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THE QUATRAINS

OF

OMAR KHAYYÁM.

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE

BY

E. H. WHINFIELD, M.A.

LATE OF THE BENGAL CIVIL SERVICE.



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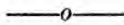
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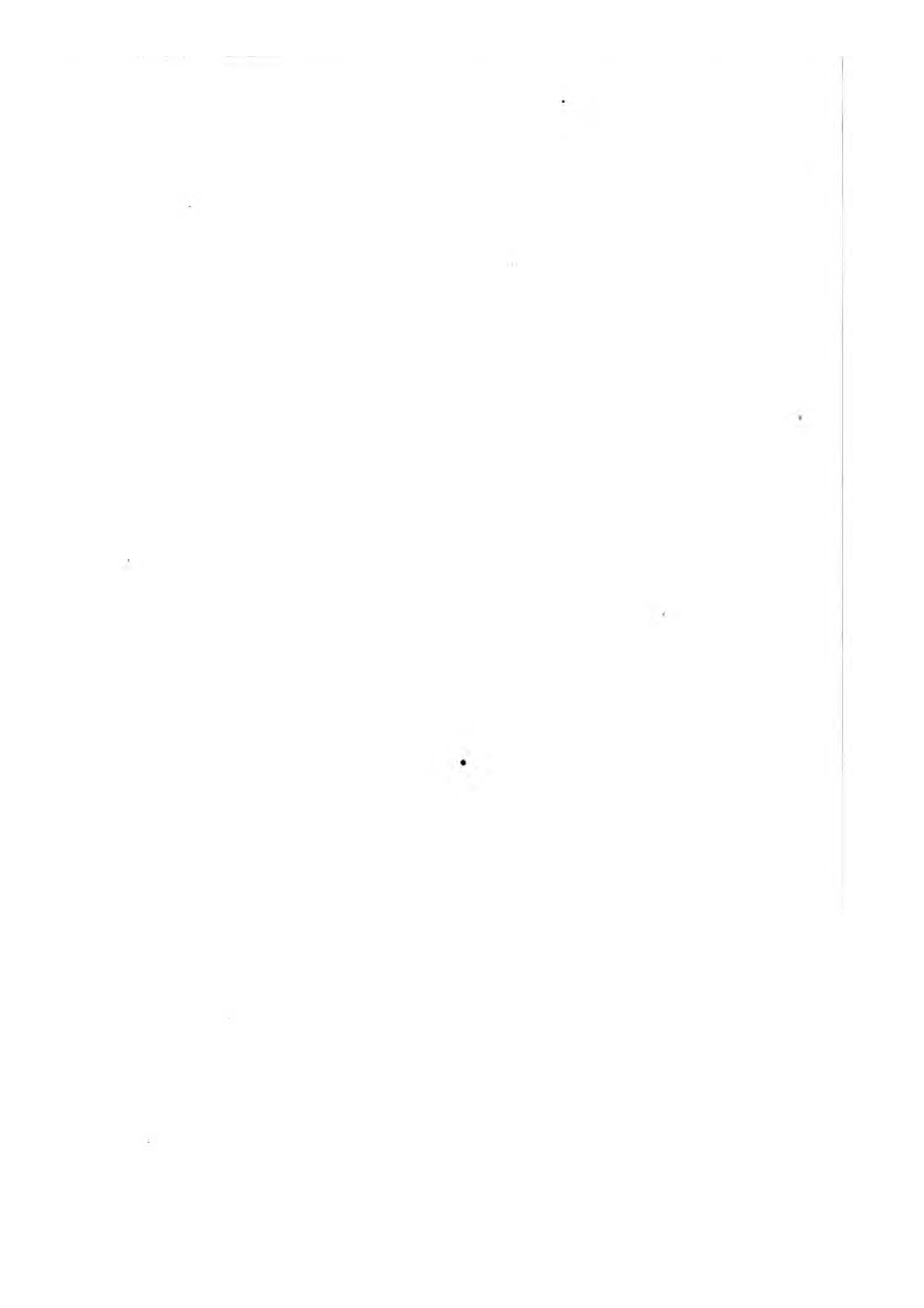
*“ An aching body, and a mind
Not wholly clear, nor wholly blind,
Too keen to rest, too weak to find,
That travails sore, and brings forth wind.”*

—M. ARNOLD.

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INTRODUCTION.

OMAR KHAYYÁM (the tent-maker) was born about the middle of the fifth century of the Hejirah, corresponding to the eleventh of the Christian era, in the neighbourhood of Naishapur, the capital of Khorásan, and died in 517 A.H. (= 1122 A.D.) His life thus extended through the reigns of the Seljuk kings, Alp Arslan, Malik Shah, Mahmud, Barkiarok, and Muhammad.

What is known of his life is contained in the following authorities:—

First, the Wasíyat, or Testament of the celebrated Nizám ul Mulk, minister of Alp Arslan and Malik Shah. This was written about 480 A.H., and an extract from it is preserved in Mirkhond's *Rauzat us Safa* (written about 900 A.H.), and in the *Dabistan i Mazahib*.¹ This extract tells how Nizám ul Mulk in his youth studied under the great Sunni doctor Imám Muaffik of Naishapur, and there formed a close friendship with two of his fellow-pupils, Omar Khayyám and Hassan Sabbah. The three friends entered into a compact, that whichever of them first attained wealth and power should share his fortune with

¹ The text of Mirkhond, with a French translation, may be found in "Notices et Extraits des MSS." xi. 143, and the passage in the *Dabistan* at vol. ii. p. 423, of Shea and Troyer's translation.

the others. When Nizám ul Mulk became minister to Alp Arslan, he was as good as his word, and gave Hassan a place at court. The result was that Hassan intrigued against, and tried to ruin him; but, failing in his attempt, retired from court, and joined the sect of Ismailians or Batínians, and finally established the notorious order of Assassins, with headquarters at Almút on the Caspian. Malcolm (Hist. of Persia, i. 245) mentions a story that one of the modes Hassan adopted to stimulate the fanaticism and secure the devotion of his followers, was to give them from time to time a foretaste of the delights of the Muhammadan paradise. This he used to effect by administering strong doses of opium, and when the patients were fast asleep, he had them conveyed into a splendid palace with beautiful gardens, where they were regaled for a day or two. A second dose of opium then produced a second sleep, during which they were carried back to their homes. Hassan acquired unbounded influence over his followers, and used it to procure the assassination of every one who had incurred his dislike, and amongst others, of his old benefactor Nizám ul Mulk.

Defremery, in his memoir on Barkiarok (p. 51), notes, on the authority of Ibn Athir, that a furious war between the various sects in Naishapur took place in the year 488 A.H. It seems not unlikely that these examples of fanaticism and superstition may have had some share in producing in Omar that feeling of antagonism to the popular religion, expressed in so many of his quatrains, which seem to breathe the spirit of that line of Lucretius—

“Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.”

But to return to the "Testament" of Nizám ul Mulk, it goes on to say, that when the minister offered a place at court to Omar, he declined it on the ground that he preferred to remain in a private station, on which Nizám ul Mulk conferred on him an annual stipend of twelve hundred pieces of gold, secured on the revenues of Naishapur. And later, in the reign of Malik Shah, Omar was summoned to Merv, and given a post worthy of his abilities and attainments.

The next authority is the *Tarikh ul Hukama*, written about 647 A.H.¹ In this it is stated that Omar Khayyám was the most learned man of his age, and thoroughly versed in all the Greek sciences, especially philosophy and astronomy. He exhorted his disciples to seek the one God by self-purification. Subsequently the Sufis accommodated his poems to their own doctrines, making them a frequent subject of discussion in their assemblies. The marrow of his teaching consisted of axioms of universal religion. His outspoken criticism of the popular theology raised such a storm against him, that he was fain to make the pilgrimage to Mecca, and to be more regular in his religious observances during the latter part of his life.

The next authority to be mentioned is the geographer and historian, Abulfeda, who lived from 672 to 732 A.H. He records that Omar Khayyám was placed by Nizám ul Mulk in charge of the royal observatory, and whilst holding that post, superintended the reform of the old calendar, established in Persia before the Muhammadan

¹ The passage is given in full in Wöpke's "*Algebre d'Omar Khayyam*," Preface, p. v.

invasion. The new calendar called *Tarikh i Jalali*, according to M. Reinaud, is considered by some superior to the Gregorian.¹ Omar, for the purpose of this work, drew up some astronomical tables called *Zij Maliksháhi*, mentioned in *Haji Khalfa's* dictionary (iii. 570). But, adds *Abulfeda*, Omar was too much addicted to poetry and pleasure, and seemed not to set much store by his astronomical labours.

There is a story about Omar having predicted where he should be buried, quoted by Mr. Fitzgerald from the *Tarikh ul Kudama*, and by D'Herbelot (article *Khiam*, ii. 436), from a book called *Majma un-Navádir*; probably not the modern Persian book of that name, in which I have failed to trace it.

Finally, there are short notices of Omar's life, containing nothing more than what has already been said, in the *Safina i Khusgu* (written in 1147 A.H.), and in the *Atish Kedah* (written in 1134 A.H.)²

Besides his quatrains, Omar has left some works on mathematics in Arabic. One of these, a treatise on Algebra, has been edited and translated by M. Woepke, of Bonn (Paris, 1851), and from that work it seems Omar's full name was *Ghias ud din Abul fathah Omar bin Ibrahim Al Khayyám*.

The editions of the quatrains which have been used for this translation are the following:—

I. That of M. Nicolas, containing 464 quatrains (Paris, 1867), references to which are indicated by the letter N.

II. That of Moulvi Muhammad Sadik Ali of Lucknow

¹ Reinaud, "Géographie d'Abulfeda," *Prolegomena*, p. ci.

² Sprenger's Catalogue, p. 464.

(Lucknow, 1878), containing nearly 800 quatrains, indicated hereafter by the letter L.

