

A Voice from the East

[THE POETRY OF IQBAL]

ZULFIQAR ALI KHAN
Kt., C.S.I. OF MALERKOTLA

FOREWORD BY
UMRAO SINGH



IQBAL ACADEMY PAKISTAN
116 - McLEOD ROAD, LAHORE

درویش جنوں من جبریل زبوں صیدے
یزدان بکند آورے ہست مر واد!

A VOICE FROM THE EAST

OR

THE POETRY OF IQBAL

BY

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MAHARAJAH RANJIT SINGH.



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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

MY chief object in writing this brief review of some poems written by Muhammad Iqbal of Lahore is to unveil his charming personality to the gaze of Europe and America. His extreme modesty in refusing permission to publish his poems has not allowed his fascinating muse to enter the penetralia of Western mind. That one of India's worthiest sons possessing a force of intellect which has initiated potential movements in the world of thought should have so long remained unknown to the world outside the continent of India is a distinct and positive loss to the progress of civilisation. If the Peacock Throne is the pride of Persia, and the lustrous Koh-i-Noor the glory of the British Crown, Iqbal would surely adorn the court of the muses in any country. The spirit of his thought constitutes the evangel of the future, especially for disintegrated societies. It lays the foundations of the renewed greatness of demoralised peoples. He comes therefore with an elixir for exhausted nations and a warning for aggressive Imperialism. As a Moslem poet his belief in the illimitable resources of human nature is such that he gives the tidings of boundless development of the individual. The human soul being an atom of energy is according to his philosophy capable of widest expansion, provided it loyally submits to a moral discipline which he expounds in his Persian poems.

His poems have profoundly stirred the soul of the people in India. The entire nation had lapsed into deep slumber, and there seemed little left to labour on behalf of moral progress. For several decades a contempt for religion was, in the circles of highest culture, regarded as an almost essential index of the liberal mind. It is not easy to explain how the soul of the nation had decayed under the influence of self-seeking pettimindedness. The poet awakened lofty feelings, aroused pride in the motherland, and set the people dreaming about the greatness of their destiny. The youth of the country realised that paltriness was the grave of all greatness. They like the poet determined not to adapt themselves to the world, but to mould the world in accordance with their own will.

In conclusion I wish to acknowledge with sincere admiration and affection the work of translation of Urdu poems which my friend Sardar Umrao Singh did for me. Quotations from the Persian poem *Asrar-i-Khudi* are taken from Dr. Nicholson's translation of that poem.

I am sensible of numerous defects in the treatment of this literary subject, but I hope that my venture will encourage a true scholar to accomplish what I have only essayed as a novice.

ZULFIQAR ALI KHAN

Lahore:

19 May 1922

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Facsimile of the 1922 Edition, <i>frontispiece</i>
Iqbal and the Author, <i>facing p. 3</i>

A VOICE FROM THE EAST

[THE POETRY OF IQBAL]



Iqbal with the Author of the book

THE PERIOD OF DECADENCE

NATIONS, like individuals, have to endure periods of sterility, during which everything goes wrong. Such an epoch arrived for the disintegrated world of India after the death of Aurangzeb, so that it became hardly possible to recognise this country which had formerly abounded in men of first-class talent. Indian poetry for a long time to come volatilised almost exclusively in unctuous flatteries of the ephemeral personalities who appeared on the slippery stage of Indian politics. The depraved tastes of the *rois faineant* of Delhi and Lucknow created a saturnalia of poetic immorality and hastened the departure of the muses. Added to this was the horror of mutual strife and struggle which completed the destruction of the noble and high-minded men of this storm-tossed country. With moral degeneracy came also intellectual paralysis and henceforth we find India plunged in deep slumber. Everyone who breathed this atmosphere became infected with drowsiness. In an age affected with these morbid inanities, it was inevitable that imaginative literature should run wild. Nobility of form was replaced by an affected, pretentious and yet essentially corrupt style; a crude and lifeless scurrility usurped the throne of art. Everything sacred to Indian hearts was defiled by the literary pedants of the day. An incredible wealth of common-places and trivialities was brought to the market in the shape of erotic verse which displayed the mental poverty characteristic of decadence. True poetry no longer maintained its dominance in the realm of the spirit, and verse-writing became an elegant method of killing time. It is pleasant, however, to record that the land of poesy was not entirely submerged. A few peaks were still visible above the surface of the flood tide. The poets Mir and Ghalib, though they sang of the witcheries of entrancing maidens, yet displayed an originality and freshness which even in these days of revolutionised taste appeal to the connoisseurs. The almost exhausted themes of the love-stricken souls, the blushing roses and the doting nightingales are treated with creative energy and possess a beauty which captivates the reader. Ghalib infused into poetry something new in tone, in feeling, in emotional expression. He was undoubtedly an artist whose brain and heart were both great. Urdu literature is enriched by the magic of his touch, and amid numberless noisy mediocrities he is the only one who has produced poetry of permanent value. But this was an occasional gleam and, apart from this solitary instance, it was sad to reflect that no longer was poesy to illuminate life by its ideals, but life,

with its finite aim and ephemeral caprices, was to dominate poesy. Consequently, the writings of this period passed into utter oblivion as soon as the society of a new age came into being.

After the establishment of British rule in India there began a period of dull repose, poor in great events, but rich in work and tranquil prosperity, a period in which the entire political life of the nation for nearly a century sank into profound slumber not to be disturbed without severe shocks. This serenity of political weather was utilised by the wisdom of the Royal officialdom in the work of organising the administration which gave promise of weighty consequences. Never in recent history has a great power had such difficult administrative problems to solve, but a crowd of officials of exceptional ability achieved wonderful results. By inaugurating a system of education on Western lines they thoroughly prepared the soil for a mighty transformation. It opened a new era of political opinion in India. It set the people yearning for a new heaven and a new earth. The nation arose phoenix-like from its ashes to reclaim its rights. The liberal tendencies of Western literature manifested themselves in the emancipation of the spirit overlaid with the dust of centuries. These were the tributary fountains that, as time went on, swelled into the broad confluence of our own times. The benumbed East was awakened to new life and its eyes were turned towards different ideals. How great is the debt of India to the thinkers and writers of the West I need not here dwell upon at great length, though its interest is not negligible. It is circumstance that inspires and moulds the thought. This glowing life, this world in resurrection received its impetus from the force of character of men who lighted their votive candles at the shrine of learning at different centres in India. (I will deal with one only in a brief manner.) Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was one of those solitary geniuses who are capable of awakening and elevating their nation by means of creative ideas. He, with a band of devoted friends who possessed the fire of joyful enthusiasm, started a small school at Aligarh for the education of Moslem boys. This was a veritable sanctuary of peace and faith from which radiated light in all directions. He himself occupied a simple hospitable home where a lively, at times too lively, society would assemble round the festive board. His happiest moments were those wherein, intoxicating and intoxicated, he could in inspired language give free issue to the flow of his thoughts and his feelings. The bewitching conversationist at the close of a laborious day would entertain the company with brilliant observations, anecdotes of early days and mischievous jokes far into the night. Nazir Ahmad, the eminent Oriental scholar and orator, Mohsanul Mulk, the talented and accomplished nobleman, Zakaullah, the famous mathematician, and Altaf Husain Hali, the national poet, and others were some of the representatives

of a fast vanishing literary epoch who formed the circle round the magnetic figure of the old Syed. These lifelong friends gathered in the modest rose-garlanded house, and in animated conversation would institute comparisons between the glorious past and the forlorn present. They matured plans for the regeneration of their fallen people. They travelled in various provinces addressing monster meetings and moving audiences to tears by the fire of their eloquence. The old Syed, unable to control his emotion, would sob like a child when he drew the sad picture of the lamentable condition of his people. The contrast between what is and what might have been is itself, as Dante teaches in a certain immortal verse, the greatest of all sorrows. The grief of the people on such occasions knew no bounds when they realised the extent of their melancholy destiny. Their spirit received a terrible shaking and burst the chains which the bigotry of the orthodox Mullas entwined round it and kept it in thralldom. An enthusiasm that was ardent and brimful of hope rejuvenated even the elderly. This movement towards Western education gathered a momentum which carried the whole people with it. It has invariably happened that in epochs of great transformation, at the right moment, the creative energy of history called forth the right men. These wonder-workers knew the vital need of the moment. They infused enthusiasm in the students, and delight in learning became the dominant impulse. Many of us can still recollect the first fervour for studies in India. A delirium seized the people. The youth went in groups singing songs from Tennyson, Byron and Shakespeare. As it was in Europe at the time of the revival of learning, men killed themselves by overstudy, so also in India young men in these days studied too hard and tried to do even more than they could do. This was the poesy of life; and the blossoming of the yearnings of earnest souls. The portly figure of the old Syed seemed triumphantly to hold in its hands the keys wherewith he opened the floodgates of a new life. But how many were the struggles through which his ardent spirit had at length fought down the old prejudice and repugnance towards all public activities, to wield in the end a great influence over the nation. How many defections of friends, how many disillusionments elaborately concealed by his keen wit, had to be endured before his richly endowed personality could set the stagnant current of Indian life in effective motion. We have now crossed the threshold with closed eyes. A new world lies before us but hidden by a thick veil not yet lifted. The spirit within, though partially liberated, clamours for unrestricted freedom. The future is pregnant with possibilities. The old society is overthrown; we gaze with grateful feelings towards departing shades. The old world with its polished manners and urbanity and tranquil ways had endeared itself to us; at any rate, it had become a second nature. To wrench ourselves from it is painful.

Why ?—because the future is uncertain and the armour, we have put on, pricks the sensitive flesh at several places, but the die is cast and there is no turning back now to clutch at incorporeal shadows. These have rolled back leaving us to face the temptations of the Siren song of the unknown. Fresh breezes have already begun to blow and our drooping spirit receives the exhilarating vigour of a new wine. We are impelled by mysterious forces to march forward. The changed outlook and the materialistic influence of new education bring into existence a blatant and aspiring bourgeoisie with its intense industry, its arrogant egotism and its pharisaical hardness of heart. After a formidable social and literary revolution, after the destruction of all the traditional ideas and forms of society, there remains nothing for this generation but the comparative liberty of the individual, which after all creates nothing new. Ignorance is replaced by scepticism yet more disastrous, by a condition of spiritual anarchy, wherein everyone believes himself to know everything. Religion is openly scoffed at, and moral restraint is superseded by a fugitive fear of the laws enacted by new rulers. Western manners, dress and slavish aping of forms of speech, come into vogue which scandalise the few survivors of the old school who continued to preserve a kernel of sound religious belief.

THE DAWN OF INDIAN RENAISSANCE

EPOCHS of literary struggle are rarely favourable to love-poetry, and therefore it was difficult to protect this quiet flower-garden of poesy from the keen winds of the day. The fermenting ideas of this age gave rise to a singer who came with a moralising muse. Hali, the national poet *par excellence*, appeared on the scene at this juncture with a work (*Musaddas*) which thrilled everyone. For the first time, now, did the life of ancient Moslems become personally, directly and vividly comprehensible to the philistines. In this poem Hali depicts the magnificent Islamic idealism which had illumined the days of the first age of Islam. He compares with inexpressible pathos that great age with the present forlorn state of the Moslem world. In so proud a nation as the Moslems, the comparison between the great past and the petty present could not fail to arouse painful feelings. But the absolute impossibility of winning back the lost glory was plain to all men's sight without reversion to old ideals. It, however, added momentum to the vital impulse of the age for national unity which manifested itself in the check which the spirit of mockery of religion received from its stirring tones. Henceforth the reverent glances of the nation were directed towards the glory of its past achievements, and the tendency to worship the materialistic character of modern civilisation became blunted. Young men touched the hidden springs of national sensibilities when they sang in melodious strains those portions of this great poem

which described the heroic deeds of a great age in history. From the date of the wonderful popularity of Hali may be discerned the birth of the romantic movement in India.

