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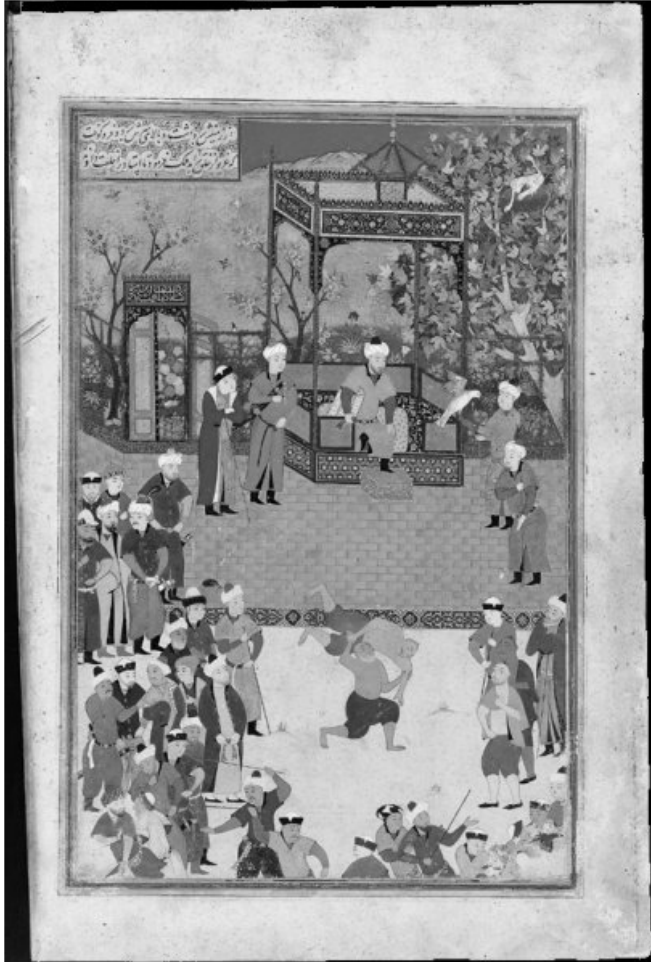
'Bustan of Sadi – Forgotten Persian Islamic Mystic'

Issue Twenty Eight

Compiled by Marilyn Hughes

The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation!

www.outofbodytravel.org



Bustan of Sadi

(To have your Questions, Articles, Poetry or Art included in future editions, submit to: MarilynnHughes1@outofbodytravel.org!)

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Having worked primarily in radio broadcasting, Marilynn Hughes spent several years as a news reporter, producer and anchor before deciding to stay at home with her three children. She's experienced, researched, written, and taught about out-of-body travel since 1987.

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The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation Journal:

'Bustan of Sadi - Forgotten Persian Islamic Mystic'

Issue Twenty Eight

By Marilyn Hughes

Bustan of Sadi was a pseudonym for Muslih-ud-Din Mushrif ibn Abdullah, a fascinating and fairly forgotten Persian Mystic Poet.

Short Life of Bustan of Sadi

*The Bustan of Sadi, Translated by A. Hart Edwards,
[1911], sacred-texts.com*

Sheikh Muslih-ud-din Sadi was born in Shiraz, in Persia, A.D. 1175; that is to say, 571 years after the flight of Muhammad from Mecca to Madina. He was the son of one Abdu'llah (servant of God), who held a Government office under the Diwan of that time. Sadi was a child when his father died, as is made clear from the pathetic poem in the second chapter, ending with these words:

Well do I know the orphan's sorrow,
For my father departed in my childhood.

But poorly endowed with earthly riches, Sadi endured many hardships in consequence of this bereavement, and was eventually obliged to live, together with his mother, under the protection of a Saracen chief. How long he remained there it is

impossible to say, for the reason that his biographers are the reverse of informing. This much is, however, known, that being imbued from early childhood with an insatiable thirst for knowledge, he eventually journeyed to Baghdad, then at the zenith of its intellectual fame, and was enabled to enter a private school there through the generosity of a wealthy native gentleman. Making full use of the opportunity so favourably presented, the young aspirant progressed rapidly along the path of learning, and at the age of twenty-one made his first essays in authorship. Some fragmentary poems which he submitted with a long dedication to Shams-ud-din, the Professor of Literature at the Nizamiah College of Baghdad, so pleased that able and discerning man that he at once fixed upon Sadi a liberal allowance from his own private purse, with the promise of every further assistance in his power. Soon after this, Sadi was admitted into the college, and ultimately gained an Idrar, or fellowship. In the seventh chapter of the *Bustan* he narrates an instructive story reminiscent of his studies at Nizamiah, and, prone to conceit though he often is, he tells the story against himself.