III. The Bodleian MS., No. 140 of the Ouseley Collection, containing 158 quatrains. It was written at Shiraz in 865 A.H., and is indicated by the letter B.

Reference has also been made to three smaller collections of the quatrains, viz., Whalley's edition (Moradabad, 1870), that of Abdallah Ansári (Teheran, 1277 A.H.), and the 31 quatrains cited in the *Atish-kedah*. The readings in the various editions differ very greatly. I have selected those which seemed the best.

The Rabái, or quatrain used by Omar, is a short poem of four lines, of which the first two and the fourth always rhyme, and sometimes the third line as well. What may be regarded as the normal line consists of thirteen syllables, seven long and six short. But whenever two short syllables come together, they may be contracted into one long syllable, and the result is, that Persian prosodians reckon no less than twenty-four different variations of the line, the shortest of which consists of ten syllables all long. But, as may be supposed, this last form of the line is of very rare occurrence. The nearest English equivalent to a normal Rabái line would be such an Alexandrine as the following of Mr. Matthew Arnold, with accents on the second, fifth, tenth, and twelfth syllables:—

“We márk not the wórld's course, but would have *ít* take *óúrs*.”

Mr. Fitzgerald in his brilliant translation has, however, adopted the decasyllable, with three rhymes, and that

metre has been stamped with approval by Mr. Swinburne, who has used it in one or two of his minor poems, with the difference, that he makes the three rhyming lines of one quatrain rhyme, with the third line of the preceding quatrain. This modification is not admissible in the case of Omar, as all, or nearly all, his poems are entirely isolated in sense from those preceding and following.

There is another reason why the decasyllable metre seems most suitable, viz., that it is the metre of the Elizabethan sonnet, which is perhaps the nearest English equivalent to Omar's verse.

Of the German translators of Omar, Hammer has used both the Alexandrine and the decasyllable ; and the most recent translation, that of Herr Bodenstedt (Breslau, 1881), is in various metres.

It may be added, that Mr. C. J. Lyall, of the Bengal Civil Service, is now editing for the Calcutta Asiatic Society a new edition of the Quatrains, in which the materials, left by that excellent Persian scholar, the late Professor Blochmann, are to be worked up.

QUATRAINS OF OMAR KHAYYÁM.



Alif.

I.

WE sojourn here for one short day or two,
And all the gain we get is grief and woe,
And then, leaving life's problems all unsolved,
And harassed by regrets, we have to go.

N. 4.

II.

Since no one can assure thee of the morrow,
Rejoice thy heart to-day, and banish sorrow
With sparkling wine, fair moon, for heaven's moon
Will look for us in vain on many a morrow.

N. 8, L. B.

III.

Men say the Koran is the word divine,
Though 'tis not oft they care to read a line ;
One lucid text there is, whereon they pore
At every time and place, and that is wine.

N. 11, B. L.

IV.

What though 'tis fair to see, this form of man,
What causèd Thee, O heavenly Artisan,
 To paint these tulip cheeks and cypress forms
Here on the lowly walls of earth's divan ?

N. 13, L.

V.

Thus spake the idol to his worshipper :
" Why dost thou worship this dead stone, fair sir ?"
 " 'Tis because He who gazeth through thine eyes
Doth some part of His charms on it confer."

L.

VI.

Whate'er thou doest, never grieve thy brother,
Nor raise a fume of wrath his peace to smother.
 Dost thou desire to taste eternal bliss ?
Vex thine own heart, but never vex another.

B.

Be.

VII.

At first ensnare all hearts with kindly art,
Then let thine heart seek its pure counterpart,
A hundred Kaabas equal not one heart ;
Seek not the Kaaba, rather seek a heart.

N. 15, L.

VIII.

Here in this tavern haunt I make my lair,
And pawn for wine the raiment that I wear,
Without a hope of bliss, or fear of bale,
Rapt above water, earth, and fire, and air.

N. 19, L. B.

IX.

Quoth fish to duck : " 'Twould be a sad affair,
Should this brook ever leave his channel bare."
To whom the duck : " When I am dead and roasted,
The ocean may run dry for aught I care."

L.

Te.

X.

FROM doubt to clear assurance is a breath,
A breath from infidelity to faith ;
 Oh ! precious breath, enjoy it while you may,
'Tis all that life can give, and then comes death.

N. 20, L.

XI.

Ah ! wheel of heaven, who run a course so blind,
'Twas e'er your wont to show yourself unkind ;
 And cruel earth, if one should cleave your breast,
What store of buried jewels would he find !

N. 21, L.

XII.

My life lasts but a day or two, and fast
Sweeps by, like torrent stream or desert blast ;
 Howbeit, of two days I take no heed—
The day to come and that already past.

N. 22, B. L.

XIII.

Now with its joyous prime my spring is rife,
I quaff this wine, and list to lute and fife ;
 Chide not at wine for all its bitter taste,
Its bitterness sorts well with human life.

N. 24, B. L.

XIV.

O soul, whose lot it is to bleed with pain,
And daily blows of fortune to sustain,
 Into this body wherefore didst thou come,
Seeing thou must so soon depart again ?

N. 25, L.

XV.

To-day is thine to spend, but not to-morrow,
Counting on morrows breedeth bankrupt sorrow ;
 Oh, squander not this breath that heaven hath lent
 thee,
Make not too sure another breath to borrow.

N. 26, B.

XVI.

Art not ashamed thus to all doors to crawl ?
Take thy good fortune, and thy bad withal ;
 Know for a surety each must play his game,
As fortune's dice from heaven's dice-box may fall.

N. 27, L.

XVII.

This jug did once, like me, love's sorrows taste,
In bonds of beauty's tresses chainèd fast;

 This very handle pendent on its neck
Has many a time twined round a slender waist.

N. 28, B. L.

XVIII.

Days changed to nights ere you were born or I,
And heavens did run their course continually;

 See you tread gently on this dust, perchance
'Twas once the apple of some beauty's eye.

N. 29, L.

XIX.

Pagodas are, like mosques, true homes of prayer;
'Tis prayer that church bells waft upon the air;

 Kaaba and temple, rosary and cross,
All are but divers tongues of world-wide prayer.

N. 30, L.

XX.

The "tablet" all our fortunes doth contain,
Writ by the "pen" that heeds not bliss nor bane;

 'Twas writ at first whatever was to be,
To grieve or strive is labour all in vain.

N. 31, B. L.

XXI.

You must resign yourself to heaven's decree,
With men alone avails hypocrisy ;
Not all the wiles that cunning e'er devised
Can help you to outwit your destiny.

N. 34, L.

XXII.

Behold these cups, he takes such pains to make them,
And then enraged lets ruin overtake them ;
So many shapely feet, and heads, and hands,
What love drives him to make, what wrath to break
them ?

N. 38, B. L.

XXIII.

Death's terrors spring from foolish fantasy ;
Death yields the tree of immortality ;
Since Isa breathed new life into my soul,
I wash my hands of fear and dare to die.

N. 39, L.

XXIV.

Khayyám, why weep you that your life is bad ?
What boots it thus to mourn ? Rather be glad,
He that sins not, no title makes to grace,
Sin entails grace, then prithee why so sad ?

N. 43, B. L.

XXV.

Still doth the "veil" man's utmost ken impede,
And all our fond conjecturings mislead :
Our only prospect is earth's quiet breast ;
'Tis given to none the dark beyond to read.

N. 44, B.

XXVI.

In synagogue and cloister, mosque and school,
Hell's terrors and heaven's lures men's bosoms rule ;
But they who pierce the secrets of "The Truth,"
Sow not such empty chaff their hearts to fool.

N. 46, B. L.

XXVII.

Thus spake the sage : "Wherefore thy days consume
In sleep ? Did ever sleep make roses bloom ?
Forgather not with death's twin-brother, sleep ;
Thou wilt have sleep enough within thy tomb."

N. 48, B. L.

XXVIII.

If the heart knew earth's secrets here below,
At death 'twould know heaven's secrets too, I trow ;
But if you know naught here, while still yourself,
To-morrow, stripped of self, what can you know ?

N. 49, L.

XXIX.

My law it is, my own sweet will to obey,
My creed, to shun the fierce sectarian fray ;
I wedded luck, and offered her a dower,
She said, "I want none, so thy heart be gay."

N. 56, L.

XXX.

These raging passions their poor lords oppress,
As dogs with noisy barks the house distress,
Foxes are they in craft, and hares in sloth,
In fury tigers, wolves in wantonness.

N. 58, L.

XXXI.

See how the grass yon river marge doth grace,
So springs the down upon a cherub's face,
Tread not this grass with scorn, perchance it springs
From some poor buried beauty's cold embrace.

N. 59, L.

XXXII.

Hearts with the light of love illumined well,
Whether in mosque or synagogue they dwell,
Have their names written in the book of love,
Unvexed by hopes of heaven or fears of hell.

N. 60, L.

XXXIII.

If wine be an unpardonable sin,
God help Khayyám and his wine-bibbing kin !
If all poor drouthy souls be lodged elsewhere,
Heaven's plains must be as bare as maiden's chin.

N. 64, L.

XXXIV.

What is the world ? a caravanserai,
A pied pavilion of night and day,
A feast whereat a thousand Jamsheds sat,
A couch whereon a thousand Bahráms lay.

N. 67, L.

XXXV.

Here in this palace, where Bahrám held sway,
The wild does drop their young, and tigers stray,
And that great hunter king, ah ! well-a-day,
Now to the hunter death is fallen a prey.

N. 69, L.

XXXVI.

That bosom friend, on whom you so rely,
Seems to clear wisdom's eyes an enemy,
Choose not your friends from this rude multitude,
Their converse is a plague 'tis best to fly.

N. 75, B. L.

XXXVII.

This body is a tent, which for a space
Doth the pure soul with kingly presence grace,
When he departs, comes the tent-pitcher, death,
Strikes it, and moves to a new halting-place.

