the marks and specks on the infant's body. The Karap then started to twist with his paws the tender head of the child, but had to desist from this vicious action, because his hands began to wither.<sup>3</sup> On another occasion, we are told, the Karap persuaded Pôrûshâspô, that Zaratusht ought to be killed. The father consequently surrendered his son to the wizard, who at first attempted to burn him alive.<sup>4</sup> But as the wood did not catch fire, he cast him before oxen, in the hope that the beasts might trample the youth to death. But here again Providence saved the boy.<sup>5</sup> He then placed the helpless infant on a narrow path, leading to a drinking-pool for horses<sup>6</sup>; and as the horses carefully avoided the infant, he cast it into a wolf's lair whose cubs were killed before, so that the enraged wolf might surely revenge the death of its cubs upon the innocent child. The sorcerer was again foiled in his designs.<sup>7</sup>

Seeing that they could not destroy the life of Zoroaster, the Karaps strove to attack his soul. The *Selections from Zât-sparam* (18.5.) relate that Pôrûshâspô brought his son to the wizards to cure him from his alleged foolishness and they gave him a foul potion with the hope of contaminating his nature. Another interesting encounter between Zarathushtra and the Karaps is told by *Dinkart* 7.3.34-35, and *Zât-sparam* 19.1-3. The sorcerer Dûrâsrôbô one day visited Pôrûshâspô's house and was asked by the latter to consecrate a bowl of mare's milk. Zaratusht objected to this and with the sagacity of a child intentionally spilled the milk. The enraged Karap thereupon threatened to destroy the boy, and not succeeding in this he left the house in disgust and despair.

1 Dk. 7.2.53.; Zsp. 14.2.

2 Zsp. 14.3. Cf. also ZN. 184. *Dinkart* 7.3.2. substitutes mid-wives (*dâyâ*) for witches.

3 Dk. 7.4.7.; Zsp. 16.2-4.; ZN. 215.

4 Dk. 7.3.8-11.; Zsp. 16.7.; ZN. 220ff.

5 Dk. 7.3.11.12.; Zsp. 16.4-6.; ZN. 238ff.

6 Dk. 7.3.13.14.; Zsp. 16.6.; ZN. 260ff.

7 Dk. 7.3.15.; Zsp. 16.8.; ZN. 282ff.

The attempt made by Dûrâsrôbô and Brâdrôk-rêsh to injure Zaratusht while he was playing with other children has been mentioned above.<sup>1</sup>

The *Dînkart* (7.4.64.67.) tells us that through revelation the prophet was aware of the plotting by the Karaps against his life. This, however, did not prevent him from attempting to proselyte them. From the *Dînkart* (7.4.2.6.14.), furthermore, we know that by the command of Ahuramazd, Zaratusht recited the prophecy of his religion before an assembly of Kîgs and Karaps, and that when they heard those words, the Karaps rushed upon him striving to bring about his death. The prophet, however, did not lose his courage; he continued to give his prophetic message and to exhort his adversaries to embrace the religion of Ahura Mazda.

That the sorcerous Karaps had sufficient reason to hate and fear Zoroaster is a well established fact. According to Brâtrôk-rêsh's own admission, they hated the son of Pôrûshâspô, because "owing to his action, the demon and fiend, the wizard and witch, will become buried below the earth and fall paralyzed back to hell"; and "because he will break every enchantment and destroy every work of the Devs"<sup>2</sup>. A further recitation of the passages in which Kavis and Karpans are alluded to as wicked beings, would take too much space.<sup>3</sup> From the examples already cited, the reader will be able to judge sufficiently the Zoroastrian conception of their malicious nature.<sup>4</sup>

As a consequence of their vicious character, the wizards, witches, Kavis and Karpans were extremely dreaded,<sup>5</sup> and their fate was held out as a warning to every faithful Zoroastrian. Thus, among the very first things seen in hell by Artâ-Vîrâf, according to the well known Pahlavi treatise *Artâ-Vîrâf Nâmak* (5.8.) was "the distress and pain and evil stench in the punishments of various

<sup>1</sup> See above p. 403.

<sup>2</sup> Dk. 7.3.27-30; Zsp. 17.4.

<sup>3</sup> ZN. 201ff; 339ff.

<sup>4</sup> Those who wish further information are referred to the following additional passages: Ya. 51.12; 32.14,15; Dk. 3.20 24.26.28.34.41.50; 7.2.45; 8.26.60; 9.29.3.4; 39.1.9.; 44.14,15; Zsp. 23.5; *Farhâng-i Oim âevak* (Reichert's ed. 4f., Hoshangji and Haug's ed. 15,55); and the *Zaratusht Nâmah*.

<sup>5</sup> There is still a third class of wicked beings, devoted to magic, whose nature does not seem transparent. Those are the Kahvaredhas, Kayadhas and Zandas mentioned in Ya. 61.2.3; Vd. 18.55; 21.17; *Farhâng-i Oim âevak* (Reichert's ed. 20., Hoshangji and Haug's ed. 30.9; 70.3.) Cf. also Bartholomae, *Air Wb.* cols. 462,1622.

<sup>6</sup> Ya. 8.4 calls any Mazdayasnan not adhering to the true religion a magician.

kinds which the demons and sorcerers and sinners have to undergo." The killing of wizards is recommended by *Dînkart* (8.20.98.) as a good means of penance for sins.

The fear and terror with which the followers of Ahura Mazda looked upon these creatures is best exemplified in the prayers of the faithful. Very few prayers do not contain a supplication to the benevolent spirits to crush the sorcerers and to protect the pious from their rancor. "May the much-desired Airyaman" — prays the believer with *Vendîdâd* 20.10.12 — "smite all manner of diseases and deaths, all the Yâtus and Pairikâs, and all the wicked Jainis"; or according to *Yasht* 2.11: "Let the Yâtus be crushed, O Zarathushtra, both Daêvas and men"; and "grant, O Mithra, that I may smite the malice of Yâtus and Pairikâs, the Kavis and Karpan"<sup>1</sup>. The reciter of *Yasna* 9.18. supplicates Haoma thus: "I make claim to Thee, O Haoma, that I may overwhelm the angry hate of the sorcerers and witches, of the Kavis and Karpan". He furthermore begs: "Let not our good waters help a sorcerer"<sup>2</sup>; and concludes with the assurance: "Off do I abjure the Daevas and all possessed by them, the sorcerers and all that hold to their devices, and every being of that sort"<sup>3</sup>. A still further prayer contains the ringing appeal: "May we be free from the wretched Kuro and the Tarewani and the Karpan",<sup>4</sup> or, "May Ahriman be smitten and the deceiver cursed, he with the demons, sorcerers and Pairikâs"<sup>5</sup>. In his daily prayer, moreover, when the pious believer ties the sacred girdle (*kusti*) around his body and holds it in a certain prescribed manner, he recites in *Pâzand*: "May Ahuramazd be lord and Ahriman, unprevailing, keeping far away, smitten and defeated. May Ahriman, the demons and fiends, the wizards and wicked, the Kigs and Karaps, the tyrants and apostates, the impious enemies and witches be smitten and defeated"<sup>6</sup>.

Sacrifices and libations were offered and still are offered to the various Ormazdian creatures for the destruction of sorcerers and witches. The *Yashts* (5.22.24.26.50.; 19.26.28.29.31.) tell us that Haoshyangha, the Paradhâta, Yima Khshaêta, Kavi Usa and Husravah offered a sacrifice to Aredvî Sûra Anâhita for the

<sup>1</sup> Yt. 10.34.59.

<sup>2</sup> Ys. 65.8.

<sup>3</sup> Ys. 12.4.

<sup>4</sup> Sir. 2.2. Cf. J.J. Modi, *Two Amulets*, p. 12.

<sup>5</sup> Barthelemy, *Gujastak Abâlîsh* 9.9.

<sup>6</sup> E. W. West, *The Nirang-i Kusti*, *SBE.* 18.384.

“overpowering of the Yâtus and Pairikâs, Kavis and Karpans.” In the same manner Takhma-Urupa is reputed to have asked and obtained from Vaya, the power of destroying the Yâtus and Pairikâs.<sup>1</sup> Zarathushtra himself is reported by Yasht 1.5.6.10.11. to have asked Ahura Mazda: “Reveal unto me Thy names, O Ahura Mazda, that I may afflict all the Yâtus and Pairikâs and that neither Yâtu nor Pairikâ may afflict me.” The Zoroastrian of to-day sacrifices unto the *Haptôiringas*, or constellation of the Great Bear, in order to oppose the Yâtu and Pairikâ,<sup>2</sup> and he chants the Ahuna-Vairyâ, the Asha-Vahishta and the Yenhê Hâtâm as a means of combating and overcoming.<sup>3</sup> He offers up a sacrifice to the Sun,<sup>4</sup> to Tishtrya,<sup>5</sup> and to Thraëtona,<sup>6</sup> and pronounces the praise of Sraosha<sup>7</sup> for the same purpose. He worships the Fravashis of the holy king Hushyaothna<sup>8</sup> and Husravah<sup>9</sup> “to withstand the Yâtus and Pairikâs, the Kavis and Karpans” and he believes that by performing a sacrifice to Vaya<sup>10</sup> and by exalting the milk-offering and libation,<sup>11</sup> he will be exempt from the onslaughts of Yâtus and Pairikâs.

Besides these prayers and oblations the Mazda-worshipper performs other rites and ceremonies which, according to his belief, will help him in his struggle against these vicious creatures. Thus he follows the commandment of *Vendîdâd* 8.80. by offering sweet-smelling wood unto the Fire, in the belief that “wheresoever the wind will carry the perfume of the fire, there Âtar, the son of Ahura-Mazda, will go and kill thousands of Daêvas, fiends and couples of Yâtus and Pairikâs”, and he purifies a faithful man by reciting the following formula contained in *Vendîdâd* II.9. 12. : “I drive away the Pairikâ, that comes upon the fire, water, earth, cow and tree.” Finally, the truly orthodox perform the Khvêtûk-das in order to destroy wizards and witches.<sup>12</sup>

Numerous are the elements and persons that have the power of smiting wizards and witches. The *Dâtistân-î-Dênig* (38.32.) states that all sacred ceremonies of the earth, the light, rains and angels vanquish wizards and witches, and Yasna 4.3. asserts that “every heavenly Yazata will free men from the Yâtus and

<sup>1</sup> Yt. 15.12.<sup>2</sup> Sir 2.13.<sup>3</sup> Ys. 61.63.<sup>4</sup> Yt. 6.4.<sup>5</sup> Yt. 8.44.<sup>6</sup> Sir. 2.2.<sup>7</sup> Yt. 11.6.<sup>8</sup> Yt. 13.104.<sup>9</sup> Yt. 13.135.<sup>10</sup> Yt. 15.56.<sup>11</sup> Ys. 16.8.<sup>12</sup> E. W. West, *The Meaning of the Khvêtûk-das*, *SBE*, 18.420



Pairikâs." According to *Dînkart* 7.5.8., Zaratusht disclosed the rites of overpowering demons and witches, and opposed successfully many wizards and demon-worshippers.<sup>1</sup> The priest, says *Dînkart* 7.8.29., are "producing the destruction of harm and of the wizards"; and *Yasht* 3.5.9.12.16., claims that the Airyaman prayer "smites down the strength of the Yâtus and Pairikâs and of the Jahi, addicted to the Yâtu". The mere names of the Ameshaspentas, according to *Yasht* 4.8. smite "the seed and kin of the Karpans". *Aredvî Sûra Anâhita* is said in the same *Yasht* to "crush down the hates of all Yâtus and Pairikâs, Kavis and Karpans"<sup>2</sup>, and Mithra is spoken of by *Yasht* 10.26, as "breaking the skulls of the Daêvas and punishing the Pairikâs".