The unanticipated development of Indian thought joyfully welcomed yet another poet when Hali ceased to write inspiring poetry. This writer of destiny was Akbar whose playful muse disclosed the secret that "Poesy and life were inseparable." If literature is the mirror of a people's soul, then Akbar truly reflects that spirit in his inimitable poems. While Hali awakened the self-consciousness of the people and promoted love for past glory, Akbar exposed with irresistible humour the seamy side of the modern civilisation. He is extremely unpretentious and yet is so severe in his opposition to the fashionable idolatries of the day, so clear in his condemnation of all vanity, artificiality and untruth. The greatest attraction of his poems lies in his kindly wit which makes even those laugh with joy on whom it inflicts the deepest wounds. Whether in the open shop of an Indian bazar or in the cultured circle of high society the recital of his verses makes everyone roar with laughter, his inexhaustible humour continues to spin golden threads around every event of the day, and it cannot be denied that in the cordiality of his mood and in the freedom of his roguish wit he is unrivalled in India. It is truly said that humour is invariably democratic, for it sweeps away all social barriers and invests the common things of life with new aspects. The increasing self-respect of the masses is reflected in these poems which induce a sense of liberation from their dull and prosaic life and administer drubbings to the high and the low alike. How true is the fact that "the real power that shapes opinion in regard to other nations and other civilisations is literature—fiction and poetry. What one people in Europe knows about another people is largely obtained, not from serious volumes of statistics, or grave history, or learned books of travel, but from the literature of that people—the literature that is an expression of its emotional life." Newspapers and journals greedily contest for the privilege of publishing in the most prominent place any fresh effusion of his radiant wit. Millions thus read his verses that touch the heart, and through the heart influence the judgment. Akbar's popularity is so wonderful that I could not pass him over lightly. No man ever gave the public so much amusement, and no one helped more forcefully the reaction which now set in against the blind worship of Western civilisation.

IQBAL'S EARLY DAYS

AKBAR's light poetry served the great purpose of nature; it prepared the national mind for the reception of a poet-philosopher whose poems produced a delirium of enthusiasm all over India, nay even outside

India. In Afghanistan, Persia and Turkey, in England, Hungary and European countries, his reputation is rapidly spreading. This poet is Dr. Muhammad Iqbal whose powerful and revitalising poems it is my chief object to interpret in this paper. As a spirit messenger he is the bearer of a new idea which illumines life with a fresh significance. The dawn of this world of different ideals has separated the epoch of conscious reflection from the epoch of unconscious creation. I think it would interest you to know something of his early life and, therefore, I would speak of Iqbal himself in a brief manner before I speak of his poems.

He was born at Sialkot about the year 1876. His family, which belonged to the middle class and inherited strong Sufistic tendencies, was held in esteem by the people. At the usual age he was sent to an ordinary school in his own town. He passed through the gamut of Indian school routine. The soul-destroying curse of examinations proved no impediment to the rapid progress which he was making in the healthy atmosphere of keen competition. In the course of his school studies he was introduced to a venerable old scholar of Oriental learning, M. Mir Hasan, who unveiled to his admiring mind the beauties of Islamic literature. The knowledge of the Arabic and Persian languages thus acquired enabled him to assimilate the works of some of the most distinguished writers among Moslems. At this early age religious study exercised a great influence in moulding his character. We all feel that a boy is a savage without religion, without tenderness, but the ideas of right and wrong are quickened within him by religious feelings. This experience came to Iqbal, and his training in this respect blossomed and bore fruit subsequently when he grew to manhood. From the very beginning he was sensitive to beauty and this aesthetic feeling very probably developed the delicate musical sensibilities of his poetic mind. All great poets in their youth have been swayed by this feeling. In fact, emotional poetry has always been written under its pleasing influence. There was nothing extraordinary in the incidents of his life at school. In Iqbal the extraordinary gift was altogether of the mind and he was one of those rare juvenile prodigies who fulfil in manhood the promise of childhood. Even at this age he charmed people by his gentle and dreamy ways. In due course when he finished his school final he transferred his residence to Lahore in order to join a college for higher studies. Here the environment was fresh and vigorous; there was cheerful succession of work and lively society. Though during his school days he had produced some elegant trifles, yet the new atmosphere afforded better scope for the exercise of his intellect, and his hitherto dormant muse receiving the stimulus of inspiration manifested its boundless possibilities. One of his finest blossoms was a verse of marvellous beauty which a contemporary poet of first rank pronounced as unique

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and on being told that a youth freshly arrived in Lahore had written it, he predicted a brilliant future for the young man. You cannot possibly reproduce the delicate music of artistic perfection of words in translation but I would attempt a rendering.

موق سمجھ کے شان کریمی نے چن لیے قطرے جو تھے مرے عرق انفعال کے

Interpreted in English it would mean: Divine grace gathered the dew-drops of remorse from my forehead taking them to be pearls. In one sublime verse the poet depicts the angelic sanctity of a soul after its resurrection. How the divine love rejoices to see the hidden and ennobling virtue of remorse! Supremely exquisite is the analogy of drops of perspiration to pearls whose purity resembles the chastity of awakened conscience. The poetic euphony which embellishes the dignity of the human soul with incomparable vesture lays claim to be enjoyed as a free work of art. Poetic critics unanimously paid homage to this aspiring genius for this single verse which immediately found currency all over the land. Iqbal was henceforth ranked as a luminary of first magnitude in the firmament of poesy, and his muse continually marched forward towards its goal, scattering flowers on its path and creating a new emotional utterance not to be imitated. In the midst of huge and admiring audiences Iqbal could be seen standing on a dais reciting his verses in sweet tunes, which exacted boundless applause and occasioned indescribable enthusiasm. I was a witness to this scene several times when amidst a tempest of acclamation Iqbal was carried away almost fainting through effort to meet the greedy demand of the cultured audience. It is rare indeed that a young man, as yet a student, should become the idol of the people, and the first fact for you to observe is that no poet ever had such vast and sudden popularity. Not only in the Punjab but all over India, so great was his influence that it crushed all competition out of existence. Nobody else could get a hearing while Iqbal sang. Nor is this all that is to be said about him. His influence chiefly initiated the romantic movement in India. The spirit of our earlier public life, which had exhibited a trait of unaesthetic torpor of the senses under close restraint, entered once more into its right and became freer and more venturesome. Iqbal unceasingly turned his talents to the best account, and ever pursued the highest aims. It remained his glory that in his poems he held up the mirror to his age, as Goethe had done before him in *Wilhelm Meister*.

HIS STUDIES IN EUROPE

THE charm and vitality of this expansive phase soon found a remote region and an alien society for its fruitful activities, for a friendly

fortune and the selfless affection of a brother made it possible for him to undertake a journey to Europe for professional training. Thus at the most impressionable period of his life he came into close touch with some of the profoundest thinkers of Europe and, finding the amenities of intellectual life at Cambridge suitable to his quiet disposition, he settled down there to drink, so to speak, at the very font and source of learning. But boys of pronounced character have always owed far more to their private reading than to their set studies and the young Indian, while devoting his time and labour to the soul-destroying curse of examinations, was feeding his mind on the copious resources of the University library and the soul-nourishing society of eminent professors. The profitable perusal of the former and the unceasing joys of the latter proved to be a veritable "pasture of great souls" for they contributed materially towards the growth of his mental powers which revealed their many-sidedness later on in his life. During the intervals of these academic studies he found ample opportunities to visit the Continent. He spent some time at Munich to prepare his thesis on Persian philosophy. These journeys afforded him glimpses into the secrets of the Western civilisation. To an Oriental mind the restless enterprise of Europe naturally presented such a contrast to the sleepy and contemplative life of the East. His acute intelligence constantly found vast and complex problems to reflect on, which awakened thought and added to the richness and variety of his faculties. Among these world problems he observed the invigorating influence of democracy and nationality on the peoples of Europe. He also saw mammon-worship in its most potent form which issued from harsh and remorseless commercialism. He could not fail to observe that triumphant materialism waged an unrelenting war against religion and morality. The consequence, as he clearly saw, was tragic. Men lost sight of the higher aims of life and wallowed among its sordid interests. To a keen student of history like him it was quite clear that materialised society constituted a danger to moral and spiritual life, for in the mad pursuit of almighty dollar the loftiest ideals were ever knocked down from their high pedestals. The body politic could never remain in a state of vigorous health and at once ceased to exercise its beneficial influence, when in its daily functions justice was regulated by selfish motives and ethics were divorced from politics. This corruption of morals inevitably undermined the greatest empires and destroyed the harmony and confidence obtaining in international relations. This debasement of character which supervened Western civilisation brought disenchantment and Iqbal who had previously imagined that the Occident was actuated by truth and justice wrote a poem embodying a piquant protest against the prostitution of the noble ideas of freedom and equality.

زمانہ آیا ہے بے حجابی کا عام دیدار یار ہوگا
 سکوت تھا پردہ دار جس کا وہ راز اب آشکار ہوگا
 گذر گیا اب وہ دور ساقی کہ چھپ کے پتے تھے بننے والے
 بنے گا سارا جہان مے خانہ ہر کوئی بادہ خوار ہوگا
 کبھی جو آوارہ جنوں تھے وہ بستیوں میں پھر آسین گے
 برہنہ پائی وہی رہے گی مگر نیا خارزار ہوگا
 سنا دیا گوش منتظر کو حجاز کی خامشی نے آخر
 جو عہد صحرائیوں سے باندھا گیا تھا پھر استوار ہوگا
 نکل کے صحرا سے جس نے روم کی سلطنت کو الٹ دیا تھا
 سنا ہے یہ قدسیوں سے میں نے وہ شیر پھر ہوشیار ہوگا
 دیار مغرب کے رہنے والو خدا کی بستی دکان نہیں ہے
 کھرا جسے تم سمجھ رہے ہو وہ اب زُر کم عیار ہوگا
 تمہاری تہذیب اپنے خنجر سے آپ ہی خود کشی کرے گی
 جو شاخ نازک پہ آشیانہ بنے گا ناہائیدار ہوگا
 سفینہ برگ گل بنا لے گا قافلہ مور ناتواں کا
 ہزار موجوں کی ہو کشاکش مگر یہ دریا کے پار ہوگا
 کہا جو قمری سے میں نے اک دن یہاں کے آزاد پا بگل ہیں
 تو غنچے کہنے لگے ہمارے چمن کا یہ راز دار ہوگا

[The time of unveiling has come, the Beloved will be seen by all;
 That secret which was veiled by silence shall become manifest.
 That cycle has gone, O cup-bearer! when they drank in hiding,
 The whole world shall become a tavern, and all shall drink.
 Those who wandered insane shall return to dwell in cities,
 Their feet shall be naked as before, but those meadows shall be new.
 The silence of Mecca has proclaimed to the expectant ears, at last;
 The compact which was made with the desert-dwellers shall become
 once more strengthened.
 The Lion which came out of the wilderness and upset the Empire of
 Rome,
 I hear from angels that he shall awaken once more.
 O dwellers of Western lands! God's world is not a shop,
 That which you considered good coin shall prove to be of low value.
 Your civilisation will commit suicide with its own dagger;
 A nest built on a slender bough cannot last.
 Even the frail petal of a rose will be made into a boat for the caravan
 of the despised ant,
 No matter what storms and cyclones may rage, but it will safely
 cross the angry seas.]

One day I remarked to a dove, "The liberated of this place are rooted to the earth,"

The huds made a prompt reply and said, "Surely he has discovered the secret of our rose-garden.""]