N. 80, L.

XXXVIII.

Khayyám, who long time stitched the tents of learning,
Has fallen into a furnace, and lies burning,
Fate's shears have cut his thread of life asunder,
And brokers cast his lumber out with spurning.

N. 81, B. L.

XXXIX.

All a long summer's day here Khayyám lies
On this green sward, gazing in Houris' eyes,
Yet Mollas say he is a graceless dog,
Who never gives a thought to Paradise.

N. 82, B. L.

XL.

O soul, so soon to leave this coil below,
And pass the dread mysterious curtain through,
Be of good cheer, and joy you while you may,
You wot not whence you come, nor whither go.

N. 85, B. L.
B

XLI.

Time is one point in our long weary years,
Jihún a drop beside our floods of tears,
 Hell but a fire enkindled of our griefs,
And heaven a moment's peace stolen from our fears.

N. 90, L.

XLII.

If men rebel, what of omnipotence ?
And if they wander, what of providence ?
 If heaven be earned by works, as wages due,
What room for mercy and benevolence ?

N. 91, L.

XLIII.

Khayyám his own true lineage cannot tell,
Whether derived from heaven or from hell ;
 Howbeit he will not renounce his wine,
Nor cash in hand for promised credit sell.

N. 92, B. L.

XLIV.

From right and left grave Mollas came, and stood,
Saying, "Renounce this wine, this foe of good ;"
 But if wine be my foe, as they declare,
I swear by Allah I must drink his blood.

N. 93, L.

XLV.

The good and evil with thy nature blent,
The weal and woe that heaven's decrees have sent,
Impute them not to motions of the skies,—
Skies than thyself ten times more impotent.

N. 95, B. L.

XLVI.

When Allah mixed my clay, he knew full well
My future acts, and could each one foretell;
'Twas he who did my sins predestinate,
Yet thinks it just to punish me in hell.

N. 99, L.

XLVII.

To him who all the week his thirst allays
To drink on Friday too is no dispraise;
Adopt my creed, and count all days the same,
Be worshippers of God and not of days.

N. 100.

XLVIII.

The breezes waft Thy fragrance, and it takes
My heart so that his master he forsakes,
And him forgetting, pants and leaps to Thee,
And so himself a part of Thee he makes.

L.

XLIX.

Did no fair rose my paradise adorn,
I would make shift to deck it with the thorn ;
 And if I lacked these prayer-mats and these beads,
Those Christian bells and stoles I would not scorn.

L.

L.

To lover's eyes what matters dark or fair,
Or if the loved one silk or sackcloth wear,
 Or lie on dust or down, or rise to heaven,
Yea, though she sink to hell, he seeks her there.

L.

LI.

To friends and eke to foes true kindness show :
No kindly heart unkindly deeds will do,
 Harshness will alienate a bosom friend,
And kindness reconcile a deadly foe.

L.

LII.

The potter did himself these vessels frame,
What makes him cast them out to scorn and shame ?
 If he has made them well, why should he break them ?
And though he marred them, they are not to blame.

L.

LIII.

By fate full many a heart has been undone,
And many a sprightly rose made woebegone ;
Plume thee not on thy lusty youth and strength,
Full many a bud is blasted ere 'tis blown.

L.

LIV.

Gold yields not wit, yet to wit lacking bread
Earth's flowery carpet seems a dungeon bed :
'Tis his full purse that makes the rose to smile,
Their empty hands make violets hang the head.

L.

LV.

Drink wine, and then as Mahmud thou wilt reign,
And list to music passing David's strain ;
Think not of past or future, seize to-day,
Then one to-day will not be lived in vain.

L.

LVI.

Drink wine, of human travail sweetest meed,
Fruitage of youth and balm of aged need ;
With boon companions, and with wine and rose,
Rejoice thy spirit—that is life indeed.

L. B.

LVII.

Dame Fortune's smiles are full of guile. Beware!
Her scimitar is sharp to smite. Take care!

When she doth drop a sweetmeat in thy mouth,
'Tis poisonous, to swallow it forbear!

B. L.

LVIII.

Where'er you see a rose or tulip bed,
Know that some mighty monarch's blood was shed;
And where the violet rears its purple tuft,
Be sure some blackmoled maiden rests her head.

B. L.

LIX.

Wine is a melting ruby, cup its mine,
Cup is the body, whose pure soul is wine;
These crystal cups which smile with ruddy wine
Example tears, the which heart's blood enshrine.

B. L.

LX.

Long must you sleep within your silent tomb,
Apart from friends, in solitary gloom;
Hark while I whisper softly in your ear,
"Never again may withered tulips bloom."

B. L.

LXI.

They preach how sweet those Houri brides will be,
But, look you, so is wine sweet, taste and see.

Hold fast this cash, and let the credit be,
And shun the din of empty drums with me.

B. L.

LXII.

Thou'rt bound to hide, O heavenly Artisan,
From foolish creatures Thy mysterious plan ;

Yet while Thou treatest him with such reserve,
What prescience canst Thou expect from man ?

B.

LXIII.

Once and again my soul did me implore
To teach her, if I might, the inspirèd lore ;

I bade her learn the Alif well by heart,
Who knows that letter well need learn no more.

B.

LXIV.

I came not hither of my own free will,
And go against my wish, a puppet still ;

Cup-bearer ! gird thy loins, and fetch some wine,
To purge the world's despite my goblet fill.

B. L.

LXV.

How long must I make bricks upon the sea ?
 Beshrew this vain task of idolatry ;
 Call not Khayyám a denizen of hell—
 One while in heaven and one in hell is he.

B. L.

LXVI.

Sweet is the breath of spring to rose's face,
 And thy sweet face adds charm to this fair place ;
 To-day is sweet, but yesterday is sad,
 And sad all mention of its parted grace.

B. L.

LXVII.

To-night thou'lt sing to me some dulcet air,
 And I upon thy lips will hang, O fair !
 Pour me some wine as rosy as thy cheeks,
 My mind is troubled like thy ruffled hair.

B.

LXVIII.

Pen, tablet, heaven, and hell I looked to see
 Above the skies from all eternity ;
 At last the master sage instructed me :
 " Pen, tablet, heaven, and hell are all in thee."

B. L.

LXIX.

The fruit of certitude you cannot pluck,
The path that leads thereto you never struck,
Nor ever shook the bough with strenuous hand ;
To-day is lost, hope for to-morrow's luck.

B. L.

LXX.

Now springtide showers its foison on the land,
And lively hearts wend forth, a joyous band,
For Isa's breath wakes the dead earth to life,
And trees gleam white with flowers, like Musa's hand.

B.

LXXI.

Alas for those cold hearts that never burn
With love, and his distracting bondage spurn ;
The days misspent with no redeeming love,
More wasted than all days,—most wasted, mourn.

B. L.

He and Khe.

LXXII.

O FAIR! whose cheeks checkmate red eglantine,
And draw the game with those fair maids of Chín;
 You played a glance against the King of Bábel,
And took his pawns and knights, and rooks and queen.

B. L.

LXXIII.

When life is spent, who recks of joy or pain?
Or cares in Naishapur and Balkh to reign?
 Come, quaff your wine, for after we are gone,
Moons will still wane and wax, and wax and wane.

N. 105, B. L.

Dal.

LXXIV.

THE sun doth smite the roofs with Orient ray,
And, Khosru-like, his wine-red sheen display ;
 Arise, and drink, the herald of the dawn
Proclaims the advent of another day.

L.

LXXV.

He who the world's foundations erst did lay,
Doth bruise full many a bosom day by day,
 And many a ruby lip and musky tress
Doth coffin in the earth, and shroud with clay.

N. 107, L.

LXXVI.

Comrades, I pray you, physic me with wine,
Make this wan amber face like rubies shine,
 And if I die, use wine to wash my corpse,
And frame my coffin out of planks of vine.

N. 109, B. L.

LXXVII.

When Allah yoked the coursers of the sun,
And launched the Pleiades their race to run,
 My lot was fixed in fate's high chancery,
Then why blame me for wrong that fate has done ?

N. 110, L.

LXXVIII.

O thou who wouldst thy sins extenuate,
Hear what all pious men reiterate :
 " To call God's prescience the cause of sin,
In wisdom's purview is mad folly's prate."

N. 116, L.

LXXIX.

Whilom, ere youth's conceit had waned, methought
Answers to all life's problems I had wrought ;
 But now, grown old and wise, too late I see
My life is spent, and all my lore is naught.

N. 113.

LXXX.

They bring us hither to our sore undoing,
And while we stay, we find but grief and rueing ;
 And last we go against our wills, nor know
The reason of our coming, nor our going.

N. 117, L.

LXXXI.

When I recall my grievous sins to mind,
Fire burns my breast, and tears my vision blind ;
 Yet, when a slave repents, is it not meet
His lord should pardon, and again be kind ?

N. 118, L.

LXXXII.

They, at whose lore the wide world stands amazed,
Whose thoughts above high heaven's self are raised,
 Strive to know Thee in vain, and, like heaven's wheel,
Their heads are turning, and their brains are dazed.

N. 120, L.

LXXXIII.

This world will last long after Khayyám's fame
Has passed away, yea and his very name ;
 Aforetime we were not, and none did heed,
When we are dead and gone, 'twill be the same.

N. 123.

LXXXIV.

The sages who have compassed sea and land,
And all the marvels of the heavens scanned,
 What think you, do they really understand
The scheme on which this universe is planned?

N. 124, L.

LXXXV.

'Tis passing strange, those full-fed noblemen
Find their own lives a burden sore; but when
 They meet with poorer men, not slaves to sense,
They hardly deign to reckon them as men.

N. 126.

LXXXVI.

Now is the volume of my youth outworn,
And all my springtide's blossoms rent and torn.
 Ah, bird of youth! I marked not how you came,
Nor how you fled and left me thus forlorn.

N. 128, L.

LXXXVII.