His scholastic life did not terminate until he had reached the age of thirty. Of the value of this prolonged period of study he himself was fully cognisant. Dost thou not know," Sadi he asks in the seventh chapter, how Sadi attained to rank? Neither did he traverse the plains nor journey across seas. he In his youth he lived under the yoke of the wise: God granted him distinction in after-life. And it is not long

before he who is submissive in obedience exercises command." No better example of the truth of this passage could be cited than that afforded by his own case.

On leaving Baghdad, he went in company with his tutor, Abdul Qadir Gilani, on a pilgrimage to Mecca. This was the first of many travels extending over a period of thirty years, in the course of which he visited Europe, India, and practically every part of what are known as the Near and Middle East. A trip through Syria and Turkey is specifically mentioned in this book as inspiring the composition of the *Bustan*. Not wishing, as he tells us, to return empty-handed to his friends at Shiraz, he built the Palace of Wealth, and offered it to them as a gift. He does not conceal the high opinion which he himself placed upon this product of his gifted pen. The gracefully worded phrases with which he predicted the undying popularity of the *Gulistan* finds a parallel in the dedication of the *Bustan* to Atabak Abu Bakr-bin-Sad, the illustrious monarch of Persia beneath whose protection Sadi spent the latter half of his life.

"Although not wishing to sing the praises of kings," he writes, "I have dedicated this book to one so that perhaps the pious will say that Sadi, who surpassed all in eloquence, lived in the time of Abu Bakr Sad." Then, addressing the king, he adds: "Happy is thy fortune that Sadi's date coincides with thine, for as long as the moon and sun are in the skies thy memory

will remain eternal in this book." This conceit is pardonable, since it has been amply justified by time.

After the thirty years of travel, Sadi, becoming elderly, settled down in Persia, where, as has been said, he gained the favour of the ruling prince, from whom he derived not only the dignity and the more tangible advantages of the post of Poet-Laureate, but his takhallus, or titular name, of Sadi. He died at the ripe age of 116, and was buried in his native city.

If the *Bustan* were the only monument that remained of his genius, his name would assuredly still be inscribed in the roll of the Immortals. One feature of his great intellectual faculties needs to be emphasized, and all the more so because it is apt to be overlooked. That is the increasing power which they assumed as he advanced in years, the truth of which can be understood when it is stated that he composed the *Bustan* at the age of 82, the *Gulistan* appearing twelve months later. Few, if any, instances of such sustained mental activity are to be found elsewhere in the entire world's history of letters.

Under the several headings of the various chapters a wide range of ethical subjects is discussed, the whole forming a compendium of moral philosophy the broad principles of which must remain for all time as irrefutable as the precepts of Scriptural teaching.

Sadi's spiritual message is not that of a visionary. His religion was an eminently practical one—he had no sympathies with the recluse and the ascetic. To fulfil

one's duties towards one's fellow-men is to fulfil one's duty towards the Deity. That is the root-idea of his teachings. "Religion," he observes, "consists only in the service of the people: it does not lie in the rosary, or prayer-rug, or mendicant's habit."

This couplet, occurring in the opening chapter, is put into the mouth of a certain pious man whom one of the kings of Persia is said to have visited in a repentant mood for the purpose of seeking counsel. The story, like many others in the book, may or may not have any foundation in fact, "the histories of ancient kings," which the poet frequently quotes as his authority, being rather too vague to be convincing. At the same time, the historical allusions form an interesting and instructive background to the legends and the moral precepts so abundantly interwoven among them.

Although Persia is only yet in the process of readjusting her ideas of government and the prerogatives of rulers, principles more advanced than seem compatible with despotism have been for many centuries current among her people, in theory, at least, if not in practice. Muhammad said that a little practice with much knowledge was better than much practice with little knowledge. On that ground Persia has defence, for the knowledge certainly was there. What could better describe the true relationship between king and people than Sadi's thirteenth-century epigram? —

Subjects are as the root and the king is as the tree,
And the tree, O son, gains strength from the root.

