

SECRETS AND MYSTERIES

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

BY IQBAL

'That experience should take place in finite centres and should wear the form of finite this-ness is in the end inexplicable.' These are the words of Prof. Bradley. But starting with these inexplicable centres of experience, he ends in a unity which he calls Absolute and in which the finite centres lose their finiteness and distinctness. According to him, therefore, the finite centre is only an appearance. The test of reality, in his opinion is all-inclusiveness; and since all finiteness is 'infected with relativity,' it follows that the latter is a mere illusion. To my mind, this inexplicable finite centre of experience is the fundamental fact of the universe. All life is individual; there is no such thing as universal life. God himself is an individual: He is the most unique individual.¹ The universe, as Dr. McTaggart says, is an association of individuals; but we must add that the orderliness and adjustment which we find in this association is not eternally achieved and complete in itself. It is the result of instinctive or conscious effort. We are gradually travelling from chaos to cosmos and are helpers in this achievement. Nor are the

members of the association fixed; new members are ever coming to birth to co-operate in the great task. Thus the universe is not a completed act: it is still in the course of formation. There can be no complete truth about the universe, for the universe has not yet become 'whole.' The process of creation is still going on, and man too takes his share in it, inasmuch as he helps to bring order into at least a portion of the chaos. The Quran indicates the possibility of other creators than God. (Quran, ch. 23. v. 14: "Blessed is God, the best of those who create.")

Obviously this view of man and the universe is opposed to that of the English Neo-Hegelians as well as to all forms of pantheistic Sufism which regard absorption in a universal life or soul as the final aim and salvation of man. The moral and religious ideal of man is not self-negation but self-affirmation, and he attains to this ideal by becoming more and more individual, more and more unique. The Prophet said, '*Takhallaqu bi-akhlaq Allah*,' 'Create in yourselves the attributes of God.' Thus man becomes unique by becoming more and more like the most unique Individual. What then is life? It is individual: its highest form, so far, is the ego (*khudi*) in which the individual becomes a self-contained exclusive centre. Physically as well as spiritually man is a self-contained centre, but he is not yet a

¹ This view was held by the orthodox Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal in its extreme (anthropomorphic) form.

complete individual. The greater his distance from God, the less his individuality. He who comes nearest to God is the completest person. Not that he is finally absorbed in God. On the contrary, he absorbs God into himself.² The true person not only absorbs the world of matter by mastering it; he absorbs God Himself into his ego by assimilating Divine attributes. Life is a forward assimilative movement. It removes all obstructions in its march by assimilating them. Its essence is the continual creation of desires and ideals, and for the purpose of its preservation and expansion it has invented or developed out of itself certain instruments, *e.g.*, senses, intellect, etc., which help it to assimilate obstructions. The greatest obstacle in the way of life is matter, Nature; yet Nature is not evil, since it enables the inner powers of life to unfold themselves.

The ego attains to freedom by the removal of all observations in its way. It is partly free, partly determined³, and reaches fuller freedom by approaching the Individual, who is most free—God. In one word, life is an endeavour for freedom.

The ego and continuation of personality

In man the centre of life becomes an ego or person. Personality is a state of tension and can continue only if that state is maintained. If the state of tension is not maintained, relaxation will ensue. Since personality, or the state of

²Maulana Rumi has very beautifully expressed this idea. The Prophet, when a little boy, was once lost in the desert. His nurse Halima was almost beside herself with grief but while roaming the desert in search of the boy she heard a voice saying:

‘Do not grieve he will not be lost to thee;
Nay, the whole world will be lost in him.’

The true individual cannot be lost in the world; it is the world that is lost in him. I go a step further and say, prefixing a new half-verse to a hemistich of Rumi:

In his will that which God wills becomes
lost;

‘How shall a man believe this saying?’”

³ According to the saying of the Prophet, ‘The true Faith is between predestination and free-will.’”

tension, is the most valuable achievement of man, he should see that he does not revert to a state of relaxation. That which tends to maintain the state of tension tends to make us immortal. Thus the idea of personality gives us a standard of value: it settles the problem of good and evil. That which fortifies personality is good, that which weakens it is bad. Art,⁴ religion, and ethics must be judged from the stand-point of personality. My criticism of Plato is directed against those philosophical systems which hold up death rather than life as their ideal—systems which ignore the greatest obstruction to life, namely, matter, and teach us to run away from it instead of absorbing it.

As in connexion with the question of the freedom of the ego we have to face the problem of matter, similarly in connexion with its immortality we have to face the problem of time. Bergson has taught us that time is not an infinite line (in the spatial sense of the word ‘line’) through which we must pass whether we wish it or not. This idea of time is adulterated. Pure time has no length. Personal immortality is an aspiration: you can have it if you make an effort to achieve it. It depends on our adopting, in this life modes of thought and activity which tend to maintain the state of tension. Buddhism, Persian Sufism and allied forms of ethics will not serve our purpose. But they are not wholly useless, because after periods of great activity we need opiates, narcotics, for some time. These forms of

⁴ The ultimate end of all human activity is Life—glorious, powerful, exuberant. All human art must be subordinated to this final purpose, and the value of everything must be determined in reference to its life-yielding capacity. The highest art is that which awakens our dormant will-force and braves us to face the trials of life manfully. All that brings drowsiness and makes us shut our eyes to reality around, on the mastery of which alone Life depends, is a message of decay and death. There should be no opium-eating in Art. The dogma of Art for the sake of Art is a clever invention of decadence to cheat us out of life and power. (‘Our Prophet’s Criticism of Contemporary Arabian Poetry’ in *The New Era*, 1916, p. 251)

thought and action are like nights in the days of life. Thus, if our activity is directed towards the maintenance of a state of tension, the shock of death is not likely to affect it. After death there may be an interval of relaxation, as the Quran speaks of a *barzakh*, or intermediate state, which, in the case of some individuals, will last until the Day of Resurrection (Quran, ch. 23, v. 102). Only those egos will survive this state of relaxation who have taken good care during the present life. Although life abhors repetition in its evolution, yet on Bergson's principles the resurrection of the body too, as Wildon Carr says, is quite possible. By breaking up time into moments we spatialise it and then find difficulty in getting over it. The true nature of time is reached when we look into our deeper self. Real time is life itself which can preserve itself by maintaining that particular state of tension (personality) which it has so far achieved. We are subject to time so long as we look upon time as something spatial. Spatialised time is a fetter which life has forged for itself in order to assimilate the present environment. In reality we are timeless, and it is possible to realise our timelessness even in this life. This revelation, however, can be momentary only.

The education of the ego

The ego is fortified by love. This word is used in a very wide sense and means the desire to assimilate, to absorb. Its highest form is the creation of values and ideals and the endeavour to realise them. Love individualises the lover as well as the beloved. The effort to realise the most unique individuality individualises the seeker and implies the individuality of the sought, for nothing else would satisfy the nature of the seeker. As love fortifies the ego, asking weakens it. All that is achieved without personal effort comes under *asking*. The son of a rich man who inherits his father's wealth is an 'asker,' or beggar; so is every one who thinks the thoughts of others. Thus, in order to fortify the ego we should cultivate love, *i.e.* the power of assimilative action, and avoid all forms of 'asking, *i.e.*

inaction. The lesson of assimilative action is given by the life of the Prophet, at least to a Mohammedan. In another part of the poem I have hinted at the general principles of Muslim ethics and have tried to reveal their meaning in connexion with the idea of personality. The ego in its movement towards uniqueness has to pass through three stages:

(a) Obedience to the Law

(b) Self-control, which is the highest form of self-consciousness or ego-hood

(c) Divine vicegerency

This divine vicegerency is the third and last stage of human development on earth. The vicegerent is the vicegerent of God on earth. He is the completest ego, the goal of humanity,⁵ the acme of life both in mind and body; in him the discord of our mental life becomes a harmony. This highest power is united in him with the highest knowledge. In his life, thought and action, instinct and reason, become one. He is the last fruit of the tree of humanity, and all the trials of a painful evolution are justified because he is to come at the end. He is the real ruler of mankind; his kingdom is the kingdom of God on earth. Out of the richness of his nature he lavishes the wealth of life on others, and brings them nearer and nearer to himself. The more we advance in evolution, the nearer we get to him. In approaching him we are raising ourselves in the scale of life. The development of humanity both in mind and body is a condition precedent to his birth. For the present he is a mere ideal; but the evolution of humanity is tending towards the production of an ideal race of more or less unique individuals who will become his fitting parents. Thus the Kingdom of God on earth means the democracy of more or less unique individuals, presided over by the most unique individual possible on this earth. Nietzsche had a glimpse of this ideal race, but his atheism and

⁵ Man already possesses the germ of vicegerency as God says in the Quran (ch. 2, v. 28): "Lo! I will appoint a *khalifa* (vicegerent) on the earth."

aristocratic prejudices marred his whole conception."⁶

SECRETS OF THE SELF

But yester-eve a lamp in hand⁷
The Shaykh did all the city span,
Sick of mere ghosts he sought a man,
But could find none in all the land.

"I Rustam or a Hyder seek
I'm sick of snails, am sick," he said,
"There's none," said I. He shook his head,
"There's none like them, but still I seek."
—Rumi

Prologue

When the world-illuming sun rushed upon
Night like a brigand,
My weeping bedewed the face of the rose.
My tears washed away sleep from the eye of
the narcissus,
My passion wakened the grass and made it
grow.

⁶ Nicholson's Note—Writing of 'Muslim Democracy' in *The New Era*, 1916, p. 251, Iqbal says: "The Democracy of Europe—overshadowed by socialistic agitation and anarchical fear—originated mainly in the economic regeneration of European societies. Nietzsche, however, abhors this 'rule of the herd' and, hopeless of the plebeian, he bases all higher culture on the cultivation and growth of an Aristocracy of Supermen. But is the plebeian so absolutely hopeless? The Democracy of Islam did not grow out of the extension of economic opportunity; it is a spiritual principle based on the assumption that every human being is a centre of latent power, the possibilities of which can be developed by cultivating a certain type of character. Out of the plebeian material Islam has formed men of the noblest type of life and power. Is not, then, the Democracy of early Islam an experimental refutation of the ideas of Nietzsche?"

⁷ The versified translation of the quotation from Rumi is taken from Shaikh Mahmud Husain. Strangely, Nicholson omitted it although he was best known as Rumi's translator.

The Gardener tried the power of my song,
He sowed my verse and reaped a sword.
In the soil he planted only the seed of my
tears
And wove my lament with the garden, as
warp and woof.
Tho' I am but a mote, the radiant sun is mine:
Within my bosom are a hundred dawns.
My dust is brighter than Jamshid's cup
It knows things that are yet unborn in the
world.
My thought hunted down and slung from the
saddle a deer
That has not yet leaped forth from the covert
of non-existence.
Fair is my garden ere yet the leaves are green:
Unborn roses are hidden in the skirt of my
garment.
I struck dumb the musicians where they were
gathered together,
I smote the heart-string of the universe,
Because the lute of my genius hath a rare
melody:
Even to comrades my song is strange.
I am born in the world as a new sun,
I have not learned the ways and fashions of
the sky
Not yet have the stars fled before my
splendour,
Not yet is my quicksilver astir;
Untouched is the sea by my dancing rays,
Untouched are the mountains by my crimson
hue.
The eye of existence is not familiar with me;
I rise trembling, afraid to show myself.
From the East my dawn arrived and routed
Night,
A fresh dew settled on the rose of the world.
I am waiting for the votaries that rise at dawn;
Oh, happy they who shall worship my fire!
I have no need of the ear of To-day,
I am the voice of the poet of To-morrow.
My own age does not understand my deep
meanings,
My Joseph is not for this market.
I despair of my old companions,
My Sinai burns for sake of the Moses who is
coming.

Their sea is silent, like dew,
But my dew is storm-ridden, like the ocean.
My song is of another world than theirs:
This bell calls other travellers to take the road.
Many a poet was born after his death,
Opened our eyes when his own were closed,
And journeyed forth again from nothingness,
Like roses blossoming o'er the earth of his
grave.
Albeit caravans have passed through this
desert,
They passed, as a camel steps, with little
sound.
But I am a lover: loud crying is my faith
The clamour of Judgment Day is one of my
minions.
My song exceeds the range of the chord,
Yet I do not fear that my lute will break.
'Twere better for the water drop not to know
my torrent,
Whose fury should rather madden the sea.
No river will contain my Oman.
My flood requires whole seas to hold it.
Unless the bud expand into a bed of roses,
It is unworthy of my spring-cloud's bounty.
Lightnings slumber within my soul,
I sweep over mountain and plain.
Wrestle with my sea, if thou art a plain;
Receive my lightning if thou art a Sinai.
The Fountain of Life hath been given me to
drink.
I have been made an adept of the mystery of
Life.
The speck of dust was vitalised by my
burning song:
It unfolded wings and became a firefly.
No one hath told the secret which I will tell
Or threaded a pearl of thought like mine.
Come, if thou would'st know the secret of
everlasting life
Come, if thou would'st win both earth and
heaven.
Heaven taught me this lore,
I cannot hide it from comrades.
O Saki arise and pour wine into the cup!
Clear the vexation of Time from my heart
The sparkling liquor that flows from Zemzem

Were a beggar to worship it, he would
become a king.
It makes thought more sober and wise, it
makes the keen eye keener,
It gives to a straw the weight of a mountain,
And to foxes the strength of lions.
It causes dust to soar to the Pleiades
And a drop of water swell to the breadth of
the sea.
It turns silence into the din of Judgment Day,
It makes the foot of the partridge red with
blood of the hawk.
Arise and pour pure wine into my cup,
Pour moon beams into the dark night of my
thought,
That I may lead home the wanderer
And imbue the idle looker-on with restless
impatience;
And advance hotly on a new quest
And become known as the champion of a new
spirit;
And be to people of insight as the pupil to the
eye,
And sink into the ear of the world, like a
voice;
And exalt the worth of Poesy
And sprinkle the dry herbs with my tears.
Inspired by the genius of the Master of Rum.
I reherarse the sealed book of secret lore.
His soul is the flaming furnace,
I am but as the spark that gleams for a
moment.
His burning candle consumed me, the moth;
His wine overwhelmed my goblet.
The master of Rum transmuted my earth to
gold
And set my ashes aflame.
The grain of sand set forth from the desert,
That it might win the radiance of the sun.
I am a wave and I will come to rest in his sea,
That I may make the glistening pearl mine
own.
I who am drunken with the wine of his song
Draw life from the breath of his words,
'Twas night: my heart would fain lament.
The silence was filled with my cries to God.
I was complaining of the sorrows of the world

8 Collected Poetical Works of Iqbal

And bemoaning the emptiness of my cup.
At last mine eye could endure no more,
Broken with fatigue it went to sleep.
There appeared the Master, formed in the
mould of Truth,
Who wrote the Quran in Persian.
He said, "O frenzied lover,
Take a draught of love's pure wine.
Strike the chords of thine heart and rouse a
tumultuous strain.
Dash thine head against the goblet and thine
eye against the lancet!
Make thy laughter the source of a hundred
sighs.
Make the hearts of men bleed with thy tears
How long wilt thou be silent, like a bud?
Sell thy fragrance cheap, like the rose!
Tongue-tied, thou art in pain:
Cast thyself upon the fire, like rue!
Like the bell, break silence at last, and from
every limb.
Utter forth a lamentation!
Thou art fire: fill the world with thy glow!
Make others burn with thy burning!
Proclaim the secrets of the old wine seller;
Be thou a surge of wine, and the crystal cup
thy robe!
Shatter the mirror of fear,
Break the bottles in the bazaar
Like the reed-flute, bring a message from the
reed-bed
Give to Majnun a message from the tribe of
Layla!
Create a new style for thy song,
Enrich the assembly with thy piercing strains!
Up, and re-inspire every living soul
Say 'Arise!' and by that word quicken the
living!
Up, and set thy feet on another path;
Put aside the passionate melancholy of old!
Become familiar with the delight of singing;
Bell of the caravan, awake!"

At these words my bosom was enkindled
And swelled with emotion like the flute;
I rose like music from the string
To prepare a Paradise for the ear.
I unveiled the mystery of the self

And disclosed its wondrous secret.
My being was an unfinished statue,
Uncomely, worthless, good for nothing.
Love chiselled me: I became a man.
And gained knowledge of the nature of the
universe.
I have seen the movement of the sinews of the
sky.
And the blood coursing in the veins of the
moon.
Many a night I wept for Man's sake
That I might tear the veil from Life's
mysteries.
And extract the secret of Life's constitution
From the laboratory of phenomena.
I who give beauty to this night, like the moon,
Am as dust in devotion to the pure Faith
(Islam) –
A Faith renowned in hill and dale.
Which kindles in men's hearts a flame of
undying song:
It sowed an atom and reaped a sun,
It harvested a hundred poets like Rumi and
Attar.
I am a sigh: I will mount to the heavens;
I am but smoke, yet am I sprung of fire.
Driven onward by high thoughts, my pen
Cast abroad the secret behind this veil,
That the drop may become co-equal with the
sea
And the grain of sand grow into a Sahara.
Poetising is not the aim of this *mathnawi*.
Beauty-worshipping and love-making is not
its aim.
I am of India: Persian is not my native tongue;
I am like the crescent moon: my cup is not
full.
Do not seek from me charm of style in
exposition.
Do not seek from me Khansar and Isfahan.
Although the language of Hind is sweet as
sugar,
Yet sweeter is the fashion of Persian speech.
My mind was enchanted by its loveliness,
My pen became as a twig of the Burning
Bush.
Because of the loftiness of my thoughts,

Persian alone is suitable to them.
 O Reader, do not find fault with the wine-cup,
 But consider attentively the taste of the wine.

*Showing that the system of the universe
 originates in the self and that the
 continuation of the life of all individuals
 depends on strengthening the self*

The form of existence is an effect of the self,
 Whatsoever thou seest is a secret of the self.
 When the self awoke to consciousness,
 It revealed the universe of Thought.
 A hundred words are hidden in its essence:
 Self-affirmation brings *not-self* to light.
 By the self the seed of opposition is sown in
 the world:
 It imagines itself to be other than itself
 It makes from itself the forms of others
 In order to multiply the pleasure of strife.
 It is slaying by the strength of its arm
 That it may become conscious of its own
 strength.
 Its self-deceptions are the essence of Life;
 Like the rose, it lives by bathing itself in
 blood.
 For the sake of a single rose it destroys a
 hundred rose gardens
 And makes a hundred lamentations in quest
 of a single melody.
 For one sky it produces a hundred new
 moons,
 And for one word a hundred discourses.
 The excuse for this wastefulness and cruelty
 Is the shaping and perfecting of spiritual
 beauty.
 The loveliness of Shirin justifies the anguish
 of Farhad.
 One fragrant navel justifies a hundred
 musk-deer.
 'Tis the fate of moths to consume in flame:
 The suffering of moths is justified by the
 candle.
 The pencil of the self limned a hundred
 to-days
 In order to achieve the dawn of a single
 morrow.

Its flames burned a hundred Abrahams
 That the lamp of one Muhammad might be
 lighted.
 Subject, object, means, and causes—
 All these are forms which it assumes for the
 purpose of action.
 The self rises, kindles, falls, glows, breathes,
 Burns, shines, walks, and flies.
 The spaciousness of Time is its arena,
 Heaven is a billow of the dust on the road.
 From its rose-planting the world abounds in
 roses;
 Night is born of its sleep, day springs from its
 waking.
 It divided its flame into sparks
 And taught the understanding to worship
 particulars.
 It dissolved itself and created the atoms
 It was scattered for a little while and created
 sands.
 Then it wearied of dispersion
 And by re-uniting itself it became the
 mountains.
 'Tis the nature of the self to manifest itself
 In every atom slumbers the might of the self.
 Power that is unexpressed and inert
 Chains the faculties which lead to action.
 Inasmuch as the life of the universe comes
 from the power of the self,
 Life is in proportion to this power.
 When a drop of water gets the self's lesson by
 heart,
 It makes its worthless existence a pearl.
 Wine is formless because its self is weak;
 It receives a form by favour of the cup.
 Although the cup of wine assumes a form,
 It is indebted to us for its motion.
 When the mountain loses its self, it turns into
 sands
 And complains that the sea surges over it;
 The wave, so long as it remains a wave in the
 sea's bosom,
 Makes itself rider on the sea's back.
 Light transformed itself into an eye
 And moved to and fro in search of beauty;
 When the grass found a means of growth in
 its self,

Its aspiration clove the breast of the garden.
The candle too concatenated itself
And built itself out of atoms;
Then it made a practice of melting itself away
and fled from its self
Until at last it trickled down from its own eye,
like tears.
If the bezel had been more self secure by
nature,
It would not have suffered wounds,
But since it derives its value from the
superscription,
Its shoulder is galled by the burden of
another's name.
Because the earth is firmly based on its self,
The captive moon goes round it perpetually.
The being of the sun is stronger than that of
the earth:
Therefore is the earth fascinated by the sun's
eye.
The glory of the red birch fixes our gaze,
The mountains are enriched by its majesty
Its raiment is woven of fire,
Its origin is one self-assertive seed.
When Life gathers strength from the self,
The river of Life expands into an ocean.

*Showing that the life of the self comes
from forming ideals and bringing them to
birth*

Life is preserved by purpose:
Because of the goal its caravan-bell tinkles.
Life is latent in seeking,
Its origin is hidden in desire.
Keep desire alive in thy heart,
Lest thy little dust become a tomb.
Desire is the soul of this world of hue and
scent,
The nature of everything is a storehouse of
desire.
Desire sets the heart dancing in the breast,
And by its glow the breast is made bright as a
mirror.
It gives to earth the power of soaring,
It is a Khizr to the Moses of perception.
From the flame of desire the heart takes life,
And when it takes life, all dies that is not true.

When it refrains from forming desires,
Its pinion breaks and it cannot soar.
Desire keeps the self in perpetual uproar:
It is a restless wave of the self's sea.
Desire is a noose for hunting ideals,
A binder of the book of deeds.
Negation of desire is death to the living,
Even as absence of heat extinguishes the
flame.
What is the source of our wakeful eye?
Our delight in seeing hath taken visible shape.
The partridge's leg is derived from the
elegance of its gait,
The nightingale's beak from its endeavour to
sing.
Away from the seed-bed, the reed became
happy:
The music was released from its prison.
What is the essence of the mind that strives
after new discoveries and scales the
heavens?
Knowest thou what works this miracle?
'Tis desire that enriches Life,
And the mind is a child of its womb.
What are social organisation, customs and
laws?
What is the secret of the novelties of science?
A desire which realised itself by its own
strength
And burst forth from the heart and took
shape.
Nose, hand, brain, eye, and ear,
Thought, imagination, feeling, memory, and
understanding –
All these are weapons devised by Life for
self-preservation
In its ceaseless struggle.
The object of science and art is not
knowledge,
The object of the garden is not the bud and
the flower.
Science is an instrument for the preservation
of Life,
Science is a means of invigorating the self.
Science and art are servants of Life,
Slaves born and bred in its house.
Rise, O thou who art strange to Life 's
mystery,

Rise intoxicated with the wine of an ideal:
 An ideal shining as the dawn,
 A blazing fire to all that is other than God;
 An ideal higher than Heaven –
 Winning, captivating, enchanting men's
 hearts,
 A destroyer of ancient falsehood,
 Fraught with turmoil, and embodiment of the
 Last Day.
 We live by forming ideals,
 We glow with the sunbeams of desire!