These fools, by dint of ignorance most crass,
Think they in wisdom all mankind surpass;
 And glibly do they damn as infidel
Whoever is not, like themselves, an ass.

N. 130.

LXXXVIII.

Until the Loved One grants the boon embrace,
The heavens will shower no kisses on thy face;
 They say, "Repent while there is time." But how
Can I repent till Allah gives me grace?

N. 134, L.

LXXXIX.

When I am dead, take me and grind me small,
So that I be a caution unto all ;
And knead me into clay with wine, and then
Use me to stop the winejar's mouth withal.

N. 136, L.

XC.

What though the sky, with his blue canopy,
Doth close us in, so that we cannot see ?
In the Etern Cupbearer's wine, methinks,
There float some thousand bubbles such as we.

N. 137.

XCI.

Glad hearts who seek not notoriety,
Nor flaunt in gold and silken bravery,
Haunt not the shades of earth like gloomy owls,
But wing their way Simurg-like to the sky.

N. 140, L.

XCII.

The tavern drudge to wash in wine is fain,
When names are tarnished, none can purge the stain ;
The perfect veil of innocence once torn,
Not all man's labours can make whole again.

N. 141, B. L.

XCIII.

What adds my service to Thy majesty ?
Or how can sins of mine dishonour Thee ?
 Oh pardon, then, and punish not ; I know
Thou'rt slow to wrath, and prone to clemency.

N. 148, L.

XCIV.

To-day how sweetly breathes the temperate air,
The rains have newly laved the parched parterre,
 And bulbuls cry, in notes of ecstasy,
"Thou, too, O pallid rose, our wine must share."

N. 153, L.

XCV.

Ere you succumb to shocks of mortal pain,
Your roses gather, and your winecups drain ;
 You are not gold, and once entombed in earth,
No one will care to dig you up again.

N. 156, L.

XCVI.

Say, did my coming profit thee, O sky ?
Or will my going swell thy majesty ?
 Coming and going put me to a stand,
Ear never heard their wherefore or their why.

N. 157, B. L.

XCVII.

The heavenly Sage, whose wit exceeds compare,
Doth count each vein and number every hair ;
 Fraud and pretences may prevail with men,
But not with Him to whom all hearts are bare.

N. 158, L.

XCVIII.

This love of yours is feigned and incomplete,
And, like a half-spent blaze, lacks light and heat ;
 True love is his who through long days and nights
Rests not, nor sleeps, nor craves for drink or meat.

N. 164, B. L.

XCIX.

Some feed false hopes on that vain fantasy
Of Houris feigned in Paradise to be ;
 But when the veil is lifted, they will see
How far they are from Thee, how far from Thee.

N. 167, B. L.

C.

In Paradise are Houris, as you know,
And fountains that with wine and honey flow ;
 If these be lawful in the world above,
What harm to love the like down here below ?

N. 168, L.

C

CI.

My spirit doth her prisoned state bemoan ;
Her earthly partner she would fain disown
 And quit, did not the stirrup of the law
Upbear her foot from dashing on the stone.

N. 171, L.

CII.

What sage the eternal tangle e'er unravelled,
Or one short step beyond his nature travelled ?
 From pupils to the masters turn your eyes,
And see each mother's son alike is gravelled.

N. 175, B. L.

CIII.

Would you be happy, curb your carnal will,
Sigh not for lack of good nor stress of ill ;
 Take heart, these heavens have their date like you,
They roll a round or two and then lie still.

N. 176, B. L.

CIV.

What eye can pierce the veil of heaven's decrees,
Or read the riddle of earth's destinies ?
 Pondered have I for years threescore and ten,
But still am baffled by these mysteries.

N. 177, L.

CV.

Drink wine to root up metaphysic weeds
And tangle of the two and seventy creeds ;
Do not forswear that wondrous alchemy,
'Twill turn to gold and furnish all your needs.

N. 179, B. L.

CVI.

To drain two beakers is my fixed design,
Two double beakers brimmed with heady wine ;
Old faith and reason thus will I divorce,
And take to wife the daughter of the vine.

N. 181, L.

CVII.

True, I drink wine, like every man of sense,
For I know Allah will not take offence ;
Before time was He knew that I should drink,
And who am I to thwart His prescience ?

N. 182, B. L.

CVIII.

When false dawn streaks the east with cold grey line,
Arise and quaff the firstfruits of the vine ;
The truth, they say, tastes bitter in the mouth—
This is a token that "the Truth" is wine.

N. 185, L.

CIX.

Now spring with boscase green the earth embowers,
The trees, like Musa's hand, grow white with flowers,
As 'twere by Isa's breath the plants revive,
While clouds brim o'er, like tearful eyes, with showers.

N. 186, L.

CX.

The showers of grape juice which cupbearers pour
Quench fires of grief in many a sad heart's core ;
Praise be to Allah, who hath sent this balm
To heal sore hearts and spirits' health restore.

N. 188, B. L.

CXI.

Can alien Pharisees Thy sweetness tell
Like us, Thy intimates, who nigh Thee dwell ?
Thou say'st, " All sinners will I burn in hell !"
Say that to strangers, we know Thee too well.

N. 190.

CXII.

When the sad day of Khayyám's death comes round,
Let your regrets, O friends, in wine be drowned ;
And when the wine-cups reach his vacant seat,
Let one deep draught be poured upon the ground.

N. 192, B. L.

CXIII.

For me heaven's sphere no music ever made,
Nor jarring discords in my life allayed ;
Nor granted me one moment's peace, but straight
Into the hands of grief again betrayed.

N. 193, L.

CXIV.

Sooner with crusts of bread contented be,
And water from the well, and liberty,
Than crouch and fawn and bend the vassal knee
To one who is nothing worth compared with thee.

N. 462, L.

CXV.

While moon and constant stars in heaven dwell,
No starlike ruby can bright wine excel ;
O foolish publicans, what can you buy
One half so precious as the goods you sell ?

N. 463, L.

CXVI.

The shining lights of this our age, who keep
Ablaze the torch of art and science deep,
Never see day, but, whelmed in endless night,
Recount their dreams and get them back to sleep.

N. 464, L.

CXVII.

Sense seeking happiness bids us pursue
All present joys and present griefs eschew ;
 She says we are not as the meadow grass,
Which, when they mow it down, springs up anew.

B. L.

CXVIII.

Slaves of vain wisdom and philosophy,
Who toil at Being and Nonentity,
 Parching your brains like dry and shrivelled grapes,
Be wise in time and drink grape-juice like me !

B.

CXIX.

The joyous souls who quaff potations deep,
And saints who in the mosques sad vigils keep,
 Are lost at sea alike, and find no shore ;
One only wakes, all others are asleep.

B. L.

CXX.

The stars, who dwell on heaven's empyreal stage,
Still mock the wise diviners of our age ;
 Take heed, hold fast the rope of mother wit,
These augurs all distrust their own presage.

B. L.

CXXI.

I am not one whom death doth much dismay ;
Life's terrors all death's terrors far outweigh ;
 This life, that heaven hath lent me for a day,
I will pay back, when it is time to pay.

B. L.

CXXII.

Ah! what hast thou to do with me, fair foe?
Who snarest my poor head, though white as snow ;
 Thou'st wrecked the mansion long resolve did build,
And rent the vesture penitence did sew.

B.

CXXIII.

Like as the skies rain down sweet jessamine,
And sprinkle all the meads with eglantine ;
 Right so, from out this jug of violet hue
I pour in lily cups this rosy wine.

B.

CXXIV.

To please the righteous life itself I sell,
And, though they tread me down, never rebel ;
 Ye say, " Inform us what and where is hell ! "
Ill company will make this earth a hell.

L.

CXXV.

Hearts are like tapers, which at beauty's eyes
Kindle a flame of love that never dies ;
 And beauty is a flame where hearts, like moths,
Offer themselves a burning sacrifice.

L.

CXXVI.

My true condition will I thus explain
In two short verses, which the whole contain ;
 " From love to Thee I now lay down my life,
In hope Thy love will raise me up again."

L.

CXXVII.

Thousands of skulls like bowls the potter made,
And thus his own similitude portrayed ;
 Fate's bowl has poured a scanty mess for thee,
And on my board full flowing bowls arrayed.

L.

CXXVIII.

On the dread day of final scrutiny
They rate men's value by their quality ;
 Get wisdom and fair qualities to-day,
For as trees fall so must they ever lie.

L.

CXXIX.

These folk are asses, laden with conceit,
And noisy drums that empty sounds repeat;
 And slaves are they of flashy empty names,
Acquire a name, and lo! they kiss thy feet.

L.

CXXX.

They tell of these skies stories without number,
And string uncounted beads of learned lumber,
 But never solve the riddle of the skies,
So sound the drum and march away to slumber.

L.

CXXXI.

When the pure spirit doth this house vacate,
Its elements assume their primal state,
 And all the silken furniture of life
Is then dismantled by the blows of fate.

L.

CXXXII.

Man's seed is water from the void sea spray,
And on his heart grief's fire doth ever prey,
 And blown is he like wind about the world,
And last his crumbling earth is swept away.

L.

CXXXIII.

When the great Founder cast me in his mould,
He mixed much baser metal with my gold,
 I left his crucible with all these flaws
And blemishes and faults you now behold.

L.

Be.

CXXXIV.

WHEREFORE waste thought on fate and destiny,
And vainly rack thy brain to find the key?
Give respite to thy brain, and let fate be;
When fate was fixed, they ne'er consulted thee.

N. 197, L.

CXXXV.

If you fulfil the ordinance divine,
If to the poor the legal tithes assign,
And never injure one, nor yet abuse,
I guarantee you heaven, and now some wine.

N. 200, B.

CXXXVI.

The world is baffled in its search for Thee,
Wealth cannot find Thee, no, nor poverty;
Thou'rt very near us, but our ears are stopped,
Our eyes are blinded that we may not see.