The Haptôiringas, or the seven stars of the polar constellation, are renowned for opposing the Yâtus and the Pairikâs,<sup>3</sup> and, according to *Yasht* 8.39., the star Tishtrya is a destroyer of the witches. Verethraghna, the personification of Victory, crushes the malice of the Yâtus and Pairikâs, Kavis and Karpans<sup>4</sup>, and the hero Tâkhmôrup is credited with the smiting of wizards and witches and with removing them from among men.<sup>5</sup> Keresâspa became famous through the killing of Pitaona "attended by many Pairikâs"<sup>6</sup>, and Jamshêd is glorified by the *Jâmâsp-Nâmak* (4) for having given the demons and fiends into the power of men; he is likewise extolled for having deprived of sight seven vicious fairies. We are informed by the *Dînâ-î Maînôg-î Khirat* (57.27.) that Zaratusht threatened Ahriman to shatter the bodies of his demons "through the Hôm, the sacred twigs and the good religion", and we know from *Dînkart* (7.4.61.) that when the prophet chanted the *Yathâ-ahû-vairyô* formula, the fiend was annihilated and Cheshmak, the Karap, rushed away. Even the animals take part in the eternal struggle against these spiteful creatures of Angra-Mainyu. In the *Bûndahishn*, so often alluded to, we find a passage (Bd. 19.33.) which states that the cock was created in opposition to the wizard, and this highly interesting statement is corroborated by the Pahlavi *Shâyast lâ-shâyast* (10.30.) and the Persian *Sad-dar* (32.1-5.).

From what has been shown it is clear that the ancient Iranian

<sup>1</sup> Dk. 5.2.8.      <sup>2</sup> Yt 5.13.      <sup>3</sup> Yt. 8.12; Mkh. 49.15.      <sup>4</sup> Yt. 14.4.62.  
<sup>5</sup> Dk. 7.1.19, and J. J. Modi, *Pâzend Jâmâspi*, 4.      <sup>6</sup> Yt. 19.41.

populated his corporeal world with various creatures of a malignant disposition, whom he feared and hated, dreaded and despised. In his struggle against these enemies of organized society he invoked the aid of all creatures, both of heaven and earth, and assisted himself by sacrifices and holy spells against the powers. In that respect the Zoroastrian conception of sorcerers and witches differed little or not at all from that of the other races. There is, however, one very interesting feature in the Mazdayasnian attitude towards enchanters, which occurs nowhere else and which marks their religion of the East as a religion of forgiving indulgence and ultimate hope for all, even for the greatest sinners. In the final day of Resurrection, when all sinners will be called to account for their deeds, "then" —says *Dinkart* 7.8.40. — "even a Karap and Kaî will be mingled again with the good, after having expiated their crimes by allotted punishments." This passage illustrates clearly the great forbearance of the Zoroastrian faith for the unhappy sinners, and it forms a beautiful appendix to the legendary story of King Dâvânôs, whose whole body, according to tradition, was gnawed by a noxious animal as a punishment for his evil actions, with the exception of his right foot, because with this limb he had once kicked a bundle of hay within the reach of a ploughing ox.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. THE EVIL-EYE.

The belief that there is a power of working evil by a glance of the eye has existed in all times and in all countries. Thomas Elworthy says : " It is found in the literature of every people in every land, since history began to be written. No science, no religion, no laws have been able to root out this fixed belief ; and no power has ever been able to eradicate it from the human mind" ;<sup>2</sup> and Bacon calls it " the most importunate and continual affection."<sup>3</sup> The possibility of thus working injury was accepted as an allowed fact alike by the Fathers of the Church, by mediæval physicians, and all writers on occult sciences, while in our own day it still exists among all savage nations and even in our very midst.<sup>4</sup> We all know what the *ophthalmos Baskanos* meant to the Greeks, and the *fascinatio* to the Romans, and we

<sup>1</sup> Sls. 12.12 ; Av. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Elworthy, *The Evil Eye*, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Bacon, *Essay " On Envy"*.

<sup>4</sup> Elworthy, *The Evil Eye*, p. 3.

may well comprehend the dreadful fear with which the English peasant still utters his "*He is overlooked*". We also know what a terrible predicament it was in the Middle Ages to be accused of casting the evil glance ; and all those who travel through Italy will bear witness to the extent of the superstitious fear attached by the children of the sunny land to the *Malocchio* or *jettatura*. We see evidence of this belief in the power of the eye in the very beginnings of Egyptian Mythology. The supreme Ptah is said to be the father of gods and men. He brought forth all the other gods from his eye, "which goes to show", says Elworthy, "that of all emanations those from the eye were the most potent".<sup>1</sup>

The ancient Iranians likewise believed in the existence of this dread power<sup>2</sup> and they connected it closely with the practice of witchcraft. Aspendiârji's translation of the *Vendîdâd*, in speaking of witchcraft, states that it is exercised either by the eye or by the voice. According to Zoroastrianism the evil-eye is a creation of Angra-Mainyu<sup>3</sup> himself and its power was frequently exercised by the arch-fiend. *Vendîdâd* 22.2. says that Ahura Mazda spoke to Zarathushtra thus : "When I made this mansion, the ruffian looked (*âkasat*) at me and created against me 99,999 diseases." In translating the word *âkasat* Darmesteter<sup>4</sup> amplifies it by the phrase "jeta le mauvais oeil", and in addition quotes a passage from Eznig's *Refutatio Haeresiarum* which states that "Ahriman corrupted the good creatures of Ormuzd by casting upon them the evil eye." The Pahlavi canonical books also ascribe to Ahriman the faculty of harming people by a glance. The *Dâtistân-i Dênig*, for example, (37.75.) in speaking of the contrast between Ahura Mazda and Angra-Mainyu says that Ormazd, the Creator, "is a manager with omniscient wisdom, while the contention of the fiend of perverted glance (*tar-nîgîrishn*) is through lust of defilement" ; and the *Bândahishn* (28.2.) claims that the eye-sight (*cashm mîcishn*) of Ahriman "does not refrain from doing harm to the creatures."

Ahriman was not the only demon feared because of the power

<sup>1</sup> Elworthy. *The Evil Eye*, p. 6; cf. also the following biblical injunction : "Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil-eye." *Prov.* 23.6.

<sup>2</sup> The "*Injunctions to Beh-dîns*," according to West, relate among others "to the evil-eye, the killing of Noxious Creatures, and the use of a tooth-pick." E. W. West, *Pahlavi Literature*, p. 111.

<sup>3</sup> *Vd.* 20 3.6,7,9.

<sup>4</sup> *LeZ.* 1. 2,289.

of his evil-eye. The *Bândahishn* (28.14.33.35.36.) mentions three other fiends who possessed the faculty of fascination. One of them is Arask, called the spiteful fiend of the evil eye (*dush-cashmîh*), the second is Aîgash, spoken of as the malignant-eyed fiend, who smites mankind with his eye; and the third is Astô-vidhâd, the demon of the malignant eye (*sur-cashmîh* — read *dush(?)*-*cashmîh*) “who spoils anything which men look at without saying: “In the name of God”, and whose glance drives away life.” Another demon who could exercise the power of fascination, according to *Dînkart* 7.3.39., was Brâdrôk-rêsh, one of the famous Karpan-brothers, who was to kill Zaratusht with a glance of his eye.

The glance of the eye of a woman during her menstruation period was extremely dreaded by the Zoroastrians, and the sacred books repeatedly warn these women not to look at certain objects. This fear of a menstruous woman's glance is of wide-spread occurrence, being prevalent even to-day among the inhabitants of Spain.<sup>1</sup> The Zoroastrians had special reasons thus to regard the glance of a menstruous woman, for, according to their belief, menstruation was created by Angra-Mainyu<sup>2</sup>, and it polluted everything that came in contact with it.<sup>3</sup> Mazdayasnism with its watchful anxiety over the bodily and spiritual welfare and purity of its believers, forbade them to associate with a woman during this period or to remain in her vicinity;<sup>4</sup> and in order to assure the observance of this religious law, declared the touch and the look of a menstruous woman to be harmful.

There are numerous passages in the Zoroastrian literature dealing with this injunction. The *Vendîdâd* (16.2.), for example, directs that the half, or the third, or the fourth, or even the fifth part of a house, that shelters a woman having an issue of blood, should be isolated “lest she look (*paiti-didhyât*) upon the fire;<sup>5</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Elwerthy, *The Evil Eye*, p. 22f.

<sup>2</sup> Vd. 1.17.18.; Bd. 3.67.

<sup>3</sup> Vd. 16.

<sup>4</sup> The ancient Iranians looked upon a menstruous woman as exercising contamination and she was therefore kept during that period in absolute isolation from her fellow-creatures. This custom is of a very early origin and was prescribed likewise in the Levitical Code. 15 19ff. We find a similar institution among the American Indians. See Leo. J. Fraughtenberg, *Traditions of the Coos Indians of Oregon*, in *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, 22, 25-42. Boston, 1909 (January-March). Cf. also Pliny. *Hist. nat.* 7.13.

<sup>5</sup> That the “looking” of a menstruous woman was different in character and consequences from that of other beings is also shown by the nature of the verb *paiti-didhyât* as a compound. The prefix *paiti* is an adverb implying adversity and the whole verb therefore means “to look against, to look with a hostile intention, to look with envy”. Cf. *sand-* “to work, to accomplish,” and *paiti-sandu*, “opposing”.

the *Dinkart* (8.31.22.) speaks of sickness due to the work of an evil eye or the proximity of a menstruous woman, and it states that "a menstruous woman or those possessing the evil-eye are exceedingly harmful." The *Shâyast lâ-shâyast* (3.10.) claims that a person's hands which have been sprinkled in ceremonial ablution, become unclean by the look of a menstruous woman, and the Pahlavi *Vendîdâd* (16.2.) further confirms this statement. The later Zoroastrian writing, the *Sad-dar*, (41.6.) asserts that anything looked at by a menstruous woman, diminishes in glory.

Of a specially detrimental consequence is the look of *Jahi*, the female fiend of menstruation. The *Vendîdâd* (18.63.64.) states that when Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazda to mention the name of the one that grieved him most, the Deity answered thus: "It is the *Jahi*, O Zarathushtra, whose look (*paiti-diti*) dries up one-third of the mighty floods that run from the mountains, whose glance withers one-third of the beautiful, golden-hued, growing plants, whose sight withers one-third of the strength of Spenta-Ârmaiti, and whose touch dries up in the faithful one-third of his good thoughts, good words, good deeds, and one-third of his strength, fiend-killing power and holiness". This assertion is again substantiated by the following passage taken from the *Sad-dar* (67.3-4.): "If *Jahi* looks at running water, it diminishes; if she glances at trees or shrub, the fruit becomes scanty; and if she converse with a pious man, his intelligence and holiness are withered by it".<sup>1</sup> And the *Shâyast lâ-shâyast* (3.28-29.), in restraining menstruous women from looking at beasts, plants, water and stars, justifies this restriction by stating that "*Jahi*, the fiend of menstruation, is so violent, that where another fiend does not smite anything with a look (*akhsh*) she destroys with a glance". As a natural consequence, a menstruous woman is forbidden to look even inadvertently or against her will at fire, water, beasts, plants and stars. A woman with an issue of blood who glances or comes in contact with fire or water, commits, according to the *Shâyast lâ-shâyast* (3.27.28.) a sin of one *Farmân*, of which she can repent by paying a fine of twelve *dîrhams*;<sup>2</sup> and if she repeatedly trans-

<sup>1</sup> Cf here the following passage from the Code of Manu, 4.57.: "Converse not with a menstruating woman".