In 1910 the autocratic tree at Teheran was rudely severed from its root; perchance the successors of Abu Bakr were not of those to whom "the words of Sadi are agreeable."

The saving grace of benevolence is illustrated in the second chapter by means of some entertaining anecdotes, of two of which the hero is Hatim Tai, the famous Arabian chief, whose generosity was such that he preferred to die rather than disappoint the messenger sent by a jealous king to slay him. The story of the Darwesh and the Fox is noteworthy inasmuch as it throws a much-needed light upon the Eastern interpretation of all that is implied by "qismat." It is commonly supposed that the sense of inevitability removes from the Eastern's mind the necessity for individual effort. This view is distinctly erroneous. No such pernicious doctrine is, at any rate, subscribed to by the educated classes; to the lazy and ne'er-do-well who plead Fate as their excuse, Sadi points the moral.

After demonstrating in the two succeeding chapters the powerlessness of man to avert the decrees of Fate, and the virtues of contentment, the poet passes on to discuss the cultivation of the mind. The comparison here drawn between the human mind and a city "full of good and evil desires," of which the Ego is the Sultan and Reason the Vazier, is original and full of meaning. Despite his own much-vaunted eloquence

and facility of speech, Sadi condemns in scathing terms the man of many words, remarking poignantly that "a grain of musk is better than a heap of mud." So, too, in his opinion, is a thief better than a backbiter, and, apropos of the gentler sex, a woman of good nature better than one of beauty. The advice to take a new wife every year cannot be regarded seriously, even though it be true that last year's almanac has lost its usefulness. More worthy of the poet is the discourse on the training of children. Nothing truer than the sentiments expressed in this poem did he ever utter, and in England today there can be few who would dispute them.

Excessive charm pervades the three concluding chapters. If that bigotry and spirit of intolerance of which the Mussulman, no less than the followers of other creeds, is guilty is revealed in no small measure, criticism on that score must give place to wonder and admiration for the sincere and fervid homage which the poet renders to the Deity whom, in the essence, all nations worship.

The narrative, in the eighth chapter, of Sadi's adventure with the idolaters in Guzerat will be found amusing as well as enlightening.

Nothing now remains for the translator but to join with Sadi in his plea for indulgent criticism:

Never have I heard it said
The wise found fault with what they read

Though of Chinese cloth a robe be made,
Inside must a cotton lining be laid.
If thou wouldst but the cloth, seek not to condemn—
Gloss over the cotton with acumen.
On the Day of Judgment the wicked will be
Forgiven, through them that have purity.
If in my words thou evil find,
Do likewise, forgive, for more is behind.
If a word in a thousand suit thy taste,
Do not denounce the rest in haste.

The poet goes on to remark that his compositions are esteemed in Persia as is the choicest musk of Tartary: the translator is less fortunate and more modest.

*The Bustan of Sadi, Translated by A. Hart Edwards,
[1911], sacred-texts.com*

The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation Journal:
Question and Answer Forum!

Please Send Your Questions to:

MarilynnHughes1@outofbodytravel.org

For Future Inclusion in this Section!

Question from Agnes, Coast to Coast AM Listener, USA:

I heard you on Coast to Coast. Wow!! It thrills me to hear what you speak about. May I ask one simple question: where have you written of what you say at the Holy Mass . . . the 15(?) parts of the Mass. I am a Catholic and believe in the Mystical experience which is so seldom addressed except by Saints like St Gertrude, who also recorded what she saw at Holy Mass. I would love to read or hear the details. Once again, because it thrills me to my core to get more of an understanding. I am hoping to have some out of body experiences at some point. I have thus far not been able to go above my (physical) nose and senses. Thank you again, sincerely, Agnes

Marilynn: I LOVE sharing that experience. Download 'Galactica: A Treatise on Death, Dying and the Afterlife,' <http://www.outofbodytravel.org/outofbodytravelbooks/galactica.html> you will find that it begins on page 55. There were 54 steps in the Holy Mass. Many Blessings, Marilynn Hughes

*Hope this helps,
 MarilynnHughes@outofbodytravel.org
 www.outofbodytravel.org*

The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation Journal:

Different Voices!