N. 204.

CXXXVII.

I saw a busy potter by the way
Kneading with might and main a lump of clay ;
 And lo ! the clay cried, " Use me gently, pray,
I was a man myself but yesterday."

N. 211, B. L.

CXXXVIII.

Oh ! wine is richer than the realm of Jam,
More luscious than the food of Miriam ;
 Sweeter are sighs that drunkards heave at morn
Than strains of Bu Sa'id and Bin Adham.

N. 215, B. L.

CXXXIX.

Deep in the rondure of the empyreal blue
There lies a cup, hid from all mortal view,
 Which comes to all in turn ; oh ! sigh not then,
But drink it boldly when it comes to you.

L.

Zē.

CXL.

O HEART! this world is but a fleeting show,
Why let its empty griefs distress thee so?
Bear up and face thy fate; the eternal pen
Will not unwrite his roll for thee, I trow.

N. 216, B. L.

CXLI.

Who e'er returned of all that went before
To tell of that long road they travel o'er?
Set not your heart on earth, you too must go,
And, when you go, you will return no more.

N. 217, L.

CXLII.

In taverns oft Thy presence I discern,
When dwellers in the mosques Thy absence mourn;
O Thou, the first, the last, the all in all,
'Tis Thine to save or, an Thou list, to burn!

N. 222, B. L.

CXLIII.

I flew here as a bird from the wild, in aim
Towards a higher seat my course to frame ;
 But, finding here no guide who knows the way,
Fly out by that same door through which I came.

N. 225, L.

CXLIV.

He binds us fast in nature's cogent chain,
And yet bids us our natures to restrain ;
 These counter precepts how can we obey ?
" Hold the jar slant, but yet the wine retain."

N. 226, L.

CXLV.

They go away, and none is seen returning
To teach the after-life's mysterious learning ;
 'Twill not be shown for dull, mechanic prayers,
For prayer is naught without deep heartfelt yearning.

N. 227, L.

CXLVI.

Go to! Cast dust on those deaf skies, who spurn
Thy orisons and bootless cries, and learn
 To drain the wine-cup and adore the fair.
Of all who go dost thou see one return ?

N. 228, L.

CXLVII.

Khayyám strings not the fair pearls of good deeds,
Nor sweeps from off his soul sin's noisome weeds ;
Nevertheless he humbly hopes for grace,
Seeing that *One* as two he ne'er misreads.

L. B. N. 229 (except line 4).

CXLVIII.

We are but chessmen, who to move are fain
Just as the great Chessplayer doth ordain ;
He moves us on life's chessboard to and fro,
And then in death's box shuts us up again.

N. 231, B. L.

CXLIX.

I put my lips to the cup, for I did yearn
The secret of the future life to learn ;
And from his lip I heard a whisper drop,
" Drink ! for once gone you never will return."

B. L.

CL.

We lay in the void inane, asleep and still ;
He said, " Awake ! Taste the world's good and ill ;"
Here we are puzzled by the strange command,
From slanted jars no single drop to spill.

L.

CLI.

What is this soul that tenants heart and brain ?
Though 'tis not easy, I will make it plain ;
 'Tis but a breath blown from the vasty deep,
And then blown back to that same deep again.

L.

Sin.

CLII.

O THOU who know'st the hearts of one and all,
In hours of need who aidest one and all,
Grant me repentance, and accept my plea,
Who dost accept the pleas of one and all.

N. 236, L.

CLIII.

I saw a bird perched on the walls of Tús,
Before him lay the skull of Kai Kaiús,
And thus he made his moan, "Alas! poor king,
Thy drums are hushed, thy clarions have sung truce."

N. 237, L.

CLIV.

What launched that golden orb his course to run,
What wrecks his bases when his course is done,
Was never weighed in reason's balances,
Nor proved by touch of keenest wit's touchstone.

L.

D

Shin.

CLV.

O FRIEND! to Khayyám's counsel lend thine ear,
To don the garb of hypocrites forbear,
 This life a moment is, the next all time,
Sell not eternity for worldly gear.

N. 240, B. L.

CLVI.

Once in a potter's shop a company
Of goodly cups and jars I did espy,
 And when they saw me, one cried out and said,
"Who made, who sells, who buys this crockery?"

N. 243, B. L.

CLVII.

Although the creeds number some seventy-three,
I hold with none but that of loving Thee;
 What matter faith, unfaith, obedience, sin?
Thou'rt all we need, the rest is vanity.

N. 248.

Káf and Lám.

CLVIII.

SEE! the dawn breaks and rends night's canopy ;
Arise and drain a morning draught with me ;
 Away with gloom, full many a dawn will break
Looking for us, and we not here to see.

N. 255, L.

CLIX.

This world a hollow pageant you should deem,
For wise men know things are not what they seem ;
 Be of good cheer and drink, and so shake off
These vain delusions of a baseless dream.

N. 256.

CLX.

The etern " Has been " and that etern " To be "
Mock man's experience and man's theory ;
 Away with science, wine is worth it all,
To all these riddles wine affords a key.

B. L.

CLXI.

I solved all problems down from Saturn's wreath
Into the deepest heart of earth beneath,
 And leaped out free from bonds of fraud and lies ;
Yea, every knot was loosed save that of death.

L.

CLXII.

'Twill not be shown to pride of lofty thought,
Nor yet with lavished gold may it be bought ;
 But if you sacrifice your fifty years,
Haply some glimpse of "Truth" may then be caught.

L.

Q i m.

CLXIII.

HEAR my complaint, ye ever-rolling skies,
And loose me from your chain of tyrannies ;
If none but fools your favours may enjoy,
Then favour me,—I am not over wise.

N. 263, L.

CLXIV.

Come, fill your cups and leave anxiety,
For what is past and what is yet to be,
Our prisoned spirits, lent us for a day,
A while from reason's bondage shall go free.

N. 265, L.

CLXV.

These circling heavens, which make us so dismayed,
I liken to a lamp's revolving shade ;
The sun the candlestick, the earth the shade,
And men the trembling forms thereon portrayed.

N. 267, B. L.

CLXVI.

Who was it that did mix my clay ? Not I.
Who wove my web of silk and dross ? Not I.
 Who wrote upon my forehead all my good
And all my evil deeds ? In sooth not I.

N. 368, L.

CLXVII.

Ah, why forecast to-morrow's hopes and fears ?
To-day at least is ours, O cavaliers ;
 To-morrow we shall quit this inn, and march
With comrades who have marched seven thousand years.

N. 269, L.

CLXVIII.

Beshrew these baleful skies who circling run ;
Beshrew my nature's imperfection,
 Not wise enough to vanquish carnal lusts,
And all too weak the world's allures to shun.

N. 273, L.

CLXIX.

On earth's green carpet many sleepers lie,
And hid beneath it others I descry ;
 And others, not yet come or passed away,
People the wide waste of Nonentity.

N. 274, L.

CLXX.

Think not I dread to see my spirit fly
Through the dark gates of fell mortality ;
 Death has no terrors when the life is true,
'Tis living ill that makes us fear to die.

N. 276.

CLXXI.

Let us shake off dull reason's incubus,
Our tale of years or days cease to discuss,
 And take our jugs, and plenish them with wine,
Before grim potters make their jugs of us.

N. 277, B. L.

CLXXII.

Against my lusts I war, alas ! in vain,
And grievous overthrows ever sustain ;
 I trust Thou wilt assoil me of my sins,
But even so my shame will still remain.

N. 282, B. L.

CLXXIII.

In these twin compasses, O soul ! you see
One body with two heads, like you and me,
 Which wander round one centre circlewise,
But at the last in one same point agree.

N. 283, L.

CLXXIV.

I went into a mosque the other day,
But, by great Allah, it was not to pray;
 No, but to steal a prayermat, now 'tis worn
I go to filch another mat away.

N. 285, B. L.

CLXXV.

When death has trod to dust my lifeless brain,
And shed my lively plumage on the plain,
 Then mould me to a cup, and fill with wine,
Haply its scent may make me breathe again.

N. 290, B.

CLXXVI.

All my life long from drink I have not ceased,
And drink I will on Kader's holy feast,
 And throw my arms about the winejar's neck,
And kiss its lip, and clasp it to my breast.

N. 298, L.

CLXXVII.

I know what is, and what is not, I know
The lore of things above and things below;
 But all this lore will cheerfully forego,
If one a deeper lore than drink can show.

N. 300, B. L.

CLXXVIII.

Though I drink wine, I am no libertine,
Nor am I grasping save of cups of wine,
I scruple to adore myself, like you,
And so adore the daughter of the vine.

N. 301, L.

CLXXIX.

We make the winejar's lip our place of prayer,
And drink in lessons of true manhood there,
And pass our lives in taverns, if perchance
The time misspent in mosques we may repair.

N. 303.

CLXXX.

With fancies, as with wine, our heads we turn,
Aspire to heaven, and earthly trammels spurn,
But when we drop this fleshly clog, we learn
From dust we came, and back to dust return.

N. 305.

CLXXXI.

I never drank of joy's sweet cordial,
But grief did spoil the draught with added gall,
Nor dipped my bread in pleasure's piquant salt,
But salt remorse did make me smart withal.

N. 310.

CLXXXVI.

O queen, with your attacks so obstinate,
You make this poor king quite disconsolate,
 You move your pawns, and knights, and rooks about,
And drive him to and fro, and then checkmate.

L.

CLXXXVII.

To find the cup of Jamshed's treasury
I laboured long, and compassed land and sea,
 And last I asked the seer, who answer made,
"Jamshed's world-mirror is displayed in thee."

L.

CLXXXVIII.

Death finds us soiled, though we were pure at birth,
With grief we go, although we came with mirth,
 Watered with tears, and burned by fires of woe,
And casting life to the winds, we rest in earth.

L.

CLXXXIX.