<sup>2</sup> Sd. 68.1-2.



gresses this restriction she will be punished in after-life by being forced to devour her own menstrual discharge.<sup>1</sup>

In a similar connection I may note that it is a universally known fact that many persons are believed to possess the power of fascination acting against the will of the possessor. In Polish folk-lore, for example, there is a remarkable story of an unhappy man who, in spite of a most loving heart, was affected with the evil-eye and who at last blinded himself in order that he might not be the means of injury to his children.<sup>2</sup> The same superstition existed among the Zoroastrians and it is clearly demonstrated by the following ordinance, contained in *Bûndahishn* (28.35.36.) and *Sad-dar* (15.1.2.) : "When one sees anything that is welcome to the eyes, it is necessary to say 'In the name of God'. For if a person does not do it and an injury happens to that object or a disaster occurs, the person becomes a sinner."<sup>3</sup>

Like the Egyptians, Babylonians and other races, both ancient and modern, the Zoroastrians also believed in the existence of remedies against the power of the evil-eye. For example, according to *Yasht* 3.8.11. 15., the Airyaman prayer is a powerful spell against the workings of the evil-eye (*duzh-dôithra*) and according to *Yasht* II. 5., he who pronounces the praise of Sraosha is well protected against the fiend tormenting him with a glance of his eyes (*ashibya*) ; and the *Vendîdâd* (20.3.6.7.9.) states that Thrîta asked and obtained from Khshathra-Vairya some remedies, "so as to withstand the evil-eye (*agha-shay*)" ; it fails, however, to say what these remedies were. There is evidence in the Zoroastrian literature which tends to show that even those who belonged to the good creation could exercise the power of fascination, if they so desired. The opening chapter of the *Yashts* (*Yt.* 1.29.) tells us that Zarathushtra shouted to Ahriman thus, "I shall throw thee back into the earth", whereupon the ruffian was made powerless "by the eyes (*dôithrâbyô*) of Spenta-Ârmaiti." The *Selections from Zât-sparam* (19.6.) relate that during the encounter between the prophet and Dûrâsrôbô<sup>4</sup> the former answered thus the threat

<sup>1</sup> AV, 72.

<sup>2</sup> Elworthy, *The Evil Eye*, p. 25f.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the following passage from Heliodorus, *Theagenes and Chariclea* 1.140. quoted by Elworthy, *The Evil Eye*, p. 8. : "When any one looks at what is excellent with an envious eye he fills the surrounding atmosphere with a pernicious quality, and transmits his own envenomed exhalations into whatever is nearest to him "

<sup>4</sup> See above p. 414.

of the Karap : " With complete mindfulness I will look upon thee with both eyes and will utterly destroy thee ". The *Dâtistân-î Dênig* (3.7.) claims that a friend can subjugate " by a look, which is a contender with the enemy ", and the *Ganje Shâyagân* 152.<sup>1</sup> admonishes the pious man thus : " You should also know, that the boundless harm done by the infernal Ghanâmîno is prevented by not exercising the three injurious faculties, which are : the sight of the eye, the hearing of the ear, and the demon of contention ".

No exposition of the Iranian belief in the evil-eye, not even the briefest, could be complete without the allusion to the counter-belief in the Good-Eye, that is to say, in the influence of a steady glance upon all living creatures. The Zoroastrians had a special genius, named *Saoka*, to whom they alluded as the " Genius of the Good-Eye ". Zarathushtra, for instance, is reported by *Vendîdâd* 19.37. to have invoked the good Saoka " whose glance is far-reaching ; " and the *Sirôzâhs* speak of him as " the good Saoka, with the eyes of Love ".<sup>2</sup> Besides the above-quoted citations and that from the *Dâtistân-î Dênig* (3.7.)<sup>3</sup> the existence of this belief is furthermore demonstrated by passages from the *Zamyâd Yasht*, *Dâtistân-î Dênig* and *Farhâng-î Oîm aêvak*. According to the prophecy contained in the *Zamyâd Yasht* (Yt. 19.94.), Saoshyant " will look upon the whole living world with the eyes (*dôithrâbyô*) of plenty, and his look (*darəs*) will deliver to immortality the whole living creation ". The *Dâtistân-î Dênig* (3.8.) narrates that when " the unwavering look of the Creator which was upon the coming of the Evil-Spirit, was unmingled with the sight of an eye, he made . . . etc. " ; and the *Farhâng-î Oîm aêvak* (Hoshangji and Haug's ed. 23. 11 : 64.1.) has a fragment *ushtatâtîm ashîbya*, which Darmesteter translates : " le bonheur avec ses yeux ".<sup>4</sup>

In conclusion I may be permitted to mention the Zoroastrian belief that the *Sag-dîd*, the gaze of a dog, destroys the *Nasus* that rush upon the dead body<sup>5</sup> and it prevents those who carry a corpse from becoming polluted.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Peshotan D. B. Sanjana, *Ganje Shâyagân*, Bombay, 1835.

<sup>2</sup> See also Vd. 22.3.4.

<sup>3</sup> Sir. 1.3. : 2.3. etc. Cf. Darmesteter; *Le ZA*. 2.272n.

99.100.

<sup>4</sup> See above, on this page.

<sup>5</sup> *LeZA*, 3.24. (fragment 54).

<sup>6</sup> Vd. 7.3. (Westergaard's ed. p. 387) ; Phl. Vd. p. 239 ; Sls. 2.1-4.

<sup>7</sup> Sls. 2.56,63,66,71,84,85. ; 10,10,12,32,38.

## 4. NAIL-PARING AND HAIR-CUTTING IN CONNECTION WITH PRIMITIVE BELIEFS.

The custom of burning or burying the nail-parings and hair-cuttings was widely in vogue among the more primitive races, and has its foundation in the peculiar belief in Sympathetic Magic. As is well known, the main principle of Sympathetic Magic is, that an effect may be produced upon a particular subject by merely imitating it. Innumerable accounts of this belief are given by Frazer, Tylor, Lubbock, Dawson and others.<sup>1</sup> The superstition is prevalent among savage and primitive races that an evil-disposed person can harm another by obtaining possession of some part of that person's body. This belief owes its origin to the peculiar conception of the soul. Primitive man conceives of the soul as a small entity which can be present in any of the separate parts of his body, such as the nails, hair, teeth, fingers and even in his name.<sup>2</sup> Believing, therefore, that injury to a single part of his body may mean destruction to his soul, primitive man is very anxious to prevent any portion of his frame from coming into the possession of wicked persons, especially witches and sorcerers.

There is hardly a race on the globe which does not believe in this superstition in some form or other, and which does not possess thrilling tales of the harm wrought by witches through the instrumentality of a person's hair or the parings of his nails. We find this superstition among the early Romans. "Unguium Dialis", says Gellius, "et capilli segmina subter arborem felicem terra operiuntur".<sup>3</sup> (The cuttings of nails and hair of a priest of Jupiter must be buried under a tree of the auspicious kind). In the same manner, the Dutch believed in early times that hair-cuttings should never be thrown into the street, for fear that they may be picked up by witch, who by this means can bewitch the person to whom it belonged.<sup>4</sup> The early Danes, likewise, burned

<sup>1</sup> J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*; E. B. Tylor, *Early History of Mankind*; Sir John Lubbock, *Origin of Civilization*; J. Dawson, *Australian Aborigines*, Melbourne, 1881.

<sup>2</sup> I am inclined to believe that the ancient Hebrew law forbidding the Jews to pronounce the real name of Jehovah is a direct consequence of this superstition, which finds its parallel in the German Lohengrin Saga, where Lohengrin may remain among men only as long as his real name is not known.

<sup>3</sup> Aulus Gellius, *Noctae Atticae* 10.15.15.

<sup>4</sup> B. Thorpe, *Northern Mythology* 3.33. London 1851, 1852.

or buried the cuttings of their hair and nails, lest evil-disposed persons should exercise enchantment with them upon the person who had borne them.<sup>1</sup> The lower classes in Ireland believe that human hair should not be burnt, but be buried, in the superstition that its owner will claim it at the Resurrection.<sup>2</sup> The orthodox Jew of to-day always burns his nail-parings, in order that no other person may take possession of them and prevent him from appearing with complete finger-nails on the day of Resurrection. In England there was a time when the nails were cut off by knives or scissors and thrown into the fire, for fear a witch might get them.<sup>3</sup>

A similar custom of burying the nail-parings and clippings from the hair exists among the Zoroastrians, past and present, and its origin is explained in the *Vendîdâd*, *Bûndahishn*, *Shâyast lâ-Shâyast*, and the *Sad-dar*.

A large portion of the seventeenth Fargard of the *Vendîdâd* is devoted to this subject, and we find there the statement that a man who combs his hair or pares his nails and drops the parings into a hole or crack, commits a deadly sin "whereby he offers up a sacrifice to the Daêvas". The Zoroastrian is, therefore, urged to bury his hair or nails in a hole dug especially for this purpose and to recite certain prayers over them. The explanation given is that the nails or hair clippings may otherwise become "spears, knives and weapons in the hands of the Daêvas against the bird Ashô-zushta".<sup>4</sup> In translating this Fargard, Darmesteter<sup>5</sup> adds a note to the effect that the nails are usually cut in two and the fragments are put in a hole with the point directed towards the north, that is to say, against the breasts of the Daêvas.

In another canonical book, the *Bûndahishn* (19.19.20.), the question of nail-paring is incidentally dealt with. We find there a passage relating to this subject, which E. W. West renders as follows: "A nail-paring, when not prayed over, is seized by the

<sup>1</sup> Thorpe, *Northern Mythology* 2.272f. London.

<sup>2</sup> *Notes and Queries* 3d. series: 10. 46.

<sup>3</sup> Elworthy, *The Evil Eye*, p. 224, 225, 416, 437. Cf. also the following passage from *Comedy of Errors* 4.3. Sr. Dromio: "Some divels aske but the parings of one's naile, a ru-h, a hire, a drop of blood, a pin, a nut, a cherrie-stone."

For further examples see S. Hartland, *Legends of Perseus*. 3 vols. London, 1891-1896.

<sup>4</sup> Vd. 17.1.11; Pahlavi Venîdâd 17.1.11; and Cf. Jackson, *On some Avestan Superstitions*, JAOS. 13. 59-61.

<sup>5</sup> *SBE*, 4.192. n. 2. (2d. ed.)

demons and wizards and shot like an arrow at the Ashô-zusht bird, which is killed. Therefore the bird seizes and devours a nail-paring, when prayed over, so that the demons may not control its use. When the spell is not uttered, then the bird does not devour the nails and the demons are able to commit an offence with it." The *Shâyast lâ-Shâyast* (12.6.) treats this matter by stating that no nail-paring can be left unprayed over, for in that case it turns into weapons and equipments of the *Mâzanân* demons ; and the *Sad-dar* (14.1-11.) contains the following statement : "When the nails are pared according to the custom, it is necessary to put the parings into a paper. And it is further necessary to take the *Srôsh-bâz* inwardly and to recite three *Yathâ-ahû-vairyôs*. Afterwards one completes the *Bâz* in the manner.....etc. For Hormazd, the good and propitious, has created a bird, which they call Ashô-zusht. And they call it the bird of Bahman ; they also call it the owl. And it eats the nails.<sup>1</sup> It is altogether necessary that they do not leave them unbroken, for they would come into use as weapons of wizards. And if they fall into the midst of food, there is danger of pulmonary consumption."