*Showing that the self is strengthened by
 love*

The luminous point whose name is the self
 Is the life-spark beneath our dust.
 By Love it is made more lasting,
 More living, more burning, more glowing.
 From Love proceeds the radiance of its being.
 And the development of its unknown
 possibilities.
 Its nature gathers fire from Love,
 Love instructs it to illumine the world.
 Love fears neither sword nor dagger,
 Love is not born of water and air and earth.
 Love makes peace and war in the world,
 Love is the Fountain of Life, Love is the
 flashing sword of Death.
 The hardest rocks are shattered by Love's
 glance:
 Love of God at last becomes wholly God.
 Learn thou to love, and seek a beloved:
 Seek an eye like Noah's, a heart like Job's!
 Transmute thy handful of earth into gold,
 Kiss the threshold of a Perfect Man!
 Like Rumi, light the candle
 And burn Rum in the fire of Tabriz!
 There is a beloved hidden within thine heart:
 I will show him to thee, if thou hast eyes to
 see.
 His lovers are fairer than the fair,
 Sweeter and comelier and more beloved.
 By love of him the heart is made strong
 And earth rubs shoulders with the Pleiades.
 The soil of Najd was quickened by his grace
 And fell into a rapture and rose to the skies.

In the Muslim 's heart is the home of
 Muhammad,
 All our glory is from the name of
 Muhammad.
 Sinai is but an eddy of the dust of his house,
 His dwelling-place is a sanctuary to the Ka'ba
 itself.
 Eternity is less than a moment of his time,
 Eternity receives increase from his essence.
 He slept on a mat of rushes,
 But the crown of Chosroes was under his
 people's feet.
 He chose the nightly solitude of Mount Hira,
 And he founded a state and laws and
 government.
 He passed many a night with sleepless eyes
 In order that the Muslims might sleep on the
 throne of Persia.
 In the hour of battle, iron was melted by the
 fash of his sword;
 In the hour of prayer, tears fell like rain from
 his eye.
 When he prayed for Divine help, his sword
 answered "Amen"
 And extirpated the race of kings.
 He instituted new laws in the world,
 He brought the empires of antiquity to an
 end.
 With the key of religion he opened the door of
 this world:
 The womb of the world never bore his like.
 In his sight high and low were one,
 He sat with his slave at one table.
 The daughter of the chieftain of Tai was taken
 prisoner in battle
 And brought into that exalted presence;
 Her feet in chains, unveiled,
 And her neck bowed with shame.
 When the Prophet saw that the poor girl had
 no veil,
 He covered her face with his own mantle.
 We are more naked than that lady of Tai,
 We are unveiled before the nations of the
 world.
 In him is our trust on the Day of Judgement,
 And in this world too he is our protector.
 Both his favour and his wrath are entirely a
 mercy:

That is a mercy to his friends and this to his
foes.
He opened the gate of mercy to his enemies,
He gave to Makkah the message, "No penalty
shall be laid upon you."
We who know not the bonds of country
Resemble sight, which is one though it be the
light of two eyes.
We belong to the Hijaz and China and Persia,
Yet we are the dew of one smiling dawn.
We are all under the spell of the eye of the
cup bearer from Makkah,
We are united as wine and cup.
He burnt clean away distinctions of lineage,
His fire consumed this trash and rubble.
We are like a rose with many petals but with
one perfume:
He is the soul of this society, and he is one
We are the secret concealed in his heart:
He spake out fearlessly, and we were
revealed.
The song of love for him fills my silent reed,
A hundred notes throb in my bosom.
How shall I tell what devotion he inspires?
A block of dry wood wept at parting from
him.
The Muslim's being is where he manifests his
glory:
Many a Sinai springs from the dust on his
path.
My image was created by his mirror,
My dawn rises from the sun of his breast.
My repose is a perpetual fever,
My evening hotter than the morning of
Judgment Day:
He is the April cloud and I his garden,
My vine is bedewed with his rain.
It sowed mine eye in the field of Love
And reaped a harvest of vision.
"The soil of Medina is sweeter than both
worlds:
Oh, happy the town where dwell the
Beloved!"
I am lost in admiration of the style of Mulla
Jami:
His verse and prose are a remedy for my
immaturity.

He has written poetry overflowing with
beautiful ideas;
And has threaded pearls in praise of the
Master-
"Muhammad is the preface to the book of the
universe:
All the worlds are slaves and he is the
Master."
From the wine of Love spring many spiritual
qualities:
Amongst the attributes of Love is blind
devotion.
The saint of Bistam, who in devotion was
unique,
Abstained from eating a water-melon.
Be a lover constant in devotion to thy
beloved,
That thou mayst cast thy nose and capture
God.
Sojourn for a while on the Hira of the heart.
Abandon self and flee to God.
Strengthened by God, return to thy self
And break the heads of the Lat and Uzza of
sensuality.
By the might of Love evoke an army
Reveal thyself on the Faran of Love,
That the Lord of the Ka'ba may show thee
favour
And make thee the object of the text, "Lo, I
will appoint a vicegerent on the earth."

*Showing that the self is weakened by
asking*

O thou who hast gathered taxes from lions,
Thy need hath caused thee to become a fox in
disposition.
Thy maladies are the result of indigence:
This disease is the source of thy pain.
It is robbing thine high thoughts of their
dignity
And putting out the light of thy noble
imagination.
Quaff rosy wine from the jar of existence!
Snatch thy money from the purse of Time!
Like Omar, come down from thy camel!
Beware of incurring obligations, beware!

How long wilt thou sue for office
 And ride like children on a reed?
 A nature that fixes its gaze on the sky
 Becomes debased by receiving benefits.
 By asking, poverty is made more abject;
 By begging, the beggar is made poorer.
 Asking disintegrates the self
 And deprives of illumination the Sinai bush
 of the self.
 Do not scatter thy handful of dust;
 Like the moon, scrape food from thine own
 side!
 Albeit thou art poor and wretched
 And overwhelmed by affliction,
 Seek not thy daily bread from the bounty of
 another,
 Seek not water from the fountain of the sun,
 Lest thou be put to shame before the Prophet
 On the Day when every soul shall be stricken
 with fear.
 The moon gets sustenance from the table of
 the sun
 And bears the brand of his bounty on her
 heart.
 Pray God for courage! Wrestle with Fortune!
 Do not sully the honour of the pure religion!
 He who swept the rubbish of idols out of the
 Ka'ba
 Said that God loves a man that earns his
 living.
 Woe to him that accepts bounty from
 another's table
 And lets his neck be bent with benefits!
 He hath consumed himself with the lightning
 of the favours bestowed on him,
 He hath sold his honour for a paltry coin.
 Happy the man who thirsting in the sun
 Does not crave of Khizr a cup of water!
 His brow is not moist with the shame of
 beggary;
 He is a man still, not a piece of clay,
 That noble youth walks under heaven
 With his head erect like the pine.
 Are his hands empty? The more is he master
 of himself.
 Do his fortunes languish? The more alert is
 he.

A whole ocean, if gained by begging is but a
 sea of fire;
 Sweet is a little dew gathered by one's own
 hand.
 Be a man of honour, and like the bubble
 Keep the cup inverted even in the midst of the
 sea!

*Showing that when the self is
 strengthened by love it gains dominion
 over the outward and inward forces of the
 universe*

When the self is made strong by Love
 Its power rules the whole world.
 The Heavenly Sage who adorned the sky with
 stars
 Plucked these buds from the bough of the self.
 Its hand becomes God's hand,
 The moon is split by its fingers.
 It is the arbitrator in all the quarrels of the
 world,
 Its command is obeyed by Darius and
 Jamshid.
 I will tell thee a story of Bu Ali,
 Whose name is renowned in India,
 Him who sang of the ancient rose-garden
 And discoursed to us about the lovely rose:
 The air of his fluttering skirt
 Made a Paradise of this fire-born country.
 His young disciple went one day to the
 bazaar –
 The wine of Bu Ali's discourse had turned his
 head.
 The governor of the city was coming along on
 horseback,
 His servant and staff-bearer rode beside him.
 The forerunner shouted, "O senseless one,
 Do not get in the way of the governor's
 escort!"
 But the dervish walked on with drooping
 head,
 Sunk in the sea of his own thoughts.
 The staff-bearer, drunken with pride,
 Broke his staff on the head of the dervish.
 Who stepped painfully out of the governor's
 way.

Sad and sorry, with a heavy heart.
 He came to Bu Ali and complained
 And released the tears from his eyes.
 Like lightning that falls on mountains,
 The Shaykh poured forth a fiery torrent of
 speech.
 He let loose from his soul a strange fire,
 He gave an order to his secretary:
 "Take thy pen and write a letter
 From a dervish to a sultan!
 Say, 'Thy governor has broken my servant's
 head;
 He has cast burning coals on his own life.
 Arrest this wicked governor,
 Or else I will bestow thy kingdom on another.
 The letter of the saint who had access to God
 Caused the monarch to tremble in every limb.
 His body was filled with aches,
 He grew as pale as the evening sun.
 He sought out a handcuff for the governor
 And entreated Bu Ali to pardon this offence.
 Khusrau, the sweet-voiced eloquent poet,
 Whose harmonies flow from the mind
 And whose genius hath the soft brilliance of
 moonlight,
 Was chosen to be the king's ambassador.
 When he entered Bu Ali's presence and
 played his lute,
 His song melted the fakir's soul like glass.
 One strain of Poesy bought the grace
 Of a kingdom that was firm as a mountain.
 Do not wound the heart of dervishes,
 Do not throw thyself into burning fire!

*A tale of which the moral is that negation
 of the self is a doctrine invented by the
 subject races of mankind in order that by
 this means they may sap and weaken the
 character of their rulers*

Hast thou heard that in the time of old
 The sheep dwelling in a certain pasture
 So increased and multiplied
 That they feared no enemy?
 At last, from the malice of Fate,
 Their breasts were smitten by a shaft of
 calamity.

The tigers sprang forth from the jungle
 And rushed upon the sheepfold.
 Conquest and dominion are signs of strength,
 Victory is the manifestation of strength.
 Those fierce tigers beat the drum of
 sovereignty,
 They deprived the sheep of freedom.
 For as much as tigers must have their prey,
 That meadow was crimsoned with the blood
 of the sheep.
 One of the sheep which was clever and acute,
 Old in years, cunning as a weather-beaten
 wolf,
 Being grieved at the fate of his fellows
 And sorely vexed by the violence of the tigers,
 Made complaint of the course of Destiny
 And sought by craft to restore the fortunes of
 his race.
 The weak, in order to preserve themselves,
 Seek device from skilled intelligence.
 In slavery, for the sake of repelling harm,
 The power of scheming becomes quickened.
 And when the madness of revenge gains
 hold,
 The mind of the slave meditates rebellion.
 "Ours is a hard knot," said this sheep to
 himself,
 "The ocean of our griefs hath no shore,
 By force we sheep cannot escape from the
 tiger:
 Our legs are silver, his paws are steel.
 'Tis not possible, however much one exhorts
 and counsels.
 To create in a sheep the disposition of a wolf.
 But to make the furious tiger a sheep – that is
 possible:
 To make him unmindful of his nature – that is
 possible."
 He became as a prophet inspired,
 And began to preach to the blood-thirsty
 tigers.
 He cried out, "O ye insolent liars,
 Who wot not of a day of ill luck that shall
 continue for ever!
 I am possessed of spiritual power,
 I am an apostle sent by God for the tigers.
 I come as a light for the eye that is dark,

I come to establish laws and give
 commandments.
 Repent of your blameworthy deeds!
 O plotters of evil, bethink yourselves of good!
 Whoso is violent and strong is miserable:
 Life's solidity depends on self-denial.
 The spirit of the righteous is fed by fodder:
 The vegetarian is pleasing unto God.
 The sharpness of your teeth brings disgrace
 upon you
 And makes the eye of your perception blind.
 Paradise is for the weak alone,
 Strength is but a means to perdition.
 It is wicked to seek greatness and glory,
 Penury is sweeter than princedom.
 Lightning does not threaten the cornseed:
 If the seed become a stack, it is unwise.
 If you are sensible, you will be a mote of sand,
 not a Sahara,
 So that you may enjoy the sunbeams.
 O thou that delightest in the slaughter of
 sheep,
 Slay thy self, and thou wilt have honour!
 Life is rendered unstable
 By violence, oppression, revenge, and exercise
 of power.
 Though trodden underfoot, the grass grows
 up time after time
 And washes the sleep of death from its eye
 again and again.
 Forget thy self, if thou art wise!
 If thou dost not forget thy self, thou art mad.
 Close thine eyes, close thine ears, close thy
 lips,
 That thy thought may reach the lofty sky!
 This pasturage of the world is naught, naught:
 O fool, do not torment thy phantom!
 The tiger-tribe was exhausted by hard
 struggles,
 They had set their hearts on enjoyment of
 luxury.
 This soporific advice pleased them,
 In their stupidity they swallowed the charm
 of the sheep.
 He that used to make sheep his prey
 Now embraced a sheep's religion.
 The tigers took kindly to a diet of fodder:
 At length their tigerish nature was broken.

The fodder blunted their teeth
 And put out the awful flashings of their eyes.
 By degrees courage ebbed from their breasts,
 The sheen departed from mirror.
 That frenzy of uttermost exertion remained
 not,
 That craving after action dwelt in their hearts
 no more.
 They lost the power of ruling and the
 resolution to be independent,
 They lost reputation, prestige, and fortune.
 Their paws that were as iron became
 strengthless;
 Their souls died and their bodies became
 tombs.
 Bodily strength diminished while spiritual
 fear increased;
 Spiritual fear robbed them of courage.
 Lack of courage produced a hundred
 diseases—
 Poverty, pusillanimity, low mindedness.
 The wakeful tiger was lulled to slumber by
 the sheep's charm
 He called his decline Moral Culture.

*To the effect that Plato, whose thought has
 deeply influenced the mysticism and
 literature of Islam, followed the sheep's
 doctrine, and that we must be on our
 guard against his theories*

Plato, the prime ascetic and sage
 Was one of that ancient flock of sheep.
 His Pegasus went astray in the darkness of
 idealism
 And dropped its shoe amidst the rocks of
 actuality.
 He was so fascinated by the invisible
 That he made hand, eye, and ear of no
 account.
 "To die," said he, "is the secret of Life:
 The candle is glorified by being put out."
 He dominates our thinking,
 His cup sends us to sleep and takes the
 sensible world away from us.
 He is a sheep in man's clothing,
 The soul of the Sufi bows to his authority.

He soared with his intellect to the highest
heaven
And called the world of phenomena a myth.
'Twas his work to dissolve the structure of
Life
And cut the bough of Life's fair tree asunder.
The thought of Plato regarded loss as profit,
His philosophy declared that being is
not-being.
His nature drowsed and created a dream
His mind's eye created a mirage.
Since he was without any taste for action,
His soul was enraptured by the nonexistent.
He disbelieved in the material universe
And became the creator of invisible Ideas.
Sweet is the world of phenomena to the living
spirit,
Dear is the world of Ideas to the dead spirit:
Its gazelles have no grave of movement,
Its partridges are denied the pleasure of
walking daintily.
Its dewdrops are unable to quiver,
Its birds have no breath in their breasts,
Its seed does not desire to grow,
Its moths do not know how to flutter.
Our recluse had no remedy but flight:
He could not endure the noise of this world.
He set his heart on the glow of a quenched
flame
And depicted a word steeped in opium.
He spread his wings towards the sky
And never came down to his nest again.
His fantasy is sunk in the jar of heaven:
I know not whether it is the dregs or brick of
the wine-jar.
The peoples were poisoned by his
intoxication:
He slumbered and took no delight in deeds.

*Concerning the true nature of poetry and
reform of Islamic literature*

'Tis the brand of desire makes the blood of
man run warm,
By the lamp of desire this dust is enkindled.
By desire Life's cup is brimmed with wine,
So that Life leaps to its feet and marches
briskly on.

Life is occupied with conquest alone,
And the one charm for conquest is desire.
Life is the hunter and desire the snare,
Desire is Love's message to Beauty.
Wherefore doth desire swell continuously
The bass and treble of Life's song?
Whatever is good and fair and beautiful
Is our guide in the wilderness of seeking.
Its image becomes impressed on thine heart,
It creates desires in thine heart.
Beauty is the creator of desire's springtide,
Desire is nourished by the display of Beauty.
'Tis in the poet's breast that Beauty unveils,
'Tis from his Sinai that Beauty's beams arise.
By his look the fair is made fairer,
Through his enchantments Nature is more
beloved.
From his lips the nightingale hath learned her
song,
And his rouge hath brightened the cheek of
the rose.
'Tis his passion burns in the heart of the moth,
'Tis he that lends glowing hues to love tales.
Sea and land are hidden within his water and
clay,
A hundred new worlds are concealed in his
heart.
Ere tulips blossomed in his brain
There was heard no note of joy or grief.
His music breathes o'er us a wonderful
enchantment,
His pen draws a mountain with a single hair.
His thoughts dwell with the moon and the
stars,
He creates beauty and knows not what is
ugly.
He is a Khizr, and amidst his darkness is the
Fountain of Life:
All things that exist are made more living by
his tears.
Heavily we go, like raw novices,
Stumbling on the way to the goal.
His nightingale hath played a tune
And laid a plot to beguile us.
That he may lead us into Life's Paradise,
And that Life's bow may become a full circle.
Caravans march at the sound of his bell
And follow the voice of his pipe;

When his zephyr blows in our garden,
It slowly steals into the tulips and roses.
His witchery makes Life develop itself
And become self-questioning and impatient.
He invites the whole world to his table;
He lavishes his fire as though it were cheap as
air.
Woe to a people that resigns itself to death
And whose poet turns away from the joy of
living!
His mirror shows beauty as ugliness,
His honey leaves a hundred stings in the
heart.
His kiss robs the rose of freshness,
He takes away from the nightingale's heart
the joy of flying.
The sinews are relaxed by his opium,
Thou payest for his song with the life.
He bereaves the cypress of delight in its
beauty,
His cold breath makes a pheasant of the male
falcon.
He is a fish. and from the breast upward a
man,
Like the Sirens in the ocean.
With his song he enchants the pilot
And casts the ship to the bottom of the sea.
His melodies steal firmness from thine heart,
His magic persuades thee that death is life.
He takes from thy soul the desire of existence,
He extracts from thy mine the blushing ruby.
He dresses gain in the garb of loss,
He makes everything praiseworthy blameful,
He plunges thee in a sea of thought
And makes thee a stranger to action.
He is sick, and by his words our sickness is
increased
The more his cup goes round, the more sick
are they that quaff it.
There are no lightning rains in his April,
His garden is a mirage of colour and perfume.
His beauty hath no dealings with Truth,
There are none but flawed pearls in his sea.
Slumber he deemed sweeter than waking:
Our fire was quenched by his breath.
By the chant of his nightingale the heart was
poisoned:
Under his heap of roses lurked a snake.

Beware of his decanter and cup!
Beware of his sparkling wine!
O thou whom his wine hath laid low
And who look'st to his glass for thy rising
dawn,
O thou whose heart hath been chilled by his
melodies,
Thou hast drunk deadly poison through the
ear!
Thy way of life is a proof of thy degeneracy,
The strings of thine instrument are out of
tune,
'Tis pampered ease hath made thee so
wretched,
A disgrace to Islam throughout the world.
One can bind thee with the vein of a rose,
One can wound thee with a zephyr.
Love hath been put to shame by thy wailing,
His fair picture hath been fouled by thy
brush.
Thy illness hath paled his cheek,
The coldness hath taken the glow from his
fire.
He is heartsick from thy heart sicknesses,
And enfeebled by thy feeblenesses.
His cup is full of childish tears,
His house is furnished with distressful sighs.
He is a drunkard begging at tavern doors,
Stealing glimpses of beauty from lattices,
Unhappy, melancholy, injured,
Kicked well-nigh to death by the warder;
Wasted like a reed by sorrows,
On his lips a store of complaints against
Heaven.
Flattery and spite are the mettle of his mirror,
Helplessness his comrade of old;
A miserable base-born underling
Without worth or hope or object,
Whose lamentations have sucked the marrow
from thy soul
And driven off gentle sleep from thy
neighbours' eyes.
Alas for a love whose fire is extinct,
A love that was born in the Holy Place and
died in the house of idols!
Oh, if thou hast the coin of poesy in thy purse,
Rub it on the touchstone of Life!

Clear-seeing thought shows the way to action,
 As the lightning-flash precedes the thunder.
 It behoves thee to meditate well concerning
 literature,
 It behoves thee to go back to Arabia:
 Thou must needs give thine heart to the
 Salma of Araby,
 That the morn of the Hijaz may blossom from
 the night of Kurdistan.
 Thou hast gathered roses from the garden of
 Persia
 And seen the springtide of India and Iran:
 Now taste a little of the heat of the desert,
 Drink the old wine of the date!
 Lay thine head for once on its hot breast.
 Yield thy body awhile to its scorching wind!
 For a long time thou hast turned about on a
 bed of silk:
 Now accustom thyself to rough cotton!
 For generations thou hast danced on tulips
 And bathed thy cheek in dew, like the rose:
 Now throw thyself on the burning sand
 And plunge in to the fountain of Zamzam!
 How long wilt thou fain lament like the
 nightingale?
 How long make thine abode in gardens?
 O thou whose auspicious snare would do
 honour to the Phoenix,
 Build a nest on the high mountains,
 A nest embosomed in lightning and thunder,
 Loftier than eagle's eye,
 That thou mayst be fit for Life's battle,
 That thy body and soul may burn in Life's
 fire!

*Showing that the education of the self has
 three stages: obedience, self-control, and
 divine vicegerency*

1. Obedience

Service and toil are traits of the camel,
 Patience and perseverance are ways of the
 camel.
 Noiselessly he steps along the sandy track,
 He is the ship of those who voyage in the
 desert.
 Every thicket knows the print of his foot:

He eats seldom, sleeps little, and is inured to
 toil.
 He carries rider, baggage, and litter:
 He trots on and on to the journey's end,
 Rejoicing in his speed,
 More patient in travel than his rider,
 Thou, too, do not refuse the burden of Duty:
 So wilt thou enjoy the best dwelling place,
 which is with God.
 Endeavour to obey, O heedless one!
 Liberty is the fruit of compulsion.
 By obedience the man of no worth is made
 worthy;
 By disobedience his fire is turned to ashes.
 Whoso would master the sun and stars,
 Let him make himself a prisoner of Law!
 The air becomes fragrant when it is
 imprisoned in the flower-bud;
 The perfume becomes musk when it is
 confined in the -navel of the muskdeer.
 The star moves towards its goal
 With head bowed in surrender to a law.
 The grass springs up in obedience to the law
 of growth:
 When it abandons that, it is trodden
 underfoot.
 To burn unceasingly is the law of the tulip.
 And so the blood leaps in its veins
 Drops of water become a sea by the law of
 union,
 And grains of sand become a Sahara.
 Since Law makes everything strong within,
 Why dost thou neglect this source of strength?
 O thou that art emancipated from the old
 Custom,
 Adorn thy feet once more with the same fine
 silver chain!
 Do not complain of the hardness of the Law,
 Do not transgress the statutes of Muhammad!