Quoth rose, "I am the Yusuf flower, I swear,
For in my mouth rich golden gems I bear."
 I said, "Show me another proof." Quoth she,
"Behold this blood-stained vesture that I wear."

L.

Dun.

CXC.

O MAN, creation's glorious summary,
Gaining and spending too much trouble thee,
 Arise and quaff the Etern Cupbearer's wine,
And live from life's annoys for ever free.

N. 319, L.

CXCI.

Make smooth for me the world, this stony place,
With fell dishonour blacken not my face,
 And grant me peace to-day, but for the morrow
I leave it in Thy hands, and hope for grace.

N. 321, L.

CXCII.

Souls, that are well informed of this world's state,
Its weal and woe with equal mind await,
 For be it woe we meet, or be it weal,
The weal doth pass, and woe too hath its date.

N. 322, B. L.

CXCIII.

Lament not fortune's mutability,
But seize her fickle favours ere they flee,
If others never mourned departed bliss,
How should a turn of fortune come to thee?

N. 325, L.

CXCIV.

Khayyám's advice, O comrades, bear in mind,
Shun not the revellers, though they be maligned,
Cast down the gates of abstinence and prayer,
And beg or steal some drink, but aye be kind.

N. 327, B. L.

CXCV.

This world a body is, and God its soul,
And angels are its senses, who control
Its limbs,—the creatures, elements, and spheres;
Such Unity informs and rules the whole.

N. 328, L.

CXCVI.

Wouldst thou have fortune bow her neck to thee?
Then feed thy soul with joy, and drink like me,
And hold a creed like mine, and thou shalt drain
The cup of wine, not that of misery.

N. 330.

CXCVII.

You have no thought, no care, no shame, I trow,
For good you leave undone, for ill you do ;
 Suppose by rascal sleights you gain the world,
You cannot take it with you when you go.

N. 335, L.

CXCVIII.

Some look for truth in creeds and rites and rules,
Some grope for doubts or dogmas in the schools ;
 But from behind the veil a voice proclaims,
“ Your road lies neither here nor there, O fools ! ”

N. 337, L.

CXCIX.

One bull is seen in heaven named Parwín,
Another lurks beneath the earth unseen,
 And thus to wisdom's eyes mankind appear
A drove of asses two fat bulls between.

N. 338, L.

CC.

Had I the right great Allah to advise,
I would bid him sweep away this earth and skies,
 And build a better, where, unclogged and free,
The clear soul might essay her high emprise.

N. 340, L.

CCI.

I do not undervalue fair renown,
Yet scorn to truckle to the vulgar frown;
Better to lie in taverns, drunk with wine,
Than feign devotion to secure a crown.

N. 345, L.

CCII.

What scurvy tricks this wheel of heaven doth play!
How he doth love to tear our friends away!
Seize ye this fleeting moment ere 'tis gone;
Fear not to-morrow, mourn not yesterday.

B.

CCIII.

Nor you nor I can read our destiny;
To that dark riddle we can find no key.
They talk of you and me behind the veil,
But when the veil is lifted, where are we?

L.

تایم.

CCIV.

BLAME not this ball, impelled by bat's hard blows,
That now to right and now to left it goes ;
That One who wields the bat and smites the strokes,
He knows what drives thee, yea, He knows, He knows.

L.

CCV.

The wheel of heaven still holds his set design
To take away thy life, O love, and mine.
Sit we on this green turf, 'twill not be long
Ere turf will hide my dust along with thine.

N. 348, L.

CCVI.

Yon palace whose roofs touch the empyreal blue,
Where kings bowed down and rendered homage due,
The ringdove is its only tenant now,
And perched aloft she wails, "Coo Coo, Coo Coo."

N. 350, L.

CCVII.

We come and go, but for the gain, where is it ?
And spin the woof, but for the warp, where is it ?
And many a weary soul has burned to dust
In heaven's blue rondure, but their smoke, where is it ?

L. B. N. 351 (except line 2).

He.

CCVIII.

'Tis well all other blessings to forego
For wine, best gift that heaven did e'er bestow,
Kalenders' raptures pass all things that are
From moon on high down unto fish below.

N. 358, B. L.

CCIX.

See how these heavens, like an inverted cup,
Stoop down, and how mankind keep gaping up;
So this jug, stooping o'er his love the cup,
Drops grapeblood in her mouth, for her to sup.

N. 363, B. L.

CCX.

The drop wept for his severance from the sea,
But the sea smiled, for, "I am all," said he,
"And naught exists outside my unity,
My one point circling apes plurality."

N. 365.

CCXI.

Bulbuls, doting on roses, oft complain
How froward breezes rend their veils in twain ;
 Sit we beneath this rose, full many a rose
Has sprung from earth, and fallen to earth again.

N. 370, B. L.

CCXII.

Suppose you hold the world in fee, what then ?
When life's last page is read and turned, what then ?
 You may outlive this present century,
And haply see the next, but what comes then ?

N. 372, L.

CCXIII.

Alone of all the vegetable tribe,
Cypress and lily men as "free" describe,
 This has a hundred tongues yet holds her peace,
And that as many hands which grasp no bribe.

N. 373, L.

CCXIV.

We rest our hopes on Thy free grace alone,
Nor seek by merits for our sins to atone,
 Mercy drops where it lists, and estimates
Ill done as undone, good undone as done.

N. 379, L.

CCXV.

O thou who hast done ill, and ill alone,
Think not to find forgiveness at the throne ;
 Hope not for mercy, for good left undone
Cannot be done, nor evil done undone.

N. 361, L.

CCXVI.

O unenlightened race of humankind !
Ye are a vapour, a mere breath of wind,
 An empty nothing hovering in the abyss,
A void before you, and a void behind.

L.

CCXVII.

Pilgrim, thy back is bent, thy powers fail,
Oblivion o'er thy name doth draw its veil,
 Thy nails are thickened like a horse's hoof,
Thy beard is ragged as an ass's tail.

L.

De.

CCXVIII.

O SOUL! could you but doff this flesh and bone,
You would soar a sprite about the heavenly throne;
Had you no shame to leave your starry home,
And drop to earth like some poor downcast stone?

B. L.

CCXIX.

Why nourish bootless grief and vain despair?
Walk justly in this naughty world, O fair!
And since the substance of this world is naught,
Think you are not, and so shake off dull care.

B. L.

CCXX.

I never would have come, had I been asked;
I would as lief not go, if I were asked;
And, to be short, I would annihilate
All coming, being, going, were I asked.

B. L.

CCXXI.

O heart ! canst thou the darksome riddle read ?
When wisest men have failed, wilt thou succeed ?
 Quaff wine, and make thy heaven here below,
Who knows if heaven above will be thy need ?

N. 383, B. L.

CCXXII.

They that have passed away and gone before
Sleep in delusion's dust for evermore ;
 Go, boy, and fetch some wine, this is the truth—
Their dogmas were but air, and wind their lore.

N. 384, B. L.

CCXXIII.

Slave of four elements and sevenfold heaven,
Who aye bemoan the thrall of these eleven,
 Drink ! I have told you seventy times and seven,
Once gone, nor hell will send you back, nor heaven.

N. 389, L.

CCXXIV.

Thou dost with frequent snare beset the way
The pilgrim's wandering footsteps to betray,
 And all poor wretches tangled in thy snares
Dost seize as prisoners and as rebels slay.

N. 390, B.

CCXXV.

Ah, potter, stay thine hand! With ruthless art
Put not to such base use man's mortal part;
See, thou art mangling on thy cruel wheel
Feridun's fingers and Kai Khosru's heart.

N. 395, L.

CCXXVI.

From the world's kitchen crave not to obtain
Those dainties, seeming real, but really vain,
Which greedy worldlings gorge to their own loss;
Renounce that loss, so loss shall prove thy gain.

N. 397, B. L.

CCXXVII.

Cloud not thy fellows' hearts with dark despite,
So that they cry to God the livelong night;
Nor plume thee on thy wealth and might, which thieves
May steal by night, or death, or fortune's might.

N. 398.

CCXXVIII.

This soul of mine was once Thy cherished bride,
What caused Thee to divorce her from Thy side?
Is it Thy purpose to forsake her quite,
That Thou dost doom her in this world to abide?

N. 399, L.

CCXXXIX.

Ah! would there were a place of rest from pain,
Which we poor pilgrims might at last attain,
 And after many thousand wintry years
Renew our youth like flowers, and bloom again.

N. 400, L.

CCXXX.

Molla! give heed, if thou true Moslem be,
Quit saintly show and feigned austerity,
 And quaff the wine that blessed Ali pours,
And sport with Houris 'neath this shady tree.

N. 403.

CCXXXI.

Last night I dashed my cup against a stone
In a mad drunken freak, as I must own,
 And lo! the cup cried, "You who treat me so
One of these days you shall be overthrown."

N. 404, B. L.

CCXXXII.

Audit yourself, your true account to frame;
See, you go empty, as you empty came;
 You say, "I will not drink and peril life,"
But, drink or no, you must die all the same.

N. 408, L.

CCXXXIII.

Open the door of Truth, O Usher purest !
And guide the way, O Thou of guides the surest !
Directors born of men shall not direct me,
Their counsel comes to naught, but Thou endurest.

N. 409, L.

CCXXXIV.

Give me a flask of wine, a crust of bread,
A quiet mind, a book of verse to read,
With thee, O love, to share my lowly roof,
I would not take the Sultan's crown instead.

N. 413, B. L.

CCXXXV.

Whilst thou dost wear this fleshly livery
Step not beyond the bounds of destiny ;
Bear up, though puissant Rustam be thy foe,
And crave no guerdon e'en from Hátim Tai.

N. 416, L.

CCXXXVI.

Behold, where'er you turn your ravished eyes,
Sweet verdure springs, and crystal Kausars rise,
And plains, once bare as hell, now smile as heaven ;
Enjoy this heaven with maids of Paradise.

N. 420, B. L.

CCXXXVII.