The above quoted passages show clearly that the Zoroastrians did not throw away their nail-parings and hair-cuttings, but buried them. And even though the reasons assigned for this custom and the ceremonies accompanying it are totally different from those of other races, there can be little doubt that this custom goes back eventually to the universal belief in Sympathetic Magic.

##### 5. NOXIOUS CREATURES.

A recognition of the animal kingdom plays a conspicuous part in the savage beliefs of all races. Animals are either feared or worshipped. As a rule, they are revered on account of the fear with which they imbue the mind of primitive man. The mythology and folk-lore of every race on the globe is full of horrible, hideous creatures who, by their demoniacal character, seem to exercise a peculiar power of fascination upon the minds of

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<sup>1</sup> Prof. C. C. Trowbridge of Columbia University, who is a close observer of the life of the owls, tells me that these animals are in the habit of spitting out in the shape of balls all the indigestible parts of food, such as the feathers and bones. These balls when washed by the weather become snow-white and, mixed with the black fur, look like finger-nails. Does not the fact that the ancient Iranians assigned to the owls the eating of fingernails, indicate that they too had observed this peculiarity of the owl pellet ?

men. Every race has its inimical creatures, legendary or real, upon whom it looks with that same sort of physical shrinking. Among the many mythical monsters, the ancient Hindu-Aryans feared their Rakshasas and Sarvaras, the Greeks dreaded their Chimæræ, Hydræ, Harpies and Sirens, the Anglo-Saxons and Slavs dreaded the were-wolf, the Arabs abhorred the Jinns, and among the beasts supposedly inimical to mankind, the Hebrews fear the serpent, the modern Hindu holds the tiger in superstitious awe, the Slavs fear the vampire, and the Arab dreads the mere sight of a wolf.

In the same way the Iranian has, besides the mythical *Srôbar*, the *Gandarep* and the *Gôsâbar*, his real noxious creatures, called *Khrafstras*, whom he dreads and strives to extirpate. Of the entire animal kingdom the following, according to the testimony of the Zoroastrian writings, were classified as noxious creatures: the mouse, the weevil, the tortoise, the frog, the lizard, the scorpion, the snake, the worm, the ant, the locust, the spider, the gnat, the toad, and the louse; associated with them are: the bear, the ape, the cat, the wolf and the hawk.<sup>1</sup> These creatures were said by *Bândakishn* (20.13.) to dwell chiefly in the Dâitk river, and their existence, according to the *Jâmâsp Nâmak* (3), was to last until the very day of Resurrection. In many instances, as in the case of the mouse, spider and the louse, the aversion of the Zoroastrians to these creatures is shared by the other races.<sup>2</sup> The instinctive

<sup>1</sup> Vd. 1.2.4.6.; 7.26.; 14.5.6.; 17.3.; Bâ. 3.15.; 19:2 .25 28.; Dk. 7.5 9.; MKh. 62. 3.; Slc. 8.19., Sd 43. 1-10. etc.

<sup>2</sup> Frommand, *Tractatus de Fascinatione*, p. 19. quoted by Elworthy, *The Evil Eye*, p. 15. Frommand relates that the Romans were very much afraid of grasshoppers. He says: "Mantis locustæ genus, quæ in stipulia nascitur, si quod inspexerit animal protinus, illi quippiam producit mâli.— Hinc Proverbiûm: Mantis te vidit". They also, simultaneously with the Greek-regarded the wolf with a superstitious fear, as is shown by the following passages quoted from Theocritus, Virgil, and Pliny:

"Ou plithegê : lukon eides ;  
Epaive tis ôs sophos epte."

Theocritus, *Idyl.* 14.22.

"Vox quoque Moerim  
Iam fugit ipsæ; lupi Moerim videre priores."

Virgil, *Ecloque* 9.

"In Italia quoque creditur luperum visus esse noxius; vocemque homini, quem contemplantur, adire ad præsens", Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 8.34. The Latin proverb: "Lupus tibi visus est", commonly used when a person becomes suddenly silent, may be traced back to this superstition.

dread of the snake and the scorpion among most nations is too well known to dwell upon.

According to the Zoroastrian conception, the *Khrafstras* or noxious creatures were created by Angra-Mainyu, and their origin is of such a character that it involves sorcery and witchcraft. The *Bûndahishn* (3.15.), for instance, relates that Ahriman created and diffused deadly creatures over the earth, such as snakes, scorpions, frogs and lizards, "so that", in the words of West's rendering, "not even as much as the point of a needle was free from them", and the same book states on another occasion (Bd. 18.2.) that the Evil Spirit formed in the ocean a lizard "in order to injure Hom". The *Dâtistân-i Dênig* (37.52.) relates "how the fiend made as leaders noxious creatures of gloomy places for producing stinging and causing injury", and the *Vendîdâd*, while recounting the creations of Angra-Mainyu, says that he also created the serpent in the river, the locust "that brings death unto cattle and plants", and the ants.<sup>1</sup> According to a different tradition, the *Khrafstras* were the offspring of sorcerers and witches. The *Khvêstûk-das*, which was cited above, relates that when Yima and Yimak married a witch and demon respectively, they gave birth to the bear, ape, Gandarep, Gôsâbar, the tortoise, cat, hawk, frog, weevil and many other noxious creatures<sup>2</sup>.

These creatures were said to be of a wicked disposition and extremely harmful. According to *Vendîdâd* (17.3.) some of them eat up the corn in the fields and the clothes in the wardrobe; and this statement gives an idea of the nature of these pests. The *Dînkart* (7.5.8.) calls them "the terrors of corn and adversaries of animals". Their existence is so painful to the earth that, according to *Shâyast lâ-shâyast* (13.19.), "the fourth discomfort of the earth is from the holes of noxious creatures", and, in the words of the *Dînâ-i Maînôg-i Khirat* (5.8. ; 6.10.) "the land from which the burrows of noxious creatures are extirpated, is happier". The *Bûndahishn*, finally, (19.7.) attributes to them vile corruptions of every kind. How much the Zoroastrians feared and abhorred these unclean creatures is demonstrated by the fact that they were said to be used as instruments of punishment in after-life. "Everywhere in

<sup>1</sup> Vd. 1.2.4.6.

E. W. West, *The Meaning of Khvêstûk-das*, SBE. 18:418-419.

hell", says the *Artâ-Virâf Nâmak*, "even the lesser noxious creatures are as high as mountains, and they so tear, seize and worry the souls of the wicked, as would be unworthy of a dog".<sup>1</sup>

As a consequence of the deep aversion which the ancient Iranians had for noxious creatures, they tried to destroy them and regarded the killing of *Khrafstras* as an act of religious merit. The *Shâyast lâ-shâyast* (20.5.), for example, states that in order to perform good works, one must kill noxious creatures. Consequently the extirpation of *Khrafstras* became a commonly accepted means of repenting and atoning for sins and offences. The *Vendîdâd* (14.5.6.) says that he who commits the sin of slaying a water dog, shall atone for it by killing ten thousand snakes of those that go upon the belly, ten thousand *Kahrpus* (cats?), ten thousand tortoises, ten thousand land-frogs, ten thousand water-frogs, ten thousand corn-carrying ants, ten thousand ants "of the small, venomous, mischievous kind", ten thousand worms and ten thousand raging flies. The *Shâyast lâ-shâyast*, moreover, advocates the killing of a lizard or scorpion as an act of penance for a sin committed against water,<sup>2</sup> and it recommends that a menstruous woman, who washes her hands with a liquid other than the urine of a bull, shall destroy two hundred noxious creatures<sup>3</sup>. The *Sad-dar* (43.1-10.) dwells at length upon the necessity of destroying *Khrafstras* and it tabulates a detailed list showing the respective value attached to the slaying of different noxious creatures. Thus the killing of a frog is equal to the payment of two hundred dirhams, that of a snake or scorpion is equal to the slaying of an apostate; the smiting of a flying ant equals the reciting of prayers for ten days, the killing of a common ant equals the recitation of the *Hôrmuzd Yasht*, and the extirpation of a mouse is an equivalent for the slaying of four lions. In what high esteem the exterminators of *Khrafstras* were held, is described to us by the *Artâ-Virâf Nâmak*. "I saw", says the pious *Virâf*, "the souls of those who killed many noxious creatures in this world, whereby the prosperity of the waters, and sacred fires and trees was increased, and they were exalted and adorned".<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> AV. 18.12.13 Cf. also AV.19.1-4.; 24.1-7.; 25.1-6.; 28; 29; 32; 34; 37; 45; 47; 56; 69; 71; 73; 81; 86; 89; 90.

<sup>2</sup> Sls. 8.19.

<sup>3</sup> Sls. 3.21.

<sup>4</sup> AV. 13.11-13.



Mortal man is not the only participant in the eternal struggle against noxious creatures.<sup>1</sup> The *Dînâ-i Maînôg-i Khirat* (62.35.36.) relates that by pouring holy water into the sea the mythical Gopaitoshah killed many noxious creatures, and, according to other testimonies, the stars Tishtrya and Vanant destroyed many *Khrafstras*.<sup>2</sup> Even beasts were arrayed in this struggle against their fellow-creatures. The *Bândahishn* (19.21-28.) states that certain beasts and birds were created in special opposition to noxious creatures. The white falcon, for example, was against the winged serpent, the mag-pie counteracts the locust, and the hedge-hog destroys corn-carrying ants by voiding urine into their nests.<sup>3</sup> "The mere horn of the three-legged ass", says *Bândahishn* (19.7.9.17.) "vanquishes and dissipates the corruption due to the efforts of noxious creatures; and his cry, like that of the ox-fish, makes *Khrafstras* cast their young." According to the *Dînâ-i Maînôg-i Khirat*, furthermore, the *Kar*-fish struggles with the frog and other noxious creatures, in order to keep them away from the lake *Varchash* (Av. *Vouru-Kasha*).<sup>4</sup> It was also believed that certain spells were able to extirpate noxious creatures, but they will be treated below as I have reserved a special chapter for the discussion of spells and exorcisms.<sup>5</sup>

#### 6.—MISCELLANEOUS BELIEFS.

Besides the above discussed Zoroastrian traditions and customs that are connected in some form or other with the practice of witchcraft, the followers of the prophet of Iran have a number of beliefs which may seem peculiar to those who are not familiar with the principles of folk-lore and origins of primitive faiths. These beliefs, expressed by Mazdayasnism in the form of sacred laws and commandments, are explained to be of a religious character; there can be little doubt, however, that their origin goes back to the superstitious practices of primitive man. The more surely

<sup>1</sup> Dk. 7.5,8., moreover, says that Zaratusht disclosed to mankind the rites of counteracting wolves and other noxious creatures and of confining hail, spiders and locusts

<sup>2</sup> B1. 7.5.; Yt. 21.1.; Zsp. 8.4.5.9.14

<sup>3</sup> Cf. also Sls. 10.31; 12.20 and Sd. 57.1.

<sup>4</sup> MKh. 62.30.; Cf. Bd. 18.2-6.