This poem forms a mine of prophecies and warnings and with a wonderful clarity of vision Iqbal gives intimation of the coming events twenty years before their occurrence. Realising the instability of the present structure of the Western civilisation he boldly declares in the first two lines that hypocrisy which so long clouded the minds of the people will be seen by them and that the time has come for the world spirit to manifest itself. The secret of the present universal unrest is found in the yearning of the masses for the advent of a new spirit of righteousness and truth. This insistent call of the people has made the spirit reveal itself and is shaping new destinies for nations long suffering under unhappy conditions. This prophecy becomes still clearer in the next two lines which emphatically announce the passage of the present times in which timid people spoke in whispers. The world in this poetic metaphor is converted into a huge tavern in which the wine of new ideas will be freely dispensed and all will become intoxicated by it. The beauty of living words is very sweet and the influence on the mind is tremendous. Whether it is Ireland, Egypt, India, Persia or Russia, the people there have torn the mask from their faces and are clamouring for their rights. They glory in the privilege of suffering and sacrifice riches and repose, nay even life itself, for an idea. This wonderful resurgence of a dauntless spirit is working openly and on an unprecedented scale. History does not relate the existence in any previous age of such a colossal revolt against organised governments. Those who carefully observe the phenomenon will have no hesitation in saying that the premonition uttered by Dr. Iqbal has found a wonderful fulfilment in the prevailing conditions in these countries. The nations appear strangely drunk with enthusiasm and it seems as though the entire world is transformed into a huge tavern. The astonishing verity of the prediction added to the charm of language awakens pleasing emotions and one insensibly feels that it is something that stirs us deeply and makes us think new thoughts. A great poet only can do this.

The third and fourth lines convey stern warning to the apostles of Western civilisation which is bound to be annihilated if the cult of imperial egoism and crushing industrialism is permitted to poison the sweet serenity of life. Many talented and sober thinkers have condemned in emphatic terms this aspect of the Western civilisation but the poet's method of explaining its cause is exceedingly effective. The mad rush of the Western nations in search of markets for their manufactures has, he says, made

them treat God's world as a shop. This, he says, will not endure and the disillusionment and disappointment will in the end reveal to them that what they considered genuine coin is only counterfeit. It is undoubtedly true that the Western intellect has wrested many priceless secrets from Nature by means of those marvellous discoveries it has made in scientific knowledge, and backward nations tremble before a union of immeasurable power with unfathomable craft such as has never existed before, but with all this, "There is," says Napoleon, "but one step from triumph to a fall. I have seen that in the greatest affairs a little thing has always decided important events." This formidable force created by the modern civilisation may recoil on it and the poet in this prophetic verse predicts that the Western civilisation will commit suicide by the weapon it has forged. Matthew Arnold in his poem called "The Future" depicts the prospects of human happiness as gloomy. It seems to him that the necessities of this civilisation are turning men's minds away from noble ideas to selfish and material ambition. It seems to him that even the feeling which makes poetry must die. The tendency of the industrial civilisation undeniably is to compel men to think more about money than ever before, and less about truth and beauty and divine things. The world is becoming material in the ugliest meaning of the term. How dismal is likely to be the plight of the people before the actual tragedy is enacted, is made obvious by Mr. Rutherford, M.P., in his little brochure *Commonwealth or Empire*. "The rulers of Europe," he says, "have made and are making fools of people, as they have done many a time before—fooling with big promises and little or no performance. In times of peace the struggle for bare existence is so intense, so cruel, and so demoralising that the masses have neither the leisure nor the strength to think beyond what they shall eat and what they shall drink. Perpetual motion on the brink of poverty degrades large sections of the community into little better than dazed insects." The mystic poet Rossetti proclaimed his deeper perception of human misery in the famous lines so full of pathos :

War that shatters her slain
And peace that grinds them as grain.

This apparently is too detrimental to the divine scheme of things and must inevitably come to an end. The European civilisation escaped by an hair's breadth from destruction during the last Great War, and the armies were hardly demobilised when portentous activity was displayed in devising scientific and diabolical means of blasting human happiness by preparing for another war. The whole world is afflicted with a dangerous malady. Very few seem to pause and consider whither we are drifting.

The golden vision of youth and the clairvoyance of a poet priest are visible in the fifth and sixth lines. Since the affairs of the world cannot evidently be conducted on the lines of selfish and materialistic policy of the West, the ineffable divine wisdom must replace it by a more humane and just polity. A reformer or a poet of high type of genius, who is summoned by the law of nature to become the regenerator of society, realises at once by intuition that all progress is through faith and hope in something and, knowing well the strange possibilities of the human soul, announces in magic words the advent of a new world of pure and lofty ideas. He will make men appear once more upon the stage who will command and inspire national policy with new ardours, and awaken lesser spirits to a comprehension of their own powers. In the fifth line the allusion is made to the Arabs who having once performed heroic deeds in a glorious chapter of history withdrew to their desert wilderness. It was apparently a cunning design of Nature to recuperate their exhausted energies, for life in cities is demoralising and conservation of life forces is possible only when you live in a primeval state of society. These virile Arabs refertilised the played-out nations of Asia, Europe and Africa and the poet says that they will again play the same role and reconstruct the world in ruins. In the sixth line reference is made to the compact which was made with these nomad Arabs whereby the nation became transformed. The compact, the poet predicts, will be reaffirmed. The verse of the Holy Qur'an which embodies this promise by God was recited by the Prophet to the Arabs who were accepting Islam and were taking the oath of fealty to him. In those early days when only a handful of Arabs constituted the entire strength of a new religion, not even the wildest imagination could have thought it possible that those few forlorn Arabs would become the rulers of a world empire. This sublime prophecy found marvellous fulfilment in a very short time. Here is the text of this divine promise :

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ
فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ - وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي
ارْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا -

[God has promised to those of you who believe and do the things that are right that He will cause them to be the rulers of the earth as He made those who were before them and that He will establish for them that religion which He has chosen for them, and that after their fears He will give them security in exchange (xxiv. 55).]

History bears witness to the miraculous conquests of the Arabs. Their empire stretched from the Bay of Biscay to the walls of China and

this phenomenal success they achieved in as many years as other nations did not do even in as many centuries. That a despised nation of desert wanderers should have led the entire world in the paths of civilisation, developing science, philosophy and arts to the highest pitch, is an enigma to modern nations. But God's promise was kept. In their triumphant onrush they utterly destroyed Rome and Persia and set up their own world empire on the ruins of those once irresistible States. In the process of time they forsook what the Qur'an had said: "Be virtuous and God commands you to be scrupulously just and act in a manner that people may be grateful to you."

But the world grew older and the dream vanished. Decadence set in and the Moslem world empire was dismembered. Now when the soul of humanity is sickened unto death by the industrial civilisation, the poet two decades earlier prophesied that this compact would be strengthened and the revitalised Arabs will again issue from their inaccessible retreats in the desert equipped with the highest morality as before and inaugurate a new era of freedom, equality and justice. That the possibility of the despairing soul of man re-establishing the millennium exists as one of the sweet secrets of Nature, is expressed by Browning in one beautiful gleam of thought :

The high that proved too high
The heroic for earth too hard,
The passion that left the ground,
To lose itself in the sky.
Are music sent up to God by the
Lover and the bard;
Enough that he heard it once,
We shall hear it by and by.

The eternal power has provided the reward or penalty for every human act and thought and if you transgress this law and try to cheat it, then the divine tribunal surely intervenes and corrects the failure of human codes to give justice. This higher morality under these conditions makes even seemingly impossible things to happen, so the poet in the seventh line visualises the successful crossing of the high seas by these divinely-inspired men. Their boat may be as delicate as the tender petals of a rose and they themselves as the poor ant, but heaven's light will guide them to the haven of glory and they will surmount the barriers placed in their way by mighty rulers possessing the deadliest machines produced by modern science. These people will again start the music and the world will once more ring with forgotten melodies.

Though short, this poem possesses the extraordinary charm of providing spiritual as well as material stimulation. The witchery of artistic

language in which both form and feeling are clothed makes confidence and hope in the future penetrate the youthful dreams of all enslaved and aspiring hearts, and the surging of sentiments involuntarily challenges them to burst out in song. It is the buoyancy of the spirit thus invoked which goes to the fashioning of human destiny.

Dr. Iqbal while in England chanced to meet Dr. Nicholson at Cambridge. The conversation was so delightful that the distinguished professor felt a strong desire to meet this talented Indian again. Luck brought them together once more and the admiration felt for the brilliant young man resulted in Dr. Nicholson translating, years after Iqbal's return to India, his Persian poem *Asrar-i Khudi* into English. It is not often that Indians capture the fancy of eminent men of letters in Europe. In those days Indians were generally looked down upon by Europeans as cringing weak-willed fools. The esteem shown by Dr. Nicholson for the young poet recalls to mind the astonishment evinced by Napoleon when he saw Goethe. It reveals (as it does in this case) what had been regarded for centuries as the "German spirit." When Goethe entered the room, Napoleon, impressed by his personality, exclaimed: "Voila un homme"—that was as much as to say: "But this is a man! and I only expected to see a German." The fragrant breeze of his reputation which began to blow in England has now crossed the ocean separating the old from the new world and with an airy touch has refreshed the dainty blossoms of intellect there. Discussing the potentiality and intrinsic value of literature, Mr. Herbert Reed, an eminent American writer, in a pleasing and scholarly criticism of Iqbal's *Asrar-i Khudi* (translated by Dr. Nicholson) says, "But subject to these elucidations, this ideal of Whitman's is a critical ideal of workability, of direct use. Applying it here and now, I can think of only one living poet who in any way sustains the test, and almost necessarily he is not of our race and creed. I mean Muhammad Iqbal whose poem *Asrar-i Khudi*, 'The Secrets of the Self,' has recently been translated from the original Persian by Dr. Reynold Nicholson and published by Messrs. Macmillan. Whilst our native poetasters were rhyming to their intimate coteries about cats and cornercrakes and other homely or unusual variations of a Keatsian theme, there was written and published in Lahore this poem, which, we are told, has taken by storm the younger generation of Indian Moslems. 'Iqbal,' writes one of them, 'has come amongst us as a Messiah and has stirred the dead with life.' And what catch-penny nostrum, you will ask, has thus appealed to the covetous hearts of the market place, you will then be told, as I tell you now, that no nostrum, neither of the Jingo nor of the salvationist, has wrought this wonder, but a poem that crystallises in its beauty the most essential phases of modern philosophy, making a unity of faith out of a multiplicity of ideas, a

universal inspiration out of the esoteric logic of the schools." Similar tributes of genuine praise have been paid by others equally competent to appreciate merit, but I cannot overburden my paper with quotations.

SELECTIONS FROM HIS POEMS

WHILE studying Law, Iqbal was awarded the Diploma of Doctor of Philosophy by the University of Munich in recognition of his original thesis on Persian philosophy, and in due course after having been called to the Bar he returned to India where his countrymen gave him enthusiastic reception. Though the profession of law was uncongenial to his aesthetic temperament, he had reluctantly to devote himself to it to earn his living. This period of his career is interesting to those who value his invigorating influence on Indian life more highly than his cautious advances in the realm of law. During precious intervals between his professional work he wrote some thrilling poems which awakened the people from the torpor of centuries and breathed into them something of his own faith and hope. He thus became both the herald and the exponent of a new age. Past history and the events of our own time teach us that to slay men has ever been easier than to mould their thoughts anew, and only true grandeur of character can defy the withering influence of an age of general corruption. But the fertility of his mind and the magic of his muse enabled Iqbal to dispel the thick fog of apathy and to create yearnings by penetrating the innermost recesses of the national heart. The force of sentiment and emotion which he so vigorously concentrates in these few lines is creative of new energies.

تصویر درد¹

ہویدا آج اپنے زخم پہنا کر کے چھوڑوں گا
 لہو رو رو کے محفل کو گلستان کر کے چھوڑوں گا
 دکھا دوں گا میں اے ہندوستان رنگ وفا سب کو
 کہ اپنی زندگی تجھ پہ قرباں کر کے چھوڑوں گا
 جلانا ہے مجھے ہر شمع دل کو سوز پہنا سے
 تری ظلمت میں میں روشن چراغاں کر کے چھوڑوں گا
 نہیں ہے وجہ وحشت میں آڑاں خاک زنداں کا
 کہ میں اس خاک سے پیدا بیاباں کر کے چھوڑوں گا

1. Out of these ten verses, only five are present in the *Bang-i Dara* (p. 67). The second hemistich of the third verse has been changed into تری تاریک راتوں میں. چراغاں کر کے چھوڑوں گا. The second, fourth, sixth, eighth and ninth verses are missing in the present edition of the *Bang-i Dara*.