2. Self-Control

Thy soul cares only for itself, like the camel:
 It is self-conceited, self-governed, and
 self-willed.
 Be a man, get its halter into thine hand,
 That thou mayst become a pearl albeit thou
 art a potter's vessel.
 He that does not command himself

Becomes a receiver of commands from others.
 When they moulded thee of clay,
 Love and fear were mingled in thy making:
 Fear of this world and of the world to come,
 fear of death,
 Fear of all the pains of earth and heaven;
 Love of riches and power, love of country,
 Love of self and kindred and wife.
 Man, in whom clay is mixed with water, is
 fond of ease,
 Devoted to wickedness and enamoured of
 evil.
 So long as thou hold'st the staff of "There is
 no god but He,"
 Thou wilt break every spell of fear.
 One to whom God is as the soul in his body,
 His neck is not bowed before vanity.
 Fear finds no way into his bosom,
 heart is afraid of none but Allah.
 Whoso dwells in the world of Negation
 Is freed from the bonds of wife and child.
 He withdraws his gaze from all except God
 And lays the knife to the throat of his son.
 Though single, he is like a host in onset:
 Life is cheaper in his eyes than wind.
 The profession of Faith is the shell, and prayer
 is the pearl within it:
 The Moslem's heart deems prayer a lesser
 pilgrimage.
 In the Muslim's hand prayer is like a dagger
 Killing sin and forwardness and wrong.
 Fasting makes an assault upon hunger and
 thirst.
 And breaches the citadel of sensuality.
 The pilgrimage enlightens the soul of the
 Faithful:
 It teaches separation from one's home and
 destroys attachment to one's native land;
 It is an act of devotion in which all feel
 themselves to be one,
 It binds together the leaves of the book of
 religion.
 Almsgiving causes love of riches to pass away
 And makes equality familiar;
 It fortifies the heart with righteousness,
 It increases wealth and diminishes fondness
 for wealth.
 All this is a means of strengthening thee:

Thou art impregnable, if thy Islam be strong.
 Draw might from the litany "O Almighty
 One!"
 That thou mayst ride the camel of thy body.

3. *Divine Vicegerency*

If thou canst rule thy camel, thou wilt rule the
 world
 And wear on thine head the crown of
 Solomon.
 Thou wilt be the glory of the world whilst the
 world lasts,
 And thou wilt reign in the kingdom
 incorruptible.
 'Tis sweet to be God's vicegerent in the world
 And exercise sway over the elements.
 God's vicegerent is as the soul of the universe,
 His being is the shadow of the Greatest Name.
 He knows the mysteries of part and whole,
 He executes the command of Allah in the
 world.
 When he pitches his tent in the wide world,
 He rolls up this ancient carpet.
 His genius abounds with life and desires to
 manifest itself:
 He will bring another world into existence.
 A hundred worlds like this world of parts and
 wholes
 Spring up, like roses, from the seed of his
 imagination.
 He makes every raw nature ripe,
 He puts the idols out of the sanctuary.
 Heart-strings give forth music at his touch,
 He wakes and sleeps for God alone.
 He teaches age the melody of youth
 And endows every thing with the radiance of
 youth.
 To the human race he brings both a glad
 message and a warning,
 He comes both as a soldier and as a marshal
 and prince.
 He is the final cause of "God taught Adam the
 names of all things,"
 He is the inmost sense of "Glory to Him that
 transported His servant by night."
 His white hand is strengthened by the staff,
 His knowledge is twined with the power of a
 perfect man.

When that bold cavalier seizes the reins,
The steed of Time gallops faster.
His awful mien makes the Red Sea dry,
He leads Israel out of Egypt.
At his cry, "Arise," the dead spirits
Rise in their bodily tomb, like pines in the
field.
His person is an atonement for all the world,
By his grandeur the world is saved.
His protecting shadow makes the mote
familiar with the sun,
His rich substance makes precious all that
exists.
He bestows life by his miraculous actions,
He renovates old ways of life.
Splendid visions rise from the print of his
foot,
Many a Moses is entranced by his Sinai.
He gives a new explanation of Life,
A new interpretation of this dream.
His hidden life is being Life's mystery,
The unheard music of Life's harp.
Nature travels in blood for generations
To compose the harmony of his personality.
Our handful of earth has reach the zenith,
For that champion will come forth from this
dust!
There sleeps amidst the ashes, of our To-day
The flame of a world-consuming morrow.
Our bed enfolds a garden of roses,
Our eyes are bright with to-morrow's dawn.
Appear, O rider of Destiny!
Appear, O light of the dark realm of Change!
Illumine the scene of existence,
Dwell in the blackness of our eyes!
Silence the noise of the nations,
Imparadise our ears with thy music!
Arise and tune the harp of brotherhood,
Give us back the cup of the wine of love!
Bring once more days of peace to the world,
Give a message of peace to them that seek
battle!
Mankind are the cornfield and thou the
harvest,
Thou art the goal of Life's caravan.
The leaves are scattered by Autumn's fury:
Oh, do thou pass over our gardens as the
Spring!

Receive from our downcast brows
The homage of little children and of young
men and old!
It is to thee that we owe our dignity
And silently undergo the pains of life.

*Setting forth the inner meaning of the
names of Ali*

Ali is the first Muslim and the King of men,
In Love's eyes Ali is the treasure of the Faith.
Devotion to his family inspires me with life
So that I am as a shining pearl.
Like the narcissus, I am enraptured with
gazing:
Like perfume, I am straying through his
pleasure garden.
If holy water gushes from my earth, he is the
source;
If wine pours from my grapes, he is the cause.
I am dust, but his sun hath made me as a
mirror:
Song can be seen in my breast.
From Ali's face the Prophet drew many a fair
omen,
By his majesty the true religion is glorified
His commandments are the strength of Islam:
All things pay allegiance to his House.
The Apostle of God gave him the name Bu
Turab;
God in the Koran called him "the Hand of
Allah."
Every one that is acquainted with Life's
mysteries
Knows what is the inner meaning of the
names of Ali.
The dark clay, whose name is the body—
Our reason is ever bemoaning its iniquity.
On account of it our sky-reaching thought
plods over the earth;
It makes our eyes blind and our ears deaf.
It hath in its hand a two-edged sword of lust:
Travelers' hearts are broken by this brigand.
Ali, the Lion of God, subdued the body's clay
And transmuted this dark earth to gold.
Murtaza, by whose sword the splendour of
Truth was revealed,

Is named Bu Turab from his conquest of the
body.
Man wins territory by prowess in battle,
But his brightest jewel is mastery of himself.
Whosoever in the world becomes a Bu Turab
Turns back the sun from the west;
Whosoever saddles tightly the seed of the
body
Sits like the bezel on the seal of sovereignty:
Here the might of Khyber is under his feet,
And hereafter his hand will distribute the
water of Kauthar.
Through self-knowledge, he acts as God's
Hand,
And in virtue of being God's Hand he reigns
over all.
His person is the gate of the city of the
sciences:
Arabia, China, and Greece are subject to him.
If thou wouldst drink clear wine from thine
own grapes,
Thou must needs wield authority over thine
own earth.
To become earth is the creed of a moth:
Be a conqueror of earth; that alone is worthy
of a man.
Thou art soft as a rose. Become hard as a
stone,
That thou mayst be the foundation of the wall
of the garden!
Build thy clay into a Man,
Build thy Man into a World!
Unless from thine own earth thou build thine
own wall or door,
Someone else will make bricks of thine earth.
O thou who complainest of the cruelty of
Heaven,
Thou whose glass cries out against the
injustice of the stone,
How long this wailing and crying and
lamentation?
How long this perpetual beating of thy
breast?
The pith of Life is contained in action,
To delight in creation is the law of Life.
Arise and create a new world!
Wrap thyself in flames, be an Abraham!

To comply with this world which does not
favour thy purposes
Is to fling away thy buckler on the field of
battle.
The man of strong character who is master of
himself
Will find Fortune complaisant.
If the world does not comply with his
humour,
He will try the hazard of war with Heaven;
He will dig up the foundations of the universe
And cast its atoms into a new mould.
He will subvert the course of Time
And wreck the azure firmament.
By his own strength he will produce
A new world which will do his pleasure.
If one cannot live in the world as beseems a
man,
Then it is better to die like the brave.
He that hath a sound heart
Will prove his strength by great enterprises.
'Tis sweet to use love in hard tasks
And, like Abraham, to gather roses from
flames.
The potentialities of men of action
Are displayed in willing acceptance of what is
difficult.
Mean spirits have no weapon but resentment.
Life has only one law.
Life is power made manifest,
And its mainspring is the desire for victory.
Mercy out of season is a chilling of Life's
blood,
A break in the rhythm of Life's music.
Whoever is sunk in the depths of ignominy
Calls his weakness contentment.
Weakness is the plunderer of Life,
Its womb is teeming with fears and lies.
Its soul is empty of virtues,
Vices fatten on its milk.
O man of sound judgment, beware!
This spoiler is lurking in ambush
Be not its dupe, if thou art wise:
Chameleon-like, it changes colour every
moment.
Even by keen observers its form is not
discerned:
Veils are thrown over its face.

Now it is muffled in pity and gentleness,
Now it wears the cloak of humanity.
Some times it is disguised as compulsion,
Sometimes as excusability.
It appears in the shape of self-indulgence
And robs the strong man's heart of courage.
Strength is the twin of Truth;
If thou knowest thyself, strength is the
Truth-revealing glass.
Life is the seed, and power the crop:
Power explains the mystery of truth and
falsehood.
A claimant, if he be possessed of power,
Needs no argument for his claim.
Falsehood derives from power the authority
of truth,
And by falsifying truth deems itself true.
Its creative word transforms poison into
nectar;
It says to good, "Thou art bad," and Good
becomes Evil.
O thou that art heedless of the trust
committed to thee,
Esteem thyself superior to both worlds!
Gain knowledge of Life's mysteries!
Be a tyrant! Ignore all except God!
O man of understanding, open thine eyes,
ears, and lips!
If then thou seest not the Way of Truth, laugh
at me!

*Story of a young man of Merv who came
to the saint Ali Hajwiri (god have mercy
on him) and complained that he was
oppressed by his enemies*

The saint of Hajwir was venerated by the
peoples,
And Pir-i-Sanjar visited his tomb as a pilgrim.
With ease he broke down the mountain
barriers
And sowed the seed of Islam in India.
The age of Omar was restored by his
godliness,
The fame of the Truth was exalted by his
words,

He was a guardian of the honour of the
Koran.
The house of Falsehood fell in ruins at his
gaze.
The dust of the Punjab was brought to life by
his breath,
Our dawn was made splendid by his sun.
He was a lover, and withal, a courier of Love:
The secrets of Love shone forth from his
brow.
I will tell a story of his perfection
And enclose a whole rose-bed in a single bud.
A young man, cypress-tall,
Came from the town of Merv to Lahore.
He went to see the venerable saint,
That the sun might dispel his darkness.
"I am hammed in," he said, "by foes;
I am as a glass in the midst of stones.
Do thou teach me, O sire of heavenly rank,
How to lead my life amongst enemies!"
The wise Director, in whose nature
Love had allied beauty with majesty,
Answered: "Thou art unread in Life's lore,
Careless of its end and its beginning.
Be without fear of others!
Thou art a sleeping force: awake!
When the stone thought itself to be glass,
It became glass and got into the way of
breaking.
If the traveller thinks himself weak,
He delivers his soul unto the brigand.
How long wilt thou regard thyself as water
and clay?
Create from thy clay a flaming Sinai!
Why be angry with mighty men?
Why complain of enemies?
I will declare the truth: thine enemy is thy
friend;
His existence crowns thee with glory.
Whosoever knows the states of the self
Considers a powerful enemy to be a blessing
from God.
To the seed of Man the enemy is as a
rain-cloud:
He awakens its potentialities.
If thy spirit be strong, the stones in thy way
are as water:

What wrecks the torrent of the ups and
downs of the road?
The sword of resolution is whetted by the
stones in the way
And put to proof by traversing stage after
stage.
What is the use of eating and sleeping like a
beast?
What is the use of being, unless thou have
strength in thyself?
When thou mak'st thyself strong with self,
Thou wilt destroy the world at thy pleasure.
If thou wouldst pass away, become free of
self;
If thou wouldst live, become full of self!
What is death? To become oblivious to self.
Why imagine that it is the parting of soul and
body?
Abide in self, like Joseph!
Advance from captivity to empire!
Think of self and be a man of action!
Be a man of God, bear mysteries within!"
I will explain the matter by means of stories,
I will open the bud by the power of my
breath.
"Tis better that a lover's secret
Should be told by the lips of others."

Story of the bird that was faint with thirst

A bird was faint with thirst,
The breath in his body was heaving like
waves of smoke.
He saw a diamond in the garden:
Thirst created a vision of water.
Deceived by the sun bright stone
The foolish bird fancied that it was water.
He got no moisture from the gem:
He pecked it with his beak, but it did not wet
his palate.
"O thrall of vain desire," said the diamond,
Thou hast sharpened thy greedy beak on me;
But I am not a dew drop, I give no drink,
I do not live for the sake of others.
Wouldst thou hurt me? Thou art mad!
A life that reveals the self is strange to thee.
My water will shiver the beaks of birds
And break the jewel of man's life."

The bird won not his heart's wish from the
diamond
And turned away from the sparkling stone.
Disappointment swelled in his breast,
The song in his throat became a wail.
Upon a rose-twig a drop of dew
Gleamed like the tear in a nightingale's eye:
All its glitter was owing to the sun,
It was trembling in fear of the sun—
A restless sky born star
That had stopped for a moment, from desire
to be seen;
Oft deceived by bud and flower,
It had gained nothing from Life.
There it hung, ready to drop,
Like a tear on the eyelashes of a lover who
hath lost his heart.
The sorely distressed bird hopped under the
rose-bush,
The dewdrop trickled into his mouth.
O thou that wouldst deliver thy soul from
enemies.
I ask thee – "Art thou a drop of water or a
gem?"
When the bird melted in the fire of thirst,
It appropriated the life of another.
The drop was not solid and gem-like;
The diamond had a being, the drop had none.
Never for an instant neglect self-preservation:
Be a diamond, not a dewdrop!
Be massive in nature, like mountains,
And bear on thy crest a hundred clouds laden
with floods of rain!
Save thyself by affirmation of self,
Compress thy quick silver into silver ore!
Produce a melody from the string of self,
Make manifest the secrets of self!

Story of the diamond and the coal

Now I will open one more gate of Truth,
I will tell thee another tale.
The coal in the mine said to the diamond,
O thou entrusted with splendours eve lasting,
We are comrades, and our being is one;
The source of our existence is the same,
Yet while I die here in the anguish of
worthlessness,

Thou art set on the crowns of emperors.
 My stuff is so vile that I am valued less than
 earth,
 Whereas the mirror's heart is rent by thy
 beauty.
 My darkness illumines the chafing dish,
 Then my substance is incinerated at last.
 Every one puts the sole of his foot on my head
 And covers my stock of existence with ashes.
 My fate must needs be deplored;
 Dost thou know what is the gist of my being?
 It is a condensed wavelet of smoke,
 Endowed with a single spark;
 Both in feature and nature thou art star-like,
 Splendours rise from every side of thee.
 Now thou become'st the light of a monarch's
 eye,
 Now thou adornest the haft of a dagger."
 "O sagacious friend!" said the diamond,
 "Dark earth, when hardened, becomes in
 dignity as a bezel.
 Having been at strife with its environment,
 It is ripened by the struggle and grows hard
 like a stone.
 'Tis this ripeness that has endowed my form
 with light
 And filled my bosom with radiance.
 Because thy being is immature, thou hast
 become abased;
 Because thy body is soft, thou art burnt.
 Be void of fear, grief, and anxiety;
 Be hard as a stone, be a diamond!
 Whosoever strives hard and grips tight,
 The two worlds are illumined by him.
 A little earth is the origin of the Black Stone
 Which puts forth its head in the Ka'bah:
 Its rank is higher than Sinai,
 It is kissed by the swarthy and the fair.
 In solidity consists the glory of Life;
 Weakness is worthlessness and immaturity."

*Story of the Shaykh and the Brahmin,
 followed by a conversation between
 Ganges and Himalaya to the effect that the
 continuation of social life depends on firm
 attachment to the characteristic traditions
 of the community*

At Benares lived a venerable Brahmin,
 Whose head was deep in the ocean of Being
 and Not-being.
 He had a large knowledge of philosophy
 But was well-disposed to the seekers after
 God.
 His mind was eager to explore new problems,
 His intellect moved on a level with the
 Pleiades;
 His nest was as high as that of the Anka;
 Sun and moon were cast, like rue, on the
 flame of his thought.
 For a long time he laboured and sweated,
 But philosophy brought no wine to his cup
 Although he set many a snare in the gardens
 of learning,
 His snares never caught a glimpse of the Ideal
 bird;
 And notwithstanding that the nails of his
 thought were dabbled with blood,
 The knot of Being and Not-being remained
 untied.
 The sighs on his lips bore witness to his
 despair,
 His countenance told tales of his distraction.
 One day he visited an excellent Shaykh,
 A man who had in his breast a heart of gold.
 The Brahmin laid the seal of silence on his lips
 And lent his ear to the Sage's discourse.
 Then said the Shaykh: "O wanderer in the
 lofty sky!
 Pledge thyself to be true, for a little, to the
 earth;
 Thou hast lost thy way in wildernesses of
 speculation,
 Thy fearless thought hath passed beyond
 Heaven.
 Be reconciled with earth, O sky-traveller!
 Do not wander in quest of the essence of the
 stars!

I do not bid thee abandon thine idols.
 Art thou an unbeliever? Then be worthy of
 the badge of unbelief!
 O inheritor of ancient culture,
 Turn not thy back on the path thy fathers
 trod;
 If a people's life is derived from unity,
 Unbelief too is source of unity.
 Thou that art not even a perfect infidel,
 Art unfit to worship at the shrine of the spirit.
 We both are far astray from the road of
 devotion:
 Thou art far from Azar, and I from Abraham.
 Our Majnun hath not fallen into melancholy
 for his Layla's sake:
 He hath not become perfect in the madness of
 love.
 When the lamp of self expires,
 What is the use of heaven surveying
 imagination?"

Once on a time, laying hold of the skirt of the
 mountain,
 Ganges said to Himalaya:
 "O thou mantled in snow since the morn of
 creation,
 Thou whose form is girdled with streams,
 God made thee a partner in the secrets of
 heaven,
 But deprived thy foot of graceful gait.
 He took away from thee the power to walk:
 What avails this sublimity and stateliness?
 Life springs from perpetual movement:
 Motion constitutes the wave's whole
 existence,"

When the mountain heard this taunt from the
 river,
 He puffed angrily like a sea of fire,
 And answered: "Thy wide waters are my
 looking-glass;
 Within my bosom are a hundred rivers like
 thee.
 This graceful gait of thine is an instrument of
 death:
 Whoso goeth from self is meet to die.
 Thou hast no knowledge of thine own case,
 Thou exultest in thy misfortune: thou art a
 fool!

O born of the womb of the revolving sky,
 A fallen-in bank is better than thou!
 Thou hast made thine existence an offering to
 the ocean,
 Thou hast thrown the rich purse of thy life to
 the highway man.
 Be self-contained like the rose in the garden,
 Do not go to the florist in order to spread thy
 perfume!
 To live is to grow in thyself
 And gather roses from thine own flower-bed.
 Ages have gone by and my foot is fast in
 earth:
 Dost thou fancy that I am far from my goal?
 My being grew and reached the sky,
 The Pleiades sank to rest under my skirts;
 Thy being vanishes in the ocean,
 But on my crest the stars bow their heads.
 Mine eye sees the mysteries of heaven,
 Mine ear is familiar with angels' wings.
 Since I glowed with the heat of unceasing toil,
 I amassed rubies, diamonds, and other gems.
 I am stone within, and in the stone is fire:
 Water cannot pass over my fire!"

Art thou a drop of water? Do not break at
 thine own feet,
 But endeavour to surge and wrestle with the
 sea.
 Desire the water of a jewel, become a jewel!
 Be an ear-drop, adorn a beauty!
 Oh, expand thyself! Move swiftly!
 Be a cloud that shoots lightning and sheds a
 flood of rain!
 Let the ocean sue for thy storms as a beggar,
 Let it complain of the straitness of its skirts
 Let it deem itself less than a wave
 And glide along at thy feet!

*Showing that the purpose of the Muslim's
 life is to exalt the word of Allah, and that
 the jihad (war against unbelievers), if it be
 prompted by land-hunger, is unlawful in
 the religion of Islam*

Imbue thine heart With the tincture of Allah,
 Give honour and glory to Love!

The Muslim's nature prevails by means of
 love:
 The Muslim, if he be not loving, is an infidel.
 Upon God depends his seeing and not-seeing,
 His eating, drinking, and sleeping.
 In his will that which God wills becomes lost—
 "How small a man believe this saying?"
 He encamps in the field of "*There is no god but
 Allah;*"
 In the world he is a witness to mankind.
 His high estate is attested by the Prophet who
 was sent to men and Jinn—
 The most truthful of witnesses.
 Leave words and seek that spiritual state,
 Shed the light of God o'er the darkness of thy
 deeds!
 Albeit clad in kingly robe, live as a dervish,
 Live wakeful and meditating on God!
 Whatever thou dost, let it be thine aim therein
 to draw nigh to God,
 That his glory may be made manifest by thee.
 Peace becomes an evil, if its object be aught
 else;
 War is good if its object is God.
 If God be not exalted by our swords,
 War dishonours the people.
 The holy Shaykh Miyan Mir Wali,
 By the light of whose soul every hidden thing
 was revealed –
 His feet were firmly planted on the path of
 Muhammad,
 He was a flute for the impassioned music of
 love.
 His tomb keeps our city safe from harm
 And causes the beams of true religion to shine
 on us.
 Heaven stooped its brow to his threshold,
 The Emperor of India was one of his disciples.
 Now, this monarch had sown the seed of
 ambition in his heart
 And was resolved on conquest.
 The flames of vain desire were alight in him,
 He was teaching his sword to ask, "Is there
 any more?"
 In the Deccan was a great noise of war,
 His army stood on the battle field.
 He went to the Shaykh of heaven-high dignity
 That he might receive his blessing:

The Muslim turns from this world to God
 And strengthens policy with prayer.
 The Shaykh made no answer to the Emperor's
 speech,
 The assembly of dervishes was all ears,
 Until a disciple, in his hand a silver coin,
 Opened his lips and broke the silence-,
 Saying, "Accept this poor offering from me,
 O guide of them that have lost the way to
 God!
 My limbs were bathed in sweat of labour
 Before I put away a dirhem in my skirt."
 The Shaykh said: "This money ought to be
 given to our Sultan,
 Who is a beggar wearing the raiment of a
 king.
 Though he holds sway over sun, moon and
 stars,
 Our Emperor is the most penniless of
 mankind.
 His eye is fixed on the table of strangers,
 The fire of his hunger hath consumed a whole
 world.
 His sword is followed by famine and plague,
 His building lays wide land waste.
 The folk are crying out because of his
 indigence,
 His empty handedness causes him to plunder
 the weak.
 His power is an enemy to all:
 Humankind are the caravan and he the
 brigand.
 In his self-delusion and ignorance
 He calls pillage by the name of empire.
 Both the royal troops and those of the enemy
 Are cloven in twain by the sword of his
 hunger.
 The beggar's hunger consumes his own soul,
 But the Sultan's hunger destroys state and
 religion.
 Whoso shall draw the sword for anything
 except Allah,
 His sword is sheathed in his own breast."

