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**THE VOICE
OF OMAR KHAYYAM**
A Variorum Study of his Rubaiyyat

**THE VOICE
OF OMAR KHAYYAM**
A Variorum Study of his Rubaiyyat

BY
JAMSHEDJI E. SAKLATWALLA

AUTHOR OF
'RANDOM RHYMES'
'OMAR KHAYYAM IN MUFTI'
OMAR KHAYYAM AS A MYSTIC'
'SOUL GOSPEL OF OMAR KHAYYAM'
THE EPISODE OF BEZAN & MANIZEH
IN PERSIAN FROM
'AREEKH-E-DILKOSHAYI SHAMSHEERKHANY'
THE CALL OF ZARATHUSTRA OR THE LIGHT
OF PERSIA IN BLANK VERSE'
A NEW TRANSLATION OF
RUBAIYYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM—39 QUATRAINS'

**QAYYIMAH PRESS
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SUPPLEMENT No. 2 : Mysticism.

SUPPLEMENT No. 3 : Felicities of Thomas Traherne.



Foreword

"THE VOICE OF OMAR KHAYYAM" makes a useful addition to the numerous aids which my friend Mr. J. E. Saklatwalla has given towards a true understanding of the Iranian mystic as poet and man. In Omar Khayyam we hear the pristine voice of Iran, for he sings in that language which vies with the beauty of the rose and the melody of the nightingale. If all his writings in prose and verse had been preserved, we should have been better able to gauge the extent to which he influenced Saadi, Hafiz, Jami, Attar and other poets who followed him. It was a unique event in the annals of literature when through the genius of Edward Fitzgerald, "the Recluse of Little Grange," Omar's name and fame received a rebirth in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Today we know far more about Omar than even Fitzgerald knew.

The history of the world presents very few instances in which the precision of a scientist and the fugitiveness of a poet are demonstrated by one and the same individual. Omar's researches in Algebra, Euclid and Astronomy were worthy achievements in themselves. Did he fly from science to poetry as a relaxation, or as a refuge, or as a matter of inward necessity? He doubtless found that there are more things in life than can be learnt in the school of experience. The son of a tent-maker, he pitched his tent from plane to plane of realisation. From the known he flew upon the wings of his poesy in quest of the unknown. The mathematician in him was great, but the aspirant in him was indisputably greater.

As Mr. Saklatwalla has repeatedly pointed out, the genius of Omar Khayyam has many facets. Not until we recognise the mystic behind the sceptic can we properly understand Omar. Weaving Ruba'i after Ruba'i because he "could no other", he might have passed into the permanence of literature doubts and misgivings which in reality were but fleeting

eidolons. But it is only through a similar search on our part that we can rise from the phenomenal to the noumenal, from the anguish of the moment to the joy absolute of life. After all, a very thin veil hides the eternal verities from our consciousness :—

“A HAIR, they say, divides the False and True ;
 Yes ; and a single Alif were the clue,
 Could you but find it, to the Treasure-house,
 And peradventure to THE MASTER too.”

In the following pages Mr. Saklatwalla brings out a harmonious picture of the life and vision of one of the most gifted savants who have fertilised the cultural soil of Iran. Besides wielding a facile pen, Mr. Saklatwalla displays an originality of outlook which imparts an educative value to his work. To his many friends in both hemispheres “THE VOICE OF OMAR KHAYYAM” will bring the glad tidings that the literary enthusiasm of this septuagenarian Parsi scholar remains as fresh as ever.

P. C. TARAPORE.

DEDICATED TO
LADY NAVAJBAI RATAN TATA, J.P.
AS AN HUMBLE MARK OF RESPECT AND ADMIRATION

FOR HER
ENLIGHTENED & PHILANTHROPIC ACTIVITIES
AND ZEAL FOR THE GENERAL
UPLIFT AND WELFARE
OF THE PARSI
COMMUNITY
BY
THE AUTHOR

PREFATORY NOTE

1. I am glad to have to admit, and such a confession is so agreeable to me, to find that within a year of my first issue of *Omar Khayyam as a Mystic*, all the copies were eagerly taken up by the admirers of the Rubaiyat of the Astronomer-Poet of Persia. It will be too presumptuous on my part to arrogate all to the merit of my first attempt but more to the ever growing interest in the study of this ancient Persian Poet. Hence I have taken advantage of this second attempt of mine to lay before my readers such other vast store of materials which had eluded my search or which had not come to my hands and remained undiscovered. In this search I am entirely beholden to my friend Mr. A. G. Potter of London, that well-known and enthusiastic collector of almost every item known regarding Omar and Omarian literature, and whose Bibliography has gone to add to what obligations he put me under by sending me from time to time numerous items pertaining to Omar and his poetry and translations of the Rubaiyat in all foreign languages of Europe and Asia.

2. I don't wish to have my book ushered into the world as Gosse once said with "Shawms" and "Trumpets" and in no case I want any exorbitant claim to be made for recognition of its merit. What I want is, to the lovers of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, to supply such material and food *cum notis variorum* as to enable them to study him and to put before them a collection of views and opinions, a kind of *callida junctura* as Carlyle said, from writers of every shade and opinion, from one who exalts Omar to a saint and to the other who degrades him to the lowest depths of a toper, debauchee or hellish infidel, or as Dr. Hastie dubs him as "the ambassador plenipotentiary of His Majesty the Devil." But I have

tried to depict faithfully the image of the soul of the poet whom I love and admire.*

3. Pointing out and indicating errors that may have crept in, in this study, criticism however severe and all suggestions for its improvement will be most gratefully received and appreciated. The writer further hopes that all defects of style, composition and arrangement and co-ordination of materials herein collected, if found wanting may be looked upon, by my readers, with indulgence for which no apology can be more sincere and profound.

4. I owe a full apology to those authors and publishers, and they are numerous, for venturing to cull out short and long extracts from their copyright books. Placed as I am so far out in Bombay the task of approaching one and all for permission would have been, if not impossible, but almost prohibitive. However I have as far as possible given the names of all such authorities from whose books all such excerpts have been culled for the purpose of elucidating my theme, in their choice and expressive language rather than resort to express my meaning and argument in my own language which can in no case rise to the standard of those whose works have largely contributed to help me to enlarge upon the subject under discussion. To all these gentlemen I must reiterate my sense of deep obligation and feel highly beholden to them. Had I not fortified my arguments and resorting to authoritative opinions from various sources my subject matter would not only have lost much force, but would have appeared much less convincing and jejune and vapid.

5. In this short study of Omar Khayyam whom when Dr. Hyde called "King of the Wise," and Von Hammer-Purgstall "The Persian Voltaire," and Ruckert "a Magical Poet," I am not going to paint him as a colossus of learning or a superman. I may be considered an unworthy object in being thoroughly

* Says Whinfield in his Introduction to Omar Khayyam — 1901 Edition — "A man who passed a life of study and had mastered all the theology, the philosophy and the science of the time, could hardly have been the mere sot which a hasty reading of his bacchanalian effusions might lead one to suppose

possessed or obsessed with the subject of my study. I would not like to be styled a hero-worshipper in excelsis.

6. This discursive work may appear pleasant to some and raw and vapid to others. Still this compendium can derive a special interest from the fact of the author's love and devotion to the object of his study coupled as it will be with some of his own views and comments.

7. It is no criticism to say that I have failed in my attempt to study Omar Khayyam since almost everyone has failed, for Omar Khayyam was a master of poetic technicalities and inimitable intricacies with allegorical and mystical symbolism peculiar to all classical Persian Poets.

8. Voltair once said that Petrarch was the most gifted genius of the world in the art of always saying the same thing. So it may be that I may be pardoned by readers of these my "stray thoughts" if they find here repetitions of what I wrote in my previous book *Omar Khayyam as a Mystic*. But Omar's, as is well-known, is a crystal of many facets and hence he can be studied in many ways and examined from various angles of thought and belief. Omar felt with Browning "that infinite passion, the pain of finite heart that yearns." *

9. What engages our mind on his quatrains — of course when mystically and symbolically interpreted — is his "lofty appetancy of soul." Many of Omar's genuine quatrains are not only both high and deep but, "alchemic gems." Apart from his scientific studies the few hundred Rubaiyat (quatrains) he has left or which have survived form truly the immortal portion of his soul.

10. Numberless writers and critics and translators oft times go to distract and cloud the real character and meaning of Omar's poetry, as glasses which multiply, will for the most part be found to obscure.

* Amelia B Edwards looks upon Omar Khayyam as a "Sufi of Sufis, a mystic of mystics"

11. Misapprehensions about Omar Khayyam* arise and come more from reading about him than from reading him. So I exhort my readers to study Omar's poetry in the original to grasp his real philosophy.

12. I have given the last seven years of my life's devotion unreservedly to Omar's Rubaiyat* and to FitzGerald and all along I have placed fresh flowers of tribute on their altars in my mind.

13 The interest that has been aroused in Omar Khayyam, his personality, religion, philosophy, scientific and mathematical studies, his poetry and finally his character, has emboldened me to collect and place before the English reading public in India, Europe and America all such material bearing on the different aspects of Omar's life and work, as have appeared in print from the hands of his admirers and detractors interspersed with some remarks of my own as may have suggested themselves to me to be consistent with the subject in question.

J. E. SAKLATWALLA.

Bombay, January, 1936.

* To the lovers and admirers of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam I should not fail to bring to their notice, if they wish to give a closer and have more intimate acquaintance and accurate knowledge and to give a careful study to the scholarly and most valuable introduction of nearly 132 pages prefixed by Nathan Haskell Dole to his 2 Vols. of the Variorum Edition of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam published by Joseph Knight Co. of Boston, 1896.

“Nothing could be simpler than to abstract from such a poem as the Rubaiyyat of Omar Khayyam the philosophic theory of Life which it expresses.”

— *Basil de Selincourt* (*Life of G. Meredith*).

“It is rather when
We gloriously forget ourselves, and plunge
Soul-forward, headlong, into a book's profound,
Impassioned for its beauty and salt of truth—
’Tis then we get the right good from a book.”

— *Aurora Leigh*.

“Read Omar once, and you can read no more,
For all books else appear, so mean, so poor,
Verse will seem prose, but still persist to read,
And Omar will be all the books you need.”

— *After Sheffield*.

PART I



من بنده عاصم رضای تو کجا است ۰ تار یک دلم نور صفای تو کجا است
ما را تو بهشت اگر به طاعت بخشی ۰ آن یع بود لطف و عطای تو کجاست

I'm a sinful slave, where is Thy grace divine?
My heart is dark, let Thy pure lustre shine!
If Heaven Thou givest as my virtue's wage,
A barter 'tis, where is free-gift of Thine?

R. P. Bhajiwalla.

OMAR KHAYYAM AT SCHOOL

The Story of the Three School Friends



The picturesque story of how Omar*, as a boy, was at school with Nizamul Mulk and Hasan Sabbah, was first told in a European language by Dr. Hyde in his Latin work, *Historia Religionis veterum Persarum*†, published in A.D. 1700. This story contains about all the information we have concerning the early life of Omar Khayyam, modern interest in whom has been aroused by Edward Fitzgerald's superlatively beautiful rendering of the Rubayyat. Fitzgerald has told the story at some length in his 'Introduction' to the *Rubayyat*, and it is faithfully reproduced in the innumerable editions of that famous work. According to the story, Omar Khayyam, Nizamul Mulk, the Vizier of Alp Arslan‡, and Malik Shah§, and Hasan Sabbah, the famous heresiarch and Ismaili propagandist and founder and first Grand Master of the Order of the Assassins, were great friends at Nishapur where, in their youth, they were "learning the traditions" under the venerable Imam Mowaffak, the eighty-five year old scholar and divine.

The three friends are said to have made a solemn vow|| that whichever of them first succeeded in life would share his fortune with the rest. Nizamul Mulk became Vizier to Alp Arslan

* The full geneological names of Omar Khayyam, Nizamul Mulk and Hasan Sabbah, are Ghayas Ud-Din Fath Omar Ibn Al-Khayyam, Abu Ali Hasan Ibn-Ishak, and Al-Hasan b Alf b. Muhammad b. Jafar b Al-Husyn b. as-Sabbah al-Himyari, respectively; Hasan Sabbah was spoken of as Baba Sayyid-na (cf *A Guide to Ismaili Literature* by W. Ivanow, Vide *Two Early Ismaili Treatises* (No 2 of Islamic Research Association, Bombay), Some Nizari Ismailis believe that Omar Khayyam was an Ismaili (Refer Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Vol XIII, 1933).

† p. 409.

‡ A.D. 1063 - A.D. 1072.

§ A.D. 1072 - A.D. 1092.

|| Vide, Prof. E. G. Browne's translation of the passage in question in "Yet More Light on Omar Khayyam", in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1899, p. 409.

comparatively early in life—at forty-two*, as some scholars say—, and both Omar Khayyam and Hasan Sabbah came to him to claim their share. The Vizier, who was great both as an administrator and as a man, kept his promise† and offered Omar Khayyam the governership of Nishapur, the poet's birth-place. Omar, "being a philosopher and a man of sense", declined the offer, and was given an annual pension of 1,200 miskals of gold. Hasan Sabbah, in his turn, was offered the governorship of Isfahan or Ray which he refused, having, it is said, higher ambitions. He asked for and was appointed by the Vizier to a suitable place at the Court. It is said that he plotted against the Vizier, and, being exposed, hid himself for a time and later fled to Egypt. He returned to Isfahan in A.D. 1080 and thereafter travelled extensively throughout Persia, preaching his 'New Propaganda' to further which he founded the Order of the Assassins, the methods of which are fully described by Marco Polo‡. Among the early victims of the Assassins§ was Nizamul Mulk, the friend and benefactor of Hasan Sabbah's early days.

* E D Ross, in his biographical introduction to Methuen's edition of Fitzgerald's rendering of the *Rubayyat* (commentary by Mrs H M Batson, 1900) In speaking of the Vizier's tragic death in 1104 (p 15), he commits an obvious slip as can be made out from his giving the correct date, A D 1092, for the same event on p 33

† The author of the *Dabistan-i-Mazahib* charges Nizamul Mulk with having tried to break the promise

‡ See Marco Polo (Yule's translation), Vol 1, p 139, et seq "The name of Assassin or Hashishin means hemp-eaters, and was applied to the sect from the use of a drug prepared from this plant, during the initiation of members or to nerve them for any extraordinary effort. The sect owes its origin to a Persian named Hasan ben Sabeh who, after a life of unprincipled adventure, became an Ismailite, and for a time settled in Egypt. Eventually in 1090 he established himself at Alamut, south of the Caspian, where his successors maintained themselves till overthrown by Hulagu in 1256 Hasan's influence was political rather than religious, his teaching enforced a blind obedience to the grand master's behest, and for nearly two centuries his followers were the terrors of east and west" (Footnote to p 245 of "The Crusades, The Story of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem", by T. A. Archer and Charles Lethbridge Kingsford (Fisher Unwin, 1894).

§ Nizamul Mulk was in the habit of dining with the poor at his table where the guests were treated with the greatest consideration On such an occasion in 1092 A D., a Young 'Fidai', or "The Self-Sacrificing one" of the Dailemete sect belonging to the Batemiens creed of the Ismailians disguised himself as a religious mystic and assassinated the great Vizier. (Refer Ibnul Athir, Vol. X, p 127 et seq, and Soyoth's History of the Khalifs, page 430). Malik Shah, the noblest of the Seljukian Sultans, whose empire extended from the

This story was for a long time supposed by scholars to be, as no doubt the majority of the readers of the quatrains believe to this day, part of the *vasaya*, or the last will and testament of Nizamul Mulk, the chief character in the story. It accords well with the known facts about the character of the great Vizier who met his death at the hands of the assassin while, according to custom, he was dining with the poor*. The story has further been repeated in such reputable Persian works as *Jamiut-Tawarikh*† (A.D. 1310), *Tarikh-i-Alfi* (A.D. 1586)‡, and, in Mirkhwand's History. From such facts as were known even in the early days of Persian scholarship about the dates of the events in the life of the three notable men of the story, the disparities in dates which it involves must have puzzled many scholars; but all doubts were set at rest by the consideration that the story was taken by the great historian, Mirkhwand, from the testament of Nizamul Mulk himself. The *Vasaya* or the Testament itself does not seem to have been examined at the time. When this was done it was found to be a fifteenth century compilation dedicated to a distant descendant of the great Vizier. The late Prof. Browne, in the course of an article entitled "Yet More Light on Omar Khayyam" §, cites Prof. Muller's criticism of the story and follows it up by a searching examination of the evidences for it. He traces the oldest extant recurrence of the legend to *Jamiut-Tawarikh* by the Ismaili historian Rashid-Uddin Fadlullah who was put to death in A.D. 1318. Rashid-Uddin adduces

borders of China to the Southern frontiers of Palestine, died very suddenly on the 18th of November, 1092, a few weeks after the murder of Nizamul Mulk by the assassins, and many suspected that he had been poisoned by them.

* See note § on p. 2.

† "Suggestions for a complete Edition of the *Jamiut-Tawarikh*," by E. G. Browne (J. R. A. S. for July and October, 1899).

‡ Written by the order of Akbar. The dates given in it are calculated from the death of Muhammad and so are ten years less than the Hijra dates. In *Tarikh-i-Alfi* Omar is stated to have died in A. R. 495 (about A.D. 1112).

§ Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1899, p. 409 et seq.

an Ismaili biography of Hasan Sabbah, entitled *Sar Guzasht-i-Sayyid-na** as authority for the story. This work, which is still extant, seems to have escaped the attention of Prof. Browne, as he roundly says that it was "committed to the flames with much else that savoured of heresy", and is further at pains to prove that it could not have contained the story, as Ata Malik Juvayni, the author of *Jahan-Gusha*, who consulted the same work, does not mention anything about the three friends. Mr. Laurence Lockhart, in the course of his interesting article on 'Hasan-i-Sabbah and the Assassins' in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, London Institution* (Vol. 5, Part 4), quotes from the *Sarguzasht*, and remarks that "it is curious that this story should appear in it". It is clear, therefore, that Juvayni, who was appointed by Hulagu Khan to examine the books found in Alamut after its capitulation in A.D. 1257, preserved the only official biography of Hasan Sabbah which is interesting to us as containing the oldest mention of the story.

But, however eminent the testimonies adduced in its behalf, the chronological difficulties inherent in it make it impossible of acceptance as a piece of history.

Of the three friends of the story, we have the most complete information about Nizamul Mulk whose work as a statesman has earned the praise of posterity. He was the son of Ali of Tus, and was born in A.D. 1017, according to Ibnul Athir. After completing his education he travelled extensively in the East and was secretary to the Governor of Balkh who treated him so meanly that he fled to Merv where he was appointed by Chakir as secretary to his son, Alp Arslan. From this time begins his great and beneficial activity which continued down to A.D. 1092, the year of his death by assassination.

* "When Alaud-Din Ata Malik-i-Juvayni, the well-known author of the "*Jahan-Gusha*" was ordered by his patron Hulagu Khan, after the capture of Alamut, to examine the Assassins' library there' and to destroy all heretical works, he only preserved one book. This book was a biography of Hasan-i-Sabbah, entitled "*Sar-Guzasht-i-Sayyidna*". Laurence Lockhart, in his "*Hasan-i-Sabbah and the Assassins*", *Bulletin of School of Oriental Studies, London Institution*, Vol. V, Part IV, p. 675.