When morning silvers the dark firmament,
Why shrills the bird of dawning his lament ?
 It is to show in dawn's bright looking-glass
How of thy careless life a night is spent.

N. 426.

CCXXXVIII.

Cup-bearer, come, from thy full-throated ewer
Pour blood-red wine, the world's despite to cure ;
 Where can I find another friend like wine,
So genuine, so solacing, so pure ?

N. 427 L.

CCXXXIX.

Though you should sit in wise Aristu's room,
Or rival Cæsar on his throne of Rûm,
 Drain Jamshed's goblet, for your end is the tomb,
Yea, were you Bahrám's self, your end is the tomb.

N. 430.

CCXL.

Last night into a potter's shop I strayed,
Who turned his wheel, and deftly plied his trade,
 And out of monarchs' heads and beggars' feet
Fair heads and handles for his pitchers made.

N. 431, L.

CCXLI.

O love! before 'tis time for us to go,
And potters make their jugs of me and you,
 Pour from this jug some wine of headache void,
And fill your cup, and fill my goblet too.

N. 433, L.

CCXLII.

Who framed the lots of quick and dead but Thou?
Who turns the wheel of baleful fate but Thou?
 We are Thy slaves, our wills are not our own,
We are Thy creatures, our Creator Thou!

N. 436.

CCXLIII.

A Molla spied a harlot, and quoth he,
"You seem a slave to drink and lechery,"
 And she made answer, "What I seem I am,
But, Molla, are you all you seem to be?"

N. 441, L.

CCXLIV.

Now in thick clouds Thy face Thou dost immerse,
And now display it in this universe;
 Thou the spectator, Thou the spectacle,
Sole to Thyself Thy glories dost rehearse.

N. 443, L.

CCXLV.

Better to make one soul rejoice with glee,
Than plant a desert with a colony ;
 Sooner one freeman bind with chains of love,
Than set a thousand chainèd captives free.

N. 444, L.

CCXLVI.

O man, whoe'er thou art, if thou be fain
To seek thy pleasure in another's pain,
 Then mourn the funeral of thy pleasant wit,
Which thou thyself with thine own hand hast slain.

N. 446, L.

CCXLVII.

Come, brim my cup with foaming head of wine,
And bring a hunch of bread, a mutton chine,
 And sit you by me, O sweet tulip cheeks ;
I would not change the Sultan's state for mine.

N. 448, L.

CCXLVIII.

They call you "wicked" if you are widely known,
And "sly intriguer" if you live alone ;
 Trust me, though you were Khizer or Elias,
'Tis best to know none and be known of none.

N. 449.

CCXLIX.

Yes, here am I with wine and feres again !
I did repent, but ah ! cannot refrain ;
 Preach not to me of Noah and his flood,
But pour a flood of wine to drown my pain.

N. 452, L.

CCL.

Angel of joyful foot ! the dawn is nigh,
Pour wine, and lift thy tuneful voice on high ;
 Sing how Jamsheds and Khosrus bit the dust,
Whelmed by the rolling months from Tír to Dai.

N. 455, L.

CCLI.

Allah ! rebuild the world in fairer guise,
And do it on the spot before my eyes,
 And either raze my name from off Thy roll,
Or make me better, happier, more wise.

N. 457.

CCLII.

O Soul ! when on the Loved One's sweets you feed,
You lose your *self*, yet find your *Self* indeed ;
 And when you drink of His entrancing cup,
You hasten your escape from quick and dead.

N. 386, L.

CCLIII.

Khayyám of burning heart, perchance to burn
In hell, and feed its balefires in thy turn,
Presume not to teach Allah clemency,
For who art thou to teach, or He to learn ?

N. 459, L.

NOTES.

QUATRAIN VII.

Kaaba, the square temple or sanctuary at Mecca, described by Gibbon, ix. 245.

XI.

Wheel of heaven, *i.e.*, fate.

XIX.

Omar, like the Sufis, is a great advocate for toleration. Sadi, in his "Bostan," tells the following story about Abraham and a Gueber :—

“ It chanced for a whole week no ‘son of the road’
In Abraham’s guest-house his face had showed ;
The kind prophet was vexed, and broke not his fast,
Saying, ‘ Why has no traveller this way passed ?’
One day he went out, and searched all around,
And at last in the desert an old man found.
Like a willow was bent the back of that sage,
And his hair it was white with the snow of old age.
The prophet addressed him in accents mild,
And welcomed that weary one found in the wild ;
Saying, ‘ Tarry a while, sir ; in my tent make a halt,
And deign to partake of my bread and my salt.’
The stranger agreed nothing loth, for indeed
He knew the kind Abraham (peace on his head).
Then the slaves and attendants, all standing erect,
Gave place to that old man with utmost respect ;
And the tables were set, and the banquet displayed,
And the company round all in order arrayed.
But when they began the Bismillah to say,
That old man was dumb,—not a word would he pray.
So Abraham said to that infidel sage,
‘ Thou forgettest the conduct befitting old age ;
When thou takest thy victuals ’tis wrong to be dumb,
And not to bless Him from whom blessings come.’
He replied, ‘ ’Tis my custom no prayers to recite,

Save those which the Magian priests think right,
 Then Abraham knew (and great was his ire)
 That the wretched old dotard worshipped the fire ;
 So he drove him away forthwith to the wild,
 For one cannot touch pitch without being defiled.
 But a voice came from heaven, in accents stern,
 Saying, ' Abraham, truly you have much to learn ;
 I have suffered this old man for years fourscore,
 And cannot you bear him a minute or more ?
 That he worships the fire you well may bewail,
 But let not the hand of your charity fail.' ”

This story took the fancy of Dr. Franklin, who published it in 1774 as an imaginary chapter of Genesis ; and about a hundred years previously it had been told by Bishop Jeremy Taylor, in his “ Discourse of the Liberty of Prophesying.” (Forbes, *Persian Grammar*, p. 165.)

XXIII.

The Persian poets frequently mention the breath of Jesus as the instrument by which He raised the dead to life.

XXIV.

A satire on the doctrine of free grace, when so preached as to countenance antinomianism.

XXVI.

The Sufi view here indicated is that souls, reabsorbed in the divine essence, have no concern with a material heaven or hell. Lahiji, the commentator on the *Gulshan i raz*, says—

“ While heaven and hell stand in your way,
 How is your soul cognisant of the mystery ? ”

Though not a Sufi himself, Khayyám evidently held many Sufi doctrines.

XXXII.

According to the Sufis, all true worshippers are animated by love for the “ Friend,” and desire for reunion with Him. Cf. Hafiz, 79—

“ Between the love of the cloister and that of the tavern is no difference,
 For wherever love is there is the light of the face of the Beloved.”

XXXIV.

Jamshed, or Jam, was the fifth king of the Peshdadian dynasty; Bahrám or Bahrám Gor, one of the Sassanian dynasty, who is said to have met his death whilst hunting the wild ass. (*Gor.*)

XXXIX.

A satire on Muhammad's paradise—

"And theirs shall be the Houris, with large dark eyes, like pearls hidden in their shells, in recompense of their labours past."—Koran lvi. 22.

XLI.

Jihún, the Oxus.

XLIV.

Alluding to Koran ii. 187—

"And kill them (your foes) wherever ye shall find them."

XLVI.

A satire on the doctrine of absolute predestination. Cf. Koran lxxxvi. 9—

"Verily Allah misleadeth whom He will, and guideth whom He will."

And Koran xvi. 38—

"Some of them there were whom Allah guided, and there were others doomed to err."

XLVII.

Drinking on Friday was considered a more heinous offence than drinking on other days, because Friday is the Muhammadan "day of assembly," or Sabbath.

XLVIII.

This, like many other quatrains, may bear either a natural or a spiritual signification. Cf. Hafiz, 1—

"Since first the zephyr wafted here the fragrance of that musky tress,
My heart still bleeds with strong desire to see its tangled loveliness."

LV.

Mahmud, the celebrated king of Ghuzni, to whom the *Shahnama* was dedicated.

LXIII.

Alif signifies the number one, and also Allah (God). The sense is that he who knows the sole existent One knows all. Cf. Hafiz, Ode 416 (Bicknell's translation)—

“ My Loved one's Alif form stamps all my thought,
Save that, what letter has my master taught ? ”

LXVIII.

The decrees of fate are written on the “ tablet ” by the “ pen. ” The sense seems to be that predestination and a material paradise are only human figments.

LXX.

Alluding to the life-giving breath of Jesus before mentioned, and to Moses' hand which he “ drew forth white as snow ” (Exod. iv. 6).

LXXIII.

Cf. Sadi, *Gulistan*, lib. i. (Eastwick's translation)—

“ What matters, when the spirit seeks to fly,
If on a throne or on bare earth we die ? ”

LXXIV.

Kai Khosru, third king of the Kaianian dynasty, usually identified with Cyrus. Firdusi says he was possessed of the cup or mirror of Jamshed, wherein the whole world was reflected, and which, according to Hafiz, was no other than a wine-cup.

LXXVII. AND LXXVIII.

These are the first of several antithetical quatrains, scattered over Omar's *Diwan*. It may be that the second was written

on the margin of the MS. by some pious reader, as a protest against the first, and afterwards found its way into the text. Or it may be that Omar wrote it himself when in a repentant mood. If so, the two together may be regarded as a poem of "The Two Voices."

LXXXVIII.

Alluding to Koran xxxi. 29—

"But will it ye shall not (to walk in the straight path), unless Allah willeth it."

The same words recur in lxxvi. 30.

XCI.

Simurg, a bird said to dwell on Mount Kaf, which makes a great figure in Persian poetry, as the type of the Deity.

XCII.

Another allusion to the doctrine of predestination.

XCIX. AND C.

Both these contrasted quatrains may well have come from Omar's pen, one attacking the Muhammadan paradise in the language of grave rebuke, the other in that of ridicule. The Sufis are never tired of inveighing against the absurdities of the Muhammadan paradise. See *Gulshan i ráz*, 701.