*Precepts written for the Muslims of India
by Mir Najat Nakshband, who is
generally known as Baba Sahrai*

O thou that hast grown from earth, like a rose,
Thou too art born of the womb of self!
Do not abandon self! Persist therein!
Be a drop of water and drink up the ocean
Glowing with the light of self as thou art,
Make self strong, and thou wilt endure.
Thou gett'st profit from the trade,
Thou gain'st riches by preserving this
commodity.
Thou art being, and art thou afraid of
not-being?
Dear friend, thy understanding is at fault.
Since I am acquainted with the harmony of
Life,
I will tell thee what is the secret of Life –
To sink into thyself like the pearl,
Then to emerge from thine inward solitude;
To collect sparks beneath the ashes,
And become a flame and dazzle men's eyes.
Go, burn the house of forty years' tribulation,
Move round thyself! Be a circling flame!
What is Life but to be freed from moving
round others
And to regard thyself as the Holy Temple?
Beat thy wings and escape from the attraction
of Earth:
Like birds, be safe from falling.
Unless thou art a bird., thou wilt do wisely
Not to build thy nest on the top of a cave.
O thou that seekest to acquire knowledge,
I say o'er to thee the message of the Sage of
Rum:
"Knowledge, if it lie on thy skin, is a snake;
Knowledge, if thou take it to heart, is a
friend."
Hast thou heard how the Master of Rum
Gave lectures on philosophy at Aleppo? –
Fast in the bonds of intellectual proofs,
Drifting o'er the dark and stormy sea of
understanding;
A Moses unilluminated by Love's Sinai,
Ignorant of Love and of Love's passion.

He discoursed on Scepticism and
Neoplatonism,
And strung many a brilliant pearl of
metaphysics.
He unravelled the problems of the
Peripatetics,
The light of his thought made clear whatever
was obscure.
Heaps of books lay around and in front of
him,
And on his lips was the key to all their
mysteries.
Shams-i-Tabriz, directed by Kamal,
Sought his way to the college of Jalauddin
Rumi
And cried out, "What is all this noise and
babble?
What are all these syllogisms and judgements
and demonstrations?"
"Peace, O fool!" exclaimed the Maulvi,
"Do not laugh at the doctrines of the sages.
Get thee out of my college!
This is argument and discussion; what hast
thou to do with it?
My discourse is beyond thy understanding.
It brightens the glass of perception!
These words increased the anger of
Shams-i-Tabriz
And caused a fire to burst forth from his soul.
The lightning of his look fell on the earth,
And the glow of his breath made the dust
spring into flames.
The spiritual fire burned the intellectual stack
And clean consumed the library of the
philosopher.
The Maulvi, being a stranger to Love's
miracles
And unversed in Love's harmonies,
Cried, "How didst thou kindle this fire,
Which hath burned the books of the
philosophers?"
The Shaykh answered, "O unbelieving
Muslim,
This is vision and ecstasy: what hast thou to
do with it?
My state is beyond thy thought,
My flame is the Alchemist's elixir."

Thou hast drawn thy substance from the
 snow of philosophy,
 The cloud of thy thought sheds nothing but
 hailstones.
 Kindle a fire in thy rubble,
 Foster a flame in thy earth!
 The Muslim's knowledge is perfected by
 spiritual fervour,
 The meaning of Islam is Renounce what shall
 pass away.
 When Abraham escaped from the bondage of
 "that which sets,"
 He sat unhurt in the midst of flames.

Thou hast cast knowledge of God behind thee
 And squandered thy religion for the sake of a
 loaf.
 Thou art hot in pursuit of antimony,
 Thou art unaware of the blackness of thine
 own eye.
 Seek the Fountain of Life from the sword's
 edge,
 And the River of Paradise from the dragon's
 mouth,
 Demand the Black Stone from the door of the
 house of idols,
 And the musk-deer's bladder from a mad
 dog,
 But do not seek the glow of Love from the
 knowledge of today,
 Do not seek the nature of Truth from this
 infidel's cup!
 Long have I been running to and fro,
 Learning the secrets of the New Knowledge:
 Its gardeners have put me to the trial
 And have made me intimate with their roses.
 Roses! Tulips, rather, that warn one not to
 smell them –
 Like paper roses, a mirage of perfume.
 Since this garden ceased to enthrall me
 I have nested on the Paradisal tree.
 Modern knowledge is the greatest blind –
 Idol-worshipping, idol-selling, idol making!
 Shackled in the prison of phenomena,
 It has not overleaped the limits of the sensible.
 It has fallen down in crossing the bridge of
 Life,
 It has laid the knife to its own throat.

Its fire is cold as the flame of the tulip;
 Its flames are frozen like hail.
 Its nature remains untouched by the glow of
 Love,
 It is ever engaged in joyless search.
 Love is the Plato that heals the sicknesses of
 the mind.
 The mind's melancholy is cured by its lancet.
 The whole world bows in adoration to Love,
 Love is the Mahmud that conquers the
 Somnath of intellect.
 Modern science lacks this old wine in its cup,
 Its nights are not loud with passionate prayer.

Thou hast misprized thine own cypress
 And deemed tall the cypress of others.
 Like the reed, thou hast emptied thyself of self
 And given thine heart to the music of others.
 O thou that begg'st morsels from an other's
 table,
 Wilt thou seek thine own kind in another's
 shop?
 The Muslim's assembly-place is burned up by
 the lamps of strangers,
 His mosque is consumed by the sparks of
 monasticism.
 When the deer fled from the sacred territory
 of Makkah,
 The hunter's arrow pierced her side.
 The leaves of the rose are scattered like its
 scent:
 O thou that has fled from the self, come back
 to it!
 O trustee of the wisdom of the Quran,
 Find the lost unity again!
 We, who keep the gate of the citadel of Islam,
 Have become unbelievers by neglecting the
 watchword of Islam.
 The ancient Saki's bowl is shattered,
 The wine-party of the Hijaz is broken up.
 The Ka'ba is filled with our idols,
 Infidelity mocks at our Islam.
 Our Shaykh hath gambled Islam away for
 love of idols.
 And made a rosary of the *zunnar*.
 Our spiritual directors owe their rank to their
 white hairs

And are the laughing-stock of children in the street;
 Their hearts bear no impress of the Faith
 But house the idols of sensuality.
 Every long-haired fellow wears the garb of a dervish –
 Alas for these traffickers in religion!
 Day and night they are traveling about with disciples,
 Insensible to the great needs of Islam.
 Their eyes are without light, like the narcissus,
 Their breasts devoid of spiritual wealth.
 Preachers and Sufis, all worship worldliness alike;
 The prestige of the pure religion is ruined.
 Our preacher fixed his eyes on the pagoda
 And the mufti of the Faith sold his verdict.
 After this, O friends, what are we to do?
 Our guide turns his face towards the wine-house.

Time is a sword

Green be the holy grave of Shafi'i,
 Whose vine hath cheered a whole world!
 His thought plucked a star from heaven:
 He named time "a cutting sword."
 How shall I say what is the secret of this sword?
 In its flashing edge there is life.
 Its owner is exalted above hope and fear,
 His hand is whiter than the hand of Moses.
 At one stroke thereof water gushes from the rock
 And the sea becomes land from dearth of moisture.
 Moses held this sword in his hand,
 Therefore he wrought more than man may contrive.
 He clove the Red Sea asunder
 And made its waters like dry earth.
 The arm of Ali, the conqueror of Khaibar,
 Drew its strength from this same sword.
 The revolution of the sky is worth seeing,
 The change of day and night is worth observing.

Look, O thou enthralled by Yesterday and Tomorrow,
 Behold another world in thine own heart!
 Thou hast sown the seed of darkness in the clay,
 Thou hast imagined Time as a line:
 Thy thought measures length of Time
 With the measure of night and day.
 Thou mak'st this line a girdle on thine infidel waist;
 Thou art an advertiser of falsehood, like idols.
 Thou wert the Elixir, and thou hast become a Peck of dust;
 Thou wert born the conscience of Truth, and thou hast become a lie!
 Art thou a Muslim? Then cast off this girdle!
 Be a candle to the feast of the religion of the free!
 Knowing not the origin of Time,
 Thou art ignorant of everlasting Life.
 How long wilt thou be a thrall of night and day?
 Learn the mystery of Time from the words "I have a time with God."
 Phenomena arise from the march of Time,
 Life is one of Time's mysteries.
 The cause of Time is not the revolution of the sun
 Time is everlasting, but the sun does not last for ever.
 Time is joy and sorrow, festival and fast,
 Time is the secret of moonlight and sunlight.
 Thou hast extended Time, like Space,
 And distinguished Yesterday from Tomorrow.
 Thou hast fled, like a scent, from thine own garden;
 Thou hast made thy prison with thine own hand.
 Our Time, which has neither beginning nor end,
 Blossoms from the flower-bed of our mind.
 To know its root quickens the living with new life:
 Its being is more splendid than the dawn.
 Life is of Time, and Time is of Life:
 "Do not abuse Time!" was the command of the Prophet.

[Translated by A.R. Nicholson]

Now I will tell you a point of wisdom as
brilliant as a pearl,⁸
That you should realize the difference
between a slave and a free man!
A slave is lost in the magic of days and nights,
But Time, with all its expansion, is lost in the
heart of a free man!
A slave weaves the shroud for himself by his
times,
And covers himself with the sheet of days and
nights!
But a free man keeps himself above the earth
And attacks the world with all his might!
A slave is caught in the snare of days and
nights like a bird,
And the pleasure of flight is forbidden to his
soul!
But the quick-breathing breast of a free man
Becomes a cage for the Bird of Time!
To a slave, Nature is a meaningless word,
And there is nothing rare in the impressions
of his soul!
Owing to his heaviness and laziness his abode
is always the same,
And the cries of his morn and eve are always
the same!
But the attempt of a free man creates new
things every moment
And his string continuously produces new
tunes!
His nature is not obliged to any sort of
repetition,
Because his path is not like the circle caused
by compasses!
To a slave Time is but a chain,
And he always complains against the fate!
But the courage of a free man gives
instructions to his fate
And the great revolutions of the world are
caused by his powerful hand!
The past the future are dissolved in his preset

⁸ This stanza was added in a later edition of the original and hence it is not found in Nicholson's translation. We are using A.R. Tariq's translation of these lines but giving up his line-breaks for a smoother reading of each couplet.

And all the delayed plans are observed by his
quick action!
These words of mine are beyond sound,
beyond discussion,
For their meaning can't be understood easily!
Although I have expressed my views about
Time yet my shallow words are ashamed of
the meaning;—
And the meaning itself has a complaint:
"What have I to do with the words?"
In fact, a living meaning when expressed in
words, dies out;
Your very breaths extinguish its fire!
Nevertheless, the point of Absence and
Presence is in the depth of our heart;
The mystery of Time and its motion is in the
depth of our heart!
The musical instrument of Time has its own
silent tunes:
Oh, dive deep into your heart that you may
realize the secret of Time!

[Translated by A.R. Tariq]

Oh, the memory of those days when Time's
sword
Was allied with the strength of our hands!
We sowed the seed of religion in men's hearts
And unveiled the face of Truth;
Our nails tore loose the knot of this world,
Our bowing in prayer gave blessings to the
earth.
From the jar of Truth we made rosy wine
gush forth,
We charged against the ancient taverns.
O thou in whose cup is old wine,
A wine so hot that the glass is well nigh
turned to water,
Wilt thou in thy pride and arrogance and
self-conceit
Taunt us with our emptiness?
Our cup, too, hath graced the symposium
Our breast hath owned a spirit.
The new age with all its glories
Hath risen from the dust of our feet.
Our blood hath watered God's harvest,
All worshippers of God are our debtors.
The *takbir* was our gift to the world,
Ka'bas were built of our clay.

By means of us God taught the Koran,
 From our hand He dispensed His bounty.
 Although crown and signet have passed from
 us,
 Do not look with contempt on our
 beggarliness!
 In thine eyes we are good for nothing,
 Thinking old thoughts, despicable.
 We have honour from "There is no god but
 Allah,"
 We are the protectors of the universe.
 Freed from the vexation of to-day and to-
 morrow,
 We have pledged ourselves to love One.
 We are the conscience hidden in God's heart,
 We are the heirs of Moses and Aaron.
 Sun and moon are still bright with our
 radiance,
 Lightning-flashes still lurk in our cloud.
 In our essence Divinity is mirrored:
 The Muslim's being is one of the signs of God.

An invocation

O thou that art as the soul in the body of the
 universe,
 Thou art our soul and thou art ever fleeing
 from us.
 Thou breathest music into Life's lute;
 Life envies Death when death is for thy sake.
 Once more bring comfort to our sad hearts,
 Once more dwell in our breasts!
 Once more demand from us the sacrifice of
 name and fame,
 Strengthen our weak love.
 We are oft complaining of destiny,
 Thou art of great price and we have naught.
 Hide not thy fair face from the empty handed!
 Sell cheap the love of Salman and Bilal!
 Give us the sleepless eye and the passionate
 heart,
 Give us again the nature of quick silver!
 Show unto us one of thy manifest signs,
 That the necks of our enemies may be bowed!
 Make this chaff a mountain crested with fire,
 Burn with out fire all that is not God!
 When the people of Islam let the thread of
 Unity go from their hands,

They fell into a hundred mazes.
 We are dispersed like stars in the world;
 Though of the same family, we are strange to
 one another.
 Bind again these scattered leaves,
 Revive the law of love!
 Take us back to serve thee as of old,
 Commit thy cause to them that love thee!
 We are travellers: give us resignation as our
 goal!
 Give us the strong faith of Abraham!
 Make us know the meaning of "There is no
 god,"
 Make us acquainted with the mystery of
 "except Allah"!
 I who burn like a candle for the sake of others
 Teach myself to weep like that candle.
 O God! a tear that is heart-enkindling,
 Passionful, wrung forth by pain, peace
 consuming,
 May I sow in the garden, and may it grow
 into a fire
 That washes away the fire-brand from the
 tulip's robe!
 My heart is with yester-eve, my eye is on
 to-morrow:
 Amidst the company I am alone.
 "Every one fancies he is my friend,
 But none ever sought the secrets within my
 soul."
 Oh, where in the wide world is my comrade?
 I am the Bush of Sinai: where is my Moses?
 I am tyrannous, I have done many a wrong to
 myself,
 I have nourished a flame in my bosom,
 A flame that burnt to ashes the wares of
 understanding,
 Cast fire on the skirt of discretion,
 Lessened with madness the proud reason,
 And inflamed the very being of knowledge:
 Its blaze enthrones the sun in the sky
 And lightnings encircle it with adoration for
 ever.
 Mine eye fell to weeping, like dew,
 Since I was entrusted with that hidden fire.
 I taught the candle to burn openly,

While I myself burned unseen by the world's
eye.
As last flames burst forth from every hair of
me,
Fire dropped from the veins of my thought:
My nightingale picked up the grains of spark
And created a fire-tempered song.
The breast of this age is without a heart,
Majnun quivers with pain because Layla's
howdah is empty.
It is not easy for the candle to throb alone:
Ah, is there no moth worthy of me?
How long shall I wait for one to share my
grief?
How long must I search for a confidant?
O Thou whose face lends light to the moon
and the stars,
Withdraw Thy fire from the soul!
Take back what Thou hast put in my breast,
Remove the stabbing radiance from my
mirror,
Or give me one old comrade
To be the mirror of mine all-burning love!
In the sea wave tosses side by side with wave:
Each hath a partner in its emotion.
In heaven star consorts with star,
And the bright moon lays her head on the
knees of Night.
Morning touches Night's dark side,
And To-day throws itself against To-morrow.
One river loses its being in another,
A waft of air dies in perfume.
There is dancing in every nook of the
wilderness,
Madman dances with madman.
Because in thine essence Thou art single,
Thou hast evolved for Thyself a whole world.
I am as the tulip of the field,
In the midst of a company I am alone.
I beg of Thy grace a sympathising friend,
And adept in the mysteries of my nature,
A friend endowed with madness and
wisdom,
One that knoweth not the phantom of vain
things,
That I may confide my lament to his soul
And see again my face in his heart.
His image I will mould of mine own clay,

I will be to him both idol and worshipper.

[Translated by R. A. Nicholson]

MYSTERIES OF SELFLESSNESS

Strive, and find yourself in selflessness; this is
the easy path, may God know better.⁹

Rumi

Dedication to the Muslim Community

Question me not when I speak of Love. If I
may not have tasted this wine, someone else
must have.

Urfi of Shiraz

You, who were made by God to be the Seal
Of all the peoples dwelling upon earth,
That all beginnings might in you find end;
Whose saints were prophet-like, whose
wounded hearts
Wove into unity the souls of men;
Why are you fallen now so far astray
From Makkah's holy Ka'ba, all bemused
By the strange beauty of the Christian's way?
The very skies are but a gathering
Of your street's dust, yourselves the cynosure
Of all men's eyes; whither in restless haste
Do you now hurry like a storm-tossed wave,
What new diversion seeking? No, but learn
The mystery of ardour from the moth
And make your lodgement in the burning
flame;
Lay love's foundation-stone in your own soul,
And to the Prophet pledge anew your troth.
My mind was weary of Christian company,
When suddenly your beauty stood unveiled.
My fellow-minstrel sang the epiphany
Of alien loveliness, the lovelorn theme

⁹ Arberry omitted the quotations from Rumi and Urfi. They have been translated separately for the present edition.

Of stresses and soft cheeks, and rubbed his
 brow
 Against the saki's door, rehearsed the chant
 Of Magian wenches. I would martyr be
 To your brow's scimitar, am fain to rest
 Like dust upon your street. Too proud am I
 To mouth base panegyrics, or to bow
 My stubborn head to every tyrant's court.
 Trained up to fashion mirrors out of words,
 I need not Alexander's magic glass.
 My neck endures not men's magic glass.
 My neck endures not men's munificence;
 Where roses bloom, I gather close the skirt
 Of my soul's bud. Hard as the dagger's steel
 I labour in this life, my lustre win
 From the tough granite. Though I am a sea,
 Not restless is my billow; in my hand
 I hold no whirlpool bowl. A painted veil
 Am I, no blossom's perfume-scattering,
 No prey to every billowing breeze that blows.
 I am glowing coal within Life's fire,
 And wrap me in my embers for a cloak.
 And now my soul comes suppliant to your
 door
 Bringing a gift of ardour passionate.
 A mighty water out of heaven's deep
 Momently trickles 'er my burning breast,
 The which I channel narrower than a brook
 That I may fling it in your garden's dish.
 Because you are beloved by him I love
 I fold you to me closely as my heart.
 Since love first made the breast an instrument
 Of fierce lamenting, by its flame my heart
 Was molten to a mirror; like a rose
 I pluck my breast apart, that I may hang
 This mirror in your sight. Gaze you therein
 On your own beauty, and you shall become
 A captive fettered in your tress' chain.
 I chant again the tale of long ago,
 To bid your bosom's old wounds bleed anew.
 So for a people no more intimate
 With its own soul I supplicated God,
 That He might grant to them a firm-knit life.
 In the mid-swath of night, when all the
 world
 Was hushed in slumber, I made loud lament;
 My spirit robbed of patience and response,
 Unto the Living and Omnipotent God

I made my litany; my yearning heart
 Surged, till its blood streamed from my
 weeping eyes.
 "How long, O lord, how long the tulip-glow,
 The begging of cool dewdrops from the
 dawn?
 Lo, like a candle wrestling with the night
 O'er my own self I pour my flooding tears."
 I spent myself, that there might be more light,
 More loveliness, more joy for other men.
 Not for one moment takes my ardent breast
 Repose from burning; Friday does not shame
 My restless week of unremitting toil.
 Wasted is now my spirit's envelop;
 My glowing sigh is sullied all with dust.
 When God created me at Time's first dawn
 A lamentation quivered on the strings
 Of my melodious lute, and in that note
 Loves's secrets stood revealed, the ransom-
 price
 Of the long sadness of the tale of Love;
 Which music even to sapless straw imparts
 The ardency of fire, and on dull clay
 Bestows the daring of the reckless moth.
 Love, like the tulip, has one brand at heart,
 And on its bosom wears a singly rose;
 And so my solitary rose I pin
 Upon your turban, and cry havoc loud
 Against your drunken slumber, hoping yet
 Tulips may blossom from your earth anew
 Breathing the fragrance of the breeze of
 Spring.