This is our section devoted to the writings and opinions of others, which may not reflect the views of author, Marilyn Hughes. Inclusion of any author's writings or work does not denote an endorsement or recommendation in regards to their writings.

Some of these will be individual writings of others on subjects of spiritual interest, other people's out-of-body experiences - some which may agree with and/or contradict the experiences of the author, poems, journals of spiritual transformation, and critiques - both positive and negative opinions and/or analysis, of the author's work.

We choose to include ALL of these because we feel that the ability to discuss our similarities and differences openly is 'ALL GOOD' as GANDHI used to say.

We welcome and encourage your submissions for possible future inclusion in this section, although we stress that we are a non-profit organization and payment is not available:

MarilynnHughes1@outofbodytravel.org

We have found that some of the best critiques, analysis, writings and experiences come from people all over the world in different walks of life who are pursuing their spiritual path with passion and are completely unknown.

THANK YOU ALL, whether you agree or disagree with our work, FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO SEEK THE TRUTH IN WHATEVER WAY THAT TRUTH MAY COME TO SEEK YOU!

Excerpts from:

The Bustan of Sadi

Translated by A. Hart Edwards

THE BUSTAN OF SADI

PROLOGUE

IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE COMPASSIONATE, THE
MERCIFUL

IN the name of Him Who created and sustains the world, the Sage Who endowed tongue with speech.

He attains no honour who turns the face from the door of His mercy.

The kings of the earth prostrate themselves before Him in supplication.

He seizes not in haste the disobedient, nor drives away the penitent with violence. The two worlds are as a drop of water in the ocean of His knowledge.

He withholds not His bounty though His servants sin; upon the surface of the earth He spread a feast, in which both friend and foe may share.

Peerless He is, and His kingdom is eternal. Upon the head of one He placeth a crown; another he hurleth from the throne to the ground.

The fire of His friend He turneth into a flowergarden; through the waters of the Nile He sendeth His foes to perdition.

Behind the veil He seeth all, and concealeth our faults with His own goodness.

He is near to them that are downcast, and accepteth the prayers of them that lament.

He knoweth of the things that exist not, of secrets that are untold.

He causeth the moon and the sun to revolve, and spreadeth water upon the earth.

In the heart of a stone hath He placed a jewel; from nothing hath He created all that is.

Who can reveal the secret of His qualities; what eye can see the limits of His beauty?

The bird of thought cannot soar to the height of His presence, nor the hand of understanding reach to the skirt of His praise.

Think not, O Sadi, that one can walk in the road of purity except in the footsteps of Muhammad.

He is the patriarch of the prophets, the guide of the path of salvation; the mediator of mankind, and the chief of the Court of Judgment. What of thy praises can Sadi utter? The mercy of God be upon thee, O Prophet, and peace!

CHAPTER II

CONCERNING BENEVOLENCE

IF THOU art wise, incline towards the essential truth, for that remains, while the things that are external pass away.

He who has neither knowledge, generosity, nor piety resembles a man in form alone.

He sleeps at peace beneath the ground who made tranquil the hearts of men.

Give now of thy gold and bounty, for eventually will it pass from thy grasp. Open the door of thy treasure to-day, for to-morrow the key will not be in thy hands.

If thou would not be distressed on the Day of Judgment, forget not them that are distressed.

Drive not the poor man empty from thy door, lest thou should wander before the doors of strangers.

He protects the needy who fears that he himself may become needful of the help of others.

Art not thou, too, a supplicant? Be grateful, and turn not away them that supplicate thee.

STORY ILLUSTRATIVE OF DOING GOOD TO THE EVIL

A woman said to her husband: "Do not again buy bread from the baker in this street. Make thy purchases in the market, for this man shows wheat and sells barley, and he has no customers but a swarm of flies."

"O light of my life," the husband answered, "pay no heed to his trickery. In the hope of our custom has he settled in this place, and not humane would it be to deprive him of his profits."

Follow the path of the righteous, and, if thou stand upon thy feet, stretch out thy hand to them that are fallen.

STORY CONCERNING FASTING

The wife of an officer of a king said to her husband: "Arise, and go to the royal palace, that they may give thee food, for thy children are in want."

"The kitchen is closed to-day," he answered; "last night the Sultan resolved to fast awhile."