<sup>5</sup> For further references to noxious creatures see: Ys. 19.1.; 34.5.9.; 35.14.; Vd. 16.11. Bd. 3.9.; 7.13.; 13.16; 28.1.; Dk. 7.1. 60.; DD. 17. 16.; 18.3.; SG. 3.21.; 5.79.; 14.17-22. 55.; Sls. 19.9; 20.18.; Zsp. 2.9.; *Patit-i Irânig* 7.; *Jâmâsp Nâmah* 7.9; etc.

is this the case, since some of them are prevalent among races that are neither linguistically nor culturally related to the Iranians.

By far the most interesting of these beliefs is the conviction held by every true believer of Zoroastrianism, that libations and offerings are not to be performed at night-time, and that after sunset no food is to be cast away towards the north without reciting certain prayers. The sacred books of the Parsis contain a number of references to this belief. *Vend'dâd* 7.79. claims that he who offers up libations in the dead of night, sins against righteousness, and the *Nirangistân* upholds this contention by stating that "he who offers libations to the Good Waters after sunset or before sunrise does no better deed than if he should cast them downright into the jaws of venomous snakes".<sup>1</sup> The *Shâyast lâ-shâyast* (9.8.; 12.17.18.) warns the faithful not to cast away after sunset to north, wine, aromatic herbs, nor any other food without reciting one *Yathâ-ahû-vairyô*, and it forbids the pious even to draw water from a well at night-time or to eat in the dark. The *Sad-dar* (30.1 2.) claims that it is not proper to pour away water at night to the north without reciting the *Yathâ-ahû-vairyô*.

In justifying these restrictions imposed upon the followers of the Zoroastrian creed, the sacred writings give them a religious coloring, and this is all the more natural in a religion in which the sun and light hold so prominent a place. They explain that demons may benefit by these actions, owing to the fact that their quarters are in the northern regions, where hell is situated,<sup>2</sup> and that their power is greater at night-time.<sup>3</sup> The texts commonly cite the case of Mashyâni, the first woman, who was also the first to pour liquid matter to the north.<sup>4</sup>

If we dispense with this explanation prompted by purely religious tendencies, and look somewhat deeper into the probable origin of this belief, we can hardly fail to see its primitive origin. Apart from the fact that it contains the perfectly common-sense point that something unclean may be drunk, if the water be drawn

<sup>1</sup> Darmesteter, *LeZA.* 3.111, (§. 48).

<sup>2</sup> Jackson, *On Some Avestan Superstitions*, *JAOS.* 13.59-61.

<sup>3</sup> *Vd.* 19.1.; *Bd.* 12.8.; *Dk.* 9.19.1-2.; *Sl.* 10.7.; *Sd.* 30.2.

<sup>4</sup> *Bd.* 15.19.

in the dark, it also exemplifies a very old and wide-spread superstition, characteristic of every primitive race — namely, the natural and childlike dread of the dark. This superstition actuated many races, all over the world, to prevent their members from performing certain actions at certain periods of the night, lest they meet with harm. The Aryan Code of Laws, for example, forbids the partaking of food at twilight;<sup>1</sup> and this regulation, similar in character and purpose to the Zoroastrian commandments, vividly suggests the idea that their enactment must have antedated the establishment of Hinduism and Mazdayasnism in these two countries, and must consequently have been prompted by the above-mentioned superstitious belief.

That the Zoroastrian laws of a seemingly religious nature are superstitious or natural in their origin, is further demonstrated by the frequent command, voiced in the sacred writings, to ignite and burn a fire at night in the house that shelters a pregnant woman or a newly-born child. The *Shâyast lâ-shâyast* (12.4.7.11.12.) recommends the keeping up of a fire or light in the house of a pregnant woman or newly-born child, and even forbids, in the words of West's rendering, "labour of child" at night, except by the reflexion of the stars, moon, or a fire, explaining that the evil spirits, demons and witches, who exercise a greater power in the dark, are kept away by the radiance of a burning light. The same sentiment is expressed by the *Dinkart* (8.38.6.) and the *Sad-dar* (16.1-4.); and in order to enforce the observance of this law the sacred books state that when Dûktaub, the mother of the prophet, became pregnant, one hundred and fifty demons tried each night to enter her house intent upon injuring her and her embryo, but were always kept away by the light and fire maintained in that house.

This anxiety of the Iranian law-makers to keep a continual fire in the house of a pregnant woman or a newly-born child,<sup>2</sup> was actuated by the knowledge gained from the experience of their more savage ancestors, that at night-time the fire was a good substitute for the broad daylight. Every man, no matter how primitive he may be, knows very well that light and fire are terrifying and abhorrent to many animals and wild beasts. If we add to this the

<sup>1</sup> Manu 4.55.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 410.

universally established fact that all evil spirits of a deadly nature are assigned by primitive man the shape of beasts or monsters, we will see at once that the Ahuramazdian law of protecting pregnant women and their young offspring against the machinations of ill-natured beings by means of fire, is another trace of the savage, pre-Zoroastrian beliefs.

Another remnant of the primitive faith, probably found by Mazdayasnism in ancient Iran and adopted in its religious system, is the holiness accorded to certain animals. As an illustration of this, we may note that Zoroastrianism holds the cock<sup>1</sup> in sacred veneration. The *Vendîdâd* (18.15.) calls him the bird of Sraosha, and says that he lifts his voice against the mighty dawn. According to *Bûndahishn* (19.33.) he was created in opposition to demons and wizards, warning men against the seduction of the demoness of lethargy. His crowing is said to protect the house from wizards and witches, and consequently the *Shâyast lâ-shâyast* (10.30.) and the *Sad-dar* (32.1-5.) forbid the killing of a cock "that crows unseasonably", and even "the slaying of a crowing hen".

By forbidding the slaying of a crowing hen Zoroastrianism strikes at a very wide-spread superstition, according to which the crowing of a female fowl, or rather the attempt at it, is a foreboding of ill luck to the owner. Consequently a hen that crows, is quickly killed, the idea being that taking her life will avert the impending danger.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, Mazdayasnism upholds the ancient belief in the sacredness of the cock prevalent among many ancient and modern races. It is a peculiarity of the mind of primitive man, easy to explain, to worship certain animals (or trees) above others, and to elevate them to the position of gods. This high veneration has two sources. Either primitive man, as is in the case of many savage races, dreads the animal exceedingly, and, in order to propitiate it, accords to it great esteem by choosing it

<sup>1</sup> Av. *parôdaras* — "the who sees first." Bartholomæ, *Air. Wb.* col. 859. See also Jackson, *On Some Avestan Superstitions*, JAOS, 13.59-61 and J. J. Modi, *The Cock as a Sacred Bird in Ancient Iran*.

<sup>2</sup> A certain traveller relates the following interesting story. "On entering a farm-house in Somersetshire recently, I saw on the table a beautiful, plump fowl, all picked and trussed ready for cooking; the farmer's wife explained to me that her husband on seeing the hen in the yard in the act of crowing, caught her at once and killed her without delay."—Wellington, *Weekly News*, June 13.1889, quoted by Elworthy, *The Evil Eye*, p. 95f.

as his totem or worshipping it as sacred, like Moses' Serpents ; or else he appreciates its good qualities and services, and accords it excellent honors, as in the case of Apis among the Egyptians, or the goose among the Romans.

Among the ancients the cock was regarded as a sacred animal, being especially consecrated to Sun-deities like Osiris, Serapis, Jupiter and Apollo. Among the Romans he was also the symbol of Mercury, denoting vigilance. They also believed that the lion is terrified on seeing the crest or hearing the crowing of a cock.<sup>1</sup> In the Middle Ages, and even to-day, the cock was regarded as a watchful guardian, who drives away the fiercest beasts and even ghosts,<sup>2</sup> and it soon became a very appropriate symbol on Amulets like the *Cimaruta*<sup>3</sup> and *Mano Pantea*.<sup>4</sup> Many races of to-day believe that the cock's eye is very powerful as an amulet, and that all demons with lions' heads vanish instantly, when the cock or his image is presented to them.<sup>5</sup> Even Christianity recognizes the universal belief in the singular power of the cock. Many churches still have a so-called weather-cock on their highest tower, and although the explanations offered to-day for this peculiar custom differ widely, it is highly probable that they were originally placed there with the intention of keeping away malicious creatures from the sacred buildings.

That the ancient Iranians, as other primitive races, held certain animals in sacred veneration, is further demonstrated by a number of passages in the Zoroastrian scriptures which bear on this subject. The *Vendîdâd*, for example, accords great reverence to the four kinds of dogs — the house-dog, the shepherd-dog, the hunting-dog, and the so-called *Vohunazga* or blood-dog — and it imposes heavy penalties for the slaying of these animals.<sup>6</sup> The *Bûndahishn*

<sup>1</sup> "Atque hoc tale, tam saevum animal, rotarum orbis circumacti, currusque inanes et gallinaceorum cristæ, cantusque etiam magis terrent, sed maxime ignes".—Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 8.19.

<sup>2</sup> *Hamlet* 1.1. 147.

<sup>3</sup> The *Cimaruta* or more properly the *Cimz di ruta*, "sprig of rue," is an amulet used to-day in Naples for the protection against the fascination of mothers and new-born infants. It usually consists of a crescent, a hand, a key, a serpent, a fish, a lotus and a cock.—Elworthy, *The Evil Eye*, p. 344-355.

<sup>4</sup> The *Mano Pantea* is an ancient Roman amulet of the same character and purpose as the *Cimaruta*.—Elworthy, *The Evil Eye*, p. 343.

<sup>5</sup> Elworthy, *The Evil Eye*, p. 354.

<sup>6</sup> Vd. 13.1-52 ; Cf. also AV. 48. ; Sd. 38.1-8. and above p. 430.

(19.35.) says of the dog, that "his barking destroys pain and his flesh and fat are good remedies against pain and decay". The *vanghâpara* (the hedge-hog?) too was regarded as a sacred animal. The *Vendîdâd* (13.3.) states that he who kills a *vanghâpara* slays his own soul for nine generations, and cannot find a way over the Chinvat bridge of judgment hereafter, unless he has atoned, while alive, for this sin; and the *Bândahishn* (19.28.), the *Shâyast lâ-shâyast* (10.31.; 12.20.), and the *Sad-dar* (67.1.) forbid the slaying of this animal "because he is very beneficent to the creation of Ahura Mazda by destroying the corn-carrying ants."

Another sacred animal was the raven. The following quotation from Yasht 14. 34ff., in Darmesteter's rendering, will at once convince us of this fact: "Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazda: If I have a curse thrown upon me, a spell told upon me by the many men who hate me, what is the remedy for it? Ahura Mazda answered: Take thou a feather of that bird (the raven) and with that feather thou shalt rub thy own body, with that feather thou shalt curse back thy own enemies..... If a man holds a bone of that strong bird, or a feather of that strong bird, no one can smite or turn to flight that fortunate man. The feather of that bird of birds brings him help; it brings unto him the homage of men, it maintains in him his glory. All tremble before him who holds the feather ..."etc.

Sacredness was also accorded to the legendary three-legged ass,<sup>1</sup> "whose cry", according to *Bândahishn* 19.19., "makes all female water-creatures of Ahura Mazda pregnant, and whose bray makes all pregnant noxious creatures cast their young".<sup>2</sup> The same effective quality is attributed to the cry of an ox and (Kar-) fish. The cries of these two animals, as well as the voice of a righteous man who was struck accidentally, according to *Bândahishn* 28.41., keep away the evil spirit.