*Prelude: Of the bond between individual
 and community*

The link that binds the individual
 To the Society a mercy is;
 His truest self in the community
 Alone achieves fulfilment. Wherefore be
 So far as in thee lies in close rapport
 With thy Society, and lustre bring
 To the wide intercourse of free-born men.
 Keep for thy talisman these words he spoke
 That was the best of mortals: "Satan holds
 His furthest distance where men congregate."
 The individual a mirror holds
 To the community, and they to him;

He is a jewel threaded on their cord,
 A star that in their constellation shines;
 And the Society is organized
 As by comprising many such as he.
 When in the Congregation he is list
 'Tis like a drop which, seeking to expand,
 Becomes an ocean. It is strong and rich
 In ancient ways, a mirror to the Past
 As to the Future, and the link between
 What is to come, and what has gone before,
 As is Eternity. The joy of growth
 Swells in his heart from the community,
 That watches and controls his every deed;
 To them he owes his body and his soul,
 Alike his outward and his hidden parts.
 His thoughts are vocal on the People's
 tongue,
 And on the pathway that his forbears laid
 He learns to run. His immaturity
 Is warmed to ripeness by their friendship's
 flame,
 Till he becomes one with the Commonwealth.
 His singleness in multiplicity
 Is firm and stable, and itself supplies
 A unity to their innumerate swarm.
 The word that sits outside its proper verse
 Shatters the jewel of the thought concealed
 Within its pocket; when the verdant leaf
 Falls from the stem, its thread of hope for
 Spring
 Is snapped asunder. He who has not drunk
 The water of the People's sacred well,
 The flames of minstrelsy within his lute
 Grow cold, and die. The individual,
 Alone, is heedless of high purposes;
 His strength is apt to dissipate itself;
 The People only make him intimate
 With discipline, teach him to be as soft
 And tractable as is the gentle breeze,
 Set him in earth like a well-rooted oak,
 Close-fetter him, to make him truly free.
 When he is prisoner to the chain of Law
 His deer, by nature wild and uncontrolled,
 Yields in captivity the precious musk.
 Thou, who hast not known self from
 selflessness,
 Therefore hast lost thyself in vain surmise,

Within thy dust there is an element
 Of Light, whose single shaft illuminates
 Thy whole perception; all thy joy derives
 From its enjoyment, all thy sorrow springs
 From its distress; its constant change and turn
 Keep thee in vital being. It is one
 And, being one, brooks no duality;
 Grace to its glow I am myself, thou thou.
 Preserving self, staking and making self,
 Nourishing pride in meek humility,
 It is a flame that sets a fire alight,
 A spark that overshoots the blazing torch.
 Its nature is to be both free and bond;
 Itself a part, it has the potency
 To seize the whole. I have beheld its wont
 Is strife incessant, and have called its name
 Selfhood, and Life. Whenever it comes forth
 From its seclusion, and discreetly steps
 Into the riot of phenomena
 Its heart is impressed with the stamp of "he",
 "I" is dissolved, converting into "thou".
 Compulsion cuts the freedom of its choice,
 Making it rich in love. While pride of self
 Pulls its own way, humility is not born;
 Pull pride together, and humility
 Comes into being. self negates itself
 In the community, that it maybe
 No more a petal, but a rosary.
 "These subtleties are like a steely sword:
 If they defeat thy wit, quick, flee away!"¹⁰

*That the community is made up of the
 mingling of individuals, and owes the
 perfecting of its education to prophethood*

Upon what manner man is bound to man:
 That tale's a thread, the end whereof is lost
 Beyond unraveling. We can descry
 The individual within the Mass,
 And we can pluck him as a flower is plucked
 Out of the garden. All his nature is
 Entranced with individuality,
 Yet only in Society he finds
 Security and preservation. On
 The road of life, the furnace of life's fire,
 That roaring battlefield, sets him aflame.

¹⁰ The quotation is from Rumi.

Men grow habituated each to each,
 Like jewels threaded on a single cord;
 Succors each other in the war of life
 In mutual bond, like workmen bent upon
 A common task. Through such polarity
 The constellations congregate, each star
 In several attraction keeping each
 Poised firmly and unshaken. Caravans
 May pitch their tents on mountain or on hill,
 Broad meadow, fringe of desert, sandy
 mound.
 Yet slack and lifeless hangs the warp and
 woof
 Of the Group's labour, unresolved the bud
 Of its deep meditation, still unplayed
 The flickering levin of its instrument,
 Its music hushed within its muted strings,
 Unsmitten by the pounding of the quest,
 The plectrum of desire; disordered still
 Its new-born concourse, and so thin its wine
 As to be blotted up with cotton flock;
 New-sprung the verdure of its soil, and cold
 The blood in its vine's veins; a habitat
 Of demons and of fairy sprites its thoughts,
 So that it leaps in terror from the shapes
 Conjured by its own surmise; shrunk the
 scope
 Of its crude life, its narrow thoughts confined
 Beneath the rim of its constricting roof;
 Fear for its life the meagre stock-in-trade
 Of its constituent elements; its heart
 Trembling before the whistle of the wind;
 Its spirit shies away from arduous toil,
 Little disposed to pluck at Nature's skirt,
 But whatsoever springs of its own self
 Or falls from heaven, that it gathers up.
 Till God discovers a man pure of heart
 In His good time, who in a single word
 A volume shall rehearse; a minstrel he
 Whose piercing music gives new life to dust.
 Through him the unsubstantial atom glows
 Radiant with life, the meanest merchandise
 Takes on new worth. Out of his single breath
 Two hundred bodies quicken; with one glass
 He livens an assembly. His bright glance
 Slays, but forthwith his single uttered word
 Bestows new life, that so Duality
 Expiring, Unity may come to birth.

His thread, whose end is knotted to the skies,
 Weaves all together life's dis severed parts.
 Revealing a new vista to the gaze,
 He can convert broad desert and bare vale
 Into a garden. At his fiery breath
 A people leap like rue upon a fire
 In sudden tumult, in their heart one spark
 Caught from his kindling, and their sullen
 clay
 Breaks instantly aflame. Where'er he treads
 The earth receiving vision, every mote
 May wink the eye at Moses' Sinai.
 The naked understanding he adorns,
 With wealth abundant fills its indigence,
 Fans with his skirts its embers, purifies
 Its gold of every particle of dross.
 He strikes the shackles from the fettered
 slave,
 Redeems him from his masters, and declares,
 "No other's slave thou art, nor any less
 Than those mute idols." So unto one goal
 Drawing each on, he circumscribes the feet
 Of all within the circle of one Law,
 Reschools them in God's wondrous Unity,
 And teaches them the habit and the use
 Of self-surrender to the Will Divine.

The pillars of Islam

First pillar: the Unity of God

The Mind, astray in this determinate world,
 First found the pathway to this distant goal
 By faith in God the One; what other home
 Should bring the hapless wanderer to rest?
 Upon what other shore should Reason's
 barque
 Touch haven? All men intimate with truth
 The secrets of the Godhead have by heart,
 Which is implicit in the sacred words
He comes unto the Merciful, a slave.
 In action let faith's potency be tried,
 That it may guide thee to thy secret powers:
 From it derive religion, wisdom, law,
 Unfailing vigour, power, authority.
 Its splendour doth amaze the learned mind,
 But giveth unto lovers force to act;
 The lowly in its shadow reacheth high,
 And worthless earth becomes like alchemy

Precious beyond compute. Its mighty force
 Chooseth the slave, whereof it doth create
 Another species; sprightlier he treads
 Upon the path of truth, and in his veins
 The blood burns hotter than the lightning's
 shaft.

Fear dies, and doubt; toil is new vitalized;
 The vision sees the inner mystery
 Of all creation. When in servanthood
 To God man's foot is established, beggary's
 bowl

Becomes the magic cup that Jamshid bore.

There is no god but God: this is the soul
 And body of our Pure Community,
 The pitch that keeps our instrument in tune,
 The very substance of our mysteries,
 The knotted thread that bids our scattered
 thoughts.

And when these words, being uttered on the
 lips,

Reach to the heart, they do augment the
 power

Of life itself; graven upon the rock,
 They wake a heart therein; but if the heart
 Burns not with the remembrance of that faith
 It doth convert to clay. When we inflamed
 The hearts within us with the passionate glow
 Of this belief, we set ablaze the barn
 Of all contingency with but a sigh.

This is the lustre glittering in the hearts
 Of men, those steely mirrors liquefied
 By Faith's consuming flame, whose torch is
 like

A tulip in our veins, and so we bear
 No other mark of glory but its brand.
 Through this true Faith black man becomes as
 red,

Kinsman to Omar, aye, and Abu Dharr.
 The heart's a lodge to self and the Not-self,
 And passion quickens when the cup is shared;
 When several hearts put on a single hue
 That is community, which Sinai
 Grows radiant in one epiphany.
 Peoples must have one thought, and in their
 minds

Pursue a single purpose; to one draw

Their temperaments respond, one testing-
 stone

Discriminates their hideous from their fair.
 Unless the instrument of thought possess
 The fire of truth, it is impossible

Its range can be so wide. We Muslims are,
 Children of Abraham, which fact is proved
 (If proof thou seekest) by *Your father he*.

Though nations' destinies their lands control,
 Though nations build their edifice on race,
 Thinkest thou the community is based
 Upon the Country? Shall so much regard
 Be blindly paid to water, air and earth?

It is dull ignorance to put one's boast
 In lineage; that judgment rests upon
 The body, and the body perishes.

Other are the foundations that support
 Islam's Community; they lie concealed
 Within our hearts. We, who are present now,
 Have bound our hearts to Him who is unseen,
 And therefore are delivered from the chains
 Of earthly things. The cord that links this folk
 Is like the thread which keeps the stars in
 place,

And, as the sight itself, invisible.

Well-pointed arrows of one quiver are we,
 One showing, one beholding, one in thought;
 One is our goal and purpose, one the form,
 The fashion, and the measure of our dream.
 Thanks to His blessings, we are brothers all
 Sharing one speech, one spirit and one heart.

*That despair, grief and fear are the mother of
 abominations, destroying life; and that belief in the
 Unity of God puts an end to those foul diseases*

The amputation of desire condemns
 To Death; Life rests secure on the behest
Do not despair. Desire continuing
 The substance is of hope, while hopelessness
 Poisons the very blood of life. Despair
 Presses thee down, a tombstone on thy heart,
 And, though thou be as high as Alond's
 mount,

It casts thee down; impotence is the slave
 Of its poor favours, unambition hangs
 Upon its skirts. Despair lulls life asleep,
 And proves the langour of its element;
 The spirit's eye is blinded by the smear

Of its collyrium, and brightest day
 Transformed to pitchy night; life's faculties
 Die at its breath, Life's springs are all dried
 up.
 Despair and Sorrow sleep beneath one quilt;
 Grief, like a lancet, pierces the soul's vein.
 O thou who art a prisoner of care,
 Learn from the Prophet's message, *Do not
 grieve!*
 This lesson fortified with trusty faith
 The heart of Abu Bakr, and with the cup
 Of blessed certitude rejoiced his soul.
 The Muslim, well content with God's good
 grace,
 Is like a star, and goes upon his way
 Smiling. If thou acknowledged a God,
 Shake free from sorrow, and deliver thee
 From vain imaging of Fortune's turns.
 Life more abundant strength of faith bestows.
No fear shall be upon them: let this be
 Constantly on thy lips. When Moses strides
 Before the Pharaoh, steadfast is his heart
 As he remembereth *Thou shalt not fear.*
 Fear, save of God, is the dire enemy
 Of Works, the highwayman that plundereth
 Life's caravan. Purpose most resolute.
 When fear attends, thinks upon what may be,
 And lofty zeal to circumspection yields.
 Or let its seed be sown within thy soil,
 Life remains stunted of its full display.
 Feeble its nature is, and well accords.
 With heart a-tremble and with palsied hand.
 Fear robs the foot of strength to rove abroad,
 And filches from the brain the power of
 thought.
 Thy enemy, observing thee afraid,
 Will pluck thee from thy bower like a bloom;
 Stronger will be the impact of his swords,
 His very glance transfix thee like a knife.
 Fear is a chain that fetters close our feet,
 A hundred torrents roaring in our sea.
 And if thy melody not freely soars,
 Fear has relaxed the tension of thy strings;
 Then twist the pegs that keep thy lute in tune,
 And hear its music mount into the skies
 In unrestrained and passionate lament.
 Fear is a spy sent from the clime of Death,
 Its spirit dark and chill as Death's own heart;

Its eye wreaks havoc in the realm of Life,
 Its ear's a thief of Life's intelligence.
 Whatever evil lurks within thy heart
 Thou canst be certain that its origin
 Is fear: fraud, cunning, malice, lies – all these
 Flourish on terror, who is wrapped about
 With falsehood and hypocrisy for veil,
 And fondles foul sedition at her breast.
 And since it is least strong when zeal is high,
 It is most happy in disunion.
 Who understands the Prophet's clue aright
 Sees infidelity concealed in fear.

Conversation of the arrow and the sword

How truthfully the well-notched arrow spoke
 Unto the sword in heat of battleide:
 "What magic lustre glitters in thy steel
 Like fairy dancers in the Caucasus?
 Thou, who canst boast in thy long ancestry
 Of Ali's trusty weapon, *Dhul-Faqar*;
 Who hast beheld the might of Khalid's arm,
 Sprinkled red sunset on the head of night –
 Thine is the fire of God's omnipotence,
 And neath thy shadow Paradise awaits.
 Whether I wing in air, or lie encased
 Within the quiver, wheresoe'er I be
 I am all fire. When from the bow I speed
 Towards a human breast, right well I see
 Into its depth, and if it do not hold
 A heart unflawed, unvisited by thoughts
 Of terror or despair, swiftly my point
 Plucks it asunder, and I spread it o'er
 With surging gore for shift. But if that breast
 Serenely throb with a believer's heart
 And glow reflective to an inward light,
 My soul is turned to water by its flame,
 My shafts fall soft as the innocuous dew."

Emperor Alamgir and the tiger

Shah Alamgir, that high and mighty king,
 Pride and renown of Gurgan Timur's line,
 In whom Islam attained a loftier fame
 And wider honour graced the Prophet's Law,
 He the last arrow to our quiver left
 In the affray of Faith with Unbelief;
 When that the impious seed of heresy,
 By Akbar nourished, sprang and sprouted
 fresh

In Dara's soul, the candle of the heart
 Was dimmed in every breast, no more secure
 Against corruption our community
 Continued; then God chose from India
 That humble-minded warrior, Alamgir,
 Religion to revive, faith to renew.
 The lightning of his sword set all ablaze
 The harvest of impiety; faith's torch
 Once more its radiance o'er our counsels
 shed.

Many the tales misguided spirits told,
 Blind to the breadth of his percipient mind;
 He was a moth that ever beat its wings
 About the candle-flame of Unity,
 An Abraham in India's idol-house.
 In all the line of kings he stands alone;
 His tomb is witness to his saintliness.

One day that ornament of crown and throne,
 That lord of battle, saint and emperor,
 Set forth into the jungle with the dawn
 Attended by one faithful follower;
 Exultant in the joyous breath of morn,
 Birds sang their hymns to God on every tree.
 The conscient king became absorbed in
 prayer,
 Striking his tent from this contingent world
 To pitch it in the realm of truth sublime.
 A tiger at that instant from the plain
 Suddenly sprang; heaven trembled at his roar;
 Scenting afar the presence of a man,
 He leaped on Alamgir, and smote his loins.
 The king, unviewing, drew his dagger forth
 And rent the belly of the furious beast;
 His heart admitting not a thought of fear,
 He stretched the tiger prostrate at his feet,
 Then sped again impatiently to God
 Mounting prayer's ladder to his heavenly
 throne.

A heart so humble and at once so proud
 No other lodge but the believer's breast
 Possesses; for the servitor of Truth
 Is naught before his Master, but stand firm
 Against Untruth, and positive indeed.
 Thou too, O ignorant man, take such a heart
 Into thy hold; let it a litter be
 Wherein immortal Beauty may be borne.

Stake self, to win self back; spread out the
 snare
 Of supplication, glory to entrap;
 Let Love set fire to pale Anxiety;
 Be thou God's fox, to learn the tiger's trade
 The fear of God faith's only preface is,
 All other fear is secret disbelief.

Second pillar: Apostleship

Abraham, friend of God, *loved not the things
 That set;* and lo, his footprint was a guide
 To all successive prophets. He, the sign
 And witness to the everlasting Lord,
 Yearned in his heart for *a Community,*
 And from his sleepless eyes the flood of tears
 Unceasing flowed until the message came,
Cleanse thou My House. Then for our sake *he
 made*

A desert populous, and founded there
 A temple whither pilgrims might process.
 And when the stem of *turn thou unto us*
 Burst into bud, the tillage of our Spring
 Took visible shape; God fashioned forth our
 form
 And through Apostleship breathed in our
 flesh
 The soul of life. We were a word unvoiced
 Within this world, that by Apostleship
 Became a measured verse; and that same
 grace
 Both shaped our being, gave us Faith and
 Law,
 Converted our vast myriads into one,
 And joined our fractions in a mighty whole
 Inseparable, indivisible.

He, who is pleased to *guide whomso he will,*
 Made of Apostleship a magic ring
 To draw around us; the community
 A circle is, whose great circumference
 Centers on Makkah's valley; and by force
 And virtue of that same relationship
 Stands our community unshakable,
 Tidings of mercy to the world entire.
 Out of that sea we surge, nor break apart
 Like scattering waves; its people, closely
 fenced

Within the ramparts of that holy soil,
 Roar loud as jungle lions. If thou look

To prove the truth that lies within my words,
 Gazing with Abu Bakr's veracious eyes,
 The Prophet, power and strength of soul and
 heart,
 Becometh more beloved than God Himself.
 His book is reinforcement to the hearts
 Of all believers; through his wisdom flows
 The lifeblood of the whole community;
 To yield his garment's hem is death – the rose
 So withers at the blast of Autumn's wind.
 His was the breath that gave the people life;
 His sun shone glory on their risen dawn.
 In God the individual, in him
 Lives the community, in his sun's rays
 Resplendent ever; his Apostleship
 Brought concord to our purpose and our goal.
 A common aim shared by the multitude
 Is unity which when it is mature,
 Forms the community; the many live
 Only by virtue of the single bond.
 The Muslim's unity from natural faith
 Derives, and this the Prophet taught to us,
 So that we lit a lantern on Truth's way.
 This pearl was fished from his unfathomed
 sea,
 And of his bounty we are one in soul.
 Let not this unity go from our hands,
 And we endure to all eternity.
 God set the seal of holy Law on us,
 As in our Prophet all Apostleship
 Is sealed. The concourse of unending days
 Is radiant in our lustre; he was Seal
 To all Apostles, to all People we.
 The service of Truth's winebearer is left
 With us; he gave to us his final glass.
No Prophet after me is of God's grace,
 And veil the modest beauty of the Faith
 Muhammad brought to men. The people's
 strength
 All rest in this, that still the secret guards
 Of how the Faith's Community is one.
 Almighty God has shattered every shape
 Carved by imposture, and for evermore
 Stitched up the sacred volume of Islam.
 The Muslim keeps his heart from all but God
 And shouts abroad, *No people after me.*

*That the purpose of Muhammad's mission was to
 found Freedom, Equality and Brotherhood among
 all mankind*

Throughout the world man worshipped
 tyrant man,
 Despised, neglected, insignificant;
 Caesar and Chosroes, highwaymen
 enthroned,
 Fettered and chained their subjects, hand and
 foot.
 High Priest and Pope, Sultan and Prince—for one
 Poor prey a hundred huntsmen took the field;
 The sceptred monarch and the surpliced
 priest
 Each claimed his tribute from the wasted
 fields;
 The bishop, eager for this abject game,
 Bartered God's pardon with the penitent.
 The Brahman from his garden raped his
 blooms,
 The Magian fed his harvest to the fire.
 Serfdom debased man's nature; while his reed
 Throbbled with threnody of his heart's blood.
 Until one faithful reassigned their rights
 To those whose rights they were, the
 Khaqan's throne
 Delivering into his subjects' hand;
 Fanned their dead embers into flame anew;
 Raised up Farhad, poor hewer of the rocks.
 To Parwiz' royal height; brought dignity
 To honest toil, and robbed the taskmasters
 Of tyrant overlordship. By his might
 He shattered every ancient privilege,
 And built new walls to fortify mankind.
 He breathed fresh life in Adam's weary
 bones,
 Redeemed the slave from bondage, set him
 free.
 His birth was mortal to the ancient world,
 Death to the temples of idolatry.
 Freedom was born out of his holy heart;
 His vineyard flowed with that delightful
 wine.
 The world's new age, its hundred lamps
 ablaze,
 Opened its eyes upon his living breast.

He drew on Being's page the new design,
 Brought into life a race of conquerors,
 A people deaf to every voice but God's,
 A moth devoted to Muhammad's flame;
 The fire of God was glowing in the brilliance
 Of the Sun's sanctuary. His fervour flushed
 Creation all with joy; new Ka'bahs rose
 Where China's temples once with idols stood.
 And in the order of his chivalry
 They were *most noble who feared God the best.*
Believers all are brothers in his heart,
 Freedom the sum and substance of his flesh.
 Impatient with discriminations all,
 His soul was pregnant with Equality.
 Therefore his sons stand up erect and free
 As the tall cypresses, the ancient pledge
 In him renewing, *Yea, thou art our Lord.*
 Prostration unto God had marked his brow;
 The Moon and stars bow down to kiss his
 feet.

*The Story of Bu Ubaid and Jaban, in illustration of
 Muslim Brotherhood*

A certain general of kind Yazdajerd
 Became a Muslim's captive in the wars;
 A Guebre he was, inured to every trick
 Of fortune, crafty, cunning, full of guile.
 He kept his captor ignorant of his rank
 Nor told him who he was, or what his name,
 But said, "I beg that you will spare my life
 And grant to me the quarter Muslims gain."
 The Muslim sheathed his sword. "To shed thy
 blood,"
 He cried, "were impious and forbidden sin."
 When Kaveh's banner had rent to shreds,
 The fire of Sasan's sons turned all to dust,
 It was disclosed the captive Jaban was,
 Supreme commander of the Persian host.
 Then was his fraud reported, and his blood
 Petitioned of the Arab general;
 But Bu Ubaid, famed leader of the ranks
 From far Hijaz, who needed not the aid
 Of armies to assist his bold resolve
 In battletide, thus answered their request.
 "Friend, we are Muslims, strings upon one
 lute
 And of one concord. Ali's voice attunes
 With Abu Dharr's, although the throat be that

Of Qanbar or Bilal. Each one of us
 Is trustee to the whole community
 And one with it, in malice or in truce.
 As the community is the sure base
 On which the individual rests secure,
 So is its covenant his sacred bond.
 Though Jaban was a foeman to Islam,
 A Muslim granted him immunity;
 His blood, O followers of the best of men,
 May not be spilled by any Muslim sword."

*The story of Sultan Murad and the architect, in
 illustration of Muslim Equality*

An architect there was, that in Khojand
 Was born, a famous craftsman of his kind,
 Worthy to be an offspring of Farhad.
 Sultan Murad commanded him to build
 A mosque, the which pleased not his majesty,
 So that he waxed right furious at his faults.
 The baleful fire flared in the ruler's eyes;
 Drawing his dagger, he cut off the hand
 Of that poor wretch, so that the spurting
 blood
 Gushed from his forearm. In such hapless
 plight
 He came before the *qazi*, and retold
 The tyrants's felony, that had destroyed
 The cunning hand which shaped the granite
 rock.
 "O thou whose words a message are of
 Truth,"
 He cried, "whose toil it is to keep alive
 Muhammad's Law, I am no ear-bored slave
 Patient to wear the ring of monarchs' might.
 Determine my appeal by the Quran!"
 The upright *cadi* bit his lips in ire
 And summoned to his court the unjust king
 Who, hearing the Quran invoked, turned pale
 With awe, and came like any criminal
 Before the judge, his eyes cast down in shame,
 Is cheeks as crimson as the tulip's glow.
 On one side stood the appellant, and on one
 The high exalted emperor, who spoke.
 "I am ashamed of this that I have wrought
 And make confession of my grievous crime."
 "In retribution" quoth the judge, "is life,
 And by that law life finds stability.
 The Muslim slave no less is than free men,

Nor is the emperor's blood of richer hue
 Than the poor builder's." Listening to these
 words
 Of Holy Writ, Murad shook off his sleeve
 And bared his hand. The plaintiff thereupon
 No Longer could keep silence. "*God commands
 Justice and kindness,*" recited he.
 For God's sake and Muhammad's, he
 declared,
 "I do forgive him." Note the majesty
 Of the Apostle's Law, and how an ant
 Triumphantly outfought a Solomon!
 Before the tribunal of the Quran
 Master and salve are one, the mat of reeds
 Coequal with the throne of rich brocade.