Mr. Laurence Lockhart, in the article already mentioned, says that, "as far as can be gathered, Hasan Sabbah was born in A.D. 1052 or A.D. 1053". But we have exact information about the dates of important events in Hasan Sabbah's public life. Hasan took the Ismaili oath in A.D. 1071, set out for Egypt in A.D. 1076, and returned to Isfahan to found the 'New Propaganda' in A.D. 1080. Alamut (Vulture's Nest), the mountain stronghold, which subsequently played such an important part in the history of the Ismailis, was captured in A.D. 1090, and the exact date of the death of Hasan Sabbah is given in "Jahan-Gusha" as May 23, A.D. 1124.

The Astronomer-Poet of Persia whose *Rubayyat* has captured the imagination of the world today was evidently not considered a poet great enough to merit inclusion in the *Tezkiret* or "Lives of the Poets" written by Awfi about A.D. 1200. Kazwini who wrote the second edition of his geography, *Athar el Bilad* in A.D. 1276, says that "Hasan Sabbah was learned in philosophy, astronomy, geometry and magic. Nizamul Mulk honoured him for his learning"; but does not mention either Omar Khayyam or the story of his friendship with the two eminent men he has just mentioned. Till now *Chahar Makala**, or the 'Four Discourses' (written about A.D. 1154) was considered to contain the oldest known account of Omar Khayyam. Though it has now been antedated by *Tarikh-Hukama al Islam*† of Zahir ad-Din al Bayhaqi written about A.D. 1151, it is indispensable to the student of Omar Khayyam not only on account of the anecdotes about Omar which it contains, but also for giving the date on which the author of that work last saw the poet. In the chapter devoted to Astrologers Arudi gives a circumstantial account of how Omar, in A.D. 1112, predicted that his grave would be in a spot where the trees would shed their blossoms on him twice a year. He goes on

* The *Chahar-Makala* was written about A.D. 1154. See "Chahar-Makala" translated by Prof. E. G. Browne (J. R. A. S. for July and October, 1899).

† cf. Article entitled, "The Earliest Account of Umar Khayyam" (E. D. R. and H. A. R. G.) in Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, London Institution, Vol. V, Part III.

to relate that when he arrived in Nishapur twenty-three years later (A.D. 1135) Omar had already 'veiled his countenance in the dust', and his grave was, as foretold, covered with blossoms. So we have evidence for saying that Omar Khayyam died in some intervening year between A.D. 1112 when Arudi saw him, and A.D. 1135 when Arudi reports his death; and, in point of fact, A.D. 1123 has generally been accepted as the probable year of his death.

In the light of these dates it seems improbable that Hasan Sabbah and Omar Khayyam who died about A.D. 1124 and A.D. 1123 respectively should have been of the same age as Nizamul Mulk, who was born in A.D. 1017. On that supposition we would have to imagine that both Omar Khayyam and Hasan Sabbah were about one hundred and six years of age at the time of their death. Nor could Nizamul Mulk have been at school with Hasan Sabbah who is said to have been born about A.D. 1052, as that would be keeping the famous statesman at school when he was already thirty-five. The story, therefore, has been rejected by some of the most eminent Persian scholars, Prof. Browne, Sir Denison Ross and Dr. Rosen among others.

Of course, the fact that Nizamul Mulk had attained to the highest position in the land when Hasan Sabbah was but a boy of six, rules out any possibility of a compact between them; nor could Omar Khayyam* who died at a very old age have been among the friends of the story. Prof. Browne favours the "acute suggestion" urged by Prof. Houtsma in his preface to *Al-Bundari* that it was not the famous Nizamul Mulk who was the fellow-student of the Astronomer-Poet and of the first Grand Master of the Assassins, but Anushirwan b. Khalid † (A.D. 1066-1139) the less famous and later Minister of the

* Historically speaking, the most probable date of the birth of Omar Khayyam can be placed between 1025-1033.

† The memoirs of Anushirwan Ibn Khalid containing a narrative of the principal events of the author's life-time (A.D. 1072 - A.D. 1134) which contains an interesting account of the Rise of the Ismailis. This was translated into Arabic by a famous historian, Imad-Ud-Din of Isfahan, and in turn, re-edited by El Bundari in A.D. 1226.

Seljukid Prince Mahmud b. Muhammad b. Malikshah (reigned A.D. 1117-31). In his Memoirs which forms the basis of Al-Bundari, Anushirwan distinctly says that he had been acquainted in his youth with "a man of Ray, who, travelled through the world and whose profession was that of a Secretary". This description points to Hasan Sabbah, who, like Anushirwan, was a native of Ray. Anushirwan was born in A.D. 1066, became Vizier in A.D. 1123 and died in A.D. 1139. Though he was younger than Hasan Sabbah—by about thirteen years, as it is conjectured—, he may well have formed a compact with him. In any case, the dramatic and widely-spread story of a school-boy friendship and mutual compact between the Astro-nomer-Poet of Persia and the greatest statesman and the most formidable rebel of the age—a compact said to have been sealed, according to the *Sar Guzasht* with the brave words:—

« خون يك ديگر به خوردند وعهد کردند که از ما هر کدام
که بدرجۀ بزرگ و مرتبۀ عالی رسد ديگران را تربيت
و تقويت کند »

"Let us all swear by our life and blood and make a solemn pact that whosoever, at any time, in any place, rises to a high dignity, or attains to power, should patronise and confer all favours on his friends",

must be considered to be a legend such as grows round the memory of a great name.



THE ASSASSINS

More about Famous Secret Sect of Islam

To the Editor,

The Evening News of India,

Sir,—I have read with great interest the article entitled the "Secrets of the Assassins" in the valued columns of the "Evening News" of the 9th instant, and I request you to allow me to make some comments thereon.

The adventurous Miss Freya Stark can rightly be said to have been the first to explore the once impregnable Alamut near Lambesar. But the statement that she 'penetrated wildernesses never before seen by white men' goes much beyond what she herself claims in the matter. In the course of a most readable article in the Illustrated London News of September 9, 1933, Miss Freya Stark mentions that M. Ivanof visited Alamut a year previous to her visit. Mr. Laurence Lockhart visited Alamut in 1928, and he has given an illustrated account of his hazardous visit in the Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies (Vol. V, Part IV). In it he mentions that a Colonel Monteith visited the fortress in 1831, and that Colonel Shield visited it in 1837-38. Both of them have recorded their experiences in the Journal of the Royal Geographical Society.

A piquant interest is added to the career of the redoubtable Ismailian, Hassan-i-Sabbah, by the story that he was at school with Nizamul Mulk and Omar Khayyam. I have examined the evidences for this story in a pamphlet entitled "Omar Khayyam at School". Of the vast literature on the subject of the Ismailians I consider M. Stanislas Guyard's monograph, 'Le grand Maître des Assassins au temps de Saladin' in the Journal Asiatique (1877) the most exhaustive.

All interested in the history of the Ismailians will be grateful to the Ismaili Research Association which has been doing much good work by publishing hitherto inaccessible Ismaili records under the direction of the eminent scholar, Mr. W. Ivanow.

January 13, 1934.

J. E. SAKLATWALLA.



THE TWO OMARS

Some more Sidelights on the Author of the Rubaiyat

Of those commentators, who have tried to depict the "True Omar" Mrs. Cadell, and facile princeps, Mr. Charles J. Pickering and of the present-day Herr Herrnholt Rempis, have all gone to exalt the name and fame and character of Omar as the father of Persian letters after Ferdousi and Rudagi. Mr. Pickering in his article in the "National Review" for December, 1890, goes to the extent of extolling Omar by comparing him with Dante and Goethe, "to whom the pursuit of knowledge was the business of life, and to sing of it their recreation. A passionate devotion to natural science is characteristic of all three, and in each we see an yearning of human sympathy and a power of pure and lofty friendship." Mr. Pickering offers his general opinion of the poet's verses in these words: "In reading the Rubaiyat, we seem to be spectators of a 'life drama', a master-spirit's progress and development through the clash and conflict of the eternal Yea and Nay; not less so, though less fully expressed than that of Carlyle in Sartor, Shakespeare in the Sonnets or Tennyson in "In Memoriam".

OMAR'S MODESTY

Omar's modesty, simplicity and contentment and retirement can well be pictured in the words of Sir Henry Wotton: "Lord of himself tho' not of lands, and having nothing, yet hath all" and "having knowledge with studious years" who could deny Omar's piety of soul, his occasional outbursts of devotion to God, when he calls for one draught of mystic wine, the love-passion of the Eternal, when he poured forth his deepest thought, as he sang:

"In faith are two and seventy worships, great and small,
 "But the worship of Thy Love will I choose before them all,
 "What's unbelief, Obedience, or Sin?
 "Before Thee, the one Aim, let all pretences fall".

(248 *Nicolas*)

At times Omar in an outburst and rapture of contemplation rises so high as to remind us, in his tone, of Shelley and Emerson. — Refer quatrains Nos. 204, 443, 365 (Whinfield).

It would not be considered out of place to summarise the merit of Fitz Gerald's version as some one said, it is not a translation, but an exquisite poem on Omar, of which Swinburne pronounced every quatrain to be "the sublimation of elegance, the apotheosis of distinction, the transfiguration of grace".

It has been admitted on all hands that Omar was a leader in science and poetry of his own day. No less we would place him in the van of our own culture and philosophy of our own times, in having voiced all the great problems that have puzzled the keenest minds since the beginning of civilisation. Hence it can be safely asserted that Omar cult, this Omar worship that now is widespread, is not a fad or ephemeral. The reason is not far to seek. For there is an ever-increasing number of thinkers as Mr. Dole said, "to whom Omar's utterances as the clearest expression of their own half melancholy, half jocular, but wholly serene and trustful views of life of the future, will always appeal.

HERR REMPIS' ESTIMATE

I am indebted to my friend Herr Herrnhold Rempis of Teck, for the following view on the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, of which he is an enthusiastic student. He gave me a short resume of what he considers the True Omar Khayyam should be and how he should be judged. I am glad he is about shortly to publish a new version of the Rubaiyat in German, and it is hoped, he is sure to throw new light on this "Sultan of the Persian song". I, therefore, give to my readers a foretaste of what Herr Rempis is shortly to present to the world.

"There is no need to make people familiar with the quatrains of Omar Khayyam, as his verses in the most famous and masterly paraphrase of Edward Fitz Gerald have really become an almost national poetry of the English-speaking world, and are distributed in uncountable editions and copies. Yet, Fitz Gerald's euphaneous paraphrase, or "translation", conveys only one—possible—thought-wave of the profound philosophy of the old Persian master-thinker, his mellifluous rhymes show the mere thought of transitoriness and frailty of human life and pleasure, and invite the reader to enjoy this present life to the highest extent. And his after-translators, all the world over, were influenced and fascinated by his suggestions, so that with most of the other translators we do not find any principally differing conception of Omar's epigrams: they use other words or terms, but in fine all say the same. Only J. B. Nicolas, the Frenchman, and J. E. Saklatwalla, the Parsi, have given us another Omar; the former, a sincere and most religious Sufi, or mystic. But with what result? They were and are sought, on account of their spiritual conception".

This shows that Omar Khayyam is known, indeed, at least as to his composing the Rubaiyat, or the quatrains, and perhaps as to one or the other of the numerous European "translations". But all these are mere refractions, no reflections of Omar's thought-light, and especially not the true light itself. Consequently, the searchers after Truth strongly feel the necessity that the world might be made familiar with the true, original Omar Khayyam.

THE TRUE OMAR

But immediately the question arises: Who and where is the true Omar? What principles of life has he taught and uttered? And surely, that is the one great, almost unsolvable problem and difficulty. For each translator held and pretends, of course, that his own rendering is the only true, infallible reflection, or refraction, of modern occidental language before us. But, unfortunately, we have to translate from Persian, a very rich

tongue by origin and still more enriched by Arabic, which has made it one of the amplest languages in the world. And though Persian as to pronunciation and grammar, there has taken place great changes in mind and thoughts since the eleventh century, when Omar lived, up to our modern times. We find similar changes in our Western languages; we use still the same words as, e.g., the Bible of 1611 A.D., but we do not think or imagine the same as our ancestors did, in those days, i.e., the words have undergone a certain "change of meaning".

Therefore, one may know classic and modern Persian best as to grammar and dictionary, but if he is not able to think and feel the expressions in the same manner as Omar and his disciples did, if he is unable to imagine or visualize the customs and the standard of life of those remote days, he cannot render the original four-liners, even if the translators are Persians or Parsis of our days. That is the principal statement about the understanding of all ancient literature by modern people. As soon as we think of Caedmon's songs, we will understand this. And so, a translator and interpreter of Omar should be as many-sided, as educated, as free in thinking, as sharp in criticism, as just in judgment, as kind at heart, as loving and patient in hope, as Omar to live in the atmosphere of his lore. For an intellectualist, a spiritualist, a materialist cannot possibly fathom the depth of Omar's reasoning. With Omar we have to bear in mind the words of Jesus: "God is spirit, and he, whosoever desireth to reach Him, must approach Him in that spirit".



MYSTICISM OF OMAR KHAYYAM

The Wine which this illustrious Poet of Persia persistently called
for was Divine Wine of Intense Longing to seek
and meet his Beloved—God

The principal mystical poets of Persia as enumerated by Dr. R. A. Nicholson are Sana'i, Attar, Jallaludin Rumi, Sa'di, Hafiz and Jami to which I am emboldened to add the name of Omar Khayyam *. The best part of medieval Persian poetry is either genuinely mystical in spirit or is so saturated with mystical ideas that it will never be more than half understood by those who read it literally. Such is the judgment of Dr. Nicholson. One Moslem critic—Nabulusi—said in relation to eroticism in Arabic or Persian poetry, "in every erotic description, whether the subject thereof be male or female, and in all imagery of gardens, flowers, rivers, birds and the like he refers to the Divine Reality manifested in phenomena, and not to those phenomena themselves". According to Recejac, "Mysticism is the tendency to approach the absolute morally and by means of symbols, and its motive force is love".

SYMBOLISM IN PERSIAN POETRY

Symbolism amongst Persian as well as Arabian mystical poets, is used to serve them at times as a mask when plain speaking would have been dangerous. They use such cryptic means of imparting mystical truths. It must be well borne in mind that by 'drunkenness' Persian mystic poets mean "entire loss of self-consciousness" characteristic of the unitive life at its highest level, the state of passing away of phenomenal self in the rapture of love. The tribulations which a

* 'The poet is essentially a seer. His mission is to discover the Secrets of God and to proclaim them to men; to read the Book of Nature and interpret it for us: to make us see with eyes and hear with his ears' — Francis Thomson.

mystic experiences are mere sufferings of intense love for his beloved *.

This does not permit of unhappiness but serves as a mark of divine regard towards Lover and in consequence such trials become the very essence of happiness †. It is, therefore, in such spirit that the mysticism of Persian poets must be interpreted and understood. If one wishes to study the poetry of pure mysticism it is recommended to read Ibnu'l-Farrid's Odes (the Ta'iiyya) in Dr. Nicholson's 'Studies in Islamic Mysticism' ‡.

The Rubaiyyat of Omar Khayyam is, no doubt, one of the most singular works a man of genius ever wrote, a kind of an emporium of infinite riches in a little room. It is an out-pouring of his inmost soul. He bewailed the transitoriness of life and called for "wine, wine, wine", meaning thereby to devote his thoughts and mind in contemplation of the divine and seeking that "Oneness" which is the goal of every true mystic. Omar found himself at odds with the world. He saw God in nature. Divine immanence overpowered his whole being. He saw the beauty of the land, the grandeur of the sea, the interest of life, above all the human life, but he was not satisfied. He prayed for more beauty, longed for fuller grandeur, and looked forward to deeper interest. Such thoughts overmastered him. So in his "Rubaiyyat" Omar poured out, with what fervour, strength and skill he possessed, the intensity of his longing to seek and meet his Beloved (God). It was in himself that he desired increase and exaltation of body, mind and soul. The thoughts of soul-life fetched him to the height of ecstasy and intoxication. He felt that God was still

* Says Puransing in his "Spirit of Oriental Poetry" — The "wine-drenched Khayyam burns within with the light of the face of the Beloved. With him the fire of wine is a symbol of a life of incessant prayer and inspiration"

† Says Lewis Costello — "When a Sufi poet speaks of love and beauty a divine sentiment is always to be understood, however much the words employed may lead the uninitiated to imagine otherwise".

‡ For a complete Glossary of Sufi meanings of certain words and expressions, refer "Selections from the Rubaiyat and Odes of Hafiz" by a member of the Persia Society of London, — pp. 29-40. (J. M. Watkins — London 1920). Also refer Col. Wilberforce Clarke's Notes in his Translation of Diwan of Hafiz.

within him. "Est Deus in nibis"*. Wherever in his "Rubaïyyat" Omar makes mention of his "Beloved", he seeks through the word One whom he loved. No mortal beauty he craved for: just as Plato, whom Omar had well studied, treated "the love of a beautiful person as a mere initiation into divine mysteries, the first step in the ladder that ascends to heaven", as J. A. Symonds well expressed it. The same writer advances a step further and points out that when a man has formed a just conception of the Universal Beauty, he looks back with a smile upon those who find their soul's sphere in the love of some mere mortal object.

It is in the nature of every Nature-mystic such as Omar † was "to make it divine the eternal reality of beauty in the supersensual world of thought". It was Keats who once wrote, "the roaring of the wind is my wife and the stars through the window are my children".

This did not suffice in the case of Omar. He addressed himself to 'wine' and called on his divine "Cup-bearer" to proffer him the "Dewy Wine" (not the fire-water of modern days) of meditation, so as to permit him to adore his maker in fullness of his mind and soul. No earthly symbols satisfied Omar. Just as in the case of Shelley, as Symonds said, "the absorption of the human soul into primeval nature forces, the blending of the principle of thought with the universal spirit of beauty, is not enough to satisfy man's yearning after immortality", such "Aerial spiritualism" of an ardent and impassioned soul, made Omar a pantheist of the highest order, nay almost "one with Nature" ‡.

* God is within us — Ovid

† The mission of a mystical Poet is to bring home to our earthly and finite minds supernatural and infinite truths, he has to translate for us the things of the spirit by the things of sense, he has to give the supernatural as many points of contact as possible with the natural: he has to enable us to apprehend by means of material symbols those spiritual realities which transcend human experience (the message of Francis Thomson).

‡ It is well said that "he who sings of divine love must conceive highly and nobly of human love".



WHO AND WHERE IS THE TRUE OMAR?

More Sidelight on the Author of the Rubaiyat

We see, the greater difficulty is with the translation than with the original itself. But nevertheless the difficulties with the recorded manuscripts of Omar Khayyam's Rubaiyat hinder a translation so much that many and hard researches are needed to solve the problems. For the great question is: Is there any authentic original manuscript in Omar's own hand, or at least dictated by him? and the answer is: None at all! All the manuscripts known to us, differ greatly as to writers, time, number and stock of the recorded quatrains: the oldest collection, or selection of his four-liners seems to be of about 1321 A.D. and contains 329 stanzas, whereas a more recent one, the famous Bodleian MS. of Oxford, of 1461 A.D. records only a more or less one-sided selection of 158 quatrains. And the more modern Persian or Indian collections show up to 770 or even 801 epigrams. But often this collection contains stanzas which are never found in others or vice versa, so that Prof. A. Christensen, Kopenhagen, can give a list of 1213 different four-liners, ascribed to be of Omar's mind.