There are a few traditions among the Zoroastrians which the present writer is at a loss to explain from any other stand-point than that taken by the holy scriptures themselves. One of them is the importance attached to the cutting of a tooth-pick without

<sup>1</sup> Ys. 42.4.

<sup>2</sup> B.I. 19.17. For other sacred animals see the rest of Bd. 19.

retaining the bark.<sup>1</sup> The *Shâyast lâ-shâyast* (10.20. ; 12. 13.) says that "a tooth-pick is to be cut out clear of bark, because when a pregnant woman puts her foot on it, she is apprehensive about its being dead matter", and the *Sad-dar* (17.1-2.) amplifies this passage by making the following statement: "When they cut a tooth-pick, they should not retain the bark; for if a small piece of bark cast away after having been applied to the teeth, is tread upon by a pregnant woman, the child in her womb might come to harm." All that the student of primitive culture can gather from these two passages, apart from the natural conclusion that bark would be annoying in a tooth-pick, is the dimly conveyed idea, that the bark of a tree, after having been once applied to the teeth, becomes a means of contamination. Why the bark only assumes such a negative quality, and why pregnant women alone ought to avoid stepping on such matter, is not evident. I know of no other custom resembling in the least this Zoroastrian injunction, and am inclined to believe that this peculiar usage goes back to some primitive Iranian custom not understood, and consequently misinterpreted by Mazdayasnism.

Another curious ordinance in the Zoroastrian religious system is the injunction imposed upon every true believer not to void water or evacuate fæces while standing or walking. The *Vendîdâd* attaches great importance to this law. In discussing this subject (Vd. 18.40.41. ; Phl. Vd. 18.98.) it puts the following words into the mouth of the Druj: "He is the second of my males, who making water lets it fall along the upper forepart of his foot. That man makes me conceive progeny as other males make their females conceive by their seed." As a remedy against this danger, the same passage further on (Vd. 18.43.) enjoins that "the offender shall rise, and stepping forth three paces further off shall say three *Ahûna-vairyas*, two *Humatanâm*, three *Hukhshathrôtemâm*, then chant the *Ahûna-vairya*, and finally offer up one *Yephê Hâtâm*." The *Dînkart* (9.19.1.) similarly forbids the voiding of urine while standing and the *Dînâ-î Maînôg-î Khirat* (2.39.) warns the faithful that "by this action the demons will drag him to hell." The *Shâyast lâ-shâyast* (10.5.) and the *Sad-dar* (56. 1.) mention the same

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the following passage from Strabo 15.3.14.: "The Persians sacrifice differently to fire and to water. To fire by putting on it dry logs without the bark,"

restriction, and *Artâ-Vîrâf Nâmak* (25.1-6.) says that "those who walk without shoes, run about uncovered, make water on the foot, and perform other demon-service, are gnawed in after-life by noxious creatures.

This restraint is commonly explained to have been prompted by a desire to avoid polluting a larger space of ground than was absolutely necessary,<sup>1</sup> and is consequently one of the many laws proving the Zoroastrian conception of the holiness of Mother Earth. The same custom was practised among the Indian Aryans who were forbidden by the Code of Manu (4.47.) "to void fæces and urine while walking or standing." Although the earth, as the producer, was looked upon as sacred by quite a number of other races, notably the ancient Greeks and the South African Zulus, none of them practised a custom similar to that of the Indo-Iranians, who therefore seem to hold a unique position in this respect.

An additional odd restriction imposed upon the Parsis is the prohibition of "walking with one boot" or "walking barefoot."<sup>2</sup> The *Bândahishn* (28.13.), for instance, calls the walking in one boot a sin, whereby the demon Taprêv is propitiated;<sup>3</sup> and the *Dînâ-î Mâinôg-î Khirat* (2.35-37.) claims that "it is possible to maintain prosperity of the body without injury to the soul by not walking with one boot." In the same manner, the *Shâyast lâ-shâyast* (4.12; 10.12.) states that walking without boots constitutes a *Tanâpûhar* sin, which ought to be avoided "because the boot prevents a person who had stepped on dead matter from becoming polluted". The *Sad-dar* (44.1-2.) also forbids putting the foot bare upon the ground, "because injury might happen to the angel Spendarmad (the personification of the earth)". This custom, although its meaning is not very clear, seems to have the same object in view as the preceding one — the desire, sacred to every Zoroastrian, to keep the earth uncontaminated and pure. It also had an important hygienic aspect, as plague in India (and doubtless also in Iran) is so frequently transferred through the bare foot.

<sup>1</sup> F. W. West, *Pahlavi Texts*, SBE. 34.12.n.1, : 37.207.n.2.

<sup>2</sup> Some Pahlavi commentators, notably Dastur Hoshangji, translate the passage referring to this practice as "walking without boots." They claim that the Pahlavi word *ae-muk*, "one boot," is a mistake for *avimuk*, "without boots." See E. W. West, *Pahlavi Texts*, SBE. 5.288.n.5.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. also Dk. 9.9.1.



Superstitious in origin is also the sacred tradition, adhered to by every believer of Mazdayasnm, of wearing the sacred girdle and the shirt, the visible tokens of one's allegiance to the teachings of Zarathushtra. The sacred girdle, *Kusti*, is a hollow cylindrical string, the warp of which consists of 72 threads and the weft of one unbroken thread, and it should encircle the body three times. The shirt, *Sudrah* or *Sadarâ*, is a muslin tunic with short sleeves that does not reach lower than the hips, with a small pocket at the opening in front of the shirt, the so-called *giribân* or *kissâi karfa*, "the pocket for good deeds".<sup>1</sup> According to tradition, any one who transgresses the law of wearing these two garments, commits a sin known as the sin of *vishâd-dâbârishnâh*, "the walking about uncovered". The *Vendîdâd*, for example, states that the man (or woman) of more than fifteen years of age, who walks without the sacred girdle or shirt, is the fourth male to make the Druj pregnant, committing thereby a sin "for which there is no means of undoing it",<sup>2</sup> and the same work states on another occasion that "he who for three springs does not wear the sacred girdle brings in the power of death".<sup>3</sup> The *Dînâ-i Maînôg-i Khirat* (2. 35.) warns the faithful not to commit the sin of running about uncovered, and the *Shâyast lâ-shâyast* (4. 10. ; 10. 13.) says that running about uncovered constitutes a *Farmân* or *Tanâpûhar* crime. The *Sad-dar* (10. ; 46. 1.) claims that "it is incumbent on all those of the good religion, men or women, who have attained to fifteen years, to wear the sacred thread-girdle", and that "those who do this are out of the department of Ahriman and in the department of Hôrmuzd". The *Dînkart* (9. 9. 1.) says that by walking about ungirdled one propitiates the demons *Andar* and *Sôvar* (who according to *Bûdahishn* 28. 29. oppose the wearing of the *Kusti* and *Sudrah*); and the *Dâtistân-i Dênig* devotes an entire chapter (39.) to the explanation of the necessity of wearing these two garments. The *Sudrah* and *Kusti* are explained by Dastur Jamaspji Asana<sup>4</sup> as designed to protect the body and to benefit the soul of the person who wears them, and by

<sup>1</sup> Dastur J. M. Jamaspji Asana, *The Navjot Ceremony*. Bombay, 1887. Cf. also Darmesteter *LeZA*. 2.243.n.13.

<sup>2</sup> Vd. 18.54,57. ; Phl. Vd. 18.115.

<sup>3</sup> Vd. 18.9. ; Phl. Vd. 5.167. ; 7.48.

<sup>4</sup> *The Navjot Ceremony*, p. 5.

the *Sad-dar* (10.) to make him a participator in the merit of all the good deeds performed all over the Zoroastrian world.

One cannot help comparing the Zoroastrian sacred girdle and shirt in certain respects with the "Four-cornered garment," and the "Prayer shawl" of the Hebrews. The "Four-cornered garment", *Arba 'Kanfot*, is a rectangular piece of cloth with an aperture sufficient to let it slip over the head, so that a part of it falls in front and a part behind the body. To its four corners there are attached fringes (*zizit*), consisting of four threads of white wool, and four threads of blue wool. It is worn to-day as an under-garment and in the Mediæval Ages it was looked upon as some kind of badge whereby the Jew was recognized and distinguished from the Gentile. In some countries, notably in Russia, it is believed that this garment averts the evil eye.<sup>1</sup> The second of these vestments just mentioned is the "Prayer shawl", or *Tallit*. It is likewise a mantle with fringes on the four corners, but it is worn over the garments. It is used by men after they are married, and, in modern times, it is donned by boys after their confirmation. The Cabbalists considered this mantle as a special garment for the service of God intended to inspire awe and reverence for God during the prayers.<sup>2</sup> In our own days, many an orthodox Jew, when questioned about the reason for wearing the *Tallit* and *Arba 'Kanfot*, will unhesitatingly answer that they are worn as a protection against *Shedim*, "ill-disposed demons", voicing thereby unconsciously the probable reason for adding the fringes to these garments. It is a known fact, dealt with extensively by Otto Jahn, that coloured threads play an important part in the belief in sorcery. Who is not familiar with the universal device of mothers tying threads of different colors around the fingers, wrists or necks of infants in order to protect them against the power of fascination? May we not regard the Zoroastrian *Kusti*, the girdle consisting of many threads, as another example of the Iranian superstitious belief in fascination, even though the girdle is made of white threads only?

The last of the Zoroastrian peculiar beliefs which I wish to

<sup>1</sup> *The Jewish Encyclopædia*, 2.75. New York, 1902.

<sup>2</sup> *The Jewish Encyclopædia*, 11.678.

<sup>3</sup> *Über den Aberglauben des Bösen Blicks bei den Alten*, p. 42. in *Ber. d. Sächs. Ges. d. Wiss., phil.-hist. Classe.* Leipzig, 1855,

mention is that associated with the sin usually called *drâyân-gâyishnîh*, or "the eagerness for chattering", and which is committed by talking while eating, praying, or at any other time when a murmured prayer has been taken inwardly and is not yet spoken out. The sinful part arises from breaking the spell of the inward prayer (*vâj*).<sup>1</sup> There are many passages referring to this transgression. The *Dînkart* (9.9.2.; 9.19.1.; 8.43.37.), for example, says that "he who eats or drinks chattering, commits a sin toward Khûrdad and Amûrdad and delights the demons by making them pregnant." The *Dînâ-î Mainôg-î Khîrat* (2.33.34.) advises not "to indulge in unseasonable chatter, so that no serious harm may happen unto the archangels Horvadâd and Amerodâd"; and the *Dâtistân-î Dênig* (79.8.) calls "the chattering meal a very grievous sin".<sup>2</sup> Finally the *Artâ-Vîrâf Nâmak* (23.) states that he who devours talkatively will always be hungry and thirsty in the world hereafter, and that he will constantly tear his own hair and beard, devour blood, and cast foam from his mouth.

This Zoroastrian law against talking while eating or drinking is obviously of a purely sanitary origin and substantiates the statement made in one of the previous chapters, that Mazdayasnism gave as much attention to the bodily welfare as to the spiritual well-being of its followers.<sup>3</sup> The mere fact that a transgression of this law meant some injury to Horvadâd (A.V. *haurvatât*, the personification of Health) shows it to have been prompted by a desire to prevent the possibility of some physical danger, incurred by persons who talk while eating or drinking. It may be interesting to note that the same custom is observed by the East-European Jews, who regard talking while eating fish, for example, as a semi-religious sin. On the other hand, the law against talking while praying, is of a religious character and is universally observed. The Jews, for example, are strictly forbidden to chatter before and after certain prayers during their long religious services.