*Concerning Muslim Freedom, and the secret of the
 Tragedy of Kerbala*

Whoever maketh compact with the One
 That is, hath been delivered from the yoke
 Of every idol. Unto love belongs
 The true believer, and Love unto him.
 Love maketh all things possible to us
 Reason is ruthless; Love is even more,
 Purer, and nimbler, and more unafraid.
 Lost in the maze of cause and of effect
 Is Reason; Love strikes boldly in the field
 Of Action. Crafty Reason sets a snare;
 Love overthrows the prey with strong right
 arm.
 Reason is rich in fear and doubt; but Love
 Has firm resolve, faith indissoluble.
 Reason constructs, to make a wilderness;
 Love lays wide waste, to build all up anew.
 Reason is cheap, and plentiful as air;
 Love is most scarce to find, and of great price.
 Reason stands firm upon phenomena,
 But Love is naked of material robes.
 Reason says, "Thrust thyself into the fore;"
 Love answers "Try thy heart, and prove
 thyself."
 Reason by acquisition is informed
 Of other; Love is born of inward grace
 And makes account with self. Reason
 declares,
 "Be happy and be prosperous"; Love replies,
 "Become a servant, that thou mayest be free."

Freedom brings full contentment to Love's
 soul,
 Freedom, the driver of Love's riding-beast.
 Hast thou not heard what things in time of
 war
 Love wrought with lustful Reason? I would
 speak
 Of that great leader of all men who love
 Truly the Lord, that upright cypress-tree
 Of the Apostle's garden, Ali's son,
 Whose father led the sacrificial feast
 That he might prove *a mighty offering*;
 And for that prince of the best race of men
 The Last of the Apostles gave his back
 To ride upon, *a camel passing fair*.
 Crimsoned his blood the cheek of jealous
 Love
 (Which theme adorns my verse in beauty
 bold)
 Who is sublime in our community
 As *Say, the Lord is God* exalts the Book.
 Moses and Pharaoh, Shabbir and Yazid –
 From Life spring these conflicting potencies;
 Truth lives in Shabbir's strength; Untruth is
 that
 Fierce, final anguish of regretful death.
 And when the Caliphate first snapped its
 thread
 From the Quran, in Freedom's throat was
 poured
 A fatal poison, like a rain-charged cloud
 The effulgence of the best of peoples rose
 Out of the West, to spill on Kerbala,
 And in that soil, that desert was before,
 Sowed, as he died, a field of tulip-blood.
 There, till the Resurrection, tyranny
 Was evermore cut off; a garden fair
 Immortalizes where his lifeblood surged.
 For Truth alone his blood dripped to the dust,
 Wherefore he has become the edifice
 Of faith in God's pure Unity. Indeed
 Had his ambition been for earthly rule,
 Not so provisioned would he have set forth
 On his last journey, having enemies
 Innumerable as the desert sands,
 Equal his friends in number to God's Name.
 The mystery that was epitomized
 In Abraham and Ishmael through his life

And death stood forth at last in full revealed.
 Firm as a mountain-chain was his resolve,
 Impetuous, unwavering to its goal
 The Sword is for the glory of the Faith
 And is unsheathed but to defend the Law.
 The Muslim, servant unto God alone
 Before no Pharaoh casteth down his head.
 His blood interpreted these mysteries,
 And waked our slumbering community.
 He drew the sword *There is none other god*
 And shed the blood of them that served the
 lie;

Inscribing in the wilderness *save God*
 He wrote for all to read the exordium
 Of our salvation. From Husain we learned
 The riddle of the Book, and at his flame
 Kindled our torches. Vanished now from ken
 Damascus might, the splendour of Baghdad,
 Granada's majesty, all lost to mind;
 Yet still the strings he smote within our soul
 Vibrate, still ever new our faith abides
 In his *Allahu Akbar*, Gentle breeze,
 Thou messenger of them that are afar,
 Bear these my tears to lave his holy dust.

*That since the Muhammadan Community
 is founded upon belief in one god and
 apostleship, therefore it is not bounded by
 space*

Our Essence is not bound to any Place;
 The vigour of our wine is not contained
 In any bowl, Chinese and Indian
 Alike the sherd that constitutes our jar,
 Turkish and Syrian alike the clay
 Forming our body; neither is our heart
 Of India, or Syria, or Rum,
 Nor any fatherland do we profess
 Except Islam. When pure-descended Ka'ab
 Brought to the Prophet for an offering
 His famed *Banat Su'ad*, whereon he strung
 The night-illuminating jewels of his praise,
 And there addressed him as an unsheathed
 sword
Of India, it did not please his heart
 (Being sublimer than high heaven's sphere)
 To be attributed to any clime;

And so the Prophet answered, "Rather say
A Sword of God, if Truth thou worshippest,
 No other pathway travel but of Truth."
 Full well he knew the mystery of Part
 And Whole, the very dust beneath his feet
 Being the magical collyrium
 Laid on the eyes of all God's messengers;
 And so he spoke to his community,
*"Of all this world of yours, I love alone
 Obedient hearts, sweet perfumes, women chaste."*
 If the perception of realities
 Guideth thy steps, the subtlety confined
 In that word *yours* will not be hid from thee.
 Indeed, that lantern of all beings' night
 Dwelt in the world, but was not of the world;
 His splendour, that consumed the adoring
 breasts
 Of holy angels, shone while *Adam yet
 Was clay and water*. Of what land he was
 I know not; this much only I do know,
 He is our comrade. These base elements
 He reckoned for our world, himself our guest.
 We, who have lost the souls within our
 breasts,
 Have therefore lost ourselves in this mean
 dust.
 Thou art a Muslim, do not bind thy heart.
 To any clime, nor lose thyself within
 This world dimensionate. The Muslim true
 Is not contained in any land on earth;
 Syria and Rum are lost within his heart
 Grasp thou the heart, and in its vast expanse
 Lose this mirage of water and of clay.
 Our Master, fleeing from his fatherland,
 Resolved the knot of Muslim nationhood.
 His wisdom founded one community—
 The world its parish—on the sacred charge
 To civilize; that Ruler of our faith
 Of his abundant bounty gave the earth
 Entire to be the confines of our mosque.
 He, whom god eulogized in the Quran
 And promised He would *save his soul alive*,
 Struck hapless awe into his enemies
 So that they trembled at his majesty.
 Why fled he, then, from his ancestral home?
 Supposest thou he ran before his foes?
 The chroniclers, ill understanding what

The Flight portends, have hid the truth from us.
 Flight is the law that rules the Muslim's life,
 And is a cause of his stability;
 Its meaning is to leap from shallowness,
 To quit the dew, the ocean to subdue.
 Transgress the bloom; the garden is thy goal;
 The loss of less more vastly gain adorns.
 The sun's great glory is in ranging free;
 The skies' arena lies beneath his feet.
 Be not a streamlet, seeking wealth from rain;
 Be boundless; quest no limit in the world.
 The frowning sea was once a simple plain,
 Played being shore, and liquefied of shame.
 Have thou the will to master everything,
 That thou mayest win dominion over all;
 Plunge like a fish, and populate the sea;
 Shake off the chains of too constricted space.
 He who has burst from all dimension's bonds
 Ranges through all directions, like the sky.
 The rose's scent by parting from the rose
 Leaps far abroad, and through the garden's
 breadth
 Disseminates itself. Thou, who hast snatched
 One corner of the meadow for thine own,
 Like the poor nightingale art satisfied
 To serenade one rose. Be like the breeze;
 Cast off the burden of complacency
 From thy broad shoulders; in thy wide
 embrace
 Gather the garden. Be thou wary; lo,
 These times are full of treachery, the way
 Beset by brigands; wayfarer, beware!

*That the country is not the foundation of
 the community*

Now brotherhood has been so cut to shreds
 That in the stead of the community
 The Country has been given pride of place
 In men's allegiance and constructive work;
 The Country is the darling of their hearts,
 And wide humanity is whittled down
 Into dismembered tribes. Men thought to find
 Paradise in that *miserable abode*
Of ruin where they made the peoples dwell.
 This tree has banished heaven from the world
 And borne for fruit the bitterness of war;

Humanity is but a legend, man
 Become a stranger to his fellow-man.
 The spirit has departed from the flesh,
 Only the seven disjointed limbs remain;
 Vanished is humankind, there but abide
 The disunited nations. Politics
 Dethroned religion, this tree first struck root
 Within a Western garden, and the tale
 Of Christianity was all rolled up,
 The radiance of the Church's lantern dimmed;
 Pope powerless and baffled, from his hand
 The counters scattered; Jesus' followers
 Spurning the Church; debased the coinage
 Of the True Cross's Law. When atheism
 Fist rent religion's garment, there arrived
 That Satan's messenger, the Florentine
 Who worshipped falsehood, whose collyrium
 Shattered the sight of men. He wrote a scroll
 For Princes, and so scattered in our clay
 The seed of conflict; his fell genius
 Decamped to darkness, and his sword like
 pen
 Struck Truth asunder. Carving images
 Like Azar was his trade; his fertile mind
 Conceived a new design; his novel faith
 Proclaimed the State the only worship;
 His thoughts the ignoble turned to praise-
 worthy.
 So, when the feet of this adorable
 He kissed, the touchstone that he introduced
 To test the truth was Gain. His doctrine
 caused
 Falsehood to flourish; plotting stratagems
 Became an art. A sad and sorry end
 Attended the regime which he devised,
 That caltrop which he scattered on the road
 Of advancing days. Dark night he wrapped
 About the peoples' eyes; deception called,
 In his vocabulary, expediency.

*That the Muhammadan Community is
also unbounded in time, since the survival
of this noble community has been divinely
promised*

In Spring thou hast heard the clamorous
 nightingale,
And watched the resurrection of the flowers;
The buds arrayed like brides; from the dark
 earth
A veritable city of stars arise;
The meadow bathed in the soft tear of dawn
That slumbered to the river's lullaby.
A bud bursts into blossom on the branch;
The breeze new-risen takes it to her breast;
A bloom lies bleeding in the gatherer's hand
And like a perfume from the mead departs.
The ring-dove builds his nest; the nightingale
Takes wing; the dew drops softly, and the
 scent
Is sped. What though these mortal tulips die,
They lessen not the splendour of the spring:
For all the loss, its treasure still abides
Abundant, still the thronging blossoms smile.
The season of the rose endures beyond
The fragile eglantine time, yea, it outlives
The rose's self, the cypress, and the fir;
The jewel-nourishing mine bears jewels yet,
Unminished by the shattering of one gem.
Dawn is departed from the East, and night
Gone from the West: their too-brief-historied
 up
Visits no more the wine-vault of the days;
Yet, though the draught be drunk, the wine
 remains
Eternal as the morrow that awaits
When all our yesterdays are drowned in
 death.
So individuals, as they depart,
Are fallen pages from the calendar
Of peoples more enduring: though the friend
Is on journey, the companionship
Still stays; the individual is gone
Abroad, unstirring the community.
Other each essence is, the qualities
Other; they differ both in how each lives
And how they die. The individual

Arises from a handful of mere clay,
The nation owes its birth to one brave heart;
The individual has for his span
Sixty or seventy years, a century
Is for the nation as single breath.
The individual is kept alive
By the concomitance of soul and flesh,
The nation lives by guarding ancient laws;
Death comes upon the individual
When dries life's river and the nation dies
When it forsakes the purpose of its life.
Though the community must pass away
Like any individual when Fate,
Issues the fiat none may disobey,
Islam's Community is divine
Undying marvel, having origin
In that great compact, *Yea, Thou art our Lord.*
This people is indifferent to Fate,
Immovable in *Lo, We have sent down
Remembrance*, Which abides while there is yet
One to remember, whose continuance
Persists with it. When God revealed the
 words
They seek God's light to extinguish, this bright
 lamp
Was never troubled it might flicker out.
'Tis a community that worships God
In perfect faith, a people well-beloved
By every man who has a conscient heart.
God drew this trusty blade out of the sheath
Of Abraham's desires, that by its edge
Sincerity might live, and all untruth
Consume before the lightning of its stroke.
We, who are proof of God's high Unity
And guardians of the Wisdom and the Book,
Encountered heaven's malice long ago,
The unsuspected menace of the hordes
Of savage Tartary, loosed on our heads
To prove its terror. Not the Judgment Day
Shall match the staring horror of those
 swords,
The thunder of those legions armed with
 death.
Confusion sore confounded in the breast
Of that disaster slept; its yesterday
Gave birth to no glad morrow. Muslim might
Quivered in dust and blood; Baghdad beheld

Such scenes as Rome ne'er witnessed in her throes.

Now ask, if so thou wilt, what new design
Purposing Fate, malignant as of old,
Proposed this holocaust; whose garden
sprang

Out of the Tartar fire? Whose turban wears
The rose transmuted from those lambent
flames?

Because our nature is of Abraham
And our relationship to God the same
As that great patriarch's: out of the fire's
depths

Anew we blossom, every Nimrod's blaze
Convert to roses. When the burning brands
Of Time's great revolution ring our mead,
Then Spring returns. The mighty power of
Rome,

Conqueror and ruler of the world entire,
Sank into small account; the golden glass
Of the Sassanians was drowned in blood;
Broken the brilliant genius of Greece;
Egypt too failed in the great test of Time,
Her bones lie buried 'neath the Pyramids.
Yet still the voice of the muezzin rings
Throughout the earth, still the Community
Of World – Islam -- maintains its ancient
forms.

Love is the universal law of life,
Mingling the fragmentary elements
Of a disordered world. Through our hearts'
glow

Love lives, irradiated by the spark
There is no god but God. Though, like a bud,
Our hearts are prisoned by oppressive care,
If we should die, the graden too will die.

*That the organization of the community is
only possible though law, and that the law
of the Muhammadan Community is the*

Quran

When a community forsakes its Law
Its parts are severed, like the scattered dust.
The being of the Muslim rests alone
On Law which is in truth the inner core
Of the Apostle's faith. A rose is born

When its component petals are conjoined
By Law; and roses, being likewise bound
By Law together, fashion a bouquet.
As sound controlled creates a melody
So, when control is absent, dissonance
Results. The breath we draw within our throat
Is but a wave of air which, in the reed
Being constricted, blows a tuneful note.
Knowest thou what thy Law is, wherein lies
Beneath yon spheres the secret of thy power?
It is the living Book, that wise Quran
Whose wisdom is eternal, uncreate.
The secrets of the fashioning of life
Are therein written; instability
Is firmly established by its potency.
Undoubted and *unchanging* are its words,
Its verses to interpretation not
Beholden; in its strength the raw desire
Acquires maturity, the bowl fears not
To dash against the rock. It casts away
The shackling chains, and leads the free man
forth

But brings the exultant captor unto woe.
The final message to all humankind
Was borne by him elect of God to be
A mercy unto every living thing;
By this the worthless unto worth attains,
The prostrate slave lifts up his head on high.
Having by heart this message, highwaymen
Turned guides upon the road, and by this
book

Were qualified high masters of the rolls;
Rude desert-farers through one lantern's glow
A hundred revelations to their brain
In every science won. So he, *whose load*
The mountain's massive shoulders could not bear,
Clove by his might the power of the spheres.
See how the capital of all our hopes
Is lodged securely in our children's breasts!
The weary wanderer in the wilderness
Unwatered, eyes aflame in the hot sun,
His camel nimbler than the agile deer,
Its breath as fire, when he would look to sleep
Casting him down beneath some shady palm,
Then with the dawn awake, the caravan
Clanged to departure, ever journeying
Through the wide prairies, unfamiliar

With roof and door, stranger to fixed
 abodes—
 When his wild heart responded vibrantly
 To the Quran's warm glow, its restless waves
 Sank to the calm of a sequestered pearl.
 Reading the lesson of its verses clear
 He who had come a slave went forth from
 God

A master. Now upon his instrument
 New melodies imperial were heard;
 Jamshid's high throne he trampled underfoot;
 Cities sprang up out of the dust he trod,
 A hundred bowers blossomed from his rose.

O thou, whose faith by custom is enslaved,
 Imprisoned by the charms of heathendom,
 Thou who hast *torn thy heritage to shreds*
 Treading the highway *to a hateful goal*,
 If thou wouldst live the Muslim life anew
 This cannot be, except by the Quran
 Thou livest. See the Sufi in his garb
 Of mystic minstrelsy, his heart inflamed
 By the fierce fervour of Iraqi's verse!
 Little do his wild ecstasies accord
 With the austere Quran; the dervish cap
 And mat of reeds replace the crown and
 throne;

His boasted poverty rich tribute takes
 Secured on many a hermitage endowed.
 The preacher, with his wealth of anecdote
 And wordy legend, little has to tell
 If truth, for all his fine grandiloquence;
 Khatib and Dailami are on his lips,
 In every week Tradition he delights,
 The little met with, and the insecure.
 It is thy duty to recite the Book,
 And therein find the purpose thou dost seek.

*That in times of decadence strict
 conformity is better than free speculation*

The present age has many tumults hid
 Beneath its head; its restless temperament
 Swarms with disorders. The society
 Of ancient nations in these modern times
 Is in confusion; sapless hangs life's bough.
 The glamour and the glitter of our days
 Have made us strangers to our very selves,

And robbed our instrument of melody;
 Filched from our heart its pristine fire, and
 dimmed
 Within our breast the radiance and the flame
There is no god but God. Whene'er decay
 Destroys the balanced temperament of life,
 Then the community may look to find
 Stability in strict conformity.
 Go thou thy fathers' road, for therein lies
 Tranquility; conformity connotes
 The holding fast of the community.
 In time of Autumn, thou who lackest leaf
 Alike and fruit, break never from the tree,
 Hoping that spring may come. Since thou hast
 lost
 The sea, be prudent, lest a greater loss
 Befall thee; the more carefully preserve
 Thy own thin rivulet; for it my hap
 Some mountain torrent shall replenish thee
 And thou once more be tossed upon the
 breast
 Of the redeeming tempest. If thy flesh
 Is yet possessed of a discerning eye,
 Take warning from the Israelitish case;
 Consider well their variable fate,
 Now hot, now cold; regard the obduracy,
 The hardness of their spare and tenuous soul.
 Sluggishly flows the blood within their veins,
 Their furrowed brow sore smitten on the
 stones
 Of porticoes a hundred. Though heaven's grip
 Hath pressed and squeezed their grape, the
 memory
 Of Moses and of Aaron liveth yet;
 And though their ardent song hath lost its
 flame,
 Still palpitates the breath within their breast.
 For when the fabric of their nationhood
 Was rent asunder, still they laboured on
 To keep the highroad of their forefathers.
 O thou whose ancient concourse is dispersed,
 Within whose breast the lamp of life is out,
 Grave on thy heart the truth of Unity,
 And in conformity essay to mend
 The ruin of thy fortune. In the time
 Of decadence, to seek to exercise
 The speculative judgment of the mind
 Completes the people's havoc finally;

Salvation lieth less in following
 The blinkered pedant's dictum, being found
 Humble imitation of the past.
 Caprice corrupted not thy fathers' brain;
 The labour of the pious was unsoiled
 By interested motive, finer far
 The thread of thought their meditation wove,
 Closer to the Prophet's way conformed
 Their self-denial. Jaafar's raptured view
 And Razi's patient delving are no more;
 Departed is the glory that adorned
 The Arab nation; narrow shrunk for us
 The defile of the Faith, whose mysteries
 Every impostor boasteth to possess.
 Thou, who art stranger to the secret truths
 Of Faith, if thou art wise, accord thyself
 With one sound Law; for I have heard it said
 By those who take and know the pulse of Life,
 Thy contrariety severs Life's veins.
 The Muslim lives by following one Law;
 The body of our Faith's community
 Throbs vital to the Word of the Quran.
 All earth we are; that is our conscient heart;
 Hold firm to its protection, since it is
The Cord of God. Upon its sacred thread
 Gem-like be safely strung, or otherwise
 Be scattered, as the dust upon the wind.

*That maturity of communal life derives
 from following the divine law*

Seek thou no other meaning in the Law,
 Nor look save light to find within the gem;
 God was the jeweller who fashioned forth
 This jewel, diamantine through and through.
 Law is the only knowledge of the Truth,
 Love the sole basis of the Prophet's code;
 The individual through Law attains
 A faith maturer, and more fair adorned.
 The rule of Law secures an ordered life
 To all the nation, which established rule
 Condition is of its continuance.
 Power is patent in its knowledge, this
 The sign of Moses' staff and potent hand;
 So I declare the secret of Islam
 Is Law, in which all things begin and end.
 Since thou art called to be a guardian
 Of the Faith's wisdom, I will tell to thee

A subtle truth of the perspicuous Law.
 If any Muslim be engaged upon
 A meritorious act, and causelessly
 Therein be challenged, forthwith it becomes
 His sacred duty to discharge the same;
 Power is deemed the very spring of Life.
 Upon the day of battle, if the foe
 Supposing truce is imminent neglects
 His army's marshalling, and casually
 Confronts his fortune, breaking down the
 wall
 And citadel of his defence; until
 His order is restored, to march against
 His unarmed country is prohibited.
 Knowest thou then the mystery of this
 Divine commandment? Life not living is
 Except we live in danger. Law requires
 That when to war thou comest, thou shalt
 blaze
 A fiery torch, and split the throat of rock.
 Law tries the power of the strong right arm;
 Confronting thee with Alond's massive
 height,
 It bids thee pound into collyrium
 That craggy mount, and with the ardent
 breath
 Drawn from thy throat its flint to liquefy.
 The lean and feeble sheep is scarce a prey
 Worthy the tiger's claw; or if the hawk
 Consorts with sparrows, meaner-spirited
 Than its poor victims it shall soon become.
 The Lawgiver, to whom all fair and foul
 Was fully known, this recipe of power
 For thee prescribed. By toil the nerves are
 steeled,
 And thou art raised to eminence in the world;
 Or be thou wounded, this will make thee
 strong,
 Yea, and mature as a firm mountain-chain.
 Full life's religion is Muhammad's faith,
 His code the commentary on life's law;
 Be though earth-lowly, it shall lift thee up
 High as the heavens, and will fashion thee
 Harmonious to God's summons. The rough
 rock
 Is polished to a mirror by this faith,
 And this unrests the steel's corroding heart.