مگر غنچوں کی صورت ہوں دل درد آشنا پیدا
 چمن میں مشت خاک اپنی پریشان کر کے چھوڑوں گا
 تعصب نے مری خاک وطن میں گھر بنایا ہے
 وہ طوفان ہوں کہ میں اس گھر کو ویراں کر کے چھوڑوں گا
 پرونا ایک ہی تسبیح میں ان بکھرے دانوں کو
 جو مشکل ہو تو اس مشکل کو آسان کر کے چھوڑوں گا
 اگر آپس میں لڑنا آج کل کی ہے مسلمانی
 مسلمانوں کو آخر نامسلمان کر کے چھوڑوں گا
 اُلٹا دوں گا نقاب عارض محبوب یک رنگی
 تجھے اس خانہ جنگی پر ہشیاں کر کے چھوڑوں گا
 دکھا دوں گا جہاں کو جو مری آنکھوں نے دیکھا ہے
 تجھے بھی صورت آئینہ حیراں کر کے چھوڑوں گا

[This day I shall expose my hidden wounds,
 I shall weep blood till I have turned my assembly into a garden.
 I shall show to everyone what faithfulness means, O Hindustan!
 For I shall not cease till I have sacrificed my life to thee.
 I have to light every heart's lamp with my hidden fire;
 I shall celebrate a festival of illumination in the darkness.
 Not without reason in my frenzy I scatter dust in the prison home,
 For I shall create an expansive desert with this dust.
 So that out of it hearts full of feeling may come to life like buds,
 I shall sow the handful of my dust.
 Bigotry has made its home on the earth of my country;
 I am that storm which shall wreck this home.
 To string all these scattered beads in a single rosary,
 Even if it is difficult, I am determined to accomplish it.
 If to be a Moslem in these days means to quarrel with one another,
 I shall convert these Moslems into non-Moslems.
 I shall lift the veil from the face of the Beloved of Divine Unity,
 And I shall make thee ashamed of this internal discord.
 I shall show to the world what mine eyes have seen,
 And I shall make thee wonder like the eye of the mirror.]

In this poem the high-minded poet speaks as a master architect of national destiny. The times are out of tune with him but as a custodian of the honour of his people he will grapple even single-handed with adverse fate and hasten the advent of a new spring-time in his country. In all ages it has been the priceless privilege of the poet to dream of restoring the current to the abandoned channel of national greatness, and Iqbal who sees the gloomy faces of his countrymen vows that he will not rest till he has wrenched the necessary concessions to the spirit of the age

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even from the gods. That the experiences of these ideal forces of human soul are common to all thinking lives, is borne out by Cowper's exquisite lines :

Oh ! happy shades to me unblest,
Friendly to peace, but not to me.
How will the scene that offers rest,
And heart that cannot rest agree.

Not willing to think about life in the old simple way the poet says that to-day marks the turning point in his life and the tears of blood which he sheds must necessarily transform the place into a rose-garden. The tears of blood which signify acute mental anguish will, when scattered thick on the ground, bear the semblance of full-blown roses. We know that suffering and sacrifice build up character and bring emancipation. The fervour of a poet's soul exercises a stimulating charm on the reader, but in the translation much of its attractive beauty is lost.

It is not without difficulty to make a selection out of a collection of gems of scintillating beauty. However, I give here a poem which to my mind is fascinating in point both of form and sound. It is called "The Birth of Love." It crystallises the Oriental idea of the composition of love which is the acme of all illusive and capricious loveliness. The Greek conception of love embodied in Cupid fails to evolve the idea of its intrinsic essence and the perfection of its physical symmetry. The idea of the exquisite beauty represented even in the form of Venus does not approach more closely to it, for this also materialises the radiance of Greek imagination of female physical grace and comeliness. Iqbal elaborates the Eastern intellectual and sensuous ideal of love's inherent principles. The subtlety of his analysis combined with the elegance of diction produces feelings of joy and sweetness. All nations in their days have experienced the irresistible influence of this divine passion and they have attempted to express it in poetry, sculpture or music. The voluntary homage paid to it in all ages shows that the subject is immortal. Whether the modern singers or painters will excel the ancients in the felicity and originality of their conception is yet doubtful, but I leave it to the reader to judge of the merit of Iqbal's effort.

محبت

عروس شب کی زلفیں تھیں ابھی نا آشنا خم سے
ستارے آسماں کے بے خبر تھے لذتِ رم سے
قمر اپنے لباسِ نو میں بیگانہ سا لگتا تھا
نہ تھا واقف ابھی گردش کے آئینِ مسلم سے

ابھی امکاں کے ظلمت خانے سے ابھری ہی تھی دنیا
 مذاق زندگی پوشیدہ تھا پہنائے عالم سے
 کمال نظم ہستی کی ابھی تھی ابتدا گویا
 ہویدا تھی نگینے کی تمنا چشم خاتم سے
 سنا ہے عالم بالا پہ کوئی کیمیاگر تھا
 صفا تھی جس کے خاک پا میں بڑھ کر ساغر جم سے
 لکھا تھا عرش کے پایہ پہ اک اکسیر کا نسخہ
 چھپاتے تھے فرشتے جس کو چشم روح آدم سے
 نگاہیں تاک میں رہتی تھیں لیکن کیمیاگر کی
 وہ اس نسخے کو بڑھ کر جانتا تھا اسم اعظم سے
 بڑھا تسبیح خوانی کے بہانے عرش کی جانب
 تمنائے دلی آخر بر آئی سعی پیہم سے
 پھرایا فکر اجزا نے آسے میدان امکاں میں
 چھپے گی کیا کوئی شے بارگاہ حق کے محرم سے
 چمک تارے سے مانگی چاند سے داغ جگر مانگا
 آڑائی تیرگی تھوڑی سی شب کی زلف برہم سے
 تڑپ بیلی سے پائی حور سے پاکیزگی پائی
 حرارت لی نفسہائے مسیح ابن مریم سے
 ذرا سی پھر ربوبیت سے شان بے نیازی لی
 ملک سے عاجزی افتادگی تقدیر شبنم سے
 پھر ان اجزا کو گھولا چشمہ حیوان کے پانی میں
 مرکب نے محبت نام پایا عرش اعظم سے
 مہوس نے یہ پانی ہستی نوخیز پر چھڑکا
 گرہ کھولی ہنر نے اس کے گویا کار عالم سے
 ہوئی جنبش عیان ذروں نے لطف خواب کو چھوڑا
 کلمے ملنے لگے آٹھ آٹھ کے اپنے اپنے دم سے
 خرام ناز پایا آفتابوں نے ستاروں نے
 چٹک غنچوں نے پائی داغ پائے لالہ زاروں نے

[As yet the tresses of the bride of night were not familiar with their graceful curls;
 And stars of heaven had tasted not the bliss of whistling motion through the depths of space.

The moon in her new robes looked rather strange
And knew not revolution's ceaseless law.
From the dark house of possibilities the world had just emerged to
spin along,
No joy of life had throbbed as yet within the furthest limits of
immensity.
The order of existence scarcely had begun unfolding to
perfectionment;
It seems as if the world, like a ring whose socket waiteth for its
precious stone, longed to evolve the archetypes to come.
They say there was an alchemist on high,
Dust of whose footsteps sparkled even more than Jamshed's crystal
cup (wherein the king beheld the marvels of a universe).
And on the pedestal of heaven there was engraved Elixir's
wondrous recipe,
Which angels always guarded from the ken of Adam's soul
destined by it to live.
The alchemist was ever on the watch
Knowing this recipe more precious than the Great Name itself.
Till seemingly saying his orisons, he nearer drew
And gained the strictly guarded pedestal, his constant effort
yielding in the end the fruit of his desire for which he burned.
And having learnt it, he went forth to seek through the vast field
of possibilities for its ingredients and collected them;
Yea ! what is there that can be hid from those who know the halls
where truth for ever dwells.
From stars he took their brightness ; from the moon the marks of
burnt-out passions of the past ;
And from night's floating and dishevelled tresses a little darkness ;
From the lightning he received its restlessness ; and purity from
Houries ;
And the gentle warmth that runs rippling from healing breath of
Mary's son.
Then from the quality of Providence he took that splendour which
dependeth not on aught else than itself,
And from the dew and angels took he their humility.
Then in the waters of the spring of life he made them to dissolve ;
And from the Throne of the Most High they called this essence
"Love."
That alchemist sprinkled this liquid on the new sprouting being,
And its magic touch released the spell-bound process of the worlds.
Motion appeared in atoms ; forthwith they abandoned their repose,
And roused themselves embracing their affinities again.
The suns and stars rolled in majestic curves,
The buds received fresh tints, and poppy flowers were branded
with the burning marks of Love.]

The first part of the poem portrays the sublime scene of the creation of the universe. The sun, the moon and millions of other planets and solar systems, the animal kingdom and the human beings in this scheme

received their allotted places and knew their functions, but the one supreme motive was still lacking even as a ring of artistic beauty is worthless without its socket being adorned with a lustrous jewel. This was the paramount law of motion. Nature could not evidently achieve its essential purpose without activity which was to be infused into different bodies by means of that divine recipe blazoned on the pedestal of heaven. The cunning alchemist who possessed himself of that celestial secret collected the rare ingredients with infinite labour and ingenuity. The potency of his science then enabled him to produce an elixir to which the unseen majesty gave the name of "Love." The miraculous powers of this liquid were apparent when it was sprinkled on the stagnant bodies. All of a sudden they became animated and intense movement was visible everywhere. The universe was set on its course of patient evolution. Two ideas stand out prominently in this poem: first, that the secret of progress is restless activity, second, that love should be the guiding principle of that activity. In sex relations love is a dominant factor, for the warmth and sunshine of its supreme sovereignty penetrates the gloomiest recesses of the human heart. It strews roses in the path of those whose soul is enraptured by the magic of its glance. The noblest achievements and the sublimest sacrifices of humanity are the result of exaltation roused by this divine passion. It is joy, laughter and tragedy all in one. The ravishing songs of the nightingale, the purity of the dew-dropping pink roses, the wondrous grace of the swaying cypress, the voluptuous fragrance of sweet jasmine, the green serenity of myrtle, the divine narcissus holding its court in a *parterre* longing for spring in a glimpse of heaven, the bewitching beauty and the capricious moods of the beloved become themes of poetic inspiration under its seductive influence. The composition of this ruling passion is analysed with consummate skill and the poet's fancy wanders over all the possibilities of Love's all-embracing activities when he selects the ingredients. Science may deride this idea, but the charm of his thought and the vigour of his description remain unaffected.

The revolution which has been wrought in the ideas of the masses of the proletariat in all countries after the stirring events of the Great War has presented such paradoxes to the embarrassed statesmen of the Western world that they cannot bring back peace to the distracted nations. Indeed, the tangle of the world's affairs is such that bankrupt statecraft is helpless to find a solution for the soul forces which have been awakened by their own selfish and immoral policy. The poet in a short poem in Persian suggests methods to the puzzled rulers of the world whereby they could capture the imagination of the people in revolt.