The above discussed Zoroastrian beliefs and customs prove distinctly that Mazdayasnism, as the other great religions, was subject to the universal necessity of respecting and reckoning with

<sup>1</sup> E.W. West, *Pahlavi Texts*, SBE, 24.11.n.1.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also Sls. 4.9.; 5.

<sup>3</sup> See above p. 421.

primitive beliefs. Just as Judaism, Christianity and Mohammedanism did not find it expedient to destroy utterly some of the savage practices and superstitions of the aboriginal Kanaanites, Romans, Teutons and Arabs respectively, so also Zoroastrianism had to yield to many primitive Indo-Iranian beliefs, only modifying and adopting them to the high spiritual standard of its religious conceptions.

#### 7. SPELLS AND EXORCISMS.

The belief in the power of magic awakened everywhere a desire to counteract and diminish its injurious effects. The desire, common to all races and ages, soon culminated in an intricate system of protective arts, which may be divided into two distinct classes : first, the written formulas of many sorts ; and second, the spoken words or actions, all tending to the same end. Of the first kind, known as written formulas, the Zoroastrian literature gives no evidence whatsoever ; the second group, however, is well represented and very often alluded to. Besides the general statement of the *Dinkart* (8.42.1.) that the Varistan section of the *Sakâdâm Nask* contained "particulars about bringing remedies to a person who had been rendered sickly by a wizard", there are other references showing the existence of spells and charms and other protective means among the ancient Iranians. According to the Pâzand treatise *Jâmâspi*, for example, the hero Faredun learned from God certain charms, mystic formulas, remedies, etc.<sup>1</sup> With this passage we may compare the following reference in *Vendîdâd* 20.3. : "Thrita asked and obtained from Khshathra Vairya remedies to withstand the diseases, rottenness and infection, which Angra-Mainyu had created against the bodies of mortals." According to the canonical texts, Zarathushtra himself is said to have been familiar with remedies against sorcery and witchcraft. *Dinkart* 7.5.8.9., for instance, states that he disclosed to mankind the rites "of driving out pestilence, overpowering the demon and witch, of disabling sorcery and witchcraft and curing diseases, of counteracting wolves and other noxious creatures, of liberating rain and of confining hail, spiders, locusts and other terrors of corn and plants, and adversaries of animals."

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<sup>1</sup> J. J. Modi, *Jâmâspi* 4.114.

Of the many spells believed by the Zoroastrians to counteract magic, the most powerful are unquestionably the Airyaman Prayer (*Airyama Ishyô*), the fifty-fourth *Hâ* of the Yasna, and the Asha-Vahishta. The Ardibehsht Yasht (Yt. 3.) calls the *Airyama Ishyô* "the greatest, the best of spells, the very best of spells; the fairest of spells, the very fairest of spells; the fearful one among spells, the most fearful of all spells; the firm one amongst spells, the firmest of all spells; the victorious amongst spells, the most victorious of all spells; the healing one amongst spells, the best healing of all spells", and it says of the Asha-Vahishta and the Airyaman Prayer that they "smite down the strength of all the creatures of Angra-Mainyu, of the Yâtus and Pairikâs, of the brood of the Snake, of the brood of the Wolf, and of the brood of the Two-legged. They smite Pride, Scorn, Hot-Fever, Slander, Discord and the evil eye. They smite the most lying words of Falsehood, they smite the Jahi, addicted to Yâtu and others".<sup>1</sup> The Ashi Yasht (Yt. 17.20.), in speaking of the Asha-Vahishta, says that it burns Angra-Mainyu as if it were melting brass, and Yasna 61.1-3. states that the Asha-Vahishta (and the *Yenghê Hâtâm*) smite the fiends, the Kahvaredhas and Kahwardhis, the Kayadhas and the Kayadhis, the Zandas and Yâtus. So much for the power of these texts as spells.

Another efficacious formula is the Ahunavar (Ahuna-Vairya prayer, the Ahunaver or Honovar), which is the most sacred formula of the Mazda-worshippers.<sup>2</sup> As is well known, it consists of twenty-one words, forming three metrical lines of sixteen syllables, and begins with the words *Yathâ-ahû-vairyô*. The Srôsh Yasht Hâdokht (Yt. 11.3.) speaks of the Ahuna Vairya as "the best fiend-smiter among all spells". Vendidad 9.27. terms its composition "the victorious, most healing words" and the *Shâyast lâ-shâyast* (19.14.) says that it is "greater and more powerful than everything in the Avesta as to rivers, wholesomeness and protection". Its origin is divine, for Yasna 19.3. relates that Ahura Mazda was the first one to recite the Ahuna Vairya "before the sky, waters, land, cattle, plants and fire, before the Holy man and Daêvas", pronouncing it as the best spell and

<sup>1</sup> Yt. 3.5. ff. 13 ff. ; Cf. also Vd. 20,9 13. ; 21.18 ff. ; 22.20 ff.

<sup>2</sup> E. W. West, *Pahlavi Texts*, SBE. 24.65.n.3.

causing it to have its effects.<sup>1</sup> Both the *Bândahishn* (I.21.22) and the *Selections of Zât-sparam* (I.20.) relate that when Ahuramazd recited this prayer "the Evil Spirit became confounded and fell back to gloomy darkness". Angra-Mainyu himself is reported to have complained that Zarathushtra smites him with the Ahuna Vairya "as strong a weapon as a stone big as a house"<sup>2</sup>, and the *Dînkart* mentions other fiends that were destroyed by a mere recitation of this formula. The statement of *Dînkart* 7.4.38. is that when Zarathushtra chanted the Ahunavar, "the demon Bûd, the secret moving pestilence, and the Deceiver were confounded and rushed away", and it states on another occasion (Dk. 7.4.61.) that the Ahunavar, when uttered aloud by the prophet, annihilated the fiend and caused Cêshmak, the Karap, to rush away. In the words of Yasna 61.1-3., the Ahuna Vairya was a good spell against the Kahvaredhas and Kayadhas, Zandas and Yâtus.<sup>3</sup>

There are many other beliefs associated with the idea of the protective power of the Ahuna-Vairya. According to the *Shâyast lâ-shâyast* (19.9.), for instance, nine *Yathâ-ahu-vairyôs* recited by the ploughman while sowing corn, diminish the mischief of the noxious creatures, while the *Dînkart* (7.1.12.) claims that two Ahunavars are sufficient to keep away from the corn the demons and fiends. Reciting the *Ahu-vairyô* while casting away towards north, wine and food after sunset prevents the demons from benefiting by this action,<sup>4</sup> as they otherwise would according to the superstition discussed above, and in the words of *Vendîdâd* 17.6.7. the uttering of a certain number of *Ahûna Vairyas* in connection with another formula<sup>5</sup> while putting the hair-cuttings or nail-parings into a hole, prevents the demons from using these parings as a weapon against the bird Ashô-zushta.<sup>6</sup> Lastly, "five *Yathâ-ahû vairyôs*", says the *Shâyast lâ-shâyast* (19.5.), "are used in order to expel a fiend".

The third of the powerful Zoroastrian spells is the uttering of the many names of Ahura Mazda. Yasht I.1-4., relates that one day Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazda thus: "What of the Holy Word, O Ahura, is the strongest? What is the most victorious?"

<sup>1</sup> Ys. 19.15.

<sup>2</sup> Yt. 17.20.; Cf. Vd. 19.9.

<sup>3</sup> See also above p. 416,

<sup>4</sup> Sd. 30.1,2.; Sls. 9,8.; 10.7.; 12.18.; Dk. 9.19.1-2. See also p. 432 above.

<sup>5</sup> See below p. 447.

<sup>6</sup> See also Sls. 12.6.

What is the most glorious? What is the most effective? What is the most fiend-smiting? What is the most healing? What destroyeth best the malice of Daêvas and Men? What maketh the material world best come to the fulfilment of its wishes? What freeth the material world best from the anxieties of the heart?" Whereupon Ahura Mazda is reported to have answered: "Our name, O Spitama Zarathushtra, who are the names of the Amesha Spentas, that is the strongest part of the Holy Word." And a little later, the same Yasht (Yt. 1.10-11.; 17.20.) makes Ahura Mazda say: "If you want to withstand the malice of the Yâtus and Pairikâs, Kavis and Karpans, of the two-legged ruffians and of the two-legged Ashemaoghas, of the four-legged wolves and of the hordes with wide fronts and many spears, then recite these my names every day and night."

The names of the Amesha Spentas are likewise considered to serve as a protective medium against the power of witchcraft. The *Khordâd Yasht* (Yt. 4.7.) distinctly says that the names of the Amesha Spentas smite men turned to *Nasus* by the *Drujas*, and the seed and kin of the Karpans, and it seriously warns the believer not to disclose this spell to anyone who is not a member of the immediate family. Of the six Amesha Spentas, the name of *Haurvatât*, in particular, is regarded as an especially good spell. According to Yasht 4.2. "he who against the thousands of thousands of Daêvas, against the ten thousands of ten thousands, against their numberless myriads, invokes the name of Haurvatât, he will smite the Nasu and the demon Hasi, Basi, Saêni and Bugi." The same potent quality is attributed to the *Srôsh Yasht Hâdôkht*, for it is said that he who pronounces the praise of Sraosha, becomes exempt from the injury that emanates from the evil eye of the fiend, and is able to withstand the malice of the wicked worshippers of the Daêvas, the Yâtus and Pairikâs.<sup>1</sup>

In many instances, the Mazdayasnian religion itself is considered the most powerful means of protection and exorcism, and is regarded as all-sufficient to counteract magical influences that might harm its follower. The *Dînkart*, for example, relates that the witchcraft of Dahâk was dissipated and disabled by the triumphant words of the religion which Zaratusht proclaimed,<sup>2</sup> and the

<sup>1</sup> Yt. 11.4.6.

<sup>2</sup> Dk. 7.4.72.; See also ZN, 719.

*Selections of Zât-sparam* (I.4.) narrate that when Aharman, accompanied by other demons, came forth to the struggle with Ahuramazd at the beginning of the world, the Creator cast the arch-enemy back to gloom "through pure words confounding witchcraft". Lastly, the *Dînâ-î Maînôg-î Khirat* (57.27-29.) tells that Zaratusht spoke once to Aharman: "I will shatter and cause to run and make down-cast for thee the bodies of thy demons and fiends, wizards and witches, through the Hôm and sacred twigs and the true good religion", and it adds that at these words the fiend became confounded and rushed to hell.

A spell peculiarly fit for driving away diseases and infections is the *Mânthrâ-Spenta*. The *Ardibehsht Yasht* (Yt. 3.6.) while enumerating the different modes of healing diseases, says that "among all remedies this one is the most healing one, that heals with the Holy Word, this one it is that will best drive away sickness from the body of the faithful, for this one is the most healing of all remedies",<sup>1</sup> and *Vendîdâd* 7.44. gives the following advice to the true believer: "Let one select as a healer the one who heals with the Holy Word; for he who heals with the Holy Word is the best healer; he drives away worst sickness from the body of the faithful". Another spell or means for driving away the demon of disease, according to *Vendîdâd* 20.7., is the prayer contained in the twentieth Fargard, beginning with the words: *yâskəm thwâm pâiti-sanghâmi, mahrkəm thwâm pâiti-sanghâmi, dâzu thwâm pâiti-sanghâmi*. (To thee, sickness, I say avaunt! to thee, death, I say avaunt! to thee, pain, I say avaunt! etc.)