Now when the Prophet's watchword passed
 from ken
 His people held no more the secret key
 To their continuance. That lusty sprout
 Tall and firm-rooted (Muslim of the wastes
 Mounted on camel, who in Batha's vale
 Took his first steps) that by the desert warmth
 Was nourished up, now fanned by Persia's
 breeze
 Is so diminished, that it hath become
 Thin as a reed. He who was wont to slay
 Tigers like sheep now winces at the ant
 Trampled unwittingly; he who in joy,
Allahu Akbar crying, turned the rock
 To running water, trembles at the note
 Of amorous nightingales; he whose high will
 Reckoned the mountain trifling as a straw
 Commits himself entire to abject trust;
 He whose firm blow once broke his foemen's
 neck,
 His heart is wounded by his own breast's
 beat;
 He whose bold tread a hundred tumults
 limned
 Now cowers in retirement from the world;
 He whose command none dared to disobey,
 Before whose door great Alexander stood
 A suppliant, and Darius begged his bread,
 His ardour is attuned to mean content,
 His boast the proffered bowl of mendicants.
 Shaykh Ahmad, Sayyid lofty as the spheres,
 From whose keen brain the sun's self
 borrowed light
 (The roses that bedeck his holy grave
No other god but God breathe from his dust)
 Thus spoke to a disciple: "O though life
 Of thy dear father, it behoves us all
 That we beware of Persia's fantasies;
 Though Persia's thoughts the heavens have
 surpassed
 They equally transgress the boundaries
 Set by the Prophet's Faith." Brother, give ear
 To his sage counsel, and attentively
 Receive the rede of a protagonist
 Of our community; take these wise words
 To fortify thy heart; conform thyself
 With Arab ways, to be a Muslim true.

*That a good communal character derives
 from discipline according to the manners
 of the Prophet*

A mendicant like Fate inexorable
 Battered upon our door incessantly;
 Enraged, I broke a stave upon his head,
 And all the harvest of his beggary
 Spilled from his hand. In youth's beginning
 days
 The reason thinks not upon right and wrong.
 My father, by my temper much distressed,
 Grew very pale; the tulips of his cheeks
 Withered; an anguished sigh sprang from his
 lip
 A star gleamed in his eye, brief glittering
 Upon his lashes, and then slowly fell.
 And as a bird that in the time of Fall
 Trembles within his nest when dawn blows
 chill,
 So in my flesh shivered my heedless soul;
 The Layla of my patience now no more
 Rode peacefully the litter of my heart.
 And then my father spoke: "Upon that morn
 The people of the Best of Messengers
 Are gathered up before the Lord of All,
 Warriors of his Pure Community
 And guardians of his Wisdom's loveliness,
 Martyrs who proved the Faith – all these like
 stars
 Shall shine within that peopled firmament;
 Ascetics too, and they that loved their God
 With anguished hearts, and scholars erudite,
 And shamefast rebels against God's
 commands.
 Then in the midst of that great company
 This suffering beggar's cries shall mount on
 high.
 O thou condemned to tread an arduous road
 Unmounted, footsore, what am I to say
 When this the Prophet asks me: 'God to thee
 Committed a young Muslim, and he won
 No portion of instruction from my school;
 What, was this labour too, too hard for thee,
 So that that heap of clay became not man?'
 So gentle was my noble sire's reproof
 That I was torn by shame and hope and fear:

“Reflect a little, son, and bring to mind
The last great gathering of the Prophet’s fold;
Look once again on my white hairs, and see
How now I tremble between fear and hope;
Do not thy father this foul injury,
O put him not to shame before his Lord!”

Thou art a bud burst from Muhammad’s
branch;
Break into bloom before the genial breeze
Of his warm Spring; win thee the scent and
hue
Of that sweet season; strive to gain for thee
Some fragment of his character sublime.
Well said great Rumi, guide in whose shrunk
drop

An ocean of deep wisdom slumbereth:
“Snap not the thread of thy brief days from
him

Who was the Seal of Prophets; little trust
In thy poor craft and faltering footsteps
place.”

The nature of the Muslim through and
through
Is loving kindness; with both hand and
tongue

He strives to be a mercy in the world,
As he whose fingers split the moon in twain
Embraces in his mercy all mankind.
Noble was he, in every attribute;
Thou art no member of our company
If from his station thou departest far.

Bird of our garden, one in song and tongue
With us, if thou dost own a melody
Carol it not alone, nor let it soar
But on a branch that in our garden grows.
Whatever thing has capital of life
Dies in an uncongenial element
Art thou a nightingale? Fly in the mead,
And with thy fellow-minstrels mediate
Thy song. Art thou an eagle? Do not live
At ocean’s bottom; in the solitude
Of the unpeopled desert make thy home.
Art thou a star? Shine in thy firmament,
Nor set thy foot beyond thy proper bounds.

If thou wilt take a drop of April shower
And nurture it within the garden’s close
Till, like the dew of the abounding Spring,

A rosebud takes it to its near embrace,
Then, in the rays of heaven-glittering dawn
Whose magic knots the blossoms on the
branch,
Thou shalt draw out the lucent element
Within its substance, all the ecstasy
Of leaping in its trembling particles.
What is thy jewel? But a watery wave;
What is thy effort? Naught save a mirage.
Hurl it to ocean, that it may become
A jewel gleaming like a tremulous star.
The April raindrop, banished from the sea,
Dies on the cornstalk with the morning dew.
The pure clay of the Muslim is a gem;
Its lustre and its radiance derive
Out of the Prophet’s ocean. Come thou, then,
Brief April shower, come into his breast,
And issue from his mighty sea, a pearl!
Outshine the sun upon this shadowy world,
And glow forever in immortal light.

*That the life of the community requires a
visible focus, and that the focus of the
Islamic community is Makkah’s sacred
house*

Now I will loose for thee the knotted cord
That is Life’s riddle, and reveal to thee
Life’s mysteries; its trade, from self to leap
Swift as a phantom, nimbly to escape
From the constriction of Dimension’s grasp.
Then how comes Life into this world of late
And soon? How does its instant time give
birth

To yesterdays and morrows? Look upon
Thyself, if thou possesseth eyes to see;
Fool, art thou aught but constantly aleap?
So, to display its glow invisible
Life’s torch contrived a curtain of its smoke,
And that its motion might be seen at peace,
Its wave was in the gem immobilized.
Life’s furnace drew its breath, forthwith
became

A tulip, and burst blooming from the branch.
Thy thought is immature, lame, slow to rise,
If thou suppose the mortal flower itself
The fleeting colour. Life is not a bird

A-building nests; 'tis but a wing of hue
 And wholly flight; imprisoned in the cage,
 Yet ever free; lamenteth as it sings;
 Washeth each moment from its wing the will
 To fly, yet ever seeks new stratagems
 Itself devising; bindeth knot on knot
 Its own affairs, yet with consummate ease
 Resolveth all its problems. Swift-paced Life
 Stands rooted in the mire, that it may feel
 Pulsing a doubled joy to walk abroad.
 Anthems unheard lie dormant in its flame;
 To-morrow, yesterday, the children are
 Of its to-day. Each moment it creates
 Fresh difficulties, passing freely through;
 Thus, instantly its task is ever new.
 Though like a sent it is all will to leap,
 When in the breast it maketh its abode
 It is a breath. Upon itself it spins
 Its threads, becomes a skein, and knots itself.
 The seed, that holdeth knotted in its grain
 The leaf and fruit, in good time openeth
 Its eyes upon itself, and is a tree;
 Creating out of water and of clay
 A garment it revealeth hand and foot,
 Eye, yea, and heart. Life chooseth to confine
 Itself within the body's solitude,
 And Life createth mighty companies.

Such is the law that governeth the birth
 Of nations, life gathereth on a point
 Of focus which, related to the ring,
 Is as the spirit hidden in the flesh,
 The track of the circumference concealed
 Within the centre. Peoples win their bond
 And order from a focus, and that same
 Perpetuates the nation's sum of days.
 The Sacred House at once our secret is
 And guardian of our secret, our heart's fire
 And instrument whereon our passion plays.
 We are a breath nurtured within its breast;
 The body we, and it the precious soul.
 Our garden glitters joyous in its dew,
 Our fields are watered from its holy well.
 Its dancing motes give lustre to the sun
 Plunging into its firmanent profound.
 We are the proof that justifies its claim,
 Attestors witnessing for Abraham.
 This made our voices loud upon the earth,

Stitched up with Time our Pre-eternity;
 In circumambulation of its shrine
 Our pure community draws common breath,
 Dawn's sun encaged; by its arithmetic
 The many count as one, and in that tie
 Of oneness thy self-mastery waxes strong.
 Thou livest by a sanctuary's bond
 And shalt endure, so long as though shalt go
 About the shrine thereof. Upon this earth
 By congregation lives a people's soul,
 And congregation is the mystery
 Of Makkah's power. Take heed once again,
 Enlightened Muslim, by the tragic fate
 Of Moses' people, who, when they gave up
 Their focus from their grasp, the thread was
 snapped
 That bound their congregation each to each.
 That nation, nurtured up upon the breast
 Of God's apostles, and whereof the part
 Was privy to the secrets of the whole,
 Suddenly smitten by the hand of Time
 Poured out its lifeblood in slow agony.
 The tendrils of its vine are withered now,
 Nor even any willow weeping grows
 More from its soil; exile has robbed its tongue
 Of common speech; both nest and birdsong
 gone;
 The candle out; dead the lamenting moth –
 My poor dust trembles at the history.
 O thou, sore wounded by the sword of Fate,
 Prisoner of confusion, doubt, dismay,
 Wrap thee in pilgrim robes; unshroud the
 dawn
 Of night's dark dust. Plunge, as thy forebears
 did,
 Into prostration; lose thyself, until
 Thou art entire prostration. Long ago
 The Muslim fashioned meek humility,
 And thence developed a world-shaking pride;
 Upon God's path the thorn-points pierced his
 feet;
 He wore a rose-bower in his turban's fold.

That true solidarity consists in adopting a fixed communal objective, and that the objective of the Muhammadan community is the preservation and propagation of Unitarianism

And now I will impart to thee the tongue
 Of all things that have being; in this speech
 The letters and articulated sounds
 Are life's activities. When life is bound
 In firm attachment to an aim professed
 The opening verse rises spontaneously;
 And if that purpose serves us for a goad,
 Swift as the tempest gallopeth our steed.
 The goal avowed is the true mystery
 Of life's continuance, that focuses
 The restless flow of its mercurial powers.
 When life is conscious of a purposed aim,
 All means material yield to its control;
 It makes its self the follower of that goal,
 For its sole sake collects, selects, rejects.
 The helmsman shoreward bound resolves to
 sail
 The flooding main; the destination far
 Determines the selection of the paths.
 The moth's heart bears the brand of the
 delight
 Of burning, for which joy it flutters still
 About the candle. If the madman Qais
 Was wanderer in the wilderness, his aim
 Was the high litter wherein Layla rode.
 Now be our Layla but familiar
 With cities, never shall we lift our tread
 To span the desert. In the enterprise
 The purpose lies as hidden as the soul
 Within the body, and from this alone
 Each labour takes its quality and size.
 The blood that circulateth in our veins
 The nimbler moveth, having the desire
 To reach a goal; life's self consumes itself
 In that bright flame, aglow with tulip-fire.
 The Goal is as a plectrum, that awakes
 The hidden music in the instrument
 Of high ambition, an attractive point
 Whereunto moves all centripetal force;
 This stirs a people's hands and feet to move
 In vital unison, one vision clear

Bestowing on a hundred several sights.
 Be the mad lover of the loveliness
 Of noble purpose; flutter like a moth
 About this ardent lamp. Sweet was the air
 Qum's music-maker sang, the silken strings
 Sweeping responsive to his pulsing thought:
 "While yet the traveller bends to pluck the
 thorn
 That pricks his foot, the litter vanishes."
 If thou art heedless but for one brief breath,
 A hundred leagues thou strayest from thy
 stage.

This ancient creature, that men call the world,
 Out of the mingling of the elements
 Derived its body; a hundred reed-beds sowed
 That one lament might burgeon; bathed in
 blood
 A hundred meads, to yield one tulip-bloom.
 Many the shapes it fetched and cast and broke
 To grave upon Life's tablet thy design;
 Many laments it sowed in the soul's tilth
 Till sprang the music of one call to prayer
 Awhile it battled sternly with the free,
 And had much traffic with false lords, at last
 To strew the seed of faith in the heart's soil
 And on the tongue to cry *There is one God.*
No other god but God – this is the point
 On which the world concentrically turns,
 This the conclusion of the world's affairs.
 From this the sphere derives its strength to
 wheel,
 The sun its constancy and brilliance,
 The sea her gems, created of its glow,
 That set the ocean's billows quivering.
 This is the breeze that fans the earth to bloom,
 This rapturous glow a few poor feathers
 flames
 Into the nightingale; and this same fire
 Runs like a torch along the vineyard's veins
 And glitters crimson in the dusty bowl.
 In Being's instrument its melodies
 Life hidden; O musician, Being's lute
 Seeketh for thee; within thy body flow
 A hundred songs, as freely in thy veins
 The lifeblood pulses; rise, and smite the
 strings!
Allahu Akbar! This the secret holds

Of thy existence; wherefore let it be
 Thy purpose to preserve and propagate
No other god. If thou a Muslim art,
 Till all the world proclaims the Name of God
 Thou canst not rest one moment. Knowest
 thou not
 The verse in Holy Scripture, calling thee
 To be *a people just, God's witnesses?*
 Thou art the glow and glory of the days,
 And made to testify to all mankind;
 To all who comprehend the weight of words
 Make general proclamation, and impart
 The learned gospel of God's Messenger.
 Unlettered was He, *innocent of guile*
The words he uttered, that elucidate
 The mystery *He did not go astray.*
 Yet, when he held the pulse of living things,
 The secrets of Life's constitution he
 Forthwith revealed, and cleansed of ancient
 blight
 The garment of the tulips of this mead.
 Life here below is bound up with his Faith
 Nor can survive, save guarded by his Law.
 Having his Book beneath thy arm, stride out
 With greater boldness to the battlefield
 Of works; for human thought, idolatrous
 And idol-fashioning, is all the time
 In quest of some new image; in these days
 It follows once again old Azar's trade,
 And man creates an ever novel god
 Whose joy is shedding blood, whose hallowed
 name
 Is Colour, Fatherland, Blood-Brotherhood.
 Humanity is slaughtered like a sheep
 Before this worthless idol. Thou, whose lips
 Have touched the sacred bowl of Abraham,
 Whose blood is ardent with his holy wine,
 Against this falsehood, garmented as truth,
 Lift now the blade *there is not aught but God*
 And smite! The days are shrouded all in mirk;
 Display thy light, and let *the thing in thee*
Perfected shine o'er all humanity.
 I tremble for thy shame, when on the Day
 Of Reckoning that Glory of all time
 Shall question thee: "Thou tookest from my
 lips
 The word of Truth, and wherefore hast thou
 failed

To pass my message on to other men?"

*That the expansion of communal life
 depends upon controlling the forces of
 world order*

Thou, who hast made with the Invisible
 Thy covenant, and burst forth like a flood
 From the shore's bondage, as a sapling rise
 Out of this garden's soil; attach thy heart
 To the Unseen, yet ever with the seen
 Wage conflict, since this being visible
 Interprets that unviewed, and prelude is
 To the o'ermastery of hidden powers.
 All otherness is only to subdue,
 Its breast a target for the well-winged shaft;
 God's fiat *Be!* made other manifest
 So that thy arrows might be sharp to pierce
 The steely anvil. Truly it requires
 A tightly knotted cord, to whet and prove
 The wit of the resolver. Art thou a bud?
 Interpret in thyself the flowery mead;
 Art thou a dewdrop? Dominate the sun!
 If thou art equal to the bold emprise,
 Melt thou this snow-lion with one torrid
 breath!
 Whoever hath subdued the things perceived
 Can of one atom reconstruct a world,
 And he whose shaft would pierce the angel's
 breast
 First fastens Adam to his saddle-bow;
 He first resolves the knot phenomena
 And, mastering Being, proves his lofty power.
 Mountain and wilderness, river and plain,
 All land and sea – these are the scholar's slate
 On which the man of vision learns to read.
 O thou who slumberest, by dull opiates
 drugged,
 And namest mean this world material,
 Rise up, and open thy besotted eyes!
 Call thou not mean thy world by Law
 compelled;
 Its purpose is to enlarge the Muslim's soul,
 To challenge his potentialities;
 The body it assaults with fortune's sword
 That thou mayest see if there be blood within;
 Dash thou thy breast against its jagged rock
 Until it pierce thy flesh, and prove thy bone.

God counts this world the portion of good
men,
Commits its splendour to believers' eyes;
It is a road the caravan must pass,
A touchstone the believer's gold to assay;
Seize thou this world, that it may not seize
thee

And in its pitcher swallow thee like wine.
The stallion of thy thought is parrot-swift,
Striding the whole wide heavens in a bound;
Urged ever onwards by the needs of life,
Raised up to rove the skies, though
earthbound still;

That, having won the mastery of the powers
Of this world-order, thou mayest
consummate

The perfecting of thy ingenious crafts.
Man is the deputy of God on earth,
And o'er the elements his rule is fixed;
On earth thy narrowness receiveth breadth,
Thy toil takes on fair shape. Ride thou the
wind;

Put bridle on that swift-paced dromedary.
Dabble thy fingers in the mountain's blood;
Draw up the lustrous waters of the pearl
From ocean's bottom; in this single field
A hundred worlds are hidden, countless suns
Veiled in these dancing motes. This glittering
ray

Shall bring to vision the invisible,
Disclose uncomprehended mysteries.
Take splendour from the world-inflaming
sun,

The arch-illuminating levin from the storm;
All stars and planets dwelling in the sky,
Those lords to whom the ancient peoples
prayed,

All those, my master, wait upon thy word
And are obedient servants to thy will.
In prudence plan the quest, to make it sure,
Then master every spirit, all the world.
Open thine eyes, and into all things gaze;
Behold the rapture veiled within the wine.
The weak, endowed with knowledge of the
power

Of natural things, takes tribute from the
strong.

The outward form of Being is not bare
Of inward meaning; this old instrument
Still keeps its pitch, still lightning in its song
If played with cunning, self against the strings
For plectrum striking. Thou, whom God
designed

Saying, *Behold!* Why travellest thou this way
Like blind men? Lo, thy self-enkindled drop
Being intimate with mysteries, is like wine
Within the tendril, dew upon the rose;
Let flow into the ocean, it becomes
A pearl, its substance glittering as a star.
Fan not the rose's petals like the breeze,
But plunge into the meaning of the bower;
Whoso hath spun about phenomena
The knotted noose, hath mastered for his
mount

The lightning and the heat. He makes the
word

Wing like a bird in flight, the instrument
Sing of itself without the plectrum's touch.
Thy ass is lame, because the way of life
Was arduous, and thou too ignorant
Of life's hard combat; while already now
Thy fellow-travellers have reached the goal,
Borne from her litter Layla, the divine
And lovely Truth; like Qais thou wanderest
Distracted in the desert, weary, sore.
Yet Adam's glory was that he possessed
The *knowledge of the names*, and being wise
In natural ken, was thereby fortified.

*That the perfection of communal life is
attained when the community, like the
individual, discovers the sensation of self;
and that the propagation and perfecting of
this sensation can be realized through
guarding the communal traditions*

O thou of gaze intent, hast thou not seen
An infant, unacquainted with its self,
So unaware of what is far, what near
That it aspires to rein the very moon?
To all a stranger, mother-worshipping,
Drunken with weeping and with milk and
sleep,

His ear cannot distinguish *la* from *mi*,

His music's the mere jangling of a chain.
 Simple and virgin are his thoughts as yet,
 Pure as a pearl his speech; to search and
 search
 His meditation's sum, as on his lips
 Spring ever Why and When and How and
 Where;
 Receptive to all images his mind,
 His occupation other to pursue,
 Other to see. Let any take his eyes
 Creeping behind his back, and how distressed
 His little soul becomes! So immature
 His thoughts are yet that like the new-sprung
 hawk
 Flutters its wings, to try the world's wide air;
 He lets them slip, to hunt and seize their prey,
 Then calls them home again unto himself.
 Lit by the pyrotechnics of the mind
 The rocket of his fancy fills the sky
 With coruscating embers. At the last
 His eye prehensile lights upon himself;
 His little hand clutched to his breast, he cries
 "I!" So his memory maketh him aware
 Of his own self, and keeps secure the bond
 Linking to-morrow with his yesterday;
 Upon this golden thread his days are strung
 Like jewels on a necklace, one by one.
 Though, every breath, ever diminishes,
 Ever augments his flesh, "I am the same
 As I have ever been," his heart declares.
 This newborn "I" the inception is of life,
 This the true song of life's awaking lute.

 Like to a child is a community
 Newborn, an infant in its mother's arms;
 All unaware of self; a jewel stained
 By the road's dust; unbound to its to-day
 Is its to-morrow, fettered not its feet
 By the successive links of night and day.
 It is the pupil lodged in Being's eye,
 Other beholding, lost unto itself;
 A hundred knots are in its cord to loose
 Ere it can reach the end of selfhood's thread
 But when with energy it falls upon
 The world's great labours, stable then
 becomes
 This new-won consciousness; it raises up
 A thousand images, and casts them down;

So it createth its own history.
 Yet, when the individual has snapped
 The bond that joins his days, as when a comb
 Sheddeth its teeth, so his perception is.
 The record of the past illuminates
 The conscience of a people; memory
 Of past achievements makes it self-aware;
 But if that memory fades, and is forgot,
 The folk again is lost in nothingness.
 Know, then, 'tis the connecting thread of days
 That stitches up thy life's loose manuscript;
 This selfsame thread sews us a shirt to wear,
 Its needle the remembrance of old yarns.
 What thing is history, O self-unaware?
 A fable? Or a legendary tale?
 Nay, 'tis the thing that maketh thee aware
 Of thy true self, alert unto the task,
 A seasoned traveller; this is the source
 Of the soul's ardour, this the nerves that knit
 The body of the whole community.
 This whets thee like a dagger on its sheath,
 To dash thee in the face of all the world.
 Ah, how delightful is this instrument
 And how inspiring, that within its strings
 Imprisons those departed memories!
 See the extinguished splendour blaze anew!
 Behold all yesterdays in the embrace
 Of its to-day! Its candle is a star
 To light the peoples' fortunes, and illumine
 To-night and yesternight in equal shine.
 The skilful vision that beholds the past
 Can recreate before thy wondering gaze
 The past anew; wine of a hundred years
 That bowl contains, an ancient drunkenness
 Flames in its juice; a cunning fowler it
 To snare the bird that from our garden flew.
 Preserve this history, and so abide
 Unshaken, vital with departed breaths.
 Fix in firm bond to-day with yesterday;
 Make life a bird accustomed to the hand.
 Draw to thy hand the thread of all the days,
 Else thou art blind-by-day, night-
 worshipping.
 Thy present thrusts its head up from the past,
 And from thy present shall thy future stem.
 If thou desirest everlasting life,
 Break not the thread between the past and
 now

And the far future. What is life? A wave
Of consciousness of continuity,
A gurgling wine that flames the revellers.