"WANDERING QUATRAINS"

Moreover, we find a large number of so-called "wandering quatrains" which are found in the diwans, or "collected works", of other Persian poets before and after Omar's time. But it would lead us too far to enter details of such a subtle nature, because we do not know whether the other collections contain "loans" from Omar's compositions or the copyists of his quatrains have enriched their number by loans from other poets. It is customary and too well-known for scribes and copyists in Persia to write on the margins of the poet they are reading or copying verses similar in thought and imagery and not unfrequently changing and correcting the author's original lines



قوی متفکرند در مذهب و دین • جمعی متحیرند در شك و یقین
ناگاه بنادی در آید ز کین • کلی یخبران راه نه آست و نه این

Alike for those who for To-day prepare,
And those that after a To-morrow stare,
A Muezzin from the Tower of Darkness cries,
"Fools! your Reward is neither Here nor There!"
FitzGerald.

or words as may suit their fancy. Such a practice is not unknown even in Western countries. Compare Hall's Satires Book I Satire.....

"Which who reads thrice, and rubs his rugged brow,
 "And deep in den to the every doubtful row,
 "Scoring the margent with his blazing stars,
 "And hundred crooked interlinears".

The conclusion of all this is that there are some spurious stanzas in the different collections and that we cannot pretend to any manuscript that it contains solely absolutely genuine epigrams. Yet we should be wrong in the same way to mark some quatrains with the odium of being spurious. There are no criteria in language or grammar to ascribe the Omarian quatrains to him or to other poets. The sole distinction might be found in the thoughts expressed in the poems, if only we knew Omar's real conception of life exactly! And that is what is asked for! Therefore we cannot realise the true Omar by means of comparing the various translations and interpretations.

But what shall we do then?—To go to the source, i.e. to translate the quatrains anew from the original? And then we shall find at once that there are many doors open for differing translations and conceptions. For, as we have stated already, the Persian words—as most of all oriental words—have a very wide and varying meaning because eastern people like to speak in spiritual pictures or images, whereas our European tongues are too much common-sensed and especially too much differenced (analytical).

The Persian poets of those days were aware of this rich faculty and ability of their native tongue, and therefore fully used this advantage to hide their innermost thoughts from the mean minds of the moron class: Whether by fear of persecution by the clergy or government or by caution not to throw away their pearls of perception before the swine of conception, is an idle reasoning. The fact is, they hid their conviction, which doing is called Ketman, an action between concealment and hypocrisy.

Prof. E. G. Browne once remarked that Persian Poetry is, without doubt, better of its kind than Persian prose; the best Persian poetry is, on the whole that of the mystics.

PLAY UPON WORDS

Reading Omar's verses in Persian we must bear in mind that he was a master of language, and therefore was aware of the fullest meaning, the spirit of each word he used. And so we find that everywhere he made pun upon pun and "delightingly" played with words and expressions, mainly with the written language. Persian was and is written in Arabic characters, of which the most remarkable is that the short vowels are not expressed, so that we are allowed to read a word just as we like, sometimes as a Persian or an Arabic word. And thus Omar often uses words which may be read so or so. Furthermore, we have to consider that—from a certain point of view—the greater art is to please with poetry the vilest mind as well as the most refined character or the subtlest thinker than to confine oneself only to one sort or to show—too openly—one's real intentions.

In consequence, we must weigh almost each word of Omar in gold balance and consider all possible meanings. But this is far more easily said than done, for we know of our human imperfections that everybody is bound (to a certain degree) by his inherited, inborn instinct and inclinations, and the acquired development of these endowments.

Consequently the sensualists or phenomenologists—whether academicians or not—only can grasp the seeming or "literal" (i.e., colloquial) significance of the verses, or believe that this is the sole truth of them. The spiritualists see only a moral, religious, or, in some special cases where no ethic may be observed, an allegoric or even mystic meaning. While the intellectualists or philosophers cling to a philosophic or "abstract" understanding of Omar's wise sayings, whereas a well-balanced mind is able to realise the four-liners in all three mental ways of thinking: in a physical (sensual), in a spiritual (moral), as

well as in a mental (intellectual), or even in a fourth way—in an essential understanding.

Yet was Omar one of their one-sided sorts? or was he universally balanced in his instinct and inclinations? For only then he would have been a Master, otherwise only a leader (chief) or thinker (philosopher). A leader or thinker cannot give the universal truth, because—to a certain extent—he is one-sided in his views, opinions and thoughts. Only a master is worth our consideration and worthy to influence our daily walks of life. Yet when we believe in the Master Omar Khayyam, we have the duty to prove our convictions and to give some examples of its truth.

The first consideration to know the true Omar Khayyam aright is to leave all our modern European ideas, thoughts, convictions, considerations, conceptions or confessions alone, and simply to see him as he was. To this end we must be acquainted with Persian history and generally with raceology.

To conclude, Omar had always before his mind's eyes the presence and love of God. He made incessant efforts to establish a direct relation to God, so that his ever repeated call for "wine" indicated nothing but an approach to Divine Reality. Thus Omar's life's philosophy cannot be summarised better than in the words of Dr. Estlin Carpenter:—

"God is through all and in all, so that life and limb are His through all and in all, so that He breathes in our breath, speaks in our speech, thinks in our thought. What then? Shall we suffer and He not know? Are we in pain and will He not feel? It is the mystery of His nature to be the Eternal and the All-pervading, and yet to blend Himself with our mortal frame, and to abide unchanged while we grow and decay."



THE RUBA'I OR QUATRAIN

Influence of Omar as a Poet

The Persian ruba'i or quatrain is essentially an epigram, a miniature poem condensed into itself, "a moment's monument" rounded, epitomised, complete. The ruba'i generally serves as a vehicle to express the union of mystical and moral thoughts. Each ruba'i conveys a complete utterance, short and well-strung. Says Ethe, the ruba'i gives the most concise expression to religious and philosophic aphorisms. The Persian quatrain serves in the first three lines to indicate the subject-matter and the fourth as they say, 'drives the nail through the heart'.* The metre of the Persian ruba'i is intricate and puzzling to those who are not familiar with and well versed in the prosodial arrangement of the verses contained in it. The rhyme scheme is peculiar and intricate. It is said that there are in all 24 different metres in Omar's Rubaiyat. I would recommend my readers to study the learned paper on Persian prosody and metres in the Persian language contributed to the Journal of the Bhandarker Institute for 1926 by Prof. M. T. Patwardhan, M.A., Professor of Persian.

According to Professor Browne the following four poets are considered to be the most celebrated for composing the Ruba'i, viz.:—Omar Khayyam, Baba Tahir of Hamadan, Abu Sa'id bin Abi'l Khayr, Shaikh Al-Ansari or Pir-i-Ansar.

The best definition of a Persian Ruba'i I know of is the one given by Dr. A. Christensen. The Ruba'i, says he, is of pure Persian origin. It rhymes as (a a b a or a a a a)

Christensen defines the ruba'i "Le ruba'i est merveilleusement propre à exprimer une pensée spirituelle sous une forme épigrammatique. Dans le ruba'i cet esprit persan tantôt gai et

* In one place says Sir Lucas King "it is the essence of Sufi teaching that love for the Divine Being should be purged of all hope of reward, as this will keep alive the illusion of self".

railleur, tantôt sceptique et blasé, tantôt déchiré de doutes, triste plein d'angoisses tantôt plongé dans les contemplations mystiques, a trouvé son expression juste. Ici, encore, la brièveté de la strophe force le poète à être économe des mots, à renoncer à cette emphase diffuse, sous laquelle les idées se perdent souvent complètement".

On this head Friedrich Bodenstedt beautifully expresses his well-considered opinion, "many of his quatrains might be taken for newly discovered verses of Goethe, rather the utterances of a poet who lived 800 years ago and yet he stood on a height of speculation and cast such deep glances into nature as if he had the prophetic penetrating knowledge of all our philosophic hypotheses and speculations and our modern natural science. He may be compared to Lucretius among the Romans".

"Khayyam still lives' his magic rhyme
Is forged of spells that conquer time.
The hopes and doubts, the joys and pains,
That never end while Man remains,
The sin, the sorrow, and the strife
Of good and ill in human life
Such themes can ne'er grow stale and old
Nor can the verses in which they are told.
Reflecting as it does each phase
Of human thought and human ways
The world may roll through ages yet
New stars may arise, old stars may set
But like the grass and like the rain
Some things for ever fresh remain.
Some poets whom no rust can touch,
Khayyam and Horace are of such.
But while we knew the Roman's tongue,
Khayyam in vain for us had sung,
Till one arose on English earth
Who to his music gave new birth.
Henceforth, so long as English speech
Shall through the coming ages reach,
The name of Khayyam will go down,
With such a glory of renown
As ne'er on Eastern poet's brow
Has poured its radiance until now."

STRAY MUSINGS IN THE RUBAIYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM

FITZGERALD'S OMAR ON ITS FIRST APPEARANCE

In the history of the first appearance of the "Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam" by Edward FitzGerald it would interest my readers to read in extenso the few lines Mr. Bertram Dobell wrote about a similar adventure that befell James Thomson's masterpiece "The City of the Dreadful Night". Says Mr. B. Dobell, "It was on 22nd March 1874, the first instalment of the 'City of Dreadful Night' appeared in the 'National Reformer' (which was then conducted by Charles Bradlaugh). Not FitzGerald's 'Omar Khayyam' which had been published about 15 years before, and which was then beginning to be talked about, stole into the world more noiselessly or seemed less likely to attract the world's attention and admiration than did Thomson's Masterpiece. The fates of two poems were indeed much alike. Both would have passed into complete oblivion but for the fact that they chanced to be seen by a few appreciative judges, who were able at last to persuade the reading public—or that small section of it which cares for poetry that though they had been heralded by no flourish of trumpets, and appealed to no popular sentiment they must be reckoned henceforth among the greatest poems of the Century." Further on Mr. Dobell remarks, that J. Thomson's poem, "City of Dreadful Night", it must be admitted that it was much more favourably received than was FitzGerald's "Omar Khayyam", on its first appearance in print, whether that poem received any notice at all from the Press I do not know but it is certain that it did not receive any such notice as could have induced more than a very few readers to purchase it.

I have attempted to nominate Omar as a "Laureate of Pessimism". The following five stanzas from James Thomson's

"The City of Dreadful Night" may well be read in conjunction with the Rubaiyat of Omar, Nos. 42, 53, 126, 137, 140, 154, 290, 369, 398, 406, 420, 441, (Whinfield's Edition 1901). These Rubaiyat well indicate the modern mind of Omar eight centuries before. Such echoes of pessimism can be found in Leopardi and Schopenhauer,

"This all-too humble soul would arrogate
Unto itself some signalising hate,
From the supreme indifference of Fate!"

"Who is most wretched in this dolorous place?
I think myself, yet I would rather be
My miserable self than He, than He
Who formed such creature to His own disgrace"

"The vilest thing must be less vile than Thou
From who it had its being, God and Lord!
Creator of all woe and sin! abhorred,
Malignant and implacable! I vow."

"That not for all thy power furled and unfurled,
For all the temples to Thy glory built
Would I assume the ignominious guilt,
Of having made such men in such a world."

"As if a being, God or Fiend, could reign,
At once so wicked, foolish,, and insane,
As to produce men when He might refrain!"

In number of the Rubaiyat of Omar the reader will find pessimistic and self-derogatory moods of mind, felt keenly by him as time and occasion suggested and just as James Thomson once expressed himself in a very telling epigram:—

"Once in a saintly passion
I cried with desperate grief,
O Lord, my heart is black with gile,
Of sinners I am chief."

"Then stopped my guardian angel,
And whispered from behind,
Vanity, my little man,
You're nothing of the kind."

Has this not been often echoed by Ecclesiastes in a desperate mood of doubt and despair!

FITZ'S VERSION ACCORDING TO MICHAEL KERNEY

FitzGerald maintained that in the absence of the perfect poet, who shall recreate in his own language the body and soul of his original, the best system is that of a paraphrase conserving the spirit of the author—a sort of literary metempsychosis."

FitzGerald must be accounted as the most accomplished metaphrast the English language has come to know.

SUFISM IN GENERAL

It must not be supposed that Sufism originated in the two centuries after the birth of the Mahomedan religion, says C. H. Bijerregaard in his book on Sufism (Omar Khayyam and FitzGerald):

"The seeds of Sufism were sown in the time of Adam, germed in that of Nuh (Noah), and budded in that of Ibrahim (Abraham). It began to develop in the time of Musa (Moses), reached maturity in Isa (Jesus), and produced pure Wine in Mahomed."

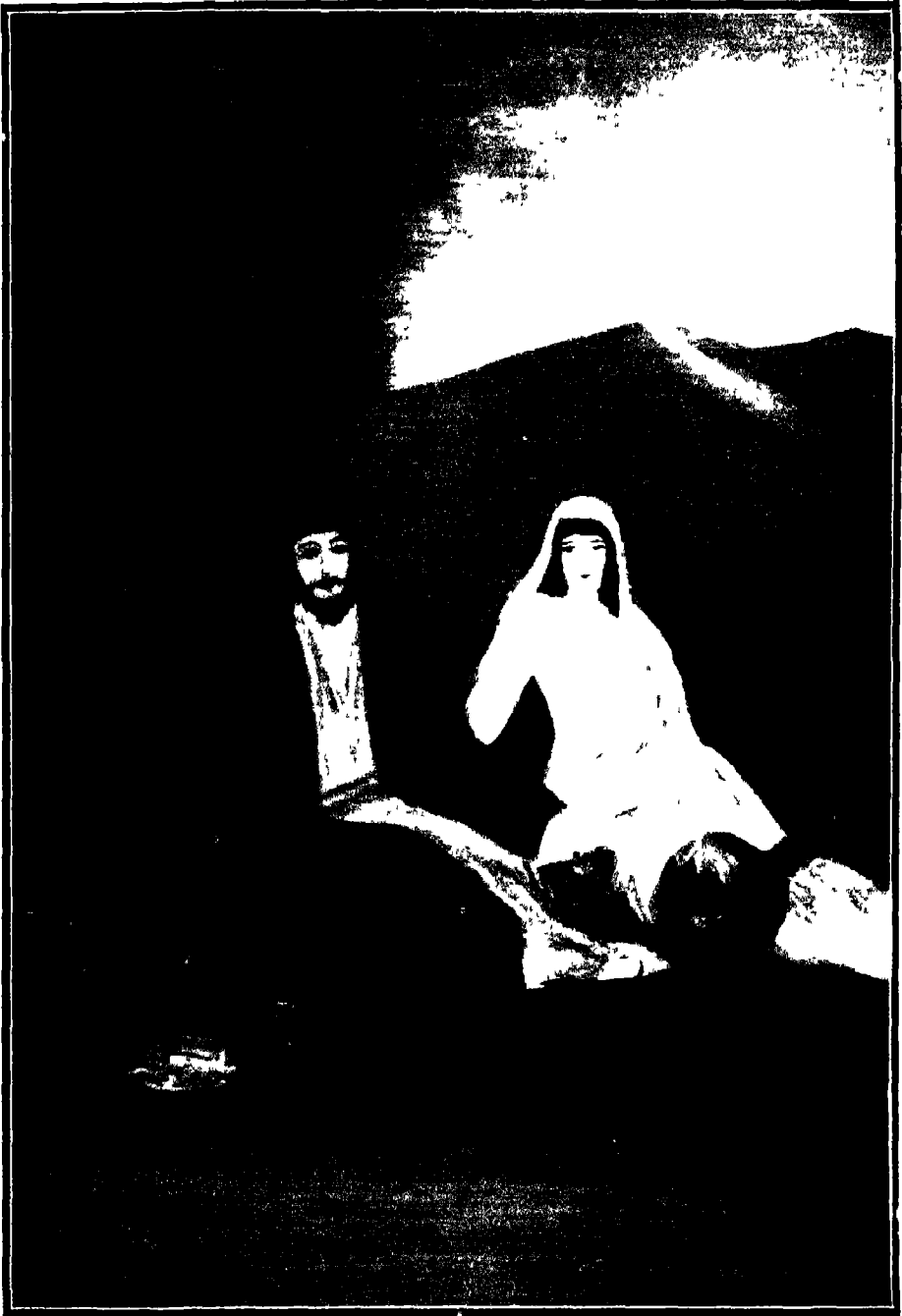
"WINE"

The Sufi by calling for wine does not mean the "red juice of the grape" but the "Wine of God's grace". In fact the Sufi is no drunkard. Wine is prohibited to him. So when he calls for "Wine, Wine" he does not want that kind which drives wisdom away; he wants that pure and unmixed wine whose hidden power vanquishes fate; that wisdom which saves from the burden of all mistakes; that clear wine which sanctifies the heart; that illuminating wine which points out the true path; that pearly wine which purifies the meditative mind and its fancies. By Wine Omar meant "God-intoxication", for he well knew that God is love and everyone that loveth knoweth God. Says Browning in "Saul":

" And God is seen, God
In the Star, in the Stone, in the Flesh,
In the Soul, in the Clod."

ہوا ہے کہ دل ہمیشہ دل کے لئے ہے خفا ہے نہ کسی کی بات ہے ہم سے
 ہوا ہے کہ ہم نے یہی دل کے لئے ہے دل کے لئے ہے نہ کسی کی بات ہے ہم سے

Without pain, when I cannot live a day,
 Without a cup my body's strength gives way,
 I am that moment's slave when such cries,
 "Have one more cup," and I cannot obey.



Says a moslem mystic "Man Arefa nafasa-hu, arefa Rabba-hu"
 — One who knows himself, knows his God. Fernand Henry said
 "Pourle mystique, 'le vin' est le symbole de l'ivresse Divine".

THE ROSE

The Rose in Persian poetry is an emblem of Love amongst all nations. The Nightingale is fond of the Rose and becomes amorous in its presence and becomes intoxicated with its song in rose's company. The Rose's thorns often penetrate his breast, yet he sings best when wounded.

EMERSON

R. W. Emerson in his excellent Essay on Persian Poetry has well expressed the mystical meaning of "wine" where he remarks — "love of Hafiz the Persian Poet is not to be confounded with vulgar debauch. Hafiz praises wine, roses, maidens, boys, birds, mornings, and music, to give vent to his immense hilarity and sympathy with every form of joy, and lays the emphasis on these to mark his scorn of sanctimony and base prudence." Special and serious attention should be drawn of those who wish to know more about Persian mysticism and Sufism to the masterly work of Mr. R. P. Masani's "The Conference of the Birds" — a Sufi Allegory of Faridud-din Attar. The introductory Note on Persian mysticism in this work is a knowledgeable study of the Persian Sufi and gives in a most succinct manner a clear grasp and conception how mystical poets like Omar Khayyam, Hafiz, Sadi, Rumi, Attar, and Jami are to be comprehended and understood. It will be too long here to quote it. Admirers of Persian poetry are advised to turn to the book itself. No less would I direct the attention of the author of "Life's Echoes" to this work.

Says Mr. Masani, "Self-renunciation is the be-all and end-all of Sufism, but it must not be confounded with renunciation of the world. It rather exhorts them to plunge themselves in it and in the universe, and to know their mutual relations. This knowledge can only be attained from within by self-mergence &c."