Besides the above-quoted spells, the Zoroastrians have a number of other mystic formulas which they utter on different occasions for the purpose of staving off the supposed injurious effects of witchcraft and other magical arts. It is related, for example, that when Zarathushtra asked the Creator by what means the faithful is able "to part and turn from the way of the wicked" he received the following answer:—"It is when a man pronouncing my spell, either reading or reciting it by heart, draws three furrows and hides there himself by saying: 'I will smite thee, O Druj, whosoever thou art, whosoever thou art amongst the Drujas, that come in an open way, by hidden

<sup>1</sup> See also Yt. 11.3.



ways, that defile by contact ! Whatsoever Druj thou art, I smite thee away from the Aryan countries ! Whatsoever Druj thou art, I bind thee, I smite thee down, O Druj, I throw thee down below, O Druj !'”<sup>1</sup> Kindred protective spells of the same type are the two formulas recited by every Zoroastrian while casting away his nail-parings and hair-cuttings. Both formulas are quoted by *Vendîdâd* 17.7ff. and, as translated by Darmesteter, mean : “For him as a reward, Mazda made the plants grow” (recited while throwing away the hair-cuttings), and “the things that the pure proclaim through Asha and Vohumano” (uttered while casting away the nail-parings)<sup>2</sup>. The *Nîrang-î Kustî*, the Kusti formula, is likewise regarded as a powerful spell against the mischief of the Evil-Spirit, for, according to the *Bândahishn* (30.30.), “the resources of the Evil-Spirit and Az, defeated by the Kusti spell, act most impotently and they rush back into gloom and darkness.” This formula recited by the faithful in Pâzand, every time they put on the sacred girdle, is quoted by E. W. West, who gives the following rendering of it: “May Ahurmazd be Lord, and Aharman unprevailing, keeping far away, smitten and defeated. May Aharman, the demons and the fiends, the wizards and witches, the Kigs and Karaps be smitten and defeated”.<sup>3</sup> Another spell which drives away the fiends, is the formula *nəmascâ yâ Ârmaitish. izhâchâ* contained in *Vendîdâd* 9.12-13. The same is recited during the ceremonies accompanying the purification of a faithful, and is so effective that in the words of the *Vendîdâd*, “the Druj becomes weaker and weaker at every one of those words which are a weapon to smite the fiend Angra-Mainyu, to smite Aeshma of the murderous spear, to smite the Mâzainya fiends, and to smite all the fiends.” A similar efficiency is attributed to the mere uttering of the phrase “In the name of God”. The *Bândahishn* (28.35.), as stated above, describes Astôvidhâd, the demon of the evil eye, as the fiend who spoils anything that men see “when they do not say ‘in the name of God’” and the *Sad-dar* (15.1-2.) assures us that “saying ‘in the name of God’ when one sees anything that is pleasant to his eyes, prevents that thing from meeting with injury”. Finally, the last spell resorted to by the Zoroastrians as

<sup>1</sup> Yt. 4.5-6.

<sup>2</sup> See also above p. 425ff.

<sup>3</sup> E. W. West, *Pahlavi Texts*, SBE, 18,384.

a shield against magical influences is the so-called *Nirang-ê Kharfastar zadân*, "an incantation for the destruction of vermin", quoted by Dastur Hoshangji and translated by Martin Haug.<sup>1</sup>

In the preceding pages, the author has dealt only with such exorcisms as are exemplified by means of magical formulas uttered whenever the occasion arose. Besides these spoken spells, however, there are a number of protective means employed by the Zoroastrians, which involve an action on the part of the abjurer. These charms consist mostly of sacrifices and libations offered to the different angels. The *Râm Yasht* (Yt. 15.56.), for example, states that if any one worships Vaya with a sacrifice, "to him neither Yâtus nor Pairikâs can do any harm." Another *Yasht* (Yt. 8.44.) claims that "he who offers to Tishtrya, him neither Angra-Mainyu nor the Yâtus and the Pairikâs can deliver unto death", and *Vendidâd* 8.80. asserts that "when a man piously brings unto the fire sweet-smelling wood, wheresoever the wind brings the perfume of the fire, thereunto Âtar, the son of Ahura Mazda, shall go and kill thousands of Daevas and fiends, and couples of Yâtus and Pairikâs." In the same manner, sacrifices to Aredvî Sûra Anâhita, to Verethragna, Mithra and to the Fravashis are believed to enable the performer to withstand Yâtus and Pairikâs, Kavis and Karpans.<sup>2</sup> According to *Yasna* 16.8.; 68.8, milk-offerings and libations "defeat and arrest the Pairikâ and the malice of Ashemaoga", and lastly, a sacrifice to Vanant, according to Yt. 20.1., is a sure safeguard against the noxious creatures of the most abominable Angra-Mainyu.

An "acted" charm of the same type as the sacrifices and offerings, is the *Khvêtûk-das*, the law of Next-of-kin-Marriage, regarded by the Zoroastrians as a powerful spell against demons and witches. The Pahlavi canon dealing with this custom calls it "the preservation of the most grievous sin, such as witchcraft", and gives the following elaborate estimation of the relative value of this observance: "If one perform the *Khvêtûk-das* for the first time, a thousand demons and two thousand wizards and witches will die; if the person observes it twice, then two thousand demons and four thousand wizards and witches will perish; if this rite be

<sup>1</sup> Hoshangji and Haug, *An Old Zand-Pahlavi Glossary*, pp. 23-24,

<sup>2</sup> Yt. 5.13; 10.26; 13.104, 135; 14.45,

performed for the third time, then three thousand demons and six thousand wizards and witches will die, and if it be observed for the fourth time, then the man and the woman, performing it, will become righteous".<sup>1</sup>

There is still a third class of protective means that serve as charms or safeguards. These are neither spoken spells, nor do they involve any action on the part of the abjurer. They are mostly superstitious beliefs in the efficacy of certain objects as charms against witchcraft and diseases. The Parsi, for instance, believes with the *Shâyast lâ-Shâyast* (10.30.) and the *Sad-dar* (32.1-5.) that the crowing of a cock, both male and female, will keep away wizards from his dwelling place.<sup>2</sup> He believes likewise that the barking of a dog destroys pain, and regards the flesh and fat of this animal as remedies for driving away decay and diseases from men.<sup>3</sup> In his opinion, the urine of a *vanghâpara* kills innumerable ants,<sup>4</sup> and the cries of the three-legged ass and of the Kar-fish, as already noticed (Bd. 19. 9. 17. ; 28.41.) have a peculiar effect upon demons and noxious creatures. A very powerful exorcism of a similar type, according to Yasht 14.34-35., is the feather of the raven. We are told that when Zarathushtra asked for a remedy against the curses and spells of the many men who hate him, the Creator replied : " Take thou a feather of the Varengana bird and with that feather thou shalt rub thy own body and curse back thy enemies", and Yasht 14.45.46. states that " whosoever, preparing for battle, invokes the name of Verethraghna and throws four feathers of the raven either way, on his side victory will be, because this is a powerful, victorious, awful and healing spell; this spell saves the head that was lost, and chants away the uplifted weapon." The conviction held by every Mazdayasnian that fire wards off danger at night from pregnant women and newly-born children,<sup>5</sup> has been previously discussed. Mention was also made of the belief voiced in the *Dînâ-i Maînôg-i Khirat* (62.35.36.) that holy water kills noxious creatures. As the last of these Zoroastrian exorcisms, we may regard the Glory or Destiny, so often alluded to in the *Dînkart* as a means of slaying demons, wizards and mons-

<sup>1</sup> E. W. West, *Pahlavi Texts*, SBE. 18.417-418.

<sup>2</sup> See above p. 434.

Bd. 19.35.

\* Slis. 10.31. ; 12.20. Sd. 57.1.

<sup>5</sup> Dk. 8.38.6. ; Slis. 12.11.12. ; Sd. 16.1-4. ; Cf. also p. 410.

ters. "When the Destiny came to Tâkhdôr, the well armed", says the Pahlavi canon, "he smote through it the demon, the wizard, and the witch".<sup>1</sup> According to *Dînkart* 7.1.39., Kai-Khûsroî vanquished through it Frangrâsiyâk of Tûr and his fellow-miscreation, Kêrsêvazad of Vakgîr, and lastly we know from the same source (Dk.7.1.32) that Keresâspa was enabled by the Glory to successfully combat the serpent Srôbâr, the golden-heeled demon Gandarep, and other demoniacal monsters.<sup>2</sup>

#### CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, I wish to sum up briefly the main results which appear to have been reached in the course of our discussion on witchcraft and other primitive beliefs among the ancient Zoroastrians.

Sorcery seems to have been practised by some of the inhabitants of Iran, although we are not wholly clear as to the conception of what constituted the crime of witchcraft. The sacred books held it in extreme abhorrence and they inflicted horrible punishments upon those who were accused of this practice. The aversion to the belief in wizards and witches seemed to play an important part in the religious and even social life of the Zoroastrians.

Among the other primitive beliefs recognized by the Zoroastrians was a belief in the evil-eye, the good-eye, and in the custom of burying the nail-parings and hair-cuttings, and in a tendency, shared by the other races, to abhor or to esteem certain animals. They furthermore accorded a special sacredness to the Earth, they dreaded the dark of the night, and they believed, like so many other races, in the efficacy of spells and exorcisms.

All these primitive customs, however, were pre-Zoroastrian, and were practised long before the appearance of the great reformer and the establishment of Mazdayasnism as the state religion of Iran. It may be safely said that if Zoroastrianism was unable wholly to eradicate these superstitions and customs from the minds of the Iranians, it at least modified them and gave them a religious character.

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<sup>1</sup> Dk. 7.1.19.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also E. W. West, *Pahlavi Texts*, *SBE*. 18.37 ff.

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ABBREVIATIONS.

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Air. Wb. | =Altiranisches Wörterbuch.                          |
| Aog.     | =Aogemadaêchâ.                                      |
| Av.      | =Avestan.   |
| AV.      | =Artâ-Vîraf Nâmak.                                  |
| Bd.      | =Bûdahishn.   |
| Cf.      | =Compare.   |
| DD.      | =Dâtistân-i Dênig.                                  |
| Dk.      | =Dînkart.   |
| ed.      | =edited, edition.                                   |
| JAOS.    | =Journal of the American Oriental Society.          |
| LeZA.    | =Le Zend-Avesta.                                    |
| MKh.     | =Dînâ-i Maînôg-i Khîrat.                            |
| Phl.     | =Pahlavi.   |
| SBE.     | =Sacred Books of the East.                          |
| Sd.      | =Sad-dar.   |
| SG.      | =Shikand-Gûmânîk Vijâr.                             |
| Sir.     | =Sîrôzah.   |
| Sls.     | =Shâyast lâ-shâyast.                                |
| Trans.   | =translated.  |
| Vd.      | =Vendîdâd.  |
| WZKM.    | =Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes. |
| YF.      | =Yôsht-i Fryânô.                                    |
| Ys.      | =Yasna.   |
| Yt.      | =Yasht.   |
| YZ.      | =Yâtkâr-i Zarîrân.                                  |
| ZN.      | =Zartusht Nâmah.                                    |
| Zsp.     | =Selections of tsparam.                             |

