In the despair of hunger, the woman bowed her head and murmured: "What does the Sultan seek from his

fasting when his breaking the fast means a festival of joy for our children?"

One who eats that good may follow is better than a Mammon-worshipper who continually fasts. Proper it is to fast with him who feeds the needy in the morning.

STORY ILLUSTRATIVE OF PRACTICAL CHARITY

A certain man had generosity without the means of displaying it; his pittance was unequal to his benevolence. (May riches never fall to the mean, nor poverty be the lot of the generous!) His charities exceeding the depth of his pocket, therefore was he always short of money.

One day a poor man wrote to him saying: "O thou of happy nature! Assist me with funds, since for some time have I languished in prison."

The generous man would have willingly acceded to the request, but he possessed not so much as the smallest piece of money. But he sent someone to the creditors of the prisoner with the message: "Free this man for a few days, and I will be his security."

Then did he visit the prisoner in his cell and say: "Arise, and fly with haste from the city."

When a sparrow sees open the door of its cage, it tarries not a moment. Like the morning breeze, the

prisoner flew from the land. Thereupon, they seized his benefactor, saying: "Produce either the man or the money."

Powerless to do either, he went to prison, for a bird escaped is ne'er recaptured. Long there did he remain, invoking help from none, nor complaining, though he slept not at nights through restlessness.

A pious man came to him and said: "I did not think that thou wert dishonest; why art thou here imprisoned?"

"No villainy have I committed," he replied. I saw a helpless man in bonds and his freedom only in my own confinement. I did not deem it right that I should live in comfort while another was fettered by the legs."

Eventually he died, leaving a good name behind.

Happy is he whose name dies not! He who sleeps beneath the earth with a heart that lives is better than he who lives with a soul that is dead, for the former remains for ever.

STORY OF A MAN AND A THIRSTY DOG

In a desert a man found a dog that was dying from thirst. Using his hat as a bucket, he fetched water from a well and gave it to the helpless animal. The prophet of the time stated that God had forgiven the man his sins because of his kindly act.

Reflect, if thou be a tyrant, and make a profession of benevolence.

He who shows kindness to a dog will not do less towards the good among his fellows.

Be generous to the extent of thy power. If thou hast not dug a well in the desert, at least place a lamp in a shrine.

Charity distributed from an ox's skin that is filled with treasure counts for less than a dinar given from the wages of toil.

Every man's burden is suited to his strength—heavy to the ant is the foot of the locust.

Do good to others so that on the morrow God may not deal harshly with thee.

Be lenient with thy slave, for he may one day become a king, like a pawn that becomes a queen.

STORY APROPOS OF NEMESIS

A poor man complained of his distressed condition to one who was rich as well as ill-dispositioned. The latter refused to help him, and turned roughly upon him in anger.

The beggar's heart bled by reason of this violence: "Strange!" he reflected, "that this rich man should be

of such forbidding countenance! Perhaps he fears not the bitterness of begging."

The rich man ordered his slave to drive the beggar away. As a result of his ingratitude for the blessings that he enjoyed, Fortune forsook him, and he lost all that he possessed. His slave passed into the hands of a generous man of enlightened mind, who was as gladdened at the sight of a beggar as the latter is at the sight of riches.

One night a beggar asked alms of the latter, and he commanded his slave to give the man to eat. When the slave took food to the supplicant he involuntarily uttered a cry, and went back weeping.

"Why these tears?" his master asked.

My heart is grieved at the plight of this unfortunate old man," the slave replied. "Once was he the owner of much wealth, and I his slave."

The master smiled and said: This is not cause for grief, O son. Time, in its revolutions, is not unjust. Was not that indigent man formerly a merchant who carried his head high in the air through pride? I am he whom that day he drove from his door. Fate has now put him in the place that I then occupied. Heaven befriended me and washed the dust of sorrow from my face. Though God, in His wisdom, closed one door, another, in His mercy, did He open."

Many a needy one has become filled, and many a Plutos has gone empty.

STORY OF A FOOL AND A FOX

Some one saw a fox that was bereft of the use of its legs. He was wondering how the animal managed to live in this condition when a tiger drew near with a jackal in its claws. The tiger ate the jackal, and the fox finished the remains. The next day also did the Omnipotent Provider send the fox its daily meal.