نگه کردم اندر دل خویشان * درین جاش دیدم دگر جا نبود

Dr. OTOMAN Z. HA'NISH ZAR—ADŪST

Before I proceed I must perforce draw my readers' attention to a weighty pronouncement of Rev. Dr. Otoman Zar-Adust Ha'nish of Los Angeles, California, in his monthly magazine "Maz-daz-nan" Vol. XXII April 1923, No. 4—on Omar Khayyam at page 226—where he says:

"Omar Khayyam must be read with understanding; read in his own language; he must be read in his own spirit; he must be read from the standpoint of the spirit of the times, the world and the environment of his day. He must be read from a higher sense in which he lives, to gain full worth of his writings, be it his poems or otherwise."

It was FitzGerald who wrote to Cowell:

"Hafiz and old Omar Khayyam ring like true metal.

The philosophy of the latter is one that never fails in this world."

Omar then also proceeds to harp upon the oft repeated Sufi doctrine that Truth can only be found *within* and one must die to 'self, to live in God'. "Mutu qabla an tamutu!" that is "Die before you die." "Die to thyself that thou mayest live" this Hegelian formula of Christian humility and self-sacrifice rang itself in Omar Khayyam's heart as a constant refrain.

Socrates and Fichte told us that to know self was to know Nature, but Omar, not unlike Lucretius and Schelling that to know Nature was to know self, inasmuch as we knew that our poet was more of a Nature mystic than a dupe of Nature.

"'Tis the sublime of man,

Our noontide majesty to know ourselves.

Parts and portions of one wonderful whole!

But 'tis God

Diffused through all, that doth make all one whole."

(Coleridge—Religious Musings.)

No less did Omar abandon the doctrine of Predestination. Prophet Mahomed was also possessed by the conviction that human destiny was immutably determined beforehand. Though the Holy Koran contains several passages on human free will, still the fatalistic doctrine held a powerful sway over the mind of orthodox Moslems. Omar wrote upon the uncertainty of life, the eternity of time and the mutability of human and terrestrial things.

On the question of Destiny, Sir Mohamed Iqbal, in his 'Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam' (Ox. Un.) holds that Destiny is not so unrelenting fact working from without, but it is, "inward reach" of a thing, its realisable possibilities, which lie within the depths of its nature. This view of Destiny, says Margaret Smith, is one way in which unitive experience expresses itself, that union which the mystics of Islam teach is not the finite effacing its own identity by absorption into the infinite, but rather the infinite passing into the loving embrace of the finite."

On the subject of "Personal Immortality" — Sir Iqbal lays down that it is to be achieved by personal effort and physical death leads to "BARZAKH", a state in which the soul catches a glimpse of fresh aspects of Reality and in which it is prepared to adapt itself to these aspects. Life is then, one and continuous. (Read in connection with this, "On the Edge of the Etheric" by G. A. Findlay).

NAISHAPUR

Omar was born in Naishapur in Khorasan. Mirkond, the celebrated Persian historian, spoke of Khorasan (of which Naishapur) was the capital: "It is the very centre of the most cultivated, the most civilised, the pleasantest and the goodliest portion of the globe, the middle gem of the necklace of the world." Hence Naishapur had become the focus of Persian Culture and the central point of the world's intellectual activity. Naishapur could be surpassed only by the famous city Cordova. It was the time when Europe was plunged al-

most in total intellectual darkness. It no less stood as an undisputed rival to Cairo and Baghdad—the hub of Eastern learning—"the vestibule of the Orient".

Poet Anwari said "if Paradise is to be found on the face of the earth, it is Naishapur, if not there, it exists not". For a description of Naishapur in the time of Omar Khayyam refer *Calcutta Review* Nov. 1927 and in the same number will be found a disquisition on the Philosophy of Omar Khayyam's quatrains.

SUFI IDEAL OF POVERTY

The Sufi ideal of poverty, however, transcends, that of renunciation of worldly goods. It enjoins not only lack of material things, but also lack of all thought or desire for worldly as well as spiritual bliss. No such thought or wish should divert his attention from God. To be detached entirely from the present as well as the future life and to desire nothing except the Lord of the present life and the future life—that is real poverty.* (R. P. Masani—Conference of Birds p. 71 note).

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SUFI

In the words of Jami the mystical quatrains of Omar Khayyam must be read not with the ears of flesh and bone, but with ears of the heart and the soul.

Love is a divine gift. Those who love God are those whom He loves. All the love—romances and mystical poetry—the stories of Laila and Majnun, Yusuf and Zuleika, Salaman and Absal, are allegorical expressions of the soul's passionate longing to be reunited to God. One day a man asked a Shaikh "pray, tell me what is love?" The Shaikh replied, 'Love is this, that thou shouldst sell the merchandise of a hundred worlds to buy *wine* (the symbol for love of God)'.

Persians look upon this world as a wine-house. The Cups are going round eternally and every new-comer has his destined

* Read and compare "Life of Rabia" by Dr. Margaret Smith.

cup handed to him by the divine Cup-bearer. Thus the heart becomes the mirror in which Divinity is reflected.

NAUSHIRWAN THE JUST AND GREEK PHILOSOPHERS

Naushirwan was a patron of science and learning. It was therefore natural that the seven philosophers, Hermias, Eulalias, Priscian, Damascius, Isidore, and Simplicius, who were driven from their homes by the persecution of Justinian, should have thought of taking refuge at his court in Persia. We find that under this Persian Monarch's orders the work of the most celebrated Greek and Sanskrit authors were translated into Pahlavi.

ZOROASTRIANISM SOURCE OF SUFISM

Pincott in Hughes' "Dictionary of Islam" traces the source of Sufism to Zoroastrianism. In his interesting article on the religions of the Sikhs he observes: "Sufism is not as Dr. Trumpp supposes, due to Hindu Pantheism, but it arose in the very earliest days of Mahomedanism, and is almost certainly due to the influence of Persian Zoroastrianism on the faith of Arab Islamism". Sufism is a religious philosophy of Love, Harmony and Beauty.*

The last great name among the neo-Platonists is that of Proclus, learned in the lore of symbols† and oracles and in the rapt utterances of Orpheus and of Zoroaster. He elaborated the trinity of Plotinus into a succession of Triads reminiscent of the influence of Zoroastrianism.

Says Mr. R. P. Masani in his Foreward to "the Conference of the Birds" by Farid-ud-Din Attar: "A study of Sufism will help us in the materialistic age to steer clear of the arid rocks of egotism while avoiding the engulfing whirl-pools of nihilism.

* The Sufi Initiate will tell us that Jesus was the greatest Sufi, as in his former incarnation has Zarathustra (Zoroaster) the great Persian Initiate King

† French Symbolism — Its origin. A learned article by Dr. M. J. Dave, M. A., Ph. D., D. Litt., in the Sanj Vartman Pateti number of August 1929 pp. 85, 99. Also refer Zoroastrian Theology of Dr. M. N. Dhalla Ph. D., Ch. 36, pp. 311-18.

The world would indeed be at all times much the better for a little infusion of the exalted devotion of mystics like Mirabai or Muktabai or of the quietism of Rabi'ah or Madame Guyon, or the transcendentalism of Maulana Rumi or Schelling, or the ecstatic exaltation of Mansur Hallaj or Meister Eckhart, or of the mystical compulsion of Joan of Arc or Florence Nightingale."

FitzGerald says in his note (14):

"One of the Persian Poets — Attar*, I think, — has a pretty story about this. A thirsty Traveller dips his hand into a spring of water to drink from. By and by comes another who draws up and drinks from an earthen bowl and then departs, leaving his bowl behind him. The first Traveller takes it up for another draught; but is surprised to find that the same water which had tasted sweet from his own hand tasted bitter from the earthen Bowl. But a Voice from heaven tells him the clay from which the Bowl is made was once man; and into whatever shape renew'd, can never lose the bitter flavour of Mortality."

OMAR AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

Those who are familiar with the literary history of the Arabs will readily come to acknowledge that even before the time of Omar Khayyam there were scholars like Al-kindī and Al-farabī, Ibn Badja (Avempaco), Al-batēni and many more of outstanding merit well-known for their study of medicine, philosophy, and the mathematical and Astronomical sciences. It is therefore not to be wondered at that a literary genius such as Omar was, had come into closer contact with his contemporaries and studied their works. Al-kindī was known to have written two hundred treatises on scientific and philosophical subjects, only few of which have survived. Al-farabī was renowned for his great learning and knew seventy languages. It was he who gave the tone and direction to nearly all subsequent speculation among the Arabs. No less was Avicenna recognised as an illustrious writer. Ibn Badja's well-known work "The Republic of the Solitary", was a favourite with religious thinkers of the time and Ibn Tofail elaborated after him on the same sub-

* He lived upto 111 years.

ject. But among these writers Al-batani of Mesopotamia who died in 929 was mainly noted for his astronomical and mathematical writings and his commentaries on Ptolemy. It must be, therefore, from Al-batani that Omar could have derived his knowledge of Astronomy and Algebra, and on both these subjects he improved upon and added to that of his predecessor. Omar was no less proficient in the study of medicine as in the centuries which followed the Hijri Era medicine was considered as indispensable adjunct to the study of philosophy and science amongst the literary of the period. Omar was also reputed for his medical studies and it cannot be gainsaid that he had not made himself familiar with Avenzoar and Constantine the African, great medical authorities of the time.

"The rich melancholy of Omar", the sensuousness, wearing so decorous and refined note of poetical rhetoric, the fatalism which was sentimental rather than pessimistic, the delicate and suggestive handling of these vast problems of destiny and suffering which are so mysteriously attractive as long as the spirit is not brought face to face with their practical issues—all this gives force and weight to the solemn appeal of FitzGerald's sonorous and majestic verse. The poem is penetrated with the philosophy of the human spirit at war, when its questionings are unanswered and all refuge has failed. Omar was a sentimentalist and a lover of beauty, both human and natural; both Omar and FitzGerald alike were deeply penetrated by the emotion which Tennyson called "the Passion of the past, the pathos of all sweet things that have an end". Omar Khayyam poured forth his inspiring verses "*avec sang de son coeur et la propre flamme de sa pensee.*"

In the well-written paper "The Many-sided Omar" Johnson Brigham says "I fail to find in the 1200 or more quatrains attributed to Omar a single allusion as suggestive of the so-called "sex-complex" as can be found in "The Song of Solomon" or some of Shakespeare's Songs or to give a modern instance or two, Swinburne's "Love and Sleep" or Amy Lovell's "Anticipation".

OMAR KHAYYAM AND ECCLESIASTES

"A Study In Despair"

The many coincidences which the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam present to the thought and language of Ecclesiastes have been somewhat obscured by the fact of the latter having been included in the Holy Bible. Ecclesiastes, according to modern exegists, particularly the learned Jastrow, is now admitted to be the work of Koheleth, and not that of the wise king Solomon, as is made to appear in the work itself. The latest date given to its composition falls about two centuries before the Christian era, and it is now admitted that considerable interpolations of an exhortatory kind have been imported in order to make it an 'edifying' work. These facts are important in so far as they help us to separate the thoughts of Koheleth from those of his pious fabricators.

Like the Koheleth of the "Ideal Biography", in his relation to the Jewish Rabbis of his time, Omar Khayyam's "half-voluptuous, half cynical strain" seems to have set up a minatory wagging of beards among the Inams of Islam and the mystics of the sufi sect. Filled with what Renan called '*la grande curiosité*' and giving their hearts to search, to seek, and to know, Koheleth, like his Persian prototype of the twelfth century, could not be cribbed, cabined, and confined within the limits of a narrow creed.

The melancholy refrain of 'vanity of vanities, all is vanity' is heard again and again in Koheleth, and it is vigorously echoed back in Omar's.

"Fools, your Reward is neither Here nor There." That life is short and death is certain are the only two things of which they are sure; and they alike counsel us to make the most of what we may yet spend. Koheleth, whose disciplined mind stalks majestically between extremes, concludes that there is



nothing better for a man than that he should "thus eat and drink, and be merry". Omar Khayyam, too, wished to live 'in some corner of the hubub coucht', as we know from the fact of his declining the offered Governorship of Naishapur. He does not seek the glories of the world or sigh for the paradise to come, but would be content with the cup 'that clears To-day of past regrets and future Fears'.

LIFE AFTER DEATH

Man's aspirations after immortality are met by Koheleth with "Who knoweth in what way a man is better than a beast?" Only the dead can speak with knowledge if they could come back alive to this world, and, Koheleth gently asks, "Who shall bring him?", to which we have Omar's defiant conviction.

"Drink—for once Dead you never shall return." To the question whether the prophets and sages of the world have not spoken of an after life in which the inequalities of this world are to be redressed, we have Omar's characteristic outburst:

"Why, all the Saints and Sages who discuss'd
Of the Two Worlds so learnedly are thrust
Like foolish Prophets forth: Their words to scorn
Are scattered, and their mouths are stopp'd with dust."

The scepticism is extended by Koheleth and Omar Khayyam alike to the very foundation of religion, the former of whom takes the view that religion originated in no small measure from dreams, and is, therefore, impelled to warn us that, "In the multitude of dreams and many words there are also diverse vanities". The thought is reiterated in Omar's:

"The Revelations of Devout and Learned.. ..
Are all but stories, which awake from sleep;
They told their comrades, and to sleep returned."

The speculative Nihilism of Omar Khayyam and of Koheleth alike deny the basis for the "ultimate values" of religion, sin and virtue, the former of which is to be punished in hell, and the latter to be rewarded in heaven. It is unthinkable that

such great minds should even be deterred from 'making themselves manifest' by such crude belief.

"THE WHEEL OF FATE"

Both take their stand firmly on the 'terra firma', and see things as far as the eye of man can reach. There is no ambiguity about them. Koheleth ironically notes that 'there is one event unto the righteous, and to the wicked'. "Dust unto Dust and to Dust descend", says Omar with characteristic conviction, and his mind burrows underground where the erstwhile member of the human body becomes common clay, and is thereafter used for making pots and cups. In the beautiful parable of the Pots, the Kuzeh-nameh, we have the talking pots summarising their relation to the Potter. One pot, in particular, which had been spoilt in the making, is made to ask why it should be punished because of the unsteady hand of its maker. We have here, in a sentence, the poet's protest at the injustice of meting out punishment for sins committed in a world where everything is pre-determined. Koheleth is singularly like Omar in his masterly summing up that there is nothing new under the sun, that the world moves round a pre-ordained orbit. The existence has come about by the movement of a blind mechanical power variously symbolised by Omar as "the wheel of fate", "the Eternal Saki", "the moving finger".

The ball may not make questions of Ayes or Noes, but with sentient beings the desire to know is part of life. 'This is a sore travail given by God to man to be exercised therein', says Koheleth, and Omar who visited doctor and saint, was not able to know more than 'I came like water and like wind I go'. Koheleth was brought to such a pass that he hated life and sought to give himself unto wine.

BACCHANALIAN PHASE

The bacchanalian phase of Omar seems to be the one most known of him, with the result that his reputation has been verily sold for a song. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that the apparent hedonism is not the light-hearted ravings of

a tipsy-toper but the bitter jest of a powerful intellect. His scepticism certainly, leads him to tranquil Epicureanism like that preached by Koheleth—eat, drink and be merry—but he never sought to narcotise the sense of wretchedness by the stimulation of the wine-cup.

Numberless instances of unconscious parallelism between the ancient Hebrew and the medieval Persian free-thinker can be piled up but one point of divergence between the two remains to be noted.

Their temperaments vary. Omar Khayyam has been called flippant and irreverent, whereas Koheleth is gentle, detached and almost academic. Omar is passionate, bitter, and defiant, while the Hebrew preacher's equable irony is never ruffled by vehemence. As expressions of 'the very original Irreligion of Thinking Man,' as FitzGerald phrased it, the Ecclesiastes, like the Rubaiyyat, must be accorded the foremost place among the works that have expressed man's deepest doubts.

These Rubaiyyat of Omar betray to us most vividly the presentiment of Omar's personality. Like Byron Omar appears everywhere through his poem. An admirer of Omar opined that this astronomer-poet of Persia was a blend of Anacreon, Koheleth, Voltaire and Villon. Despite this amalgam he was the milk of human kindness—having 'engrafted', to use his own expression, 'the leaf of love upon his heart'. His heart melted at the sight of human suffering, he sang—"so far as in thee lies, cause no pain to anyone". From a careful study of the Rubaiyyat it would be hard, nay impossible, to believe that his Esthetic mind would ever be attracted to coarse pleasures and indulgence of deep draughts of heady wine. Omar should never be taken literally. Omar was not averse to society and learned friends. For the beauties of Nature he had a poet's passion. In fact he can be called a Nature-Mystic as he said "the thoughtful soul to solitude retires". Western scholars have looked upon Omar 'a philosopher of scientific insight and ability far beyond that of the age and country he lived in'.



OMAR KHAYYAM AND ABU'L-ALA'

OMAR KHAYYAM (A.D. 1025-1123).

ABU'L-ALA'L-MAARRI (A.D. 974-1058).

One who has been charmed with the haunting music of passionate denial, scorn, banter, and light-hearted hedonism that alternate in the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam will be apt to look askance at the suggestion that the individual beauties of the Persian poet could be found in, and much less borrowed from, any other poet. Omar Khayyam has been called the Voltaire of the East, the bold scoffer at the beliefs of the many. He has been compared to Lucretius, Solomon, Horace, Anacreon, Schopenhauer, and, within the pale of Islam, to Avicenna and Abu'l-Ala'l-Maarri. We are here concerned with the correspondence of thought between Abu'l-Ala and Omar Khayyam.

In the introduction to his translation of Abu'l-Ala's "Luzumiyat" Mr. Rihani suggests that Omar Khayyam was a "disciple" and imitator of the Syrian poet-philosopher, who lived about fifty years before him. The works of Abu'l-Ala are in Arabic, a language in which Omar Khayyam is well-known to have been well-versed. Abu'l-Ala attained great renown in the closing years of his life, and was perhaps widely read some time after. These facts suggest, according to Mr. Rihani, a conscious imitation of Abu'l-Ala by the later poet, Omar Khayyam.

CLOSE SIMILARITY

There is a close similarity in the way both the poets fared during their life time and after death as well. Here one important exception must be made. Abu'l-Ala lost his eyesight by an attack of small-pox early in life, while Omar Khayyam enjoyed a long healthy life. Abu'l-Ala, like Omar Khayyam, was nurtured in the best Islamic traditions of the 10th Century. Perhaps, the blind poet did not fare so well in his worldly career as Omar Khayyam did. Both were mathematicians, and were more honoured for their proficiency in that abstract branch of knowledge than for their poetry. In extranals

both seem to have lived in accordance with the tenets of their faith, and reserved their audacious denials to their writings. A detailed examination, such as for reasons of space cannot be made here, would show certain striking resemblances in thought and in imagery such as can rarely be accounted for by any literary coincidence. Both were merciless in lashing hypocrisy and quackery and cant. Both were fatalists and believed that some blind chance had pre-determined the course of life. The theologians and the priests came in for a generous share of contempt at the hands of Abu'l-Ala as well as of Omar Khayyam.

The former is more outspoken in his condemnations, and does not spare even the founders of religions. There is a 20th century suggestiveness in their outbursts of dissatisfaction with the existing order of things. As a result, the works of Omar Khayyam and of Abu'l-Ala have not been popular in the countries of their birth. Curiously enough, the Sufis claim both as followers of Sufism, declaring that Omar Khayyam symbolised the Divine Essence as Wine, and Abu'l-Ala as Reason.