بملازمان سلطان خبرے دھم ز رازے
 کہ جہان توان گرفتن ز نوائے دلگدازے
 بمناع خود چہ نازی کہ بشہر دردمندان
 دل غزنوی نیرزد بہ تبسم ایازے
 ہمہ ناز بے نیازی ہمہ ساز بے نوائی
 دل شاہ لرزہ گیرد ز گدایے بے نیازے
 ز مستیز آشنایان چہ نیاز و ناز خیزد
 دلکے بہانہ سوزے نگہے بہانہ سازے
 رہ دیر تختہ گل ز جبین سجدہ ریزم
 کہ نیاز من نہ گنجد بدو رکعت نمازے
 ز تعافل تو خامم برہ تو ناتمام
 من و جان نیم سوزے تو و چشم نیم بازے

[Let the tidings of this secret be carried to the kings, that a world
 can be subdued by a soul-enthraling melody.

Pride not thyself over thy wealth, for in the city of love, the heart
 of a Mahmud is not worth the smile of an Ayaz.

All this pride, to want nothing; all his possessions, to have nothing.
 The heart of a king trembles from a poor man who wants
 nothing.

What humble demands and coquettish refusals arise in the conflict
 of lovers? The tiny heart that would burn all excuses; and the
 glance which makes excuses.

I scatter a bed of roses from my forehead bowing in prayer on the
 way to the infidel's temple; for my worship overflows the limits
 of a couple of prayers of the faithful.

Owing to that neglect I remain imperfect on the path: I and my
 half-smouldering spirit, and thou with thy half-opened eyes.]

The idea that it is kindness and not force that can sweeten the embittered feelings of the people is illuminated by the gentle wisdom of antiquity. The poet has presented this truth in a new vesture which our senses find extremely attractive. That there is affinity of ideas between all great poets, is confirmed by Tennyson's sweet lines :

However it be, it seems to me,
 'Tis only noble to be good.
 Kind hearts are more than coronets,
 And simple faith than Norman blood.

Sa'di, the immortal sage of the East, has voiced the same sentiment in his incomparable verse :

Since the people are like the roots,
And the rulers like the trunk,
The tree, my son, can weather
All storms if the roots are firm.

That the egotism of power displayed by modern rulers is incapable of understanding the all-conquering force of love, is within our daily experience of the terrible state of the people's mind all the world over. The poet in a fascinating poem wishes to inculcate the old truth that the thrones can remain unshaken only when they are established on the affection and gratitude of the subjects. How the power of kindness obliterates all evil memories is made clear by a touching incident "illustrative of the difference between the modern and the old-fashioned way of thinking." A French man-of-war is on its way from Tongking to Europe, and there are many soldiers and sailors to be fed, so the ship carries many cattle. Every day one or two animals are killed and at last there are only two cows left. When one of these is killed in the presence of the other, the living cow becomes horribly frightened, and moans, and struggles so that everybody is sorry for it. Then a sailor goes up to the moaning cow and gently rubs its nose, and speaks kindly to it. Thereupon the cow licks his hand, forgets its fear, forgets the killing and the blood and everything, and begins to eat quite happily again. This is a good and touching little study of animal psychology, but are human beings less susceptible to the healing influence of kindness?

It is easy to realise how the kings tremble in the presence of a poor man who is above all wants, when we see in the history of ancient kingdoms how the courage and self-denial of reformers or philanthropists have shaken the mightiest empires to their foundations. More recently in our own times the strange spectacle of Tolstoy and Gandhi fearlessly confronting the two world empires furnishes a convincing proof of their acquiring phenomenal power by interpreting the soul forces of the masses. It is the time spirit which electrifies people and, though poor, a devoted patriot becomes irresistible when carried on the high tide of popular will.

The second half of the poem is an address to the divine beauty of the eternal will which has now been unveiled and the poet, looking upon it as the goal of all his desires, approaches it with humble mien. His living and intense faith is so wonderfully gracious that as he prostrates himself on the way to the temple of this spirit of the universe the arid ground is converted so to speak into a carpet of roses. He is painfully conscious that the apathetic indifference of the beloved has left him imperfect and in following the spirit he realises his deficiencies (immaturity); then the cry rises from his heart: "I am only midway to my goal because the beloved looked at me with only half-opened eyes." To the supersensitive nature

of the poet it is agonising that he of all the people should be unable to revel in the delirium of ecstasy. It is due, he knows, to the lack of sufficient ardour in wooing the beloved. In his headlong quest of an ideal state of human society it is mortifying to him to see how difficult it is for a people to renew their youth who have learnt to hug their chains. The law of Nature prescribes that the attainment of the loftiest ideals of life depends on your capacity for persistent and mad pursuit of the object, and the poet bewails that he is still timid and hesitating and, therefore, must burst his manacles. In melodious language he conveys a message both to the prince and the people. It moves the heart by explaining the great mystery of the universe, the power of deep faith and persistent yearning.

The steamer which carried Iqbal to the coast of France passed through the straits of Massena. The sight of the enchanting island of Sicily touched the profound sensibility of the poet and conjured before his mental vision the picture of its past glories under Moslem rulers. The Arab civilisation and all its glittering associations, over the whole field of science, ethics, poetry and art, seemed enough to inspire pride in its most evident sense, but the recollection of its ruthless destruction by the barbarians evoked from him a patriotic lament which reflects the anguish of Moslem soul in all countries. This genuine though mournful effusion of the poet's muse stirs the emotions to the boiling point when you read it in the original composition ; even the translation makes you see the latent beauty of its sweet but sad ideas.

صقلیہ

رو لے اب دل کھول کر اے دیدہ خوباہ ہار
وہ نظر آتا ہے تہذیب حجازی کا مزار
یہ محل خیمہ تھا آن صحرا نشینوں کا کبھی¹
بحر بازی گاہ تھا جن کے سفینوں کا کبھی
زلزلے جن سے شہنشاہوں کے درباروں میں تھے
شعلہ جاں سوز پنہاں جن کی تلواروں میں تھے²
آفرینش جن کی دنیائے کہن کی تھی اجل
جن کی ہیبت سے لرز جاتے تھے باطل کے محل

1. In the present edition of the *Bang-i Dara*, this hemistich has been changed by Iqbal as:

تھا یہاں ہنگامہ ان صحرا نشینوں کا کبھی

2. This hemistich has been changed as:

بجلیوں کے آشیائے جن کی تلواروں میں تھے

زندگی دنیا کو جن کی شورشِ مَقم سے ملی
 مخلصی انسان کو زنجیرِ توہم سے ملی³
 جس کے آوازے سے لذت گیر اب تک گوش ہے
 وہ جس کیا اب ہمیشہ کے لیے خاموش ہے ؟
 آہ ! اے سسلی سمندر کی ہے تجھ سے آبرو
 رہنا کی طرح اس پانی کے صحرا میں ہے تو
 زیب تیرے خال سے رخسار دریا کو رہے
 تیری شمعوں سے تسلی بحرِ ہما کو رہے
 ہو سبک چشم مسافر پر ترا منظرِ مدام
 موجِ رقصاں تیرے ساحل کی چٹانوں پر مدام
 تو کبھی اس قوم کی تہذیب کا گہوارہ تھا
 حسنِ عالم سوز جس کا آتشِ نظارہ تھا
 نالہ کش شیراز کا بلبلِ ہوا بغداد پر
 داغِ رویا خون کے آنسو جہاں آباد پر
 آسمان نے دولتِ غرناطہ جب ہرباد کی
 ابنِ بدروں کے دلِ ناشاد نے فریاد کی
 مرثیہ تیری تباہی کا مری قسمت میں تھا
 یہ تڑپنا اور تڑپانا میری قسمت میں تھا⁴
 ہے ترے آثار میں پوشیدہ کس کی داستان ؟
 تیرے ساحل کی خموشی میں ہے اندازِ بیاں
 درد اپنا مجھ سے کہ میں بھی سراپا درد ہوں
 جس کی تو منزل تھا میں اس کارواں کی گرد ہوں
 رنگِ تصویرِ کہن میں بھر کے دکھلا دے مجھے
 قصہِ ایامِ سلف کا کہ کے تڑپا دے مجھے

3. This and the following verses have been changed as:

مردہ عالمِ زندہ جن کی شورشِ مَقم سے ہوا
 آدمی آزاد زنجیرِ توہم سے ہوا
 غفلوں سے جس کے لذت گیر اب تک گوش ہے
 کیا وہ تکبیر اب ہمیشہ کے لیے خاموش ہے ؟

4. This verse has now been changed as:

غمِ نصیبِ اقبال کو بخشا گیا ماتمِ ترا
 چن لیا تقدیر نے وہ دل کہ تھا محرمِ ترا

میں ترا تحفہ سوئے ہندوستان لے جاؤں گا
خود یہاں روتا ہوں اوروں کو وہاں رلواؤں گا

[Weep to thy heart's content, O blood-weeping eye!
Yonder is visible the tomb of Muslim culture.
Once this palace was the tent of those dwellers of the desert,
For whose ships the ocean was a playground;
Who raised earthquakes in the palaces of the kings of kings,
In whose swords lay hidden life-scorching flames;
Whose birth was death for the old world,
Whose fear caused the palaces of error to tremble;
Whose cry of "arise" gave life to the world
And freedom to men from the chains of superstition.
Is that drum silent for ever,
Whose reverberations delight the ear to this day?
Oh Sicily! the sea is honoured by thee,
Thou art a guide in the desert of these waters.
May the cheek of the ocean remain adorned by thy beauty spot;
May thy lamps comfort those who measure the seas;
May thy view be ever light on the eyes of the traveller,
May thy waves ever dance on thy rocks!
Once thou wast the cradle of the civilisation of the people,
The fire of whose glance was world-burning beauty.
The nightingale of Shiraz wailed over Baghdad,
And Dagh wept tears of blood over Delhi.
When the heavens scattered the wealth of Granada to the winds,
The sorrowful heart of Ibn Badrun cried out.
The dirge of thy ruin was to fall to my lot;
It was in my lot to suffer this agony and to make others suffer.
Whose story is hidden in thy ruins?
The silence of thy footfall hath a mode of expression.
Tell me of thy sorrow—I too am full of pain;
I am the dust of that caravan whose goal thou wast.
Paint over this picture once more and show it to me;
Make me suffer by telling the story of ancient days.
I shall carry thy gift to India;
I shall make others weep as I weep here.]

The spirit of the poem is essentially one of pleasure-pain which finds a responsive vibration in Shelley's dream musings :

We look before and after, and pine for what is not,
Our sincerest laughter with some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thoughts.

Like a great poet Iqbal captures the reader's imagination by instantly seizing the core of an emotional fact and presenting it in a brilliant verse with an artistic blending of sweet and melancholy memories such as you find in the songs of the nightingale. He stands on the deck while the steamer slowly moves—his heart profoundly stirred by the sight of that

land of dreams wherein Moslem civilisation put forth some of its sweetest blossoms. While a prey to agonising reflections he feels the fullness of the past; and the void of the present which is without joy, glory or greatness. His anguished soul sees the

Old, unhappy, far off things
And battles long ago.

(Wordsworth)

He sees the relic of a civilisation which has utterly vanished, a civilisation of exquisite beauty, joyous and simple. Its flourishing cities have disappeared from the face of this fairy island and the vestiges of its liberal institutions exist only in museums and libraries. Its people who brought liberty to the oppressed and downfall to the tyrants are nowhere. Everything is gone but the art of that people which by its dainty loveliness preserves the memory of their great past. A mouldering arch, the ruins of a minaret, the perfection of a dome are frozen music which once enthralled the world and now even in its decay captivates the lovers of art. The silent melody of their pathetic beauty is heard by the imagination of all Moslems. Keats expresses the same idea in his golden verse:

Heard melodies are sweet; but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, yee oft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but more endeared,
Pipe to the spirit, ditties of no tone.