The eyes of the man were thus opened to the light of true knowledge. "After this," he reflected, "I will sit in a corner like an ant, for the elephant's portion is not gained by reason of its strength."

So did he sit in silence, waiting for his daily food to come from the Invisible. No one heeded him, and soon was he reduced to skin and bones. When, at last, his senses had almost gone through weakness, a voice came out from the wall of a mosque, saying:

"Go, O false one! Be the rending tiger, and pose not as a paralytic fox. Exert thyself like the tiger, so that something may remain from thy spoil. Why, like the fox, appease thy hunger with leavings? Eat of the fruits of thine own endeavours; strive like a man, and relieve the wants of the needy."

Seize, O youth, the hand of the aged; fall not thyself, saying, "Hold my hand." In the two worlds does he obtain reward who does good to the people of God.

STORY OF A DEVOUT MISER

In the remote regions of Turkey there lived a good and pious man, whom I and some fellow-travellers once visited. He received us cordially, and seated us with respect. He had vineyards, and wheat-fields, slaves and gold, but was as miserly as a leafless tree. His feelings were warm, but his fireplace was cold. He passed the night awake in prayer, and we in hunger. In the morning he girt his loins and recommenced the same politeness of the previous night.

One of our party was of merry wit and temper. "Come, give us food in change for a kiss," he said, "for that is better to a hungry man. In serving me, place not thy hand upon my shoe, but give me bread and strike thy shoe upon my head."

Excellence is attained by generosity, not by vigils in the night.

Idle words are a hollow drum; invocations without merit are a weak support.

STORY OF HATIM TAI

Hatim Tai possessed a horse whose fleetness was as that of the morning breeze. Of this was the Sultan of Turkey informed.

"Like Hatim Tai," he was told, "none is equal in generosity; like his horse, nothing is equal in speed

and gait. As a ship in the sea it traverses the desert, while the eagle, exhausted, lags behind."

"From Hatim will I request that horse," the king replied. "If he be generous and give it to me, then shall I know that his fame is true; if not, that it is but the sound of a hollow drum."

So he despatched a messenger with ten followers to Hatim. They alighted at the house of the Arab chief, who prepared a feast and killed a horse in their honour.

On the following day, when the messenger explained the object of his mission, Hatim became as one mad with grief. "Why," he cried, "didst thou not give me before thy message? That swift-paced horse did I roast last night for thee to eat. No other means had I to entertain thee; that horse alone stood by my tent, and I would not that my guests should sleep fasting."

To the men he gave money and splendid robes, and when the news of his generosity reached to Turkey, the king showered a thousand praises upon his nature.

STORY OF HATIM AND THE MESSENGER SENT TO KILL HIM

One of the kings of Yaman was renowned for his liberality, yet the name of Hatim was never mentioned in his presence without his falling into a

rage. "How long," he would ask, "wilt thou speak of that vain man, who possesses neither a kingdom, nor power, nor wealth?"

On one occasion he prepared a royal feast, which the people were invited to attend. Someone began to speak of Hatim, and another to praise him. Envious, the king despatched a man to slay the Arabian chief, reflecting: "So long as Hatim lives, my name will never become famous."

The messenger departed, and travelled far seeking for Hatim that he might kill him. As he went along the road a youth came out to meet him. He was handsome and wise, and showed friendliness toward the messenger, whom he took to his house to pass the night. Such liberality did he shower upon his guest that the heart of the evil-minded one was turned to goodness.

In the morning the generous youth kissed his hand and said: "Remain with me for a few days."

"I am unable to tarry here," replied the messenger, "for urgent business is before me."

"If thou wilt entrust me with thy secret," said the youth, "to aid thee will I spare no effort."

"O generous man!" was the reply, "give ear to me, for I know that the generous are concealers of secrets. Perhaps in this country thou knowest Hatim, who is of lofty mind and noble qualities. The king of Yaman

desires his head, though I know not what enmity has arisen between them. Grateful shall I be if thou wilt direct me to where he is. This hope from thy kindness do I entertain, O friend!"

The youth laughed and said: "I am Hatim; see here my head! strike it from my body with thy sword. I would not that harm should befall thee, or that thou shouldst fail in thy endeavour."