VITAL DIFFERENCE

Here we come to a vital difference between the two. If we take the Sufi view the most irreconcilable opposites could be brought together. But, as a matter of fact, it is not so. Omar Khayyam loved both symbolically and materially the old familiar juice, and the beautiful cup-bearer Saki. Abu'l-Ala on the other hand, denounces the grape of Omar's song with the enthusiasm of a modern prohibitionist and was a true bachelor holding the view that procreation was an offence. Indeed his pessimism is of more sombre kind than Omar Khayyam's. Abu'l-Ala was a strict vegetarian and greatly favoured the Hindu paractice of cremation of dead bodies. We do not know Omar Khayyam's views on diet or on the subject of post-mortem disposal.

The main question whether and to what extent Omar Khayyam was indebted to Abu'l-Ala must remain unanswered. The nice point of literary priority cannot be tackled after the thousand years that have elapsed since their death.

OMAR KHAYYAM AND MODERN THINKERS

To represent Omar as addicted to Wine or Frivolous Luxuries
of Life is grossly to pervert truth & do grave
injustice to Persian Mystics.

When we speak of the philosophy of Omar Khayyam it would serve us well to bear in mind that the views we adduce are from FitzGerald's rendering of the Rubaiyat. The modern conception of Omar Khayyam has been fixed once and for all by the eccentric Irishman who, notwithstanding the veritable resurrection of Omar from oblivion he has so miraculously wrought, has certainly done him much harm in the eyes of his numerous readers. Any one ever so slightly acquainted with the cult of the Sufis, the mystics of Persia, will surely rub his eyes at the metamorphosed Omar and exclaim: 'Thou art truly translated'. The Sufis themselves must have been scandalised at the base use made of the master's noblest yearnings for union with God. The interpretation of Omar's wine as Bhakti, of Saki as God would surely evoke irreverent chuckles and even ribald laughter.

To swim with the tide is not considered a meritorious act, but, in this case, the current against understanding Omar Khayyam differently to what FitzGerald has shown him up to be is so strong, that one has to perpetrate a piece of literary opportunism, and agree that the Persian Poet was, in the words of Tennyson, 'a large infidel'.

Even Tennyson, who had a profound sense of a moral law governing the universe, and of whom even so fastidious a critic as Dean Inge says that he wrote beautifully about beautiful things is betrayed into a mood of pessimism.

From a different standpoint to that of Tennyson, Arthur Schopenhauer, the great German thinker, came to the like conclusion that death was the best thing that could happen to a

man as it would release him from a world where pain is in excess of pleasure. Schopenhauer, being naturally disposed to melancholy, his teaching was turned into the pessimism which is associated with his name. He teaches that we do not, in the phenomenal world, come into contact with the ultimately real. Therefore, all quest for such a knowledge is doomed to end in nothing. Compare this with Omar Khayyam's:

"There was Door to which I found no key".

The world arises for Schopenhauer when there has been evolved a nervous system sufficiently organised to be the instrument of knowledge. The will, therefore, becomes the thing-in-itself, and rules ruthlessly. It is the will to live that conditions all our modes of thought and activity. This activity is the root-cause of pain in this world which preponderates over pleasure. The only way to cut ourselves away from this activity is to live down the will to live, not to desire the 'riches of the world', but to renounce them, to become an ascetic.

What Omar symbolises as the "Moving Hand", "the Eternal Saki", "The Potter", "The Wheel of Destiny", is simply the force that pre-conditions everything. Here their views would seem to converge. But Schopenhauer's "will-to-live" would seem to be capable of being weakened, whereas the relentless Destiny which, according to Omar Khayyam, has shaped this universe is an implacable power.

Omar Khayyam's "luxurious sense of the divine" and his constant exhortation to seek a union with his Beloved is the only aim in life a true Sufi aspires to.

SHADOWS OF THE MIND

Omar Khayyam often comes to suffer from "shadows of the mind", doubts the omnipotency of Allah and broods over the uncertainty of life and relapses into a state of despair at the insolubility of the deep problems of life, death and immortality, and ends in proclaiming himself an avowed agnostic.

Such a deep-dyed phase passes away and then he drowns himself in an ecstatic mood with deep draughts of "wine divine". To the wise and pure soul, a genuine Sufi, the eternal is always present.

Thus Omar:

"Man, is not the creation's last appeal
The light of wisdom's eye? Behold the wheel
Of universal life as 'twere a ring,
But Man the Superscription and the Seal"

It was this sense of pessimism, which led Voltaire to compare man to a mouse in a cathedral, and Carlyle to a minnow in a creek. After such considerations many scholars have dubbed Omar as a "Laureate of pessimism". In such pessimistic moods Omar can keep good company with Schopenhauer and Leopardi.

Just as Leopardi represented in his writings the "Sorrow of the World", so Omar, like his Western compeers, Werther, Obermann, René, Byron, Lenau, De Vigny, Heine, Schopenhauer, poured out his soul in agonising verses, full of despair, doubt and sorrow. Thus Omar drowned his sorrows in "The Ruby Wine", the "Amber Juice", often sung by Persian mystical Poets to indicate nothing but a flashing of a warm light on the verity of human soul, a divine afflatus solid and ethereal. So it is not difficult to understand that Omar, sceptical and pessimistic, should develop into a man of science, a great astronomer and a deep mathematician.

A BASELESS NOTION

Omar was, to some length, a pessimist and had shewn a vein of sadness, but his temperament did not betray that dolefulness or gloom, which characterised Carlyle. Omar's life was neither "grim and sorrowful" nor "solitary, eating his own heart", like Carlyle after his Edinburgh triumph. Omar's own mood and mental condition was in every stage of his career a hopeful life and had moments full of auroral gleams of existence. At times we find Omar oppressed with a sort of religious



melancholy, but it was tinged with divine afflatus and tranquillity. Hence the notion or belief of Omar being a drunkard or addicted to frivolous insane luxuries of life is one of the absurdities and perversions of truth which arise more from a moral incapacity and insufficiency of understanding anything unusually complex and mystical or with a predetermined malevolence to resist truthful testimony. So when Omar Khayyam was "deep in wine" he displayed his cosmic enthusiasm so much as to imply, as in the case of Whitman, Omar stood his "feet tennoned and mortised in granite" cognisant of the "amplitude of time" and he played his part in "illimitable symphony of cosmic life".

To conclude, Omar had always before his mind's eyes the presence and Love of God. He made incessant efforts to establish a direct relation to God, so that his ever-repeated call for "wine", indicated nothing but an approach to Divine Reality.

The following quatrains from Nicholas, viz: 47, 76, 90, 103, 123, 372 will serve to point to the "Pessimism" of Omar Khayyam.



OMAR KHAYYAM AS A THINKER AND PHILOSOPHER

Omar Khayyam has been called "the erudite philosopher of the ages—the Lord of the seekers of truth—the King of the learned".

Omar Khayyam never suffered from what the Frenchmen call 'impuissance de vivre' meaning thereby an incapacity to face the facts of life and adapt oneself to its hard and unalterable conditions. Coleridge suffered from this 'impuissance' and in spite of this defect he never wavered in his life from the pursuit of truth. Omar in his walk of life had throughout a humanising task to perform and this he did full well by his poetry. This 'humanitarian impulse' has been well manifested in several of his quatrains. Omar Khayyam laboured in order to found a philosophy of life. He laboured to correct, chastise the pseudo Sufis and bigots of religion. He, in the poetry, both of man and of nature, struck an unfaltering note which his ever-present sympathy with rustic life was well expressed in his sequestered homely garden house by the Rudbar. Omar from his very early age was more inclined to philosophic thought and he filled his mind with the thought of 'Wine Divine',* as he hailed the rising Orb of the day.

آمد سحری ندا ز می خانه ما * کای رند خراباتی و دیوانه ما
برخیز که پر کیم پیانه ز می * زان پیش که پر کند پیانه ما

There are many thinkers who believe that poetry has nothing to do with philosophy. Such was not the case with Omar Khayyam. Omar has philosophised in his Rubaiyat, for, as Dryden had said in regard to Coleridge—"philosophy has

* Divine love is exemplified to us in a variety of symbolic imagery, 'under the similitude of corporal things'.

served as raw material for his quatrains". With Thomas Traherne Omar well knew that no man can be a Man unless he be a philosopher.

Omar was a connoisseur in mysticism* and as such he revelled in expressing in symbols of "wine and cup-bearer, tavern", as is the wont of all Persian Poets, the philosophy of kisses to express religious devotion, the perfection of the Divine Being, and the raptures of piety, is undoubted. Omar's whole life was characterised by what Hazlitt called 'the mighty heap of hopes of thought, of learning and humanity'. Omar lived and died full of hopes of 'divine union' which a true mystic and Sufi aspires after. For, our poet full well knew that:

"Work without hope draws nectar in a sieve,
And hope without an object cannot live".

I must not be backward to admit that I have laid under contribution Works of numberless authors who have treated, spoken and written about Omar, his life, his philosophy, his poetry and his outlook as a preacher of the highest Sufi order and to crown above all as a mystic. My reading has opened to me the treasure of Omar's mind and thought and I have borrowed freely from numerous sources. Omar had studied in

* E. Underhill. "Mysticism is the art of union with Reality".

I am much indebted to the profound study "Metaphysique of Mysticism" of my late Guru A. Govindacharya Svami of Mysore.

"Mysticism", says Dr Troeltsch, "is nothing but the insistence upon immediacy, interiority, presence of religious experience" (Hugel, 111). Visions of the Divine and "a passionate realism of intercourse with God" (Ib) are notable features of such Mysticism. Take another authoritative definition of Mysticism: "the intuitive and ecstatic union with the Deity obtained by contemplation" (ERE IX. 58). Such visions and contemplation abound in the Gathas. Yasna 21, for example, consists of the description of a great vision in which Zarathushtra beholds the World-soul appealing to its Creator for the appointment of a protector and guardian and at the end of the vision he himself is entrusted with the great mission. It is in the fitness of things that the Gathas should begin with an account of this vision in which Zarathushtra is, as it were, furnished with the credentials for his great mission in the world; just as the book of the prophet Isaiah starts with describing the mystical vision in which Isaiah is consecrated to his vocation (Peak, COMMENTARIES ON THE BIBLE, 436).

("THE SPIRIT OF THE GATHAS" by Sir J. C. Coyaji, Kt., M.A., in the Kaiser-i-Hind at page 86). 8th Dec. 1935.

the 'Darul-hikmat' Greek philosophy of Plato, Aristotle and Pythagoras. The same course of study was continued in the Khana-i-Nizaria in Alamut Fortress, the haunt and citadel of Hasan Sabbah. It was the close study of Greek philosophers' lives, Plato and others, no less to some extent the Vedic-philosophy of India (Vide Payne's Introduction to his translation of Omar Khayyam) that have come to give a firm impression to the minds of Eastern and Western readers the spiritual uplift and implicit faith in the Existence of God. Omar was not an 'apostate, an athiest or an agnostic'.

بکشای دری که درکشاینده تویی * بنای رهی که ره نماینده تویی
من دست بهیچ دستگیری ندم * کایشان همه فانی اند و پاینده تویی

Let those who accuse Omar of being an athiest note what Omar wrote in the opening chapter of his recently discovered prose work styled "Navroze-Nameh" wherein he invokes most reverently God the Creator. This opening address to the Almighty as translated by Frederick Rosen settles this doubt once for all. It begins:

In the name of God the Merciful, the Gracious! Praise and thanks to the Lord—may His glory shine!—Who is the Creator of the world and the Holder of the earth and of time, Who gives all living beings their daily sustenance, Who knows the manifest and the occult, Who is Himself without desire and without associate, without rule or want, Who is beyond the limits of measure or numbers, almighty and wanting neither help nor assistance.

Number of quatrains can be cited to show and prove his deep reverence and belief in life everlasting, divine union and Supreme Reality*.

ای از حرم ذات تو عقل آگه نی * وز معصیت و طاعت ما مستغنی
هستم ز گناه وز جا هشیارم * امید برحمت تو دارم یعنی

* "I am not I till I am one with Thee,
I am not I till, loosed from Self's control,
I cease to be and love absorbs my Soul."

In his oft quoted rubai, Omar confesses his deepest belief in the Unity of God and discarding the question of Duality. This view was no less expounded by Rumi when he sang:

"Duyam az dil badar kardam
Yeki didam do alam ra &c. . ."

Were I, therefore, to search in the whole range of English poets right up from Chaucer to Francis Thomson, I do not think, a better example than Thomas Traherne "the Divine Philosopher" as he is denominated by his admirers—to compare with Omar Khayyam. Had Omar lived in the British Isles in the 17th Century he would have well nigh composed his "Centuries of Meditations" which is considered the magnum opus of Traherne. Dr. Tullock, in his Rational Theology (II, 186), has succinctly summarised the under current of these "Meditations" in the following words:—"No spiritually thoughtful mind can read them unmoved. They carry us so directly into an atmosphere of divine philosophy, luminous with the richest lights of meditative genius. We see a mind religious to the core not only free from all pietistic weakness and dogmatic narrowness but poising itself naturally at an altitude out of sight of them His mind is fresh as a new-born life, with open eyes of poetic wonder and divine speculation.) He has not painfully reached the serene heights on which his thoughts dwell; but these heights are the natural level of his lofty and abounding spiritual nature". (Tullock: Rational Theology, II, 186). Were one to closely study and parallelise it with a number of Rubaiyat from Omar, doubtless a very close resemblance will be found subsisting between these two poets, one of the 11th Century and the other who flourished in the 17th Century. Some minor differences may be gathered here and there but the sum total of the underlying thought and philosophy will be clearly perceived from a comparative study of these two thinkers.

Omar's study and erudition were no less colossal than that of Traherne. After Firdausi, it can safely be asserted that Omar set the ball of evolutionary movement of thought roll-

ing, closing with Al-Ghazzali, Avicenna, Abu Abdulla Sufi, Abdul-Malik Attash and other Arab thinkers. With Traherne Omar has much in common particularly Platonism and at many points they are both akin.

Just as a writer has observed, these two particularly resemble each other in loftiness and serenity of Soul. Both have expressed and revealed with transparent frankness experiences of the inner life. Both went through a period of scepticism and both emerged pledged to Mysticism. The ultimate choice of both was the personal quest of the Divine Union which is the sole ambition of a true Sufi philosopher. Hence, under the influence of Platonic doctrines both these writers sought after the purification of the Soul and spiritual wisdom (the wine of Omar).

Omar mostly lived the life of cloistered peace enjoyed by the Universities and Kitabkhanas of Naishapur, Merv, Cordove and Alamut. Omar had the energy of enjoyment of beautiful life. His eager spirit went out ardently to the world of men and science and Nature. Like Traherne, Omar was not monastic, not ascetic. Omar's was an illuminated soul that saw beauty in an acorn—a grain of sand, the lily, the grandeur of stars and planets. He saw God in everything and studied His Immanence.

In one place I have called Omar—a Nature Mystic. No less does W. K. Flemming in his "Mysticism in Christianity" say that there is no one in the whole range of mystics who looks on Nature as Traherne does.

Omar Khayyam may be likened to an interpreter of despair and disillusionment residing in the solitude of his homely abode in Naishapur. I may venture to call him a 'waif of eternity', as he raised the wine-cup of the divine union and craved and yearned for absorption in the unfathomable Reality. In his humble home he withdrew himself unto himself to prepare his Self to receive his own Self.

It was the Psalmist who cried — "Oh that I had the wings of a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest". Chat-

terton sang and harped on the same tune "joyless seek the solitary shade". Cowper poured out his heart, "Oh! that the desert were my dwelling place". Omar no less hankered after silence and solitude 'some letter of the after-life to spell'.

Omar had pivoted his life on 'Love Divine' and like-wise Traherne believed that 'love is the one supreme duty and good, that love is wisdom, purity and valour and peace and that its infinite sorrow is infinitely better than the world's richest joy'. It was such love* that filled the heart of Omar and possessed him. It was this love that guided his every action and ruled all his thoughts. The whole standard of his life's action was based on the highest levels of spiritual life.

Were we to look at the author of the "Imitation", Thomas A. Kempis, he desired and wanted to save his own soul. Traherne wanted to save the world. Not unlike Traherne, Omar desired to better the world as several of his quatrains testify. Omar was never oppressed with real or imaginary sin:

سازنده کار مرده و زنده تویی ۰ دارنده این چرخ پراگنده تویی
من گرچه بدم صاحب این بنده تویی ۰ کس را چه گنه که آفریننده تویی

This astronomer-poet of persia was full of the rapturous aspirations of a joyful and happy soul, well conscious of its kinship with God Himself and continually dwell upon the goodness, the love and the Mercy of God. All the thoughts that singed through Omar's brain found an exact counterpart in Traherne when he said "The whole world ministers to you as the theatre of your love, without which it were better for you to have no being".

Traherne's 'Centuries of Meditations' is entirely based on the close study of the Bible. It is no less a manual of contemplation. Each century depicts the progressive stages of contemplative life. The first century is on 'Love' in all its phases — ethical, moral, physical and spiritual. The other

* Bishop Gore says . "As God is Love, so where love is, God is, and the permanence of love in us means that we are permanently dwelling in God and God in us."

"Centuries" treat of Holiness, service to humanity, happiness, felicity. It is in general a compendium of precepts from the Bible and points to a true christian's pathway in life. It may be likened to a correct guide-book of both the Testaments. The whole philosophy of this book can be summarised in these words—"Seek Ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you".

Can I not rehearse the ever recurring refrain of the quatrains of Omar in the memorable words of Walt Whitman:

"I cannot rest, O God, I cannot eat or drink or sleep,
Till I put forth myself, my prayer, once more to Thee,
Breathe, bathe myself, once more in Thee,
Report myself once more to Thee."

These lines full well express the ever constant call of the 'wine' of Omar and of all Persian Mystical Poets. So, it will come home to all who call for 'wine' the 'ruby cup' as an eternal task of all the thinkers, philosophers, mystics and contemplatives who have come and gone and those who will appear in time to come. By this task eternal will men feel the urge which spurs them on to newer and better worlds.

I will never forgive myself if I fail to establish a comparison of the "urge of love" implanted in man as sung by Browning and Omar. "Love", says Henry Jones, is for Browning the highest and richest conception man can form". Love has the highest truth conceivable and believable. Love consists in recognition of life's duty as the Divine Command. Said Browning—"There is no good of life but love—but love—Love, give love, ask only love and leave the rest". Omar firmly held that from love all other goodness is derived. Browning made love and humanity one. So did Omar. Omar's task in life was to constitute love into the inmost law of his being. Browning's fundamental conception is that love finds its consummation in man and says:

"What God is, what we are,
What life is, how God tastes an infinite joy,
Infinite ways — one everlasting bliss,



From whom all being emanates all power,
 Proceeds: in whom is life for evermore,
 Yet, whom existence in its lowest form includes."

Omar by constantly calling to bring wine (highest form of love) gives to love a religious significance by making it the power divine, the central energy of God's being. The principle of love propounded by Omar is surely the richest vein of pure ore in his poetry. In case of Omar it was by love alone that he knew the secret of all being. The final belief of Omar as we read his quatrains after quatrains praising and calling for "Wine"—the love of God.