Whilst under the influence of these sad reflections, he says that the immortal Sa'di composed a dirge on the fall of Baghdad, the destruction of Granada was described by Ibn Badrun and that of Delhi by the poet Dagh, but the melancholy story of Sicily's destiny was allotted to him and, therefore, in obedience to the dictates of unkind fate he expresses his emotion in most winning and beautiful verse. If literature is the reflection of the soul of a people, then we can understand the magic of this poem which has moved great audiences to exaltation and to tears. The Moslems feel a legitimate pride in the great achievements of their brethren in times when the nations of the world were groaning under the weight of chains which enslaved them. It was both spiritual and physical slavery of a most degrading nature. History abounds with instances in which the Moslems reclaimed the Christians and others from gross superstition and brought freedom to servile nations. How grateful it is to the ear of a Moslem when he reads the petition which the Christians of Palestine wrote to the Moslem Amir: "O Moslems, we prefer you to the Byzantians, though they are of our own faith, because you keep faith with us and refrain from doing us injustice, and your rule over us is better than theirs, for they have robbed us of our goods and our homes" (Arnold, *Preaching*

INTRODUCTION

THIS book, first published in 1922 during Iqbal's life-time with his full approval, is unique in several respects.

The author, Nawab Zulfiqar Ali Khan, was a life-long friend of Iqbal and had full opportunity to observe him from close quarters, and to discuss with him most intimately the problems that confronted the Muslims of this sub-continent; he shared with him the anxieties and aspirations of their nation. He was a man of great learning, well versed both in Oriental and Occidental literature and took active part in all literary and cultural activities of the day along with other common friends. He was greatly impressed by the originality of Iqbal's thought, the high standard of his poetic genius and its significance for the future well-being of the Muslims. In the Preface of the book he says, "If the Peacock Throne is the pride of Persia, and the lustrous Koh-i-Noor the glory of the British Crown, Iqbal would surely adorn the court of the muses in any country." This is not an outburst of poetic imagination on the part of the author but a frank and honest expression of deep conviction that he shared with many of his contemporaries.

Secondly, it was the first book on Iqbal in English by the pen of a man who understood Iqbal and was in a position to say authoritatively what he meant to say. The English translation of *Asrar-i Khudi* by Professor Nicholson, first published in 1920, had already introduced Iqbal to the English-knowing people. Judged from the amount of comments on this translation, the book, no doubt, seemed to have taken the West by storm. But most of these writers generally failed to grasp the true significance of his teachings. Iqbal himself tried to remove these misgivings and doubts in his well-known letter to Professor Nicholson, but Zulfiqar Ali's book presented Iqbal's ideas in an unequivocal language and thus went a long way in dispelling doubts and removing misinterpretations.

Thirdly, the Urdu and Persian verses of Iqbal quoted in the text were translated into English at the request of the author by Mr. Umrao Singh. The seasoned editor of a well-known English journal and an intimate friend and admirer of Iqbal as he was, he was best qualified to undertake this work. Translation is indeed a very difficult job: every language has its own peculiar idiom which is intimately associated with ideas the rich shades of which a foreigner often fails to appreciate. The difficulty becomes all the more acute when the subject to be translated is poetry, involving the use of rhythmic words and phrases that, besides conveying a particular sense, appeal to the aesthetic sense of the reader. It is easy to convey the sense in a translation but almost impossible to import into another language the beauty of rhythm and music that is characteristic of a great poetry like Iqbal's. Umrao Singh's translation of Iqbal's poetry is indeed excellent and adds much to the value of this book.

صاحبِ طرزِ نثر نگار اور شاعر ابنِ ایشام مرحوم
کی یاد میں یہ کتاب انجمن ترقی اردو ہند
کی لائبریری کو پیش کی جاتی ہے

of Islam, p. 55). Even in our own times one of the foremost thinkers of Europe bears testimony to the spiritual beauties of Islam. Renan, the great Frenchman, says: "Je ne suis jamais entre dans une mosquée sans une vive émotion, le diraije? sans un certain regret de n'être pas Musalman" [I have never gone into a mosque without a lively emotion, shall I confess it, without a positive regret for not being a Musalman]. The conduct of the Moslems who became the liberators of oppressed humanity was moulded by such sublime teachings of their Prophet as is contained in this injunction. The Prophet was asked who was the most favoured of God's creatures. He replied, "He from whom the greatest good comes to His creatures," and then when asked what actions were most excellent, he answered: "To gladden the heart of a human being, to feed the hungry, to help the afflicted, to lighten the sorrows of the sorrowful, and to remove the wrongs of the injured." "He who helps his fellow creatures in the hour of need and he who helps the oppressed, God will help him in the day of travail." The poet had these exalted ideals in view when he said that the mightiest tyrants shrunk from the sight of those Arab conquerors whose cry of "Arise" elevated the slaves to the status of equality with free men, and set new values to moral conduct. The east and the west rising from its ashes then witnessed the dawn of a new era of a new movement in art and thought in an environment exceedingly fresh, rich and enchanting. The island of Sicily is so favoured by Nature that its possession was coveted by the Greeks, the Romans, the Carthaginians and the Arabs. The last named adorned it with liberal institutions of their wonderful civilisation. The poet invokes profuse blessings on this "guide in the desert of these waters" because it was once the abode of the beloved and, although this nymph of the Mediterranean is wedded to a new lord, the memory of its old associations is so dear that he would again listen to the recital of the story of ancient happiness. "Paint over this picture," he says, "once more and show it to me," but the sad reality brings pain and despair and he sees :

Yon rising moon that looks for us again,
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane ;
How oft hereafter rising looks for us,
Through this same garden and for one in vain.

HIS GREAT WORK

IQBAL's monumental work so far produced is the Persian poem in two separate parts called *Asrar-i Khudi* and *Rumuz-i Be-Khudi*. The first, "Secrets of the Self," is translated by Dr. Nicholson of Cambridge into English. This poem may rightly be called world poetry or world music meant for all times and all climes. The master singer possessing a

sensitive nature cannot endure the evils which eat so to speak into the vitals of his people and it is mortifying to him to see how difficult it is for a people to renew their youth who have learnt to honour their chains. But in prophetic tones he describes the potency of certain ideals which will rejuvenate a degenerate society. The poem forms a unique piece of literary art. It establishes a new system of character-training. It formulates a philosophy which will produce saviours of a misguided world. What flavours and forces do we not find mingled in it? It has fire and courage which make the soul restless. It directs thought into new channels. It inspires self-confidence in palsied wills to climb ice and frowning heights. In a fascinating style he deals with the whole problem of "man," his life and the worth of his life, and attempts to forge a new destiny for his people by preaching reversion to the vigorous but simple life of the early Moslems based on the teachings of the Prophet. Great thinkers among all nations in the past as well as in our own times have experienced patriotic anguish as a result of the fallen fortunes and the disintegrated morals of their people. They have tried to set in motion floods of sentiment by their thrilling music, but the continuation of a current of thought depends on the strength which a conviction may possess. That it is not always safe to play with souls, is made clear by the disastrous consequences which have followed the preachings of some great masters. Nietzsche, the famous German philosopher, has developed a system of ideas whose majesty is undeniable. His wonderful intellect in propounding this theme has evinced a grandeur which is truly awe-inspiring. His readers, however, will not fail to notice that this superb edifice of thought is not based on any secure moral foundation, but reposes merely on the bold assumption of a brilliant intelligence. He sees in Nature no more than the stage for the ego without elucidating the necessity of any restraint on its wild impulses. His ideal of superman consequently glorifies the brute in man and exalts the malignant and evil propensities of his nature. This philosophy of Nietzsche has overwhelmed the world with calamitous consequences, and the cult having proved an entire failure, the unhappy humanity longing for peace, justice and liberty will discover in Iqbal's philosophy the elements essential for reconstructing its shattered hopes. Although the poem is addressed to the Moslem peoples, its underlying truths are eternal verities and can be applied to the uplift of all those societies whose forms remain when the soul is dead, when the spirit has vanished. Such people may find themselves suddenly at the mercy of other nations. Hegel says that philosophy brings forth ideas suited to the epoch. Iqbal has, therefore, rightly understood the condition of his own people who belong to the day before yesterday and the day after to-morrow—they have as yet no to-day.

This dynamic philosophy of Iqbal inculcates the vital principle of developing the latent forces inherent in man, in order that a radiant and commanding personality may find manifestation, the travail of humanity being a necessary preliminary.

سوز بہم قسمت پروانہ ہا شمع عذر محنت پروانہ ہا
خامہ، او نقش صد امروز بست تا بیارد صبح فردائے بدست
شعلہ ہائے او صد ابراہیم سوخت تا چراغ یک محمد بر فروخت

['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.]

The advent of a redeemer in this world takes place when exhausted and oppressed humanity lies prostrate. His work is superhuman for he has to put the whole world in a melting pot and extract the alloy from the corrupted metal, but only a personality so unique can accomplish this task, and then what a scope and final satisfaction the wonderful achievement affords to his refined pride and tenacious will! His person is like a globe of light which illumines the profound darkness. In order that a single supreme entity may come into existence, Nature ignores the inevitable sacrifice of millions of beings for she rejoices in the keen struggle for life. In her workshop the tragedies of daily life are countless and according to her pitiless law it is only the fittest who survive. The poet, therefore, affirms that the advent of the highest knowledge and the highest morality is of such imperative necessity to rebuild the shattered fabric of humanity that all conceivable suffering is worth it. When you read this culling from Iqbal's poem you are reminded of Renan who has said in one of his philosophical dialogues that perhaps there is no God existing at present, but that men are gradually working to make a God, and that out of all the sorrow and labour of mankind a God will be created at last. This God of the French philosopher is no other than the poet's ideal man who will possess godly attributes. To a world of toil, misery and despair, upon which the sun of hope and happiness does not shine, this great personality gives an altogether new force and colour. In this youthful new world of his own creation he will build his chosen realm of natural and rational rights ; his great deeds will be commensurate with his great thoughts. But for this mighty soul also there is a period of rigorous discipline in order to attain to larger life and higher development. It must not be forgotten that this careful preparation is absolutely essential in

order that his gradual purification may illumine his entire nature. The poet prescribes three stages for this education of the self—Obedience, Self-control and Divine Vicegerency.

در اطاعت کوش اے غفلت شعار می شود از جبر پیدا اختیار
 ناکس از فرمان پذیری کس شود آتش ار باشد ز طغیان خس شود
 هر که تسخیر مه و پروین کند خویش را زنجیری آئین کند
 باد را زندان گل خوشبو کند قید بو را نافه آهو کند
 می زند اختر موے منزل قدم پیش آئینے سر تسلیم خم
 لاله پیهم سوختن قانون او بر جہد اندر رگ او خون او
 قطرها دریاست از آئین وصل ذره ها صحراست از آئین وصل
 باطن هر شے ز آئینے قوی تو چرا غافل ز این سامان روی
 باز اے آزاد دستور قدیم زینت پا کن هان زنجیر سیم
 شکوه سنج سختی آئین مشو از حدود مصطفی بیرون مرو

[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 wind is enthralled by the fragrant rose,

The perfume is confined in the navel of musk-deer;

The star moves towards the goal

With head bowed in surrender to a law.

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 chains.

Do not complain of the hardness of the law,

Do not transgress the statutes of Muhammad.]

The second stage in the process is self-control and he warns the aspirant that :

هر که بر خود نیست فرمانش روان می شود فرمان پذیر از دیگران
 تا عصای لا اله داری بدست هر طلسم خوف را خواهی شکست
 هر که حق باشد چون جان اندر تنش خم نگردد پیش باطل گردنش
 خوف را در سینه او راه نیست خاطرش مرعوب غیر الله نیست

هر که در اقلیم لا آباد شد فارغ از بند زن و اولاد شد
می کند از ماسوی قطع نظر می نهد ساطور بر حلق پسر
با یکے مثل هجوم لشکر است جان بچشم او زباد ارزان تر است
لا الهه باشد صدف گوهر نماز قلب مسلم را حج اصغر نماز

[He that does not command himself
Becomes a receiver of command from others.
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;
His heart is afraid of none but Allah.
Whoso dwells in the Moslem faith
Is free from the bonds of wife and children;
He withdraws his gaze from all except God
And lays his knife to the throat of his son.
Though he is like a host in onset,
Life is cheaper in his eyes than wind.
The profession of faith is the shell, but prayer is the pearl;
The prayer is the small pilgrimage for a Muslim heart.]