Throwing aside his sword, the man fell on the ground and kissed the dust of Hatim's feet. "If I injured a hair on thy body," he cried, "I should no longer be a man." So saying, he clasped Hatim to his breast and took his way back to Yaman.

"Come," said the king as the man approached, "what news hast thou? Why didst thou not tie his head to thy saddle-straps? Perhaps that famous one attacked thee and thou wert too weak to engage in combat."

The messenger kissed the ground and said: "O wise and just king! I found Hatim, and saw him to be generous and full of wisdom, and in courage superior to myself. My back was bent by the burden of his favours; with the sword of kindness and bounty he killed me."

When he had related all that he had seen of Hatim's generosity, the king uttered praises upon the family of the Arab chief and rewarded the messenger with gold.

STORY ILLUSTRATIVE OF MISDIRECTED KINDNESS

A certain man, in the ceiling of whose house some bees had built their hives, asked his wife for a butcher's knife so that he might destroy them. "Do not so," the woman said, for the poor creatures will be greatly distressed when turned out of their homes."

Accordingly, the foolish man left the bees in peace.

One day the woman was stung by one of the insects and stood wailing on the doorstep. Hearing her cries, the husband left his shop and hurried towards the house. Angered, he said: "O wife! show not such a bitter face to the world; remember thou didst say to me, 'Kill not the poor bees.'"

How can one do good to the evil? Forbearance with the wicked but increases their iniquity.

What is a dog that a dish of viands should be set before him? Command that they should give him bones. A kicking animal is best well-burdened.

If the night-watchman display humanity, no one sleeps at night for fear of thieves.

In the battle-field, the spear-shaft is worth more than a hundred thousand sugarcanes.

When thou rearest a cat, she destroys thy pigeons;
when thou makest fat a wolf, he rends one who is
dear to thee.

Raise not a building that has not a strong foundation;
if thou dost, beware.

DISCOURSE CONCERNING KINDNESS TO ORPHANS

Protect him whose father is dead; remove the dust
from his raiment, and injure him not. Thou knowest
not how hard is his condition; no foliage is there on a
rootless tree. Give not a kiss to a child of thine own in
the sight of a helpless orphan. If the latter weep, who
will assuage his grief? If he be angered, who will bear
his burden? See that he weeps not, for the throne of
God trembles at the orphan's lament. With pity, wipe
the tears from his eyes and the dust from his face. If
the protecting shadow of his father's care be gone,
cherish him beneath the shadow of thy care.

Upon my head was a kingly crown when it reposed
upon the bosom of my father. Then, if a fly settled
upon my body, many were distressed on my behalf.
Now, should I be taken in captivity, not one among
my friends would come to aid me. Well do I know the
orphan's sorrow, for my father departed in my
childhood.

CHAPTER III

CONCERNING LOVE

HAPPY are the days of them that are infatuated by love for Him, whether they be sorrowed by separation from Him or made joyous by His presence.

They are mendicants who fly from worldly sovereignty; in the hope of meeting Him they are patient in their mendicity. Oft have they drunk of the wine of anguish; be it bitter, they remain silent. In the remembrance of Him patience is not bitter, for wormwood is sweet from the hand of a friend.

They that are captive in the coils of His love, seek not to escape; they suffer reproach, but are monarchs in the seclusion of their meditation, and their way is not known. They are like the temple of Jerusalem, splendid of which is the interior, but whose outer wall is left in ruin.

Like moths, they burn themselves in the fire of love. Their beloved is in their breasts, yet do they seek Him; though near a fountain, their lips are parched.

DISCOURSE CONCERNING CONSTANCY

Thy love renders thee impatient and disturbed. With such sincerity hast thou placed thy head at her feet that thou art oblivious to the world.

When in the eyes of thy beloved riches count not,
gold and dust are as one to thee.

Thou sayest that she dwelleth in thine eyes—if they
be closed, she is in thy mind.

If she demand thy life, thou dost place it in her hand;
if she place a sword upon thy head, thou holdest it
forward.

When earthly love produces such confusion and such
obedience demands, dost thou wonder if travellers of
the road of God remain engulfed in the Ocean of
Reality?

In the remembrance of their Friend they have turned
their backs upon the world; they are so fascinated by
the Cup-bearer that they have spilled the wine.

No medicine can cure them, for no one has
knowledge of their pains.