Who would fail to remark the consanguinity of feeling and sense in the following lines Browning wrote in his song "Christmas Eve":

"No; love, which on Earth, amid all shows of it,
 Has ever been seen the sole good of life in it,
 The love, ever growing there, spite of the strife in it,
 Shall arise, made perfect, from death's repose of it
 And I shall behold Thee, face to face
 O God, and in Thy light retrace
 How in all I loved here, still wast Thou "

It may not be out of place to add in passing the valued opinion of professor Cowell, one of the profoundest Orientalists of the 19th Century. Professor Cowell looked on Omar as a true Sufi and his poem as a mystical one in which profoundly religious impulses and doctrines are conveyed in a series of figures wherein the drunkenness lauded by Omar is to be read as the rapture of Divine Love, and the Wine which causes it as the Divine Mercy.

Mr. Benson's estimate of the character of Omar may well be cited here. "Omar was sentimentalist, and a lover of beauty, both human and natural. Omar tended to linger over golden memories of the past, and was actually alive to the pathos of sweet things that have an ending. Omar was penetrated with a certain dark philosophy, the philosophy of the human spirit at bay when all refuge has failed."

Let me in conclusion add the most telling experiences certain well-known mystics had come to enjoy in their lives: "The Mystics in their search for their different stages and degrees of intuitions of Eternal Life explore the resources of all the arts—poetry, music, dancing, to raise themselves to the pitch of what Coventry Patmore once spoke of as a "sphere of rapture and dalliance." Many typical examples of these degrees may be cited to confirm it. St. Francis and after him Richard Rolle heard celestial melodies; Kabir the "Unstruck music of the Infinite." Dante saw the saints dancing in the sphere of the Sun; "Suso heard the music of the Angels;—Plotinus and Jacob Boehme resort to dance as an image of the glad harmonious movements of liberated Souls." In the East the ecstatic dances of Chaitanyas and the sweet melodies of the Azhvars and Tukaram and the elated strains of Hafiz and Jelaludin Rumi and Omar and the Songs of the Sufis or Dancing Dervishes, all illustrate in diverse manners the world of mystic experiences.



OMAR KHAYYAM

A Review

Rev. Dr. Weir, Professor of Arabic in the University of Glasgow, has done signal service in bringing to bear an accurate knowledge of Arabic on the study of the Quatrains of Omar Khayyam of Naishapur. In his masterly exposition he has admirably portrayed in all its phases the character of Omar as a poet and given an excellent and close analysis of Omar's thoughts on life, death, soul, life-hereafter, human conduct and lastly on the religious tendencies of the time in which he lived. Dr. Weir has supplied an able exposition of the inner workings of the mind of the poet, and he (Dr. Weir) is one of the very few translators and critics of Omar that has gone to detect in this Astronomer Poet of Iran, leanings toward Zoroastrian doctrines and at times his outpourings so far as to betray him at heart a true follower of Zoroaster.

The learned Editors of this excellent "Wisdom of the East Series" have done a yeoman service for the lovers of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam in their selection of Dr. Weir as interpreter of Omar. In including Omar Khayyam in this well-known series the Editors have eminently fulfilled their main purpose to bring the East and the West together and their choice of selecting Eastern masterpieces is unimpeachable which is evidenced by the inclusion of Omar Khayyam in it.

Another noteworthy feature of Dr. Weir's translation is the addition of three very valuable and knowledgeable appendices (1) Avicenna's verses on the Soul, (2) Ibn-al-Farid's verses on mystic wine, and (3) Al-Tughrai's verses on Oriental Pessimism. These appendices go materially to help the readers of Omar to judge of the Poet in his true light so far as his mysticism, his gentle cynicism and pessimism are to be elucidated.

To lovers of Omar's Rubaiyat this book of Dr. Weir's will prove a true and earnest guide to understand the Rubaiyat preaching "To thine ownself be true".

Undoubtedly this work deserves well to be placed fairly before the public and it must be considered a valuable addition to the long bibliographical list of works on Omarion literature.

OMAR'S ERUDITION AND HELLENIC CULTURE IN IRAN

Omar Khayyam had imbued his mind with Greek philosophy, specially of Plato and Aristotle. Hence he tries to trace the ascent of the human soul—(the wine cup of inspiration or divine afflatus) from physical love to love of knowledge, and then describes to us the intuition or vision of the highest reality—(Allah), that arises out of such an ascent. In this evidently Omar was to a large extent influenced by the Neoplatonic school of thought. It is true that as long as man is mortal and insufficient he shall find no words adequate enough to describe the nature of God. In consequence, the poet or thinker, resorts to symbols to present to his mind the adequate analogical conception of the Supreme Reality. By such process of reasoning, and as a natural consequence, he actively realises the significance of this spiritual unity in life and matter. From such a deep religious intuition of God, Omar vividly realised the spirituality of life and matter in the universe. By such a process of an active intuition of the Eternal Spirit was Omar led to the love of God and a prayer to him for the moment he enters into such a meditative mood that his self realises its selflessness and pours itself into "the unity of the eternal self, consciousness of God." Thus one comes to choose to name Omar in the words of Plato as, "a spectator of all time and existence."

Omar as I have stated before, was to a very great extent a nature-mystic, for he derived and caught his inspiration from the external world as several of his quatrains point out and philosophised about it.

The above consideration leads me to the question and argument of the Unity of God which Rumi has well and tersely expressed in

من تو شدم تو من شدی * من جان شدم تو تن شدی
 *† تاکس نگوید بعد ازین * من دیگرم تو دیگری

Says Prof. R. A. Nicholson in his *Literary History of the Arabs*, p. 388, "During these seventy-five years (786-861 A.D.) the stream of Hellenic culture flowed unceasingly into the Moslem world. Innumerable works of Greek philosophers, physicians, and scientists, were translated and eagerly studied. Thus the Greeks became the teachers of the Arabs, and the wisdom of ancient Greece formed the basis of Mahomedan science and philosophy." It is contended that the immediate source of Sufi theosophy is to be sought in Greek, and Syrian speculation. It is therefore evident what Sufism owed to Greece, but the Perso-Indian elements are hardly less important."

No wonder then that Omar's studies were tinctured deeply with Grecian and Indian influences. He must have carefully familiarised himself with the philosophical and scientific works of his numerous predecessors, the most prominent amongst them being Ma'ruf-al-Karkhi (810 A.D.), Abu Sulayman-ad-Darani (830 A.D.), Dhu'l-nun-al-Misri (860 A.D.), Abu-Bayazid-Bistami (875 A.D.), Abu-Talib al-Makki (996 A.D.), Mansur-al-Hallaj (922 A.D.), Muhasibi and notably his contemporary Al-Ghazzali.

Omar Khayyam's whole out-look on life, from his close study of the Greek philosophers like Plato and Aristotle and others of the Neo-platonic school of thought, was based on the attainment of "integral fulness of life." His quest was not influenced by the will-lessness of the ascetic renouncing all life but was broad-based on the formation of 'Insan-ul-Kamil' — the perfect

* Says Blake, "God becomes as We are, that we may be as He is — that is to say : God descends among us, into us, in order to raise us to Him."

† Genuine religious experience is a joyous *feeling* that there is a Being infinitely better than ourselves, and that our life and destiny, like every thing that exists, are dependent upon Him — not upon a blind irrational fate, but upon the actual and perfect God, the One that embraces all. "If this immediate reality of the higher principle be taken away there would be nothing left of religious experience. It would no longer exist. But it *does* exist; consequently that which is given and experienced in it exists also. God is in us, therefore He is." Vladimir Solovyev. — Plato.

man. 'Who does not forsake the world for 'Nirvanic rest' or feed solely on the realm of 'ideas,' but to enter on the path of the world mostly to save and regenerate it and turn it into the 'Kingdom of God.' In the end to form a perfect individual an entity in perfect Society (collective humanity). Hence Omar as the precursor of Sadi, Hafiz, Rumi, Attar and several others realised and saw from the Symbolical application of "wine" (Love Divine) a promise and a prospect of the highest realisation of existence on Earth and a fullness of life. The above reflections lead as to the conclusion that "God is within us, therefore He *is*."

SWINBURNE AND OMAR

Meredith describes the scene when Swinburne read the Quatrains of Omar Khayyam to him in his cottage at Copsham in a letter to the Times 15 April, 1909.

"Swinburne was impatient to reveal his find—the Omar Khayyam of Edward FitzGerald to Meredith. As he came near to Copsham Cottage along the road from Ester, he was seen brandishing a white pamphlet in the manner of a fanatical preacher and soon he was heard declaiming the stately stanzas of his rich treasure. He and Meredith and some other friends sat on the Mound for hours reciting Omar Khayyam; the dinner bell went unheard at first; then, the meal over, the party returned to the Mound and recited again the verses until night-fall. Suddenly Swinburne ran into the cottage, returned with paper, quill pen and red ink. In an hour he had written the first 13 stanzas of *Laus Veneris*, directly inspired by Omar Khayyam." (George Meredith—by S. M. Ellis p. 129, 1920 Edition).

CONFLICT OF OPINIONS ON OMAR

As they say there are two sides to every question. So without being one-sided and with an open mind I would like to present sides of the case both obverse and reverse. I have all along tried to depict Omar Khayyam as a true Sufi and a great mystic. Consequently I must lay before my readers what Dr. William Hastie, Professor of Divinity of the University of Glasgow has said about Omar and his Rubaiyat and leave to my readers to form their considered judgement after they have carefully weighed all the pros and cons of the question as is disclosed in this variorum study of Omar.

Dr. Hastie,* in all haste goes to stigmatise FitzGerald's version as "new-patched Omar Khayyam" and turns to run down to hate and scorn "the miserable, self-deluded, unhealthy fanatics of his Cult" and which he characterises as "a literary craze and delusion, infatuation and spurious idolatry." To crown above all Dr. Hastie says that FitzGerald by his clever tailoring has indeed clothed his Satan in the well-fitting robes of an Angel of Light. Further on he goes on denouncing and branding Omar's Rubaiyat (Epigrams) as "of the rudest wit and shallowest reflection, lean and flashy songs."

Finally this Doctor of Divinity showers his anathema and curses on the poor head of old Omar when he says, "who now cares for his senile scepticism, his pessimistic whine, his

* Now contrast with Dr. Hastie's ranting declamation the view expressed by that eminent orientalist Friedrich Bodenstedt about Omar as a poet. (Dr. Hastie's—"Festival of Spring").

"The poet," says Bodenstedt, "is inexhaustible in his coinage of new expressions, striking metaphors, witty conceits, and surprising terms of thought. A clear, investigating eye, which always searches into the heart of things; an enlightened mind, which is yet always in search of more light; a keen understanding, which finds the stereo-typed scholastic expressions insufficient to designate the unusual; deep feeling, and love for the truth are united in him with a lively and real fancy, which enables him to make the clearness of his thought become evident in the picture. He wrote little, but his remains may be regarded as the very quintessence of all oriental poetry, certainly in regard to the highest questions that have puzzled men."

withered cynicism, his agnostic blindness and despair, his insolent misanthropy, his impotent blasphemies."

The above ranting criticism of the learned Doctor appears to me to be the result of vapid sentimentality, shattered nerves, ill-digested study, ignorance of Sufi philosophy and doctrines, self-blinded, vomiting neurotic hatred against Omar whom he styles "Topsy Toper, a cowardly scamp, bankrupt, blustering purblind Braggart." To such a rodomontade and vain rant, boast and abuse let me give a reply to such a critic in Omar's own words:

"Blame not the drunkards, you who wine eschew,
Had I but grace, I would abstain like you,
And mark me, vaunting zealot, you commit
A hundred-fold worse sins than drunkards do."

(Whinfield No. 11).





OMAR—A MATHEMATICIAN

Omar was not only a poet, a philosopher, but likewise a great Mathematician* and an Astronomer. Omar's work on "L'Algebre" and on a discussion of the definitions of Euclid are well known. Omar considered (in the words of Novalis) Mathematics to be aids to thought and the highest form of life and believed that all spiritual messengers must be Mathematicians. Even religion is pure Mathematics. For references to Omar Khayyam as an Astronomer and Mathematician refer "Histoire de l'Astronomie au moyenage" par Delambre, pp. 191-196. Histoire de Mathematique par Montucla Vol. I, p. 387. Histoire de l'astronomie Moderne par Delambre, pp. 75-84. "L'Algebra" de Omar Khayyam, translated by Woepke into French 1851. La Bibliotheque de Leyde (Voir No. 1067 du Catalogue de 1716) possesse aussi un ouvrage d' Al Khayyami Sur l'explication des difficultées presentées en tête des livres des Elements d'Euclide.

Woepke called Omar an unrivalled astronomer and a philosopher and a scientist of the first order of merit. Ibn Khaldoon called him the greatest Geometrician of the East.



*According to Plato, mathematics rightly viewed possesses not only truth, but supreme beauty, a beauty cold and austere, like that of sculpture, without appeal to any part of our weaker nature, without the gorgeous trappings of painting or music, yet sublimely pure and capable of a stern perfection such as only the greatest art can show (Bertram Russel's "Mysticism and Logic" P. 60).

OMAR'S CHARACTER

Omar was in truth a pious soul. He being a philosopher and the greatest scientist of his age his thinking and study led him to dive deep into all recondite problems of Life and Death. This might have led him to doubt and despair by his fathoming the mysteries of our existence, but he never abandoned his belief in Allah and said "Unto God give the glory." He believed in Allah — *Al* the beginningless and *la* — the endless, the Creator. None will doubt the piety of his life when we read the last words that he spoke and that is when you can see the man. Just before he died his last words were "Whatever I have accomplished and done that is useful, good, grand, sublime and true, is to Thy credit, God, because Thou revealest it to me. If there is anything that I have done that is not in accordance with Thy wish and Thy will, Thy desire, if I have done anything that is apt to reflect, may it fall upon *me* for not having used the light of understanding Thou hast blest me with. The good and the true, the divine, let it reflect on Thee."

In spite of this utterance of his, we have writers at this present day who make us believe that Omar Khayyam was not a faithful believer, and that he was not a religious man. They would make us believe, he spent his days with a jug of wine, and women beside him in song. This is not true. All the quatrains, each and every one, speak for themselves. If you have read the quatrains of Omar Khayyam and your idea is different, it is because of the translation, the interpreter unable to understand the scientific, mystical and poetic language.

Omar Khayyam must be read with understanding and read in his own language and in his own spirit and in the spirit of his times. The above is the expression of view of Rev. Dr. Otoman Zar Adusht Ha'nish of Los Angeles, California.

In this connection we must note what he said to Nizam-ul-Mulk when he was asked by him what gift from him he

expected. "Give me, he said, the revenues of the village where I was born. I am a dervish; I am ambitionless; beneath my father's roof I can please myself with poetry and the study of the Supreme." He was granted a life-long pension of 1000 miskals. Omar being a poet, a philosopher, a mystic and a student of the stars lived to a very old age, happy and contented.

In the words of a modern thinker, I believe it was O. Spengler, "Symbols" are sensible signs, final, indivisible and above all unsought impressions of definite meaning. Thus the idea of God in the mind of the Persian poet was an actuality as the sum total of all symbols* in relation to the soul and absorption and contemplation in the highest conception of the human mind. Thus the use of homely words used by mystics and poets, such as "Wine", "Beloved", "Tavern", "Garden", become the media of the highest soul-expression.†

Omar's longing for solitude and the wondrous awakening of the inner life and his absorption and contemplation of his "Beloved" (God) and the ineffable sense of forsakenness, all point clearly that Omar was a mystic of the highest order craving for, as Goethe said,

" A longing pure and not to be described,
Drove me to wander over woods and fields,
And in a mist of hot abundant-tears,
I felt a world arise and live for me "

Thus it will seem incontestable that Omar was not a mystic of the abstract type, but a consummate practical mystic. His was 'l'âme moderne.' His synthetic and encyclopædic mind made him a master universal in all arts and sciences of the day. We must approach Omar's work in Omar's own spirit, as all must do who fain would rise to his heights and penetrate to his depth.

* Freud said " Symbols are the only language of the soul "

† Says Vaughan, " According to Sufi system wine is equivalent to devotion , the tavern is an oratory , kisses and embraces, the raptures of piety , while wantonness, drunkenness, and merriment, are religious ardour, and abstraction from all terrestrial thoughts."

Only readers who are not touched by the mystic fervour of Omar and deaf to his fervent appeal to his deep laid sense of piety, will lay it down unsatisfied. And it cannot be too strongly repeated that the beauty of the Rubaiyat does not lie on the surface but beneath. For in fact Omar was stretched between the polarity of good and evil.

For Omar, philosophy, poetry and science were merely a 'Solace' for inclement times, mere 'blissful drunkenness.' For Emil Ludwig said that "a man who devotes his time to science and lives without friends is an educated *were-wolf*." It was Omar's insatiability which pointed to the nobility of his own soul.

A mystical poem must necessarily contain a religious element. Mysticism denotes a direct knowledge of spiritual matters. If some go to deny that Omar Khayyam's poems are not mystical, were I in that case to denote and style it as poetry of "*Sight and Insight*," I think all will agree.

Omar Khayyam's ideas of love and human passion were nothing short of a "heightened and enlarged state of the soul." He being a mystic of the highest type, he yearned "to have the beams of love" in the absorption and contemplation of his "Beloved" that is God. Not to interpret and understand Omar Khayyam in the light as stated above is to read him upside down.

This phase of the mind and character of Omar Khayyam can well be exemplified in several of the English mystical poets. Look at Blake Donne and the author of the "*Hesperedes*" — Herrick.

Omar Khayyam tried and hankered after the sight of the Eternal form of his "Beloved" and thus to him became a sacrament. When the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam are read and interpreted in this light, his quatrains become "an Epic of the soul."

OMAR AS A PHILOSOPHER

The chief lesson we derive from a critical study of the Quatrains of Omar Khayyam is the futility of human perfectibility. Even Omar goes to doubt natural goodness in humanity. In thus contemplating the existence of human wickedness, sin and evil in the world, he has come to impart in some of his stanzas agnostic views. But from these he often diverted after his study of the heavens—profound astronomer of his time as he was, led him to admit and express his belief in the existence of a Supreme Soul—the Creator and Originator and Builder of the Universe.

Omar could have well expressed his view of existence and this world in the words of Benjamin Constant:

“The more one thinks it over, the less is one able to imagine any good reason for the existence of this foolish thing we call the world. I understand neither the intention, nor the master builder, nor the artist, nor the figures in this *Lanterna Magica* of which I have the honour to form a part. Shall I understand any better when I have disappeared from the small, dark globe on which it amuses? I know not what unseen power to make me dance, whether I will or no? I cannot say.”

Benjamin Constant—Adolphe.