The third and final stage is the acme of perfection, when you feel as though the whole universe is created for you, and as its supreme lord or the vicegerent of God you receive the homage of all. The poet describes him thus :

نغمه را تار دل از مضرب او بهر حق بیداری* او خواب او
شیب را آموزد آهنگ شباب می دهد هر چیز را رنگ شباب
نوع انسان را بشیر و هم نذیر هم سپاهی هم سپه گر هم امیر
چون عنان گیرد بدست آن شهسوار تیز تر گردد مسند روزگار
خشک سازد هیبت او نیل را می برد از مصر اسرائیل را
از قم او خیزد اندر گور تن مرده جانها چون صنوبر در چمن
زندگی را می کند تفسیر نو می دهد این خواب را تعبیر نو
هستی* مکنون او راز حیات نغمه نشنیده ساز حیات

[Heart-strings give forth music at his touch,
He wakes and sleeps for God alone.
He teaches age the melody of youth,
And endows everything 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.

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.
 He gives a new explanation of life,
 A new interpretation of this dream.
 His hidden being is life's mystery,
 The unheard music of life's harp.]

It is for this glorious personality that tortured and despairing souls in their gloomy surrounding look towards the heavens even as a dry and parched seed in a desert would look for beneficent and bounteous drops of rain; and the cry of agony goes forth from the darkest recesses of these people.

اے سوارِ اشہبِ دورانِ بیا اے فروغِ دیدہ امکانِ بیا
 رونقِ ہنگامہٴ ایجاد شو در سوادِ دیدہ ہا آباد شو
 شورشِ اقوام را خاموش کن نغمہٴ خود را بہشتِ گوش کن
 خیز و قانونِ اخوت ساز ده جامِ صہبائے محبت باز ده
 ریخت از جورِ خزانِ برگِ شجر چون بہارِ برِ ریاضِ ما گذر
 سجدہ ہائے طفلک و برنا و پیر از جبینِ شرمِ سارِ ما بگیر
 از وجودِ تو سرِ افرازمِ ما پس بہ سوزِ این جہانِ سازیمِ ما

[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!
 Protect the tree's leaf against autumn's cruelty
 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!
 When thou art there, we will lift up our heads
 Content to suffer the burning fire of this world.]

The poet like the maker of a new world deems it necessary that a painful process of preparation may be gone through in order that a people may reach the zenith of their glory. The historical law teaches us that the discipline of suffering, indeed of great suffering, has produced all the elevation of humanity hitherto. This world is a huge workshop in which individuals and nations are constantly making or unmaking

their destiny. Every moment of your lives is precious beyond conception. You either add to the beauty of the edifice wherein your destiny dwells or allow the storm and stress of time to lay it in ruins. There is fire above, beneath and all around you and if you shrink from it in dismay and become a coward and desert your post, you are lost and you create a hell for yourself. Beware, therefore, and do not recoil from facing the trials of this world, nay, even go forward and meet them joyfully. Remember also that the tension of a soul in misfortune will communicate its energy to your designs if only you will show indifference to all pain. Calamities in this world are like hammer strokes which serve to harden your character. They should make you insensible to all sense of fear and develop in you the faculty of self-control, and while you are passing through this crucible of suffering you will realise that in you both the creature and the Creator are united, for you are fashioning and forging an exquisite divinity by burning the dross in you. Thus the highest grade of purity ennobles you and places you in a unique position for it is the highest spiritualisation of the instinct. You will then feel the joy of holy music which will perpetually impel your soul out of night into morning and out of gloom, out of affliction, into clearness, brightness and refinement. This is the pinnacle of glory rendering you fit to assume the supreme functions of the Vicegerent of God on Earth. Under your fostering care people will enjoy the privilege of freedom, justice and equality.

The poem gives you a deep insight into the infinite mystery of the self whose possibilities of illimitable development are incomprehensible. "Rejoice, therefore, O man! that you are capable of becoming God-like; adorn yourself with these gifts and cultivate the habits which conduce to purity, rigour and manliness. Do not let the odour of paltry people cling to you, but show the rush, the breath and the emancipating scorn of a wind which makes everything healthy by making everything run." Swinburne also detects God in man when he says:

But this thing is God,
To be man with thy might,
To grow straight in the strength of the spirit, and
Live out thy life as the light.

In another place in *Asrar-i Khudi*, Iqbal condemns the negation of desire as the *Nirvana* of the self which means stagnation and ultimate death of individuals and nations :

دل ز سوز آرزو گیرد حیات غیر حق میرد چو او گیرد حیات
چون ز تخلیق تمنا باز ماند شہرش بشکست و از پرواز ماند
آرزو ہنگامہ آراء خودی موج بیتابے ز درباے خودی



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آرزو صید مقاصد را کمند دفتر افعال را شیرازه بند
 زنده را نفی نمنا مرده کرد شعله را نقصان موز افسرده کرد
 عقل ندرت کوش و گردون تا ز چیست هیچ میدانی که این اعجاز چیست
 زندگی سرمایه دار از آرزو است عقل از زائیدگان بطن اوست

[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 wishes,
 Its pinion breaks and it cannot soar.
 Desire is an emotion of the self,
 It is a restless wave of the life'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 burning extinguishes the flame.
 Why does the mind strive after new discoveries and scale the
 heavens?
 Do you realise whose wonderful deal it is ?
 'Tis desire that enriches life,
 And the intellect is a child of its womb.]

The secret of all human motive for action is desire. It serves in the human body the same purpose which steam does in an engine. Man-made machinery ceases to operate if the propelling force loses its power. Similarly, the God-made mechanism of the human body loses the zest for life if desire is dead. It is only the keen struggle for life which will keep man alive. Individuals and nations animated by vigorous desires must take part in this struggle or perish. The competition is terrible, for man has to fight if it comes to that even with the elemental forces of Nature which will serve him only as long as he is masterful and constant effort is the rule of his life. But the moment he seeks rest from the conflict these very forces will destroy him. The birds and beasts of prey will descend upon him and tear him to pieces. Therefore, beware of longing for repose. It conceals the will to the denial of life which is a poisonous principle of dissolution and decay. A man who is not yet a degenerating, waning type will welcome every shock that does not allow him to remain idle, to sit and amuse himself, for he realises that he who struggles best in the world is very likely to obtain the best that it has to offer. The poet lays great emphasis on the necessity of keeping the flame of desire burning to serve as an incentive and stimulus to life.

This message to the world unlocks the treasure-house of wisdom. The content of poetry and the experiences of the past are the content of individual as well as of national life. They teach you that you must constantly advance and feel sure that you are really alive. The possibility of

retrogression can be removed from your path only if you continue to grow day by day. Therefore effort which desire generates must be the first and the highest duty of life. Men who seek the happiness of repose are apt to shudder and recoil in face of mysterious decisions and new paths, but your mental energy and moral effort will, if you keep the flame burning, make you appropriate everything. You will assimilate and absorb the very nature which in the case of indolent and played-out people proves so destructive. Do not forget that as a new-born child you felt the appetite and thirst for mother's milk. Hunger was the first sensation you felt on arrival in this world. Your Creator, therefore, expects you to strive for your nourishment. Strive joyously and revel in the ecstasy of effort even as a lover rejoices at the prospect of greeting his beloved. Only then success will come to you. He who refuses to struggle, says Meredith, is Nature's accursed, let him perish! let the curtain of death hide him away for ever. Even God seems to envy man the happiness of effort. Addressing the spirit of man, God says :

O man ! my creature, thy lot was more blest than mine
I taste not delight of seeking nor the boon of longing know.
There is but one joy transcendent and I hoard it not but bestow ;
I hoard it not, nor have tasted, but freely I give it thee,
The joy of most glorious striving, which lieth in victory. (Watson)

In the literature of some of the Oriental peoples you come across the idea of rest as the culmination and crown of human ambition. You must refuse to accept this dangerous doctrine for it is the siren call for your destruction. Only the birds, strayed and fatigued by flight which let themselves be captured with the hand, can yield to such a foolish sentiment. Many a mighty people who have succumbed to this temptation have this sad epitaph engraved on their tombs. It should serve you as a warning in time lest you should waver in your resolve to keep alive the fire in you. The poet pours forth the consecrated fire of historic truth when he says, "Negation of desire is death to the living." It is even more than this. A little slip or neglect on your part in your career of conscious activity blasts the hopes of generations yet unborn and condemns them to a misery over which the fates may justly weep. Your very memory will be loathsome to those who are consigned to slavery by your criminal desire to extinguish the flame in you. Forget not that if you cease to preside over the immortal banquet spread before you by the submissive forces of Nature you become a beggar longing for the crumbs falling from the tables of that happy divinity who occupies the seat left vacant by you. "Your pinions will be broken," says the poet. Yes, you become a sport of other nations and slave for their aggrandizement. You lose half of your virtues, says Plato, if you lose your liberty. Nay, you lose all you possess. With the

This book ranks as a classic among the innumerable books written about Iqbal during all this period. Unfortunately, it was not reprinted after its first appearance in 1922. The Iqbal Academy is proud to present this reprint to the public. Every effort has been made to give it a form that does justice to its contents. How far we have succeeded in this effort is for the reader to judge.

B.A. DAR

misfortune of slavery everything seems at once to crumble about you. Freedom, joy, glory, ambition, religion, power—all desert you as the soul deserts the dead body. For centuries you have no will of your own and during this weary time you administer to the happiness and greatness of others finding strange consolation in it. Do not, therefore, let the war of effort die within you. Drive away all unworthy longing for repose which may threaten your fabric with destruction.

The fire which burns in you and enables you to conquer obstacles, even to plunge your horse into the ocean to swim across to the unseen world, to raise the standard of the unity of God, was kindled by a divinely-inspired personality. You will rue the day when you extinguish that flame deliberately, and before you commit that crime think of the dreary fate and the nights of torment which will surely supervene that supreme act of folly. What is there on earth like the delight of an eagle poised on the highest peak between heaven and earth, the interpreter, so to speak, of the unknown to the world of manifestation spread before him. He is unique; he is above the proximity of the common and the base. It is truly the victory of steady desire over the obscurity of destiny. You were placed in that enviable position by the miraculous energy of that God-inspired will. Keep that position, nay, cherish the ambition to strike your pinions even against the blue vault of heaven by an unceasing impulse towards higher life. Divorce the idea of lassitude from you and gather fresh forces every moment. Yes, be a storm pregnant with new lightnings; only then is greatness possible.

The poet entering the sacred shrine of history attains to the most fertile and soundest idea of his philosophy. To his artist spirit there truly come moments of illumination in which the nature of things becomes directly manifest to his eyes. From the contemplation of the eternal rush of world forces he derives with definite assurance that for which Nietzsche has an inexpressible loathing, the knowledge that law and religion are to be understood as manifestations of the world-constructive intelligence, and therefore as necessary growths. A system of ethics based upon physics and religion makes you realise the harmony of necessity and freedom in the eternal life of reality, and while some enlightened nations, who look upon thought as a universal solvent, apply it to obscure problems of life and thereby lose their strength. This virile system which Iqbal expounds in his poem makes you retain that elemented principle which is the basis of all greatness and beauty. The energy of its conception provides him with inspiration for the creation of an ideal man whose mechanism he animated with religious vitality. In his subtle yearning for a purer spiritual life he stands in sharp contrast to the anti-religious philosophy of Nietzsche, who vigorously denounces all moral scruples. In developing

his archetype, Iqbal devotes himself to the contemplation of an age which was rich in moral feeling when fortunate mankind absorbed the secrets of religion from the precept and example of lofty spirits whose dazzling personalities produced momentous results for human progress. Their burning moral passions consumed vice and their very touch ennobled the vulgar. This highly evolved being, the constitution of whose soul is richly endowed with manly and masterful virtues, is presented by Iqbal to the demoralised world with the enthusiasm of a priest and the magic of a great poet. The annals of past ages will confirm the truth that

در عمل پوشیده مضمون حیات لذت تخلیق قانون حیات
خیز و خلاق جهان تازه شو شعله در برکن خلیل آوازه شو
با جهان نامساعد ساختن هست در میدان سپر انداختن
مرد خود دارم که باشد پخته کار با مزاج او بسازد روزگار
گر نه سازد با مزاج او جهان می شود جنگ آزما با آسمان
بر کند بنیاد موجودات را می دهد ترکیب نو ذرات را
گردش ایام را برهم زند چرخ نیلی قام را برهم زند
می کند از قوت خود آشکار روزگار نو که باشد سازگار
از رموز جزو و کل آگاه بود در جهان قائم با سرالله بود
خیمه چون دروسعت عالم زند این بساط کهنه را برهم زند
فطرتش معمور و می خواهد نمود عالمی دیگر بیارد در وجود
صد جهان مثل جهان جزو و کل روید از کشت خیال او چو گل
پخته سازد فطرت هر خام را از حرم بیرون کند اصنام را
نغمه را تار دل از مضرب او بهر حق بیداری او خواب او

[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, to be an Abraham.
To comply with this ill-starred world
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 world.
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.
He knows the secrets of parts and wholes,
That they exist in the world by Divine command.
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.]