CI.

The meaning is that he would commit suicide were it not for the "Almighty's canon 'gainst self-slaughter."

CII.

Cf. Hafiz, Ode 355—

"For how can our eyes behold Thee as Thou art?
As our sight is so see we, and only in part."

And Persius—

“ Tecum habita, et nôris quam sit tibi curta supellex.”

CV.

The author of the *Sharh ul Muwakif* (quoted in Pocock's *Specimen Historiæ Arabum*, p. 210) mentions the following saying of Muhammad :—“ It shall come to pass that my people shall be divided into three-and-seventy sects, all of which, save only one, shall have their portion in the fire.” Sharastáni says that the reason why the prophet pitched on the number seventy-three, was that the Magians were divided into seventy sects, the Jews into seventy-one, and the Christians into seventy-two. Cf. Hafiz (*Radif Dal*)—

“ Consider the battle of the seventy-two sects as mischief ;
Since they see not Truth, they give way to fables.”

CVI.

Daughter of the vine, *i.e.*, wine.

CVIII.

“ False dawn ” is the faint light in the East which precedes sunrise, the true dawn. (Nicolas.)

CXI.

The word *Záhid*, here translated Pharisee, corresponds to Burns' “ unco guid.”

CXII.

It is the custom of Persian poets to introduce their own names in their verses ; so Donne—

“ If myself I've won
To know my rules, I have and you have *Donne*.”

CXVIII.

Being and Not being, or Nonentity, are subjects on which the Sufis have much to say. They identified Being with the sole

existent divine One, and Not being with the world of phenomena. Evil, they said, proceeded from Not being, just as St. Augustine said evil was a negation.

CXXIV.

This quatrain is also ascribed to Hafiz.

CXXXII.

This introduction of the four elements is what is termed a *Mutazadd* or opposition. Mr. Bicknell, in his "Hafiz," p. 191, quotes a similar quatrain of Abul Faraj Rûmi—

" Air art Thou entering my frame as breath,
Fire art Thou burning hearts with love till death ;
Water art Thou by which all creatures grow,
Earth also art Thou to which all must go."

CXXXV.

Almsgiving (*Zakât*) is one of what are termed the "five foundations of religious practice." The amount to be given is a tenth of cattle, but less of other property. Legal ordinances or *Farz* are those duties enjoined by the Koran, as opposed to *Wâjib*, duties resting on tradition or other less binding authority. Hence the Wahâbis or Muhammadan Puritans have, in Eastern Bengal, taken the name of Ferâzis.

CXXXVIII.

Abu Sa'id Abul Khair and Ibrahim bin Adham were two celebrated Sufis, whose lives may be read in the Muhammadan "Acta Sanctorum," the *Nafhat ul Uns* of Jâmi. The quatrains of the former, which are of a highly devotional and mystical character, are very popular in Persia. In a little chapbook printed at Teheran in 1277 A.H., each quatrain is accompanied by directions for its use as an ejaculation or prayer. The food of Miriam (Mary) was that provided for her in the desert by the angel Gabriel (Koran xix.)

CXLIV.

Cf. Lord Brooke's "Mustapha" (1609 A.D.)—

“ Oh, wearisome condition of humanity !
 Born under one law, to another bound,
 Vainly begot, and yet forbidden vanity,
 Created sick, commanded to be sound ;
 What meaneth nature by these diverse laws ? ”

CXLVII.

The Sufis, whilst holding with other Muhammadans the great central doctrine of Islam, the *Tauhid*, or unity of God, gave it a mystical extension. Whilst with ordinary Muhammadans it means only, “There is no god but God ;” the Sufis interpreted it as meaning, “There is no Being—no real existence—but God.” Everything but God is phenomenal and non-existent. Thus Hafiz, Ode 465—

“ Hafiz ! when preaching Unity, with unitarian pen
 Blot out and cancel every page that tells of spirits or men.”

CLIII.

Kai Kaiús, the second king of the Kaianian dynasty, probably Cyaxares, who reigned at Tús, and figures in the *Shah-náma*.

CLXII.

The Truth (*Al Hakk*) is the Sufi term for the One sole existent divine Being.

CLXXIII.

Mr. Fitzgerald has quoted a similar comparison used by the poet Donne (1610 A.D.) It may be found in “Ward's English Poets,” i. 562.

CLXXIV.

M. Nicolas says that “stealing a prayer-mat” is a proverbial expression to signify hypocrisy, or attending the

mosque to gain reputation. The quatrain is evidently a satire on some hypocrite of Omar's acquaintance.

CLXXVI.

Kader, the "night of power," the 19th or 21st of the month Ramzán, directed to be kept holy. See Koran xcvi.—

"Verily we sent down the Koran on the night of Kader. . . . Therein do the angels descend."

This quatrain was evidently written in a very impenitent mood.

CLXXXIII.

"Mustafa" (Chosen) is one of the titles given to Muhammad. This quatrain recalls Burns' protest against "the curst restrictions on aquavitæ."

CLXXXV.

The last line in this quatrain may very probably have been suggested, as Mr. Fitzgerald thinks, by the dying exclamation of Omar's friend, Nizám ul Mulk, recorded in the Mantic ut Táir of Farid ud Din 'Attár (line 4620)—

"When Nizám ul Mulk was in his death agony,
He said, 'O God, I am going in the hands of the wind.'"

CLXXXIX.

Yusuf or Joseph is, with Persian poets, the type of manly beauty. His adventures with Zuleikha or Potiphar's wife form the subject of a poem by Jami. The golden gems, or yellow stamens of the rose, are compared to Joseph's teeth! Jami speaks of—

"The pearly teeth within his ruby lips
Like lightning flashing in an evening sky."

CXC.

Wine signifies in Sufi phraseology the rapture of the beatific vision, which makes the mystic "beside himself,"

annihilates his phenomenal self and absorbs him in the One Being. See *Gulshan i ráz*, p. 79 of my edition.

CXCIII.

This was a saying of Kisra Parwiz, one of the Sassanian kings. His favourite sultana once exclaimed, "Would that the joys of kings might last for ever!" He replied, "If the happiness of our predecessors had not passed away, how could ours have followed?" (*Bicknell's Hafiz*, p. 73.)

CXCIV.

This quatrain recalls the often-quoted lines of Pope—

" All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is, and God the soul," &c.

And Wordsworth's lines—

" And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts : a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man,
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things."

CXCVIII.

The sense is that "The Truth" is hidden alike from the popular theologian and from the philosopher, and is only revealed to the "illuminated" mystic. See *Gulshan i ráz*, p. 11.

CXCIX.

Parwin, the constellation Taurus. The "bull beneath the earth" is that on which the earth was fabled to rest. Omar would seem to have been of the same opinion as Carlyle regarding the intellectual powers of his countrymen.

CCVI.

Kú means in Persian "where?" Mr. Fitzgerald notes that Mr. Binning found this quatrain inscribed on the ruins of Persepolis. So Firdúsi—

"The spider weaves his web in his palace of Cæsar,
The owl stands sentinel on the watchtower of Afrasiab."

CCVIII.

Kalenders, wandering dervishes, usually considered rogues. Fish, *i.e.*, that on which the earth was fabled to rest.

CCX.

The single point of the One Being whirled about produces the illusion of the world of phenomena. So *Gulshan i ráz*, line 710—

"Go! whirl round one spark of fire,
And from its quick motion you will see a circle."

CCXIII.

Cf. Sadi's "Gulistan" by Eastwick, p. 306 :—"They asked a philosopher why, when God Most High had created so many famous, fruitful trees, the cypress alone was called 'free,' which bore no fruit? He replied, 'Every tree has its appointed time and season wherein it flourishes, and when that is past it droops. But the cypress is not exposed to either of these vicissitudes, and is at all times fresh and green, and this is the condition of the free.'"

CCXIV.

In the *Nafhat ul Uns* the Shaikh of Islam is quoted as saying, "God is veiled from the heart of him who relies on his own good works."

CCXVII.

A good example of the rhetorical figure known to us as "bathos," for which the Persians seem to have no name.

CCXX.

This is the climax to all Omar's "gloomy epigrams."

CCXXX.

Cf. Koran xxxvii. 40—

"A banquet shall they have of fruits, and honoured shall they be in the gardens of delight, upon couches face to face. A cup shall be borne round among them from a fountain, limpid, delicious to those who drink."

According to tradition, Ali, the prophet's son-in-law, was the celestial cupbearer, and the fountain was named Kausar.

CCXXXV.

Rustam, the Persian Hercules, whose exploits are narrated in the Shahnáma. Hatim Tai, an Arab chief famed for his liberality.

CCXXXIX.

Aristu : Aristotle. Jamshed, as before stated, was supposed to have been the inventor of wine.

CCXLI.

"Wine of headache void" is an allusion to Koran lvi. 17—

"Aye-blooming youths go round about to them with goblets and ewers and a cup of flowing wine : Their brows ache not from it, nor fails the sense."

CCL.

Tir and Dái : April and December.

CCLII.

This quatrain sets forth the favourite mystical doctrine, "Die to self, to live eternally in God." Compare Max Müller, Hibbert Lectures, p. 375—

"The (Brahman's) highest knowledge was expressed in the words *tat tvam*, 'thou art It,' thou thyself, thy own true Self, that which

can never be taken from thee : when everything else that seemed to be thine disappears ; when all that was created vanishes again like a dream, thy own true Self belongs to the Eternal Self ; the *Atman*, or self within thee, is the true Brahman, from whom thou wast estranged for a time through birth and death, but who receives thee back again as soon as thou returnest to 'Him or to It.'"

The 'cup' is the spiritual intoxication or ecstasy which annihilates the phenomenal self.

CCLIII.

For the last line of this quatrain I am indebted to Mr. Fitzgerald.

THE END.



A

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