



IRAN LEAGUE

IRAN LEAGUE, an organization established on 10 September 1922 by prominent Parsis with the aim of reviving and strengthening cultural and other ties between the Parsis of India and Iran. A meeting was held to frame and adopt the constitution, and Sir Hormasji C. D. Adenwala was elected its first president. Keeping the aims of the League in view, the Committee worked to establish closer cultural ties and friendly contact with the Iranian government and people. Activities included assistance to persons wishing to visit Iran, amelioration work for the Zoroastrians of Iran (along the lines of the Society for the Amelioration of the Conditions of the Zoroastrians in Persia—see [CHARITABLE FOUNDATIONS ii. Among Zoroastrians in Islamic Times](#)), publication of the cultural journal *Iran League Quarterly*, lectures on Iranian activities, free Persian conversation classes, establishment of closer commercial contacts with Iran, encouragement to various Iranian movements, and the establishment of various funds. In March 1928 the monthly *Bulletin of the Iran League*, containing scholarly articles, began publication; but in 1930 it became a quarterly.

In November 1924, Ahmad Shah Qajar landed in Bombay on his way to Europe and was presented with an address in a silver casket by the Iran League, the Iranian Zoroastrian Anjuman [IZA] (in Persian: Anjoman-e zartoštiān-e irāni-e Bombe'i), and the Iranian Muslims in Bombay. After the suppression in Iran of a tribal revolt (December 1924), the League sent a congratulatory message to Sardar Sepah Reza Khan, and it was represented at his coronation as shah on 25 April 1926. On another occasion, the League and IZA jointly sent to Reza



Shah presentation copies, in a silver casket, of Pour-Davoud's Persian translations of the Avestan Gathas and of the Yashts (vol. I; see bibliography).

In 1925 the Iran League was informed that the Iranian Majles intended to replace the Arabic names of months in the Iranian calendar with those of the ancient Iranian Zoroastrian names and to introduce a solar calendar in Iran. With the help of Dasturs and scholars a solar calendar was formulated, which was passed by the Majles on 31 March 1925 (see s.v. [CALENDARS](#), *EIr.* IV, col. 672a). Also with the help of scholars and various institutions, some 330 books on the Zoroastrian religion in English, Gujarati, Avestan, and Pahlavi were sent to the library of the Majles and to the Iranian Zoroastrian Anjoman in Tehran; and other literature on the Zoroastrian religion was sent to Iran from time to time.

A special committee was formed under the auspices of the League named "Iranian Women's Education Fund Committee" with a grant of Rs. 1,20,000/-, and a high school for girls was built in Tehran. The League took a leading part in erecting a statue of the Iranian epic poet Ferdowsi in the Kīābān-e Ferdowsi in Tehran. The Iran League also endeavored to encourage Parsis to travel to Iran and visit places of pilgrimage, fire temples, and shrines; and Mr. Kaikhosrow A. Fitter, Secretary of the League, published an informative guide for travelers to Iran and Iraq. Mr. Peshotan D. Marker, a patron of the Iran League, rendered yeoman service for the cause of education in Iran; and his munificence enabled the establishment of several institutions for education in Yazd. The Ferdowsi Memorial Clock Tower in Yazd was built at his expense. The Iran League also collected donations for opening a girls' orphanage in Kerman.

The Iran League celebrated its Silver Jubilee in 1947 and its Golden Jubilee on 30 March 1973. It supported the effort of Iranian Zoroastrians to organize the first World Zoroastrian Congress, which was held in Iran in 1960.

The League assisted various publications, notably the translations of the Avesta into Persian by Pour-Davoud (see bibliography), and including scholarly collections such as the *Dinshah Irani Memorial Volume* (Bombay, Dinshah J. Irani Memorial Fund Committee, 1943), *Professor Poure-Davoud Memorial Volume No. II* (Bombay, The Iran League, 1951), and *Peshotanji Marker Memorial Volume* (Bombay, IZA, 1966). For many years it continued to publish the *Iran League Quarterly*, which is now discontinued due to lack of funds. Unfortunately, the activities of this distinguished body have been



diluted to holding annual essay contests and speech competitions for schoolgoing Parsi boys and girls.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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