The supreme object of Iqbal's philosophy is the production of the typical or ideal man by a rigorous training of the human faculties. This system seeks to work from within to without. It aims at transforming character and thus transforming the world. The value of this conception is immeasurable for the type—man, whose development is strongly influenced by religious sentiment, will bring a message for a new greatness of man which has not been surpassed in the adumbrated past. In contradistinction to Nietzsche's Superman who mocks at religion and springs exclusively from the aristocratic stock to ride roughshod over the demos, Iqbal's Perfect Man is adorned with the attributes even of God. From the super-plenitude of his angelic soul flow the rarest blessings to the whole creation. He smooths rough souls and makes them taste a new longing. From contact with him everyone goes away richer and fresher than before. He mobilises the latent forces of human nature and presses them in the service of mankind. Woe to him who thwarts his wishes, for in executing the commands of God he will try the hazards of war with heaven. His delicate moral sensibilities do not tolerate the current follies and corruption of men. He will, therefore, says the poet, dig up the foundations of the universe and cast its atoms into a new mould and thus create a new world. Being the beloved of Nature he sets at naught the laws of biology. He transmutes the base metal of humanity into a precious substance and sets new values to everything. This ideal man of the poet represents the individual whose divine essence has reached the highest development, and only some of the greater prophets have reached this stage. But taking into consideration men of lesser calibre such as Alexander, Caesar and Napoleon we find that they tried to recast the world in which they lived and almost succeeded in their great designs. The men who served them as instruments, though originally insignificant, became mighty leaders as a result of their association with them, but the grand fabric which these

superior personalities reared crumbled in the dust as soon as they disappeared from the scene of their action. These were indeed ephemeral entities who shot like the meteor across the dark firmament creating only a transient glow leaving no trace behind them. On the contrary, we see with wonder the work of the Prophet of Islam who excels the fancy of the poet in the radiance of his soul. He it was who transformed the whole world by the sublimity of his ideals—the world in which the voice of justice and liberty had been ruthlessly stifled creating a favourable atmosphere for sin and sorrow. His associates were mightier people than Alexander, Ceasar and Napoleon. His work has endured in spite of the desparate efforts of the whole world to destroy it. He alone was competent to work the miracle of remodelling a people like the Arabs who issued from a most unpromising land enraptured by unknown fervours and irresistibly forced out of themselves, intoxicated and longing to fructify humanity with the nectar of God's knowledge. These were truly the people who showed that pious nations alone were free and valiant.

Such is Iqbal's archetype who forges a future for those people who have done penance for wandering away from the path of the great. He stimulates their slumbering passions and by his mere touch and superabundant powers he shows how unexhausted man is still of the greatest possibilities. Iqbal's philosophy thus explains in a forceful manner the conditions and methods by virtue of which a soul grows up to such an elevation and power. And the most essential and indispensable of these conditions is the ascendancy of mind over matter, in other words, the acquisition of power to conquer the animal part of one's self which one shares with inferior creatures. The idealism permeating the poem tends thus to create divine conditions in man and makes him supreme, morally, intellectually and physically. The boundless energy and purity of his mind contribute to a general rise in the moral standard of life and character for the whole community. He inculcates by his own precept and example the necessity of acquiring a self-respect that does not permit a man to yield to what he believes to be wrong, no matter how great the power behind the wrong. In his claim to sovereign control in the ordering of human conduct is the guarantee of the reality of human progress. This perfect man, serene, fearless and firm, enfranchises the soul of humanity; this is his sure touchstone. He lifts the people upwards so that with clarified intelligence and extended vision they can gaze around them into this beautiful world and instantaneously, as if by a miracle, men make larger claims on life, and there manifests itself a more vigorous impulse towards a sensuous fullness of existence which henceforth receives a new colour and a new mission.

This poem conveys the message of life to decadent nations. It also

contains a fearful warning to the blind apostles of a materialistic civilisation. These messages are delivered in a joyfully creative mood. None but rare and strong spirits like Iqbal will ever be animated by the great ambition of creating, not for an age but for all time and for all people. It has the merit to charm the cultured by the beauty of its style and by the idealistic inclinations of its author. The vibrations of Iqbal's melody pass over withered roses like the fresh breeze of a summer morning infusing in them fragrance and freshness. That it will awaken forsaken music among decadent people, is apparent from the intense passion and soul-stirring emotions which pervade this immortal work. By pouring new inspiration into new matter and thus helping the generation of an impulse towards unknown greatness and happiness, Iqbal has rendered unique service to humanity, truth and virtue. Goethe, recognising the idealistic yearning of the human mind, pays high tribute to the genius which awakens the fervour of faith and hope. "The proper study of mankind is man," he says, "and the teacher who is competent to awaken a sentiment responsive to a single good deed or to a single good poem effects more than the teacher who records for us by form and by name whole series of classified natural objects." Nations whose faculties have become atrophied by long and arbitrary restraints on their free exercise, will feel the compelling force of this poem and will be impelled to seek their fullest and freest expressions by developing their moral and mental energies and thus adding to the richness and variety of human thought and action. For them Dr. Iqbal holds out the promise of renewed youth and a supreme life of imperishable glory.

دگر بہ دشت عرب خیمہ زن کہ بزم عجم
مئے گذشتہ و جام شکستی دارد

صاحب طرز نثر نگار اور شاعر ابن الہاء مرحوم
کی یاد میں یہ کتاب انجمن ترقی اردو ہونہ
کی لائبریری کو پیش کی جاتی ہے

FOREWORD

SIR ZULFIQAR has tried in this paper to throw some light on the springs of Iqbal's genius as a poet and a thinker, who through his powerful expression draws the attention of the world to those constructive principles which underlie religion—Islam in this case particularly. To try to fathom the depths of genius is a profitable task for the individual, but as hopeless as fathoming nature. Unlike the platitudes of the common mind it does not yield to anyone, but presents a vista of vision which unfolds with the progress of the race. The poet writes not for the past or even the present, but for the coming age, and therein lies the possibility of his partial or fuller achievement. We skim the surface of the deep and take our fill.

To speak of the real value of Iqbal's poetry would be to scandalise the current notions. To do this with some restraint of enthusiasm is difficult but necessary. So far as his aesthetic value is concerned, for those who are endowed with some refined feeling for the charm of real beauty and harmony of words which have at the same time something to convey, touch with Iqbal's verse can be likened to one thing only, the feeling of sublimated and purified love. It is akin to reading the highest masters of Persian verse. Besides, his verse contains the concentrated mass of thought which characterises other masters of Persian verse who do not possess the aesthetic charm developed to that degree as we find for example in Hafiz. He combines idea with beauty of expression which one hardly finds in his precursors who represent either one or other quality in its excellence but who lack necessarily that something modern which pre-eminently belongs to him.

As to the constructive idea which he has tried to represent in his longer Persian poems, it is an attempt, and a very legitimate one, to prevent the premature broadening of the mystic sense of religious feeling which leads to seeming toleration but hides indifference towards duty, and neutralises and destroys the function of religion by trying to pour into unworthy vessels the elixir of experience which they cannot possibly contain. Men talk and profess things which they do not understand, and thus misinterpret, leading to chaos and decay and absence of that strength which characterises real faith and belief based on living experience, and thus help the disintegration of the social organism which religious feeling alone can hold together and help forward to progress. In this, his work is akin to that which the *Bhagawad Gita* essayed to accomplish for Brahminism, and which consisted in the application of the religio-philosophic idea to the maintenance and progress of human society from which it had been divorced and the neglect of which resulted in its disintegration. What looks like a narrowing tendency in these later poems is nothing but an attempt at wedding together of these two and bringing about a legitimate union between them. The poet had foreseen long ago the chaos which materialism has engendered in Europe and the world, but



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which seemed to be the runner of progress at eliminating the weakness of under mysticism on the one hand and the still worse degenerating tendency to materialism on the other. In this sense, it seems to me these poems are universal, they are of universal value, though apparently addressed only to the Islamic world.

While reading one of the poems with Iqbal, I have been struck with the wealth and terseness of the poetic ideas which escape one in a cursory reading due to the richness of the words with their older significance. He is enriching the language with ideas in the words which his poetical genius has so appropriately selected for their phonetic harmony, in a manner which reveals the truly creative nature of his work. The future ages will read more sense into these words and expressions as we find in other languages which do not remain merely a vocabulary, and the future generations will understand him better than we do now. In this consists the value of his work. A man who has picked up the soil of race ideas in their language, adding to it the substance of his own, as we find in the works of F.W. Bain who has done the same for the word and phrase in the English language by borrowing from them the significance of classic India which they hitherto had not, with the same grace and absence of awkwardness Iqbal has brought to the Persian and Urdu tongues.

The rich-harmony of a Hafiz is wedded to the richness and terseness of a Rumi. It is a happy combination in Saadi which is more than the fact of mysticism. And yet Saadi does not have the Hafiz aesthetic which Iqbal surely does in the composition of his poems though in the serious style of the longer poems the aesthetic sense cannot be naturally kept up to his own level. Iqbal you find a Rumi going above the halting and labouring of the latter in which beauty does not keep pace with ideas, and there are a certain amount of word-padding is to be found which one so often misses in the original. This is a thing which no translation can show in the work of Iqbal or any real poet—while the translations from the mediocre poets sometimes sound better than the original—for, as has been said, only a poet can translate a poet, and that is hardly ever necessary.

Often at the house of my friend Iqbal I have seen him enveloped in that blue haze which he has so often accompanied by a genial and magnetic atmosphere thrilling with subtle poetic vibrations which require no stretch of imagination to feel. Converse at such times has ceased through the touch of that spirit which precedes his song. There are some tall spirits who would remain unaffected, but I find it hard to imagine a man who could resist such a power. The pure and sparkling ambrosia of the gods is demanded of him and again, and one feels a need to share it with other kindred spirits. Partly from these impulses, partly from a desire to light up, though momentarily, an edifice which seldom sees unconventional lights, arose the impulse to write this paper in the breast of my friend, and it may be hoped that though some windows may be closed still, this glow might shine through different chinks, "and steal in through another way," as Iqbal says. The other day I found one of his verses inscribed in a most unusual place.

and no mean street wall too. I could not help smiling at the ways of life, and I hope I have not smiled for the last time in this matter. All credit to my friend. In the present instance the labour has been strenuous and prolonged, though no burden, I am sure. "The inebriate camel carries lightly," as Saadi says, and still more so on the way to Hijaz, as in this instance. And this to my mind symbolises the work, with its poetical wine and the direction to which the caravan happens to be moving.

UMRAO SINGH SHER GIL

Simla:

15 May 1922