Omar in his quatrains occupies himself with the problem of life and death, sin, fate, past, present and future culminating into divine unity and believing in the ALL ONE prelude and anticipating Rumi when he sang—

دویم از دل بدر کردم • یکی دیدم دو عالم را
یکی جویم یکی بینم • یکی دانم یکی خانم

Omar yearned to drink the surging joy of life from the foaming cup of infinity in order that he may taste one drop of the transcendental bliss of “Unity”—at-one-ment. Omar’s philosophy, his mysticism was not like “Werther” that dashing the head

against the wall, those long sobs, that deep despair, which nothing but the dagger through the heart can still. Von Hammer considered Omar one of the most notable of Persian Poets, unique in the irreligious tone of his verses. Nevertheless the underlying tone of Omar's verses gave rise to the mysticism of Maulana Rumi, Ḥafiz and Sādi. He is the sole representative of the age of free-thought, which is said to be everywhere the fore-runner of mysticism. He is more of a doubter than a disbeliever. There is nothing arid or prosaic in all the quatrains which can be believed or suspected to be genuine but is superadded with what is sweetest, purest and most harmonious, coupled with free movements of rhythm that we are led to exclaim, "A miracle of poetic creation". Omar loved to sit or rest by the solitary and woody margin of the lake or rivulet, crowned with the perfume of blooming flowers and listening to the sweet and melodious chant of the nightingale, and abandoned himself to his thoughts, becoming motionless, as motionless as nature. Omar devoted "the best hours of the mind", as Bacon says, to the study and solution of the world mystery — the two mystical twins — Birth and Death, predestination and immortality. Nicholson affirms that Omar had "drunk deep in the well of Greek wisdom and so also Ibn-al-Quifti who wrote in his *Tarikh-ul-Ḥokma* that Omar was pre-eminently a man of science and was well versed in Greek philosophy. Nizami Aruzi Samarqandi gave Omar the sobriquet of "Ḥujjat-ul-Ḥaqq — i.e. 'Propounder of Truth' and asserted that he had never seen his like in the world.

Some consider Omar an out-and-out free-thinker and was looked upon by his contemporaries and successors as an infidel because he did not bring his speculations into line with the Koran and did not adhere to the traditions of the Prophet. Omar was highly intellectual and in search of truth he went beyond the dogmas of Mahomedan theology. Nazmuddin Daya stigmatises him as an anti-Sufi, still there are several quatrains which proclaim him a mystic of a high order and degree.

The keynote to Omar's Rubaiyat is the deep sense of mortality that runs through them and it is in fact its haunting

and melancholy which take hold of the reader's mind. But a far greater portion of these Quatrains are mainly concerned with the higher aspects of transcendent mysticism and embodies the characteristic doctrine of "Unification" or Henosis which means that nothing exists except God.





PART II

ADDENDA

Page viii, lines 28-29:

Many have averred that Omar was a habitual drunkard. In this connection a fair comparison can be made of Omar with Burns and Coleridge. So far as their addiction to opium and drinks was concerned, no complaint was heard against Coleridge from the "rigidly righteous" class of his time despite his Table Talk and other prose writings unmistakably smell of drugs. Why do we find no such charge having been made against Coleridge? Simply because, he defended the Church. But Burns attacked the Church. He exposed its hypocrisy and greed. This went to prove that he was a bad man, a drunkard. Likewise fared Omar at the hands of Dr. Hastie, Col. Browne and several others of their ilk, and persuasion.

Page x, line 11, "I owe a full apology":

"I have here made only a nosegay of culled flowers and have brought nothing of my own but the string that ties them." — Montaigne

Page xii, line 6, Omar and FitzGerald:

Mr. Benson has drawn a fair comparison between Omar and FitzGerald — "Omar was a sentimentalist, and a lover of beauty, both human and natural; so was FitzGerald. Omar tended to linger over golden memories of the past, and was actually alive to the pathos of sweet things that have an ending; and such was FitzGerald. Omar was penetrated with a certain dark philosophy, the philosophy of human spirit at bay when all refuge has failed; and this was the case with FitzGerald."

Page xii, line 10:

A very informative and well judged estimate of the character and personality of Omar Khayyam may be studied in the Preface to F. York Powell's version of Omar Khayyam (Howard Wilford Bell, Oxford 1901).

Page 1, line 1, Omar Khayyam :

“ Under the Seljuks lived the great Omar-i-Khayyam, favourite of the west. Of the same fraternity as Catullus and Horace, sure of naught but the throbbing present; votary of pleasure and wine; scoffer of imaginary fears and of rewards promised in the life beyond the grave; a mocking philosopher, a stern realist—he measured everything by his own measure and reduced the world into the micocosm of his own self. To a world weary of hide-bound conventions and eager for unrestrained freedom his appeal is instantaneous. It is just this which accounts for his amazing popularity in the west. His philosophy coincides with the modern philosophy of life.”—Extracts from “Islamic Civilization” by Khuda Baksh, Vol. II.

Page 1, line 7, FitzGerald superlatively etc. :

FitzGerald's Omar is a translation although not very close to the original as the unlearned are given to understand, is a permanency in English Literature.

Times Lit. Suppt. (4-1-36, p. 4)

Page 2, lines 4-7 :

When Nizam-ul-Mulk offered Omar a pension of 1000 miscals and expressed his desire to live a secluded life of literary leisure, in preference to any lucrative post in the service of State—a like parallel can be traced in the life of the celebrated Saint of Delhi, Nizamuddin Auliya when he became a disciple of Khawaja Farid. Nizamuddin thought it noble to live the life of a hermit and recluse away from the noise and bustle of cities—away from temptation and vice, but it was noble to live with people and for the people, to remain pure and unsullied in an atmosphere corrupt with sin and to strive to lead the erring souls to truth and virtue by the light of his own piety (Life and Work of Amir Khushrau by Dr. Mahommad Wahid Mirza, p. 114).

Page 5, lines 12-13, Rubaiyat :

The admiration of the composition by Edward FitzGerald

has caused people to think Omar an ancient avtar of FitzGerald and FitzGerald a re-incarnation of Omar.

Page 8, line 1, "The Assassins":

"Itinerary from Tehran to Alamut Khurrembad in May 1837," by Lt.-Col. Justus Shiel. The Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, Vol. viii, 1838, pp. 430-434.

"Journal of a tour through Azerdbijan and the Shores of the Caspian," by Col. Monteith. The Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, Vol. iii, 1833, pp. 1-58.

Page 9, line 3, 'True Omar':

The Salient fact of Omar Khayyam's experience is evidently his conviction of a life of things, a life what is akin to the life of man, but deeper, wider, and more intense. It is by contact with this life in things, or with Nature, that man grows in moral strength and wisdom and realises his true immortal being. (S. G. Dunn—"Wordsworth's Metaphysical system—Essays and studies of the English Association" Vol. 18.)

Page 11, line 22:

"OMAR KHAYYAM" IN 42 TONGUES

It is curious how the verses of Omar Khayyam have caught the imagination of every land. There are Omar Khayyam Clubs and Omar Khayyam Dinners, while one of the most comprehensive collections of the poet's works must be in Bombay. Away in a secluded part of Byculla, Bombay, on the tables of an unpretentious room, lie no fewer than 150 separate editions of the Persian poet, and in 42 different languages. The collector, Mr. J. E. Saklatwalla, has been scouring all parts of the earth for these volumes, and when he showed them proudly to the writer recently, he handled each volume as though it were some fragile piece of jewellery. Which is the original edition of the poet's work is a matter of dispute, but hearing of one claimant to this distinction in Teheran, Mr. Saklatwalla sent to that city and had a copy of this edition made on vellum

in manuscript. There are, of course, many more quatrains of Omar's great work than the average reader has seen, and Mr. Saklatwalla has himself translated a great many.

(Times of India Weekly, dated 13-1-35).

Page 13, lines 18-19, Mysticism :

Giovanni Papini in his book "A man Finished" on page 209 states:—

"Mysticism, in fact, is but the overthrowing of barriers, the negation of detachment, an impulse towards absolute and eternal inseparability. The mystic does not feel himself separated from the world, from the Universal, from God. And, therefore, having become an intimate and integral part of the world, all the remains of his will is reflected in the Universal, having surrendered his own personal will, he unconsciously becomes a species of universal will, and the physicist's most stringent laws must collapse before the amorous desire of the ecstatic."

Page 14, line 16, "Oneness":

Cf. "A creed of the Fatimids" pp. 25 to 30, by W. Ivanow, 1936, Qayyimah Press, Bombay.

Page 14, line 19:

"History of Muslim Mysticism — how it was influenced by Greek Philosophy,"—refer lecture delivered at Shantiniketan, Bengal, by Professor Mohammad Habib on "Sufism" as Nizam lecturer, on 2nd March 1936.

Page 15, line 1, Est. Deus :

The Brahmins say — "Win only the knowledge of the self and leave alone everything else."

(Mundaka II. 25.)

Page 15, line 23, the human soul:

Cf. "A creed of the Fatimids" pp. 66 to 68, by W. Ivanow, 1936, Qayyimah Press, Bombay.

Page 15, line 28, "One with Nature":

The outspoken Sufi believes in God. Was it not Spinoza who said: "There is nothing but God. I am God." Was this not also the last cry of the martyr Mansur-al-Hallaj?

Page 16, line 3, We see, the greater etc.:

FitzGerald's conception of a translator's privilege:—

"FitzGerald maintained that in the absence of the perfect poet who shall recreate in his own language the body and soul of his original, the best system is that a paraphrase conserving the spirit of the author, i. e., a sort of literary metempsychosis."

Page 19, lines 18-25:

A dissertation on "God as Love" given by Hirendranath Datta before Diamond Jubilee International Convention of the Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras (cf. Times of India, 31-12-35).

Page 20, line 1:

For a comparison between Sir R. Burton's Quasideh and the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam refer an article in Modern Review, pp. 47-50, January 1932, by Dhan Gopal Mukerji.

Page 20, line 16, Persian Prosody and metres in the Persian language:

Amir Khushrau in his "Ghurrat-ul-Kamal" has well compared Persian with Arabic poetry. He writes—"Persian poetry is more rhythmic and balanced than Arabic. The fact that Arabic possesses such a vast vocabulary and words of multiple senses while few words in Persian have more than one sense and yet the Persian poetry has reached to such a high pitch of excellence, is sufficient to show the superiority of this poetry over Arabic poetry." (Life and works of Amir Khushrau by Dr. Mohammad Wahid Mirza, M.A., 1935, p. 160.)

Page 21, line 1, the Rubai:

There is no continuity of plan in the Rubaiyat. Each tetro-

stich is a distinct thought expressed in musical verse. One can compare these quatrains to the Japanese 'Hyakumin — Isshu' where every stanza is a separate and independent poem on a different topic.

Page 21, lines 8-12:

The scrupulously genuine Quatrains of Omar Khayyam are ample evidence of an epitome that comes glowing from the core of his heart; it is the document, almost a revelation of the highest mystical tendencies of his enlightened soul, a proof of the Divine grace that actuated him by the symbolical draught of the wine cup.

Page 24, "Sufism" and "Wine":

On the origin of Sufism Gertrude Bell said "Some have supposed that Sufism was imported from India after the time of Mahomed; some that it was a development of the doctrines of Zoroaster which the Prophet's successors silenced but did not destroy. The highest good to which the Sufis can attain, is the annihilation of the actual — to forget that they have a separate existence, and to lose themselves in the Divinity as a drop of water is lost in the ocean. The drunkenness of the Sufi Poets, say their interpreters, is nothing but an ecstatic frame of mind, in which the spirit is intoxicated with the contemplation of God just as the body is intoxicated with wine. The soul of the Sufi longs to return to God, from whom it has been separated by the mortal veil of the body. Among Persian Poets revelry of wine — intoxication — is to be taken for spiritual exaltation."

Page 24, line 8, Sufism in general:

"Sufism is more akin to Visisht advaitic Vedanta philosophy, and more akin to the love-religion of the Dravidians, in its mystic aspect. Vaishnavism is essentially a Gospel of Divine Love; So is Sufism" — Swami Govindacharya.



Page 24, line 18, Wine:

By 'Wine' Lalla Vakiyani implies the nectar of Salvation. Cf. Quarterly Review (January 1892). Also refer—The Indian Antiquary, Vol. LIX, Part June 1930, pp. 108-13. Also refer L'Eloge du Vin (Al-Khamriah)—Poeme Mystique de Omar Ibn-al-Faridh (Les éditions Vega—Paris 1931).

Page 24, line 19, Wine:

The meaning of wine, both in its real and symbolical sense, is well known in most of heathen religions, more especially in mysteries, as well as in the Judeo-Christian cult and in Moslem Esoterism" (see Journal of the Cama Oriental Institute, No. 19, a paper "On Wine and Feasts in the Iranian National Epic"—from the Russian of F. Rosenberg translated by L. Bagdonow, pp. 13-44).

Page 24, line 21, "Wine of God's Grace." **Page 28**, line 31, "World as a wine-house":

"I am not alone in rapture in this wine tavern;
But Junaid, Shibly and Attar were equally in rapture."

Page 24, line 22, Wine:

In the middle ages wine was taken in a purely material sense.

"Chi boit et ne reboit ne cais qua boir-soit." Who drinks not over and over again knows not what drinking is.

The above French motto is seen indited in Titian's picture "Bacchanal." This old version of "Fill the bumper Fair" as the motto set to music before a couple in the centre of the canvas. (Life of Titian by Crowe and Caval Cassel, Vol. 1, p. 228, Edition 1881). It would be interesting in this connection to read what St. Augustine thought when he met a man under great influence of strong drink and intoxication (cf. Life of St. Augustine by Papini—pp. 111-113, chapter XXI, The drunken Beggar).

Page 24, line 30, "God-Intoxication":

Puran Singh, the Sikh Poet of the Punjab, resembles the old religious poets of India and Persia. In his devotional ecstasy, the name of God filled him with rapture. He sang:

"The name of the Infinite! The satnam that lives
From heart to heart, from lips to lips.
The Fire of life that goes from man to man.
It was ere time began, it is and shall be.
Teach me Thy Name, let me breathe in Thy love
And grow young."

Page 25, line 24, Mystical poets:

Dayaram, the Hindu poet of Western India, and Ghalib, the Mahomedan poet of the Punjab, were not essentially different from Narsinh Mehta and Amir Khoshru, who lived four centuries before them. They wrote of Divine Love (as Omar Khayyam, Sadı, Hafiz were their precursors), of the human longing for God, of the transitory nature of human happiness, and the vanity of earthly power and pomp."—Vasudeo B. Mehta (Bookman, April 1931).

Page 26, line 1:

"If Thou would'st hear the Nameless, and will dive
Into the Temple-cave of thine own self,
There, brooding by the central altar, thou
May'st haply learn the Nameless has a voice,
By which thou wilt abide, if thou be wise,
As if thou knowest, tho' thou canst not know",
Tennyson.

Page 26, lines 1-3, نگہ کردم اندر دل حویشتن :

Abul-Hasan al-Hirali, a Sufi of the 13th Century, said "the highest faith consists in the fact — 'Heaven and Earth contains *Me* not, but the heart of Man — my believing Servant containeth *Me*.'"

Page 26, line 16, The philosophy of the latter:

No utter surprise can come to him
Who pierces Khayyam's core;

That which we seek and shun is there,
Man's final lore."

H. Melville.

Page 26, line 16, philosophy of Omar Khayyam:

What does Omar divine in the interpretation of his philosophy? What is the substance of his higher vision?

Not unlike Vladimir Solovyof "he sees the unity of the divine in us all, he sees the unity of this divine in us with the divine without; he sees ahead of us in time or in eternity the increasing sense of that unity." For he drove away duality from his Soul and saw unity everywhere. No less has this been well expressed by Rumi when he sang:

دویم از دل بدر کردم * یکی دیدم دو عالم را
یکی جویم یکی بینم * یکی دانم یکی خانم

With Omar love is the vilification of egoism, the desire for divine unity. In this unity he finds his true individuality and immortality.

Page 28, line 18, Sufi:

There is a Vedanta — Sufi Society in Mysore where (in 1920) Dr. J. S. Mackenzie and F. W. Thomas of India Office Library were present.

Page 28, lines 19-20:

Those to whom the idiom of high and esoteric symbology is so much fantastic nonsense will never be able to understand the mystic inward experience (on this topic read and study — John Middleton Murry's book on "God," chapter II, *Mysticism* and after, p. 119 et seq).

Page 29, lines 1-2:

"Maddened by love I shall laugh and cry,
Shall float in the ocean of divine bliss;
Shall madden others with my madness,
And shall disport for ever under the feet of God."

Hymn 703, *Brahma Sangit*.

Is this not an echo of Omar's "Ruby Juice"?

Page 29, line 3, The Greek Philosophers:

On Greek Philosophy in Islam refer Syed Suleiman Nadvi's paper in "Islamic Culture," January 1927, "Muslims and Greek Schools of philosophy."

Page 29, line 11, Sanskrit authors:

Otto Rothfeld says that — when Omar Khayyam died, he was at least over 80 and was well acknowledged as a man of learning surrounded by respect and veneration.....Further the same author asserts that — "In the Province of Khorasan in which Omar was born followers of Buddha or of the Hindu Vedanta had for centuries existed, and Vedantic teaching had made some way among all the Persian people."

Page 29, line 12, Zoroastrianism:

On the influence of Zoroastrianism on Islam refer *Compte Rendu de la Societe Asiatique de 1868 — Rapport annuel* — by Ignaz Goldziher (a study published in English 1912-Luzac). Also Von Kramer's *History of 'Islamic Spirit'* may be usefully consulted.

Page 29, line 12, "Source of Sufism":

Refer "*L'eloge du vin*" (Al-Khamriya), *Poeme mystique* de Omar ibn-Al-Faridh. This contains Nablusi's commentary thereon and an "*essai sur la mystique Mussulmane*" which is the best short account of the origin and nature of Sufism since Ibn Khaldun's.

Page 29, line 12:

"Marked influence of Zoroastrian ideas on Judaism, Buddhism and Christianity was to be seen, while after a critical study of Islamic literature," said Professor Taher Rezwi, "one could easily realise that the religion preached by the Prophet of Arabia was a reformed shape of the Zoroastrian faith from one end to the other." — Professor Rezwi's lecture at Calcutta.

Times of India, dated 9-3-36.

Page 29, line 13, Zoroastrianism:

Mrs. Violet Tweedale in her well-known work, "The Cosmic Christ," states — "The manifestation of the Cosmic Christ is to be found in the case of the great Iranian, or ancient Persian Prophet, Zoroaster. Zoroaster is of special interest to students and lovers of the Cosmic Christ, for all esoteric schools teach, and all tradition affirms, that he it was who through many incarnations prepared his body for complete Christ-ensoulment and was born into Palestine as Jesus of Nazareth. He was one of the greatest Sufis of whom we have any historical account, and the Prophet Daniel based his teaching on that of the Iranian prophet with whom he had been associated in a former life. Let us remember that the Magi who were led by a star to the birthplace of Jesus of Nazareth were Zoroastrian priests. This priestly tribe carried on the faith after the prophet's death, and exist to this day."

In regards to the Sufis, the author claims that no one really knows who the first Sufi was. It is, she says, the oldest esoteric school in existence, and the parent of all others. Sufism, in the following words, unites the whole world into one brotherhood: "To God belongeth the East and the West, and whithersoever ye turn there is the face of God." (Occult Review, Nov. 1936.)

Page 29, line 14, Source of Sufism etc.:

The indebtedness of Sufism to Persia and the mystic Zoroastrian substratum of Persian Mysticism (a blend) is shown by Dr. E. Lehmann in the Chapter on Persian Mysticism in his book "Mysticism in Heathendom and Christendom."

Page 29, lines 19-20:

On Sufism and its relation to Pantheism and Islam (Islamic Culture, January 1931, pp. 142-65, by C. E. Wilson).

Page 29, lines 26-28:

The Gods are only one single Being under different names. "ekana sad viprā bahudhā vadanti."

Page 31, line 14:

Professor E. B. Cowell has well summarised Omar and his philosophy; he looked on Omar as a fine Sufi and his poem as a mystical one in which profoundly religious impulses and doctrines are conveyed in a series of figures wherein the drunkenness lauded by Omar is to be read as the rapture of Divine Love, and the wine which causes it as the Divine Mercy."