*That the continuance of the species derives
from motherhood, and that the
preservation and honouring of
motherhood is the foundation of Islam*

The instrument of man sings melodies
When struck by woman's plectrum; his soul's
pride
Swells of her deference. The woman clothes
The nakedness of man; the loveliness
Of the beloved a garment weaves for love.
The love of God is nourished at her breast,
A lovely air struck from her silent hand;
And he in whom all beings make their boast
Declared he loved three things – *sweet
perfume, prayer,
And womankind.* What Muslim reckons her
A servant, nothing more, no part has won
Of the Book's wisdom. If thou lookest well,
Motherhood is a mercy, being linked
By close affinity to prophethood,
And her compassion is the prophet's own.
For mothers shape the way that men shall go;
Maturer, by the grace of Motherhood,
The character of nations is, the lines
That score that brow determine our estate.
If thou art learned to attain the truth
Behind the form, our word community
Hath, in the Persian, many subtleties.
He, for whose sake God said *Let there be life,
Declared that Paradise lies at the feet
Of mothers.* In the honouring of the womb
The life communal is alone secured,
Else is life raw and brutish. Motherhood
Quickens the pace of life, the mysteries
Of life revealing; tortuously twists
The current of our stream, so that it flows
Bubbling and whirling on its rapid course.
Take any peasant woman, ignorant,
Squat-figured, fat, uncomely, unrefined,
Unlettered, dim of vision, simple, dumb;
The pangs of motherhood have torn her heart,
Dark, tragic rings have underscored her eyes;

If from her bosom the community
Receive one Muslim zealous for the Faith,
God's faithful servant, all the pains she bore
Have fortified our being, and our dawn
Glows radiant in the lustre of her dusk.
Now take the slender figure, bosomless,
Close-cosseted, a riot in her glance,
Her thoughts resplendent with the Western
light;
In outward guise a woman, inwardly
No woman she; she hath destroyed the bonds
That hold our pure community secure;
Her sacred charms are all unloosed and
spilled;
Bold-eyed her freedom is, provocative,
And wholly ignorant of modesty;
Her learning is inadequate to bear
The charge of motherhood, and on the dusk
And evening of her days not one star shines;
Better it were this rose had never grown
Within our garden, better were her brand
Washed from the skirt of the community.
Stars without number whispering *No god
But God*, ungleaming in the dark of time
And not yet risen from nonentity,
Still wait without the bounded territories
Of quality and quantity, being hid
Within the shadows of our patent life,
These our epiphanies still unbeheld;
Dew not descended on the rose's bloom,
Buds not yet torn by the lascivious breeze.
This garden of potentialities,
These unseen tulips blossom from the bower
Of fertile Motherhood. A people's wealth
Rests not, my prudent friend, in linen fine
Or treasured hoards of silver and of gold;
Its riches are its sons, clean-limbed and strong
Of body, supple-brained, hard-labouring,
Healthy and nimble to high enterprise.
Mothers preserve the clue of Brotherhood,
The strength of Scripture and Community.

*That the Lady Fatima is the perfect
pattern of Muslim womanhood*

Mary is hallowed in one line alone,
That she bore Jesus; Fatima in three.

For that she was the sweet delight of him
 Who came a mercy to all living things,
 Leader of former as of latter saints,
 Who breathed new spirit into this dead world
 And brought to birth the age of a New Law.
 His lady she, whose regal diadem
 God's words adorn *Hath there come any time*,
 The chosen one, resolver of all knots
 And hard perplexities, the Lion of God,
 An emperor whose palace was a hut,
 Accoutred with one sword, one coat of mail.
 And she his mother, upon whom revolves
 Love's compasses, the leader of Love's train,
 That single candle in the corridor
 Of sanctity resplendent, guardian
 Of the integrity of that best race
 Of all God's peoples; who, that the fierce
 flame
 Of war and hatred might extinguished be,
 Trod underfoot the crown and royal ring.
 His mother too, the lord of all earth's saints
 And strong right arm of every freeborn man,
 Husain, the passion in the song of life,
 Teacher of freedom to God's chosen few.
 The character, the essential purity
 Of holy children from their mothers come.
 She was the harvest of the well-sown field
 Of self-surrender, to all mothers she
 The perfect pattern, Fatima the chaste.
 Her heart so grieved, because one came in
 need,
 She stripped her cloak and sold it to a Jew;
 Though creatures all, of light alike and fire,
 Obeyed her bidding, yet she sank her will
 In her good consort's pleasure. Fortitude
 And meekness were her schooling; while her
 lips
 Chanted the Book, she ground the homely
 mill.
 No pillow needed she to catch her tears,
 But wept contrition's offering of pearls
 Upon the skirt of prayer; which Gabriel
 stooped
 To gather, as they glistened in the dust,
 And rained like dew upon the Throne of God.
 God's Law a fetter locks about my feet
 To guard secure the Prophet's high behest,
 Else had I surely gone about her tomb

And fallen prostrate, worshipping her dust.

Address to the veiled ladies of Islam

O thou, whose mantle is the covering
 That guards our honour, whose effulgence
 Our candle's capital, whose nature pure
 To us a mercy, our religion's strength,
 Foundation of our true community!
 Our children's lips, being suckled at thy
 breast,
 From thee first learn to lisp *No god but God*.
 Thy love it is, that shapes our little ways,
 Thy love that moulds our thoughts, our
 words, our deeds.
 Our lightning-flash, that slumbered in thy
 cloud,
 Glitters upon the mountain, sweeps the plain.
 O guardian of the blessings of God's Law,
 Thou from whose breath the Faith of God
 draws fire,
 Coxcomb and crafty is the present age,
 Its caravan a highwayman, well armed
 To seize and spoil Faith's riches; blind its
 brain,
 That knoweth naught of God; ignoble they
 Who are the captives of its twisted chains;
 Bold is its eye, and reckless; swift to snatch
 The talons of its lashes; its poor prey
 Calls itself free, its victim vaunts it lives!
 Thine is the hand that keepeth fresh and
 green
 The young tree of our Commonwealth, as
 thou
 Guardest inviolate the capital
 Of our Community. Fret not thyself
 To calculate the profit and the loss,
 Being content to tread the well-worn path
 Our fathers went before. Be wary of
 Time's depredations, and to thy broad breast
 Gather thy children close; these meadow-
 chicks,
 Unfledged as yet co fly, have fallen far
 From their warm nest. High, high the
 cravings are
 That wrestle with thy soul; be conscious still
 And ever of thy model, Fatima,
 So that thy branch may bear a new Husain,

Our garden blossom with the Golden Age.

*Summary of the purport of the poem in
exegetis of the Surah of Pure Faith*

"Say: He is God, One"

I dreamed one night I looked upon Siddiq
And plucked a rose that blossomed at his feet

—

He, that *most generous was of all mankind*
Unto our Master, he that stood the first
Like Moses on the Sinai of our Faith,
Whose zeal was as a cloud that showered rain
Upon the tilth of our community,
Second to own Islam, to share the Cave,
Badr, and the Tomb. "O chosen of Love's
choice,"

I cried to him, "whose love is the first line
In the collected poetry of Love,
Whose hand established on a firmer base
A remedy for our immediate woes."
"How long", said he, "wilt thou be prisoner
To base desire? Get lustre, and new light
To light thee, from the Surah of Pure Faith."
This one breath, winding in a hundred
breasts,

Is but one secret of the Unity;
Get thee its colour, to be like to it,
Reflective to its beauty in the world.
He, who bestowed this Muslim name on thee,
Drew thee to Oneness from Duality;
'Tis thou thyself hast called thee Afghan, Turk

—

Ah, thou remainest as thou ever wert!
Deliver now the named from all the names;
Have done with cups; ally thee to the jar!
Thou hast become a scandal to thy name,
A leaf that fell untimely from thy tree;
Attune thee unto Oneness; be thou gone
From Twoness; nor dissect thy Unity.
Thou who art servant unto One, if thou
Art thou, how long wilt thou to school of
Two?

Lo, thou hast shut thy door upon thyself;
Take to thy heart that which thy lips imbibed.
A hundred nations thou hast raised from one,
On thy own fort made treacherous assault.

Be one; make visible thy Unity;
Let action turn the unseen into seen;
Activity augments the joy of faith,
But faith is dead that issues not in deeds.

"God, the Self-Subsistent"

If thou hast bound thy faithful heart on *God*
The Self-subsistent, thou hast overlept
The rim of things material. No slave
To things material God's servant is;
Life is no turning of a water-wheel.
If thou be Muslim, be not suppliant
Of other's succour; be the embodiment
Of good to all the world. Make not complaint
Of scurvy fortune to the fortunate,
Nor from thy sleeve reach out a beggar's
hand.

Like Ali, be content with barley-bread;
Break Marhab's neck, and capture Khyber's
fort.

Why bear the favour of the bountiful,
Why feel the lancet of their nay and yea?
Take not the sustenance from mean, base
hands;

Thou art a Joseph; count thyself not cheap.
And if thou be an ant, and lackest wings
And feathers, go not unto Solomon
To plead thy want. The road is arduous;
Go light-accoutred, if thou wouldst attain;
Unfettered live thy days, unfettered die.
Count o'er the rosary of *Take thou less*
Of this world's goods, and thou shalt riches win
In *living free*. So far as in thee lies
Become that Stone of the philosophers,
Not the base dross; a benefactor be,
Not a petitioner for others' alms.
Thou knowest well bu Ali's eminence,
Accept from me this draught, drawn from his
cup —

"Trample Kai-Kaus' throne beneath thy foot;
Yield up thy life, but not thy self-respect!"
The tavern door stands open of itself
To those whose bowls are empty, whose
needs none.

Harun Rashid, that captain of the Faith
Whose blade to Nicephor of Byzance proved
A deadly potion, unto Malik spoke

Upon this fashion: "Master of my folk,
 The dust before whose door illuminates
 My people's brow, melodious nightingale
 Carolling mid the roses of good words,
 I am desirous to be taught by thee
 The secrets of those words. How long art thou
 Content in Yemen to conceal the glow
 Of thy bright rubies? Rise, and pitch thy tent
 Here, in the homestead of the Caliphate.
 How fair the brightness of the shining day,
 The captivating beauty of Iraq!
 The Fount of Khizer gushes from its vines,
 Its earth is healing for the wounds of Christ."
 "I am the Prophet's servant," Malik said,
 "And only him I love, with all my heart.
 Bound to his saddle-bow, I will not quit
 His holy sanctuary. By the kiss
 Of Yathrib's dust I live; my night to me
 Is fairer than Iraq's pellucid day.
 Love says, 'Obey my ordinance; sign not
 The articles of service even to kings.'
 Thou wouldst become my master, overlord
 Of this freed slave of God, that I should wait
 Upon thy door to teach thee, and no more
 Serve the community, being bound to thee.
 Be it thy wish some portion to attain
 Of godly knowledge, in my circle sit
 And study with the rest. Indifference
 To worldly needs engenders fine disdain,
 And holy pride takes many splendid shapes."

Godly indifference is to put on
 The hue of God, and from thy robe to wash
 The dye of otherness. But thou hast learned
 The rote of others, taking that for store,
 An alien rouge to beautify thy face;
 In those insignia thou takest pride,
 Until I know not if thou be thyself
 Or art another. Fanned by foreign blasts
 Thy soil is fallen silent, and no more
 Fertile in fragrant roses and sweet herbs.
 Desolate not thy tilth with thy own hand;
 Make it not beg for rain from alien clouds.
 Thy mind is prisoner to others' thoughts,
 Another's music throbs within thy throat,
 Thy very speech is borrowed, and thy heart
 Dilates with aspirations not thine own.
 The song thy ring-doves sing, the leafy gowns

That deck thy cypresses, are meanly begged;
 Thou takest wine from others in a bowl
 Itself from others taken upon loan.
 If he, whose glance contains the mystery
Erred not the sight – if he should come again
 Unto his people, he whose candle-flame
 Knows its own moth, who can distinguish
 well
 His own from strangers standing at the gate,
 Our master would declare, *Thou art not mine*.
 Woe, woe, alas for us upon that day!

How long wilt thou content thyself to live
 The life of stars, that in the risen morn
 Lose all their being? Thou hast been deceived
 By the false dawn, packed up thy goods and
 gone
 From the broad firmament. Thou art the sun;
 Look on thy self a little; purchase not
 Some shreds of radiance from others' stars!
 Thou hast engraved thy heart with alien
 shapes,
 Gambled the alchemy and gained the dross;
 How long this glittering with others' shine?
 Shake off heavy fumes for foreign grapes!
 How long this fluttering about the flame
 Of party lanterns? If thou hast a heart
 Within thy breast, with thine own ardour
 burn!
 Be like the gaze, wrapped round in thy own
 veils;
 Rise on the wing, but ever wheel back home;
 Bubble-like bar thy little privacy
 Against the intruder, if thou wouldst be wise.
 No man to individuality
 Ever attained, save that he knew himself,
 No nation came to nationhood, except
 It spurned to suit the whim of other men.
 Then of our Prophet's message be apprised,
 And have thou done with other lords but
 God.

"He begat not, neither was He begotten"

Loftier than hue and blood thy people are,
 And greater worth one Negro of the Faith
 Than are a hundred redskin infidels.
 A single drop of water Qanbar took
 For his ablutions is more precious far

Than all the blood of Caesar. Take no count
 Of father, mother, uncle; call thy self
 An offspring of Islam, as Salman did.
 See, my brave comrade, in the honeyed cells
 That constitute the hive a subtle truth;
 One drop from a red tulip is distilled,
 One from a blue narcissus; none proclaims,
 "I am of jasmine, of lily I!"
 So our community the beehive is
 Of Abraham whose honey is our Faith.
 If thou hast made of our community
 Lineage a part essential, thou hast rent
 The fabric of true Brotherhood; thy roots
 Have struck not in our soil, thy way of
 thought
 Runs counter to our Muslim rectitude.

Ibn-i-Mas'ud, that lantern bright of Love,
 Body and spirit blazing in Love's flame,
 Being distressed upon a brother's death
 Dissolved in tears, a mirror liquefied,
 Nor any term to his lamentings saw
 But in his grief; as of her child bereaved
 A mother weeps, so uncontrollably
 He sobbed: "Ah, scholar of humility,
 Alas, my comrade in the schools of prayer!
 My tall young cypress, fellow traveller
 Upon the pathway of the Prophet's love!
 O grief, that he is now denied the courts
 Of God's Apostle, while mine eyes are bright
 With gazing fondly on the Prophet's face!

The bond of Turk and Arab is not ours,
 The link that binds us is no fetter's chain
 Of ancient lineage; our hearts are bound
 To the beloved Prophet of Hijaz,
 And to each other are we joined through him.
 Our common thread is simple loyalty
 To him alone; the rapture of his wine
 Alone our eyes entrances; from what time
 This glad intoxication with his love.
 Raced in our blood, the old is set ablaze
 In new creation. As the blood that flows
 Within a people's veins, so is his love
 Sole substance of our solidarity.
 Love dwells within the spirit, lineage
 The flesh inhabits; stronger far than race
 And common ancestry is Love's firm cord.
 True loverhood must overleap the bounds

Of lineage, transcend Arabia
 And Persia. Love's community is like
 The light of God; whatever being we
 Possess, from its existence is derived.
 "None seeketh when or where God's light
 was born;
 What need of warp and woof, God's robe to
 spin?"
 Who suffereth his foot to wear the chains
 Of clime and ancestry, is unaware
 How *He begat not, neither was begot.*

"And there is not any equal unto Him"

What is the Muslim, that hath closed his eyes
 Against the world? This heart attached to
 God,
 What is its nature? On a mountain-top
 A tulip blowing, that hath never seen
 The trailing border of the gatherer's skirt;
 The flame is kindled in his ardent breast
 From the first breaths of dawn; heaven suffers
 not
 To loose him from her bosom, deeming him
 A star suspended; the uprising sun
 Touches his lips with dawn's first ray, the
 dew
 Bathes from his waking eyes the dust of sleep.
 Firm must the bond be tied with *There is none*
 If thou wouldst an unequalled people be.
 He who is Essence One, unpartnered is;
 His servant too no partner can endure;
 And whoso in the Highest of the High
 Believeth, cannot suffer any peer
 In his high jealousy. Wrapt round his breast
 The robe of *Do not grieve*, borne on his brow
 The crown *Ye are the highest*, he transports
 On his broad back the burden of both worlds,
 Protects both land and sea in his embrace;
 His ear attentive to the thunder's roar,
 His shoulders bared to take the lightning's
 scourge,
 Against the false he is a sword, a shield
 Before the truth; evil and good are proved
 Upon the touchstone of his ordinance
 And prohibition. Knotted in his coals
 A hundred conflagrations lurk; life's self
 Derives perfection from his essence pure.

Through the broad spaces of this clamorous world
 No music sounds but his triumphant song,
 His loud *Allahu Akbar*. Great is he
 On justice, clemency, benevolence;
 Noble his temper, even in chastisement.
 At festival his lyre delights the mind;
 Steel melts before his ardour in the fight.
 Where roses blossom, with the nightingale's
 His sweet song mingles; in the wilderness
 No falcon is more swift upon the prey.
 His heart untroubled scorns to take repose
 Beneath the heavens; in the spreading skies
 He makes his dwellings, as on soaring wing
 He rises far beyond yon ancient hoop
 That spans our firmament, to whet his beak
 Against the gleaming stars.
 Thou, with thy frail
 Unspread pinion, tentative to fly,
 Art like some chrysalis, that in the dust
 Still slumbers on; rejecting the Quran,
 How meanly thou hast sunk, base caviller
 Protesting of the turn of Fortune's wheel!
 Yet, lying abject as the scattered dew,
 Thou hast within thy grip a living Book;
 How long shall earth content thee for thy
 home?
 Life up thy baggage; hurl it to the skies!

*The author's memorial to him who is a
 mercy to all living beings*

O thou, whose manifesting was the youth
 Of strenuous life, whose bright epiphany
 Told the interpretation of life's dreams,
 Earth attained honour, having held thy court,
 And heaven glory, having kissed thy roof.
 Thy face illumines the six-directioned world;
 Turk, Tajik, Arab—all thy servants are.
 Whatever things have being, find in thee
 True exaltation, and thy poverty
 Is their abundant riches. In this world
 Thou litst the lamp of life, as thou didst teach
 God's servitors a godly mastery.
 Without thee, whatsoever form indwelt
 This habitat of water and of clay
 Was put to shame in utter bankruptcy;

Till, when thy breath drew fire from the cold
 dust
 And Adam made of earth's dead particles,
 Each atom caught the skirts of sun and moon,
 Suddenly conscious of its inward strength.
 Since first my gaze alighted on thy face
 Dearer than father and dear mother thou
 Art grown to me. Thy love hath lit a flame
 Within my heart; ah, let it work at ease.
 For all my spirit is consumed in me,
 And my sole chattel is a reed-like sigh,
 The lantern flickering in my ruined house.
 It is not possible not to declare
 This hidden grief; it is not possible
 To veil the wine in the translucent cup.
 But now the Muslim is estranged a new
 Unto the Prophet's secret; now once more
 God's sanctuary is an idols' shrine;
 Manat and Lat, Hubal and Uzza – each
 Carries an idol to his bosom clasped;
 Our shaykh – no Brahman is so infidel,
 Seeking his Somnath stands within his head.
 Arabia deserted, he is gone
 With all his being's baggage, slumberous
 To drowse in Persia's wine-vault. Persia's
 sleet
 Has set his limbs a-shiver; his thin wine
 Rune colder than his tears. As timorous
 Of death as any infidel, his breast
 Is hollow, empty of a living heart.
 I bore him lifeless from the doctors' hands
 And brought him to the Prophet's presence;
 dead
 He was; I told him of the Fount of Life,
 I spoke with him upon a mystery
 O the Quran, a tale of the Beloved
 Of Najd; I brought to him a perfume sweet
 Pressed from the roses of Arabia.
 The Candle of my music lit the throng;
 I taught the people life's enigma; still
 He cried against me, "These are Europe's
 spells
 He weaves to bind us with, the psaltery
 Of Europe that he strikes into our ears."
 O thou, that to Busiri gavest a Cloak
 And to my fingers yielded Salma's lute,
 Grant now to him, whose thoughts are so
 astray

That he can no more recognize his own,
Perception of the truth, and joy therein.
Be lusterless the mirror of my heart,
Or be my words by aught but the Quran
Informed, O thou whose splendour is the
dawn
Of every age and time, whose vision sees
All that is in men's breasts, rend now the veil
Of my thought's shame; sweep clean the
avenue
Of my offending thorns; choke in my breast
The narrow breath of life; thy people guard
Against the mischief of my wickedness;
Nurse not to verdure my untimely seed,
Grant me no portion of spring's fecund
showers,
Wither the vintage in my swelling grapes
And scatter poison in my sparkling wine;
Disgrace me on the Day of Reckoning,
Too abject to embrace thy holy feet.
But if I ever threaded on my chain
The pearl of the Quran's sweet mysteries,
I to the Muslims I have spoken true,
O thou whose bounty raises the obscure
Unto significance, one prayer from thee
Is ample guerdon for my word's desert;
Plead thou to God my cause, and let my love
Be locked in the embrace of godly deeds.
Thou hast accorded me a contrite soul,
A part of holy learning; establish me
More firm in action, and my April shower
Convert to pearls of great and glittering price.

Since first I cast the baggage of my soul
In this world's caravanserai, one more
Desire I ever nourished, like my heart
Dwelling within my breast, mine intimate
From life's dawn; since first I learned thy
name

From my sire's lips, the flame of that desire
Kindled and glowed in me. My roll of days
As heaven lengthens, in life's lottery
Marking me loser, ever lustier grows
The youth of my desire; this ancient wine
Gains greater body with the passing years.
This yearning is gem beneath my dust,
A single star illumining my night.
Awhile with rosy checks did I consort,

Played love with twisted tresses, tasted wines
With lustrous brows, the lamp of godly peace
Rudely extinguished; lightnings danced about
My harvest; my heart's store of merchandise
By highwaymen was plundered. Yet this
draught

Was spilled not from the goblet of my soul,
This gold refined not scattered from my skirt.
My reason diabolical resolved
To wear the Magian girdle; its impress
Stamped o'er my spirit's furrows. Many years
I was doubt's prisoner, inseparable
From my too arid brain. I had not read
One letter of true knowledge, and abode
Still in philosophy's conjecture-land;
My darkness was a stranger to the light
Of God, my dusk knew not the glow of dawn.
And yet this yearning slumbered in my heart,
Close-shrouded as the pearl within the shell;
But lastly from the goblet of mine eye
It slowly trickled, and within my mind
Created melodies. And now my soul
Is emptied of all memories but thee;
I will be bold to speak of my desire,
If thou wilt give me leave. My life hath been
Unfurnished in good works, and therefore I
Might not aspire to worthiness of this,
Which to reveal I am too much ashamed;
Yet thy compassion maketh me more bold.
The honey of thy mercy comforteth
The whole round world; and this my yearning
is,

That I be granted in Hijaz to die!
A Muslim, stranger to all else but God –
How long shall he the heathen girdle wear
And keep the temple? O the bitter shame
If, when his earthly days are at an end,
A pagan shrine receives his mortal bones.
If from thy door my scattered parts arise,
Woe to this day, that morrow how sublime!
O happy city that thy dwelling was,
Thrice-blessed earth wherein thou dost
repose!

"My friend's abode, the city of my king –
True patriotism, the lover's creed."
Give to my star an even-wakeful eye,
And in the shadow of the wall a place
To slumber, that my spirit's quicksilver

Be stilled; that I may say unto the skies,
"Behold me, tranquil; ye who looked upon

| My first beginning, witness now my close."
| *[Translated by A.J. Arberry]*