Page 32, line 1, Ecclesiastes:

Horace G. Hutchenson writes in his breezy article on Ed. Fitz. (see Quarterly Review for April 1931, pp. 279-301) about as under:

"A mystical sense has been read into the Verses of Omar, as if the 'wine' and the rest of the pleasant things of sense were to be taken as symbols of spiritual things. But the scholars seem on the whole to misbelieve this, preferring to take Omar, at something like his face value. That at its simplest is how Fitz. takes him, though doubtless Omar writes as a protestant against the strictest sect of Islamism of his day much as the Preacher Ecclesiastes, in our Bible, wrote against the ultra orthodox Pharissies."

Page 32, lines 1 et seq:

To Plato, as to Hamlet, the world appeared as a garden overgrown with weeds and brushwood. Hence the pessimistic view (likewise of Omar) was brought about and proceeded not by personal shortcomings and misfortunes, but by the fact that in this world truth and righteousness, found no place and that hypocrisy, ingratitude, rapine and murder ran rampant further it seemed to him that "the whole world is full of evil; the body is the grave and prison of the soul; Society is the grave of wisdom and truth; life for the true philosopher (instance Omar Khayyam) is a constant death.

Page 38, lines 1-3:

Renan has put into a few luminous sentences his view of

the mystical poets of India and Persia. "On sait que dans ces pays," he says, "s'est developpee une vaste litterature ou l'amour divin et l'amour terrestre se croisent d'une facon souvent difficile a démêler. L'origine de ce singulier genre de poesie est une question qui n'est pas encore eclaircie. Dans beaucoup de cas les sens mystiques pretes a certaines poesies erotiques persanes et hindoues n'ont pas plus de realite que les allegories du Cantique des Cantiques Dans l'Inde et la Perse ce genre de poesie (erotico-mystique) est le fruit d'un extreme raffinement, d'une imagination vive et portée au quietisme, d'un certain goût du mystère, et aussi, en Perse du moins, de l'hypocrisie imposée par le fanatisme musulman."

Page 39, line 26, "luxurious sense of the Divine":

Compare Amiel's effusive sense—"There is no repose for the mind except in the absolute; for feeling except in the infinite; for the soul except in the divine; my end is communion with Being through the whole of Being."

Page 39, lines 26-29:

Were we to analyse the internal meaning of the several ethical quatrains of Omar one who has carefully studied Shelley's Prometheus Unbound, he will find no far distant analogy in the thoughts expressed by Shelley. Omar was influenced more by the tenets of Neoplatonism and no less by the ethics of Christianity, as much as was then known and studied and his whole belief was centered on the ultimate power of the universe on One Eternal Love."

Page 44, line 6:

India is the source from whence other nations have derived this mystic worship of divinity (E. E. Thwaytes — Hibbert Journal, Oct. 1915).

Page 45, lines 4-5: دویم از دل بدر کردم

When man entirely drops his body, and shuffles his mortal coil he inhabits an electro-magnetic form, a radiant body of ether.

Further he drops off all passions and personal emotions entirely, all feelings, all desires like fear, anger, hatred, lust and the like, thus he is said to have reached the condition of pure selfhood.

But what happens to the soul, which is a mental nomenclature, when the body dies? From the teaching of the Bible we have every reason to believe that God gently withdraws the soul of the believer from his body at the moment of death, endows it with the power of self-conscious existence and activity without a physical organ, and takes it to Himself in Paradise. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus upholds this doctrine, for Lazarus at death was immediately borne to "Abraham's bosom," which was a Hebrew figure of speech for Paradise.

Christian Faith and Life, Oct. 1934, p. 250.

Page 45, line 13, "Traherne":

Well-known Metaphysical Poets appeared in the Caroline Age, and included Southwell, Fletcher, Herrick, Quarles, Herbert, Crashaw, Traherne and among them, Henry Vaughan shone with a brighter light.

Page 47, line 5, 'Love Divine':

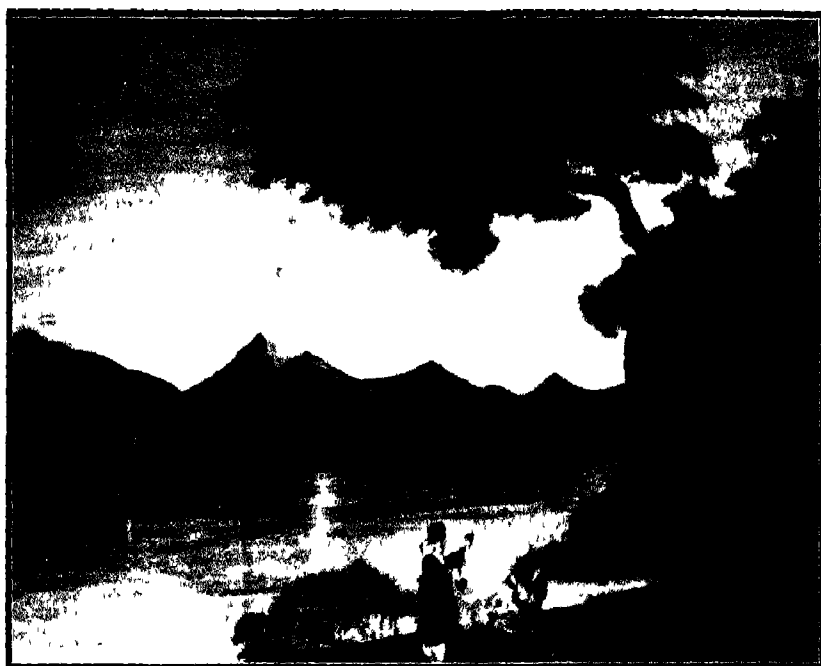
Vladimir Solovyov believes "Love is the highest revelation, the gleam of another world upon our ordinary existence; Love therefore is the proof of immortality, the guerdon and sense of it."

Page 47, line 23, "All the thoughts":

"Before Thy prescience, Power Divine,
What is this idle sense of mine?
What all the learning of the Schools?
What sages, priests and pedants? Fools!
The world is Thine, from Thee it rose
By Thee it ebbs, by Thee it flows.
Hence, worldly lore! By whom is wisdom shown?
The Eternal knows, knows all, and He alone!

Page 50, line 14:

Chaitanya, an Indian St. Frances (Dr. J. Estlin Carpenter in Hibbert Journal, July 1921).



Page 58, line 1, "Omar's Character".

It is interesting to read the last moments of Omar's death. He was reading Bu Ali Sena (Avicennas), "Kitab-ush-Shifa," The Book of Healing. Upon reaching the Chapter on "Wah-dat-o-Kasrat" (i.e. the one and the many) he at once got up. He always used to carry a toothpick which he put between the pages, arose, and said his prayers, fasted till night, performed the last evening prayer, bowed and kneeled down and said "O God I have known Thee to the extent of my power, forgive me therefore." With such an expression on his lips, he breathed his last. Likewise Frederick Amiel let fall from his despairing grasp, the pen, with a moan and cried "Quevivre est difficile O mon cœur fatigue"!

Appendix A

A CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF IMPORTANT PERSIAN AND ARABIC WORKS CONTAINING REFERENCES TO 'UMAR KHAYYĀM

(By the kind permission of Mr. R. P. Bhajiwalla, author of "Maulana Shabī and Umar Khayyām")

- (1) "Ta'rikh al-Ḥukamā al-Islām" of Zāheru'd-Dīn Bayhaqī. Published before A.D. 1150.
- (2) "Chahār Maqāla" of Niẓāmī 'Arūzī Samarqandī. Published A.D. 1150.
- (3) "Mirṣādu'l-'Ibād" of Najmu'd-Dīn Rāzī. Published A.D. 1223.
- (4) "Tā'rikh al'-Kāmil" of Ibnul'-Asīr. Published A.D. 1230.
- (5) "Ta'rikh ul'-Ḥukamā" of Jamālu'd-Dīn al-Qiftī. Published A.D. 1248.
- (6) "Nuzhatu'l-Arwāḥ" of Muḥammad Shahrāzūrī. Published middle of 13th Century A.D.
- (7) "Ta'rikh-i-Jahān Gushā" of 'Aṭā Malik-i-Juwaynī. Published A.D. 1260.
- (8) "Āḡāru'l-Bilād" of Zakariyyā al-Qazwīnī. Published before A.D. 1283.
- (9) "Jāmi'u't-Tawārīkh" of Rashīdu'd-Dīn Fazellāh. Published A.D. 1310.
- (10) "Ta'rikh-i-Guzīda" of Ḥamdu'llāh Mustawfī. Published A.D. 1330.
- (11) "Firdawsu't-Tawārīkh." Published A.D. 1405.
- (12) "Tazkiratu'sh-Shu'arā" of Dawlatshāh Samarqandī. Published A.D. 1487.
- (13) "Ā'in-i-Akbarī" of Abu'l-Faẓl. Published middle of 16th Century A.D.
- (14) "Ta'rikh-i-Alfi" Published A.D. 1583.

- (15) "Haft Iqlīm" of Amīn Aḥmad-i-Rāzī. Published A.D. 1593.
- (16) "Dabistān-i-Mazāhib" of Muḥsin-i-Fānī. Published A.D. 1650.
- (17) "Kashfu'z-Zunūn" of Hājji Khalīfa. Published middle of 17th Century A. D.
- (18) "Riyāzu'sh-Shu'arā" of Walī Dāghistānī. Published A.D. 1748.
- (19) "Khazāna-i-'Āmira" of Mir Ghulām 'Alī Khān Āzād. Published A.D. 1763.
- (20) "Ātish Kadah" of Luṭf 'Alī Beg Azhar. Published A.D. 1766.
- (21) "Mu'jmau'l-Fuṣaḥā" of Riḏā Qulī Khān. Published A.D. 1867.



Appendix B

A LIST OF LANGUAGES IN WHICH THE RUBAIYYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM ARE TRANSLATED

These can be seen in the author's collection of works on Omar. This unique collection is believed to be the second best in the world—the first remaining with Mr. A. G. Potter of Hampstead, London.

(Those in brackets are awaited)

English.	Greek.	Spanish (Volapuk).
French.	Spanish.	Hindi.
German.	Catalan.	Japanese.
Russian.	Esperanto.	(Chinese).
Swedish.	Sindhi.	Urdu.
Danish.	Gujrati.	Tamil.
Norwegian	Bengalee.	Telugu.
Polish.	Gaelic (Irish).	(Malayalam).
Italian.	Hebrew.	Manx.
Zechoslavakian.	Arabic.	Sanskrit.
Hungarian.	Turkish.	Icelandic.
Latin.	Armenian.	(Punjabi)
		(Singhalese)

Note.—The British Museum, London, possesses translations of Omar Khayyam in English, German, French, Italian, Hebrew and Danish (upto 1925).

A Short Note on Omar Khayyam

Omar was a typical man of the world that in some restricted sense he may be classed as a 'Karma Yogin'. Unfortunately, few details of his personal life and character have been unearthed from any extant works of Mohamedan historians. But his quatrains go in a long measure to strike an unfaltering note of his character and views on life and other recondite questions of philosophy, Soul and immortality. He has indicated sufficiently from his poetical outpourings that he was more of a Nature-Mystic and much less of an ascetic or Durvish. I have approached his philosophy of life by instituting a comparison with that of Thomas Traherne as propounded in his celebrated theological work, "Centuries of Meditation". To interpret his quatrains symbolically the reader will always find evidence of his "Call for Love Divine".* Besides, Omar's deep study of Greek philosophy, higher mathematics as can be evidenced from his published work on "Algebra" and commentaries on the definitions of Euclid coupled with his astronomical studies, as have been exhibited in the revision of the Calendar and recently discovered prose work called "Navroz-Nameh", go to prove that he was a celebrated savant of his age.

In conclusion I am led to compare the conception of love as realised by Browning† with that of Omar who was actuated by his constantly harping on the theme of contemplating on "Love".

* The true poetry is that which raises you, as this does, towards heaven, and fills you with Divine emotion, which sings of love and death, of hope and sacrifice, and awakens the sense of the infinite—(Amiel). M. Georges Salmon in his article in *La Grande Encyclopédie*—Paris on Omar Khayyam writes — Omar Khayyam devint un mystique, un soufi, célébrant tour à tour l'amour divin et l'ivresse extatique. Il fut vénéré comme un Saint.

It is close upon eight centuries since Omar Khayyam passed away, and yet his thoughts on life and death are fresh as if he had written in our own generation, and to many his doubts are as insoluble. It is a great soul, athirst for a knowledge of God, and a passionate seeker after truth, that reveals itself to us, and in spite of difficulties and contradictions in his utterances, he appeals strongly to those who care for the spiritual more than for the material—Ella C. Sykes in "Persia and its People".

† Browning's Treatment of the Principle of Love by Naotaro Kurdo—Vol. III, No. 4, English Seminar, Imperial University, Tokyo, Japan.

MYSTICISM

It has been urged—among others by a high authority like Dr. Moulton (EZ, 146) that “there was a singular absence of the mystic element about Zarathustra’s teaching”. Now if we take Mysticism as equivalent to asceticism or quietism there is some truth in this view. But if we take such a definition of Mysticism as is given by an eminent theologian like Prof. Troeltsch we have reason to differ, though respectfully, from the view taken by Dr. Moulton. “Myticism,” says Dr. Troeltsch, “is nothing but the insistence upon immediacy, interiority, presence of religious experience” (Hugel, III). Visions of the Divine and “a passionate realism of intercourse with God” (Ib.) are notable features of such Mysticism. Take another authoritative definition of Mysticism: “the intuitive and ecstatic union with the Deity obtained by contemplation” (ERE IX. 58). Such vision and contemplation abound in the Gathas. Yasna 21, for example, consists of the description of a great vision in which Zarathushtra beholds the World-soul appealing to its Creator for the appointment of a protector and guardian and at the end of the vision he himself is entrusted with the great mission. It is in the fitness of things that the Gathas should begin with an account of this vision in which Zarathushtra is, as it were, furnished with the credentials for his great mission in the world; just as the book of the prophet Isaiah starts with describing the mystical vision in which Isaiah is consecrated to his vocation (Peake COMMENTARIES ON THE BIBLE, 436).^{*} Indeed a very instructive parallelism might be drawn between the visions of and yearnings for the Divine on the part of Zarathushtra and on that of the great figures in the Old Testament. According to the view taken by Geldner and Bartholomae, Yasna 43 verse 5 describes a vision of the birth of life and the beginning of time when a Divine decree created or emphasised the moral code and the ultimate triumph of virtue (Moulton, 356).

^{*} “The spirit of the Gathas” by Sir J. C. Coyajee, Kt., M.A.

Felicities of Thomas Traherne*

My readers at an earlier stage have been made familiar with "Centuries of Meditation" by Traherne (vide page 45). This book is a work of deep devotion and high spiritual import. Some pious readers will be led to put "Meditations" on a higher pedestal than Thomas A. Kempis' "Imitation". Now, "Felicities" is a kind of anthology of Traherne's writings—carefully selected fragments of his prose alongside of his shorter poems. It is a small book to be carried in one's coat-pocket. This small book is not so much to read through but to be dipped into when one is disposed to be alone. Like Omar, Traherne was a modest man and of retiring disposition and in consequence a lover of Nature; who may be denominated a Nature-Mystic. Both Omar and Traherne had a gift of inner vision. Both recognised that behind all natural things there lay a unity, marvellous and mysterious—having discarded duality and recognising both the worlds as One. *دویم از دل بدر کردم*. The minds of Omar and Traherne were filled with "rapturous aspnings of a joyful and happy Soul, conscious of its kinship with God Himself and sure of its divinity and of its glorious destiny". The recent discovery of Omar's lost manuscript of "El Vujud" by Hayder Vaner, Retired Governor General in the Turkish Army (a metaphysical work on "The Existence" will go a long way to bear out the above-named ethical and religious frame of Omar's mind. No doubt Traherne and Omar were born poets. The poems of both these writers evince full well that whatever they felt and saw was "illuminated by the light of the spiritual world" and possessed a kind of mystical significance. Their beauteous Souls were ravished and transported at the

* Chosen and edited with Introduction by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch; P. J. & A. E. Dobell, London, 1934, Price 8s. This valuable book was brought to my notice at a time when this book of mine was printing and I feel much benefited after its perusal. I must render my sincere thanks to its Editor, Sir Arther Quiller-Couch.

Supplement No. III—*Contd.*

sight of Beauty and made their hearts leap with joy and ecstasy.

"And every Stone, and every Star a Tongue,
And every Gale of Wind a Curious Song."

Both these poets possessed and cherished a living and burning faith in the Goodness of God.

The last utterances of Omar on his death-bed will amply justify the whole-hearted reverence and love of Nature and God he felt. This is likewise well evidenced in his invocation as can be read in Omar's "Nowroz-Nameh".

With Amiel when these twin Souls contemplated on the magnificent spectacle of Nature, they felt as if they were in the temple of the infinite and believed that they were the guests of God in this immense Nature—"How all these stars wandering in the pale ether drew them far from earth; and what inexpressible peace, what a dew of the eternal life they shed upon the souls in ecstasy."

In conclusion let me exhort my readers to make "The Felicities of Thomas Traherne their daily vade-mecum, their constant companion, their monitor to guide, to exalt and to chasten the course of their life which is beset with struggles and miseries and sufferings. It will give such poise to inner life, to know, to love, to act and thus lead on to a perfect life."



Supplementary Note 1 :

The life and general outlook of Omar and Traherne suggest very instructive parallels. In many features of mental and emotional character Omar was not far removed from Traherne. In spiritual yearnings and aspirations both were nearly allied. Genius was precisely shaped by Omar's profound study of Greek philosophy and close application to higher mathematics (so far as was studied in his days) and to Astronomy not unaccompanied by a touch of metaphysics (as his recently discovered book "El Vujud" — Existence — proves) and lastly to poetry. His poetry well characterises his view on life, death and immortality. No less was Traherne actuated to follow his religious bent in the same direction. Hence it was Nasir Khushrau in the case of Omar who added to the name of Omar a highly honorific epithet of "Sadre Kawnayn", i.e., leader of both the worlds. The vehemence, insistence and furore with which Omar calls for his mystic "Wine" are nothing short of the "thirst for the unknown and frenzy for the blue vaults of the infinite and the poignant intoxication of the spiritual". Traherne echoes all these in his "Centuries".

Supplementary Note 2 :

A decade after the publication of the Rubaiyyat of Omar Khayyam as rendered into glorious verse by FitzGerald much controversy was waged and attention devoted to the exposition of the philosophy underlying these quatrains. Some flung a charge of atheism, some of hedonism, some of pessimism, while some like Carlyle and Dr. Hastie stigmatised him as an "infidel" and "drunkard".

All these futile abuses thrown against Omar were the result of misunderstanding the mystical significance of the tenets and creed as held and practised by this Astronomer-Poet of Persia. In like manner, Schopenhauer characterised in most

Supplementary Note 2 — *Contd.*

opprobrious terms Spinoza and stigmatised him as "stinking Jewish optimist", and in recent times an American writer denounced Buddha as the most mischievous pessimist of the East. I can scarcely recall in modern times a poet loaded with greater infamy and extolled with more enthusiasm than Omar. I would be crossing the border-line of undue exaggeration were I to stamp Omar as "God-intoxicated Man" as Novalis happily judged Spinoza, as such an appellation was long current amongst the mystical poets of Iran and Arabia.



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