With their cries of longing do they root up a
mountain; with their sighs they dismember a
kingdom.

Such is their weeping at dawn that the tears wash the
collyrium of sleep from their eyes. Night and day are
they immersed in the sea of love; so distracted are
they that they know not night from day.

So enamoured are they of the beauty of the Painter
that they care not for the beauty of His designs.

He drinks of the pure wine of Unity who is forgetful of both this world and the next.

STORY OF A DANCER

I have heard that, at the singing of a musician, one of fairy-face began to dance. Surrounded by distracted hearts, the flame of a candle caught her skirt. She was distressed and angered.

One of her lovers said, "Why agitate thyself? The fire has burned thy skirts—it has entirely consumed the harvest of my life."

STORY ILLUSTRATING THE REALITY OF LOVE

One who loved God set his face towards the desert. His father, being grieved at his absence, neither ate nor slept.

Some one admonished the son, who said "Since my Friend has claimed me as His own, no other friendship do I own. When He revealed to me His beauty, all else that I saw appeared unreal."

They that love Him care for no one else; their senses are confused and their ears are deaf to the words of them that reproach.

They wander through the desert of Divine Knowledge without a caravan.

They have no hope of approbation from their fellow-men, for they are the chosen of the elect of God.

STORY ILLUSTRATIVE OF PATIENCE

An old man begged at the door of a mosque. Some one said to him: "This is not the place to beg; stand not here with impudence."

"What house is this," the man inquired, "from which no pity comes upon the condition of the poor?"

"Silence!" was the reply. "What foolish words are these! This is the house of our Master!"

The beggar raised a cry: "Alas," he said, "that I should be disappointed at this door. I have not gone hopeless from any street; why should I go thus from the door of God? Here will I stretch forth my hand of want, for I know that I shall not depart empty-handed."

For a year he remained devoutly employed in the mosque. One night, through weakness, his heart began to palpitate, and at daybreak his last breath flickered like a morning lamp. Thus did he exclaim with joy: "And whoever knocked at the door of the Bounteous One, it opened."

He who seeks God should be patient and enduring; I have not heard of an alchemist being sad. Much gold he reduces to ashes so that he may one day turn copper into gold. Gold is good with which to buy—

and what couldst thou wish to buy better than the face of thy Friend?

STORY OF ONE WHO WAS ASSIDUOUS IN PRAYER

An old man spent the night in worship and the morning in prayer. A guardian angel whispered to him: "Go, take thy way, for thy prayers are not acceptable at this door."

The next night again he passed the night in devotion; and a disciple, being informed of his circumstances, said: "When thou seest that the door is shut, why dost thou thus exert thyself?"

Weeping, he replied: "O my son! Dost thou suppose that although He has torn my reins I shall keep my hands from off his saddle-straps? When a supplicant is repelled at one door, what is his fear if he know of another?"

While thus he spoke, with his head upon the ground, the angel uttered this message in his ears: "Although there is no merit in him, his prayers are accepted, for except Me he has no refuge."

STORY OF SULTAN MAHMUD AND HIS LOVE FOR AYAZ

Some one found fault with the king of Ghazni, saying: "Ayaz, his favourite slave, possesses no beauty. It is

strange that a nightingale should love a rose that has neither colour nor perfume."

This was told to Mahmud, who said: "My love, O sir, is for his virtues, not for his farm and stature."

I have heard that in a narrow pass a camel fell and a chest of pearls was broken. The king gave the signal for plunder, and urged on his horse with speed. The horsemen did likewise, and, leaving the king behind, gathered up the pearls. Not one of them remained near the king but Ayaz.

"O thou of curly locks!" said Mahmud, "what hast thou gained of the plunder?"

"Nothing," he replied. "I walked in haste behind thee: I do not occupy myself with riches away from thy service."

If an honourable place in the court be thine, be not neglectful of the king on account of gain elsewhere.

STORY OF A VILLAGE CHIEF

A village chief passed with his son through the centre of the imperial army. In the presence of such pomp and splendour the man displayed humility and fled, through fear, into a corner.

"After all," observed his son, "thou art a 'village chief, and in chieftaincy greater than the nobles. Why dost thou tremble like a willow tree?"

"True," replied his father. I am a chief and a ruler, but my honour lies as far as my village."

Thus are the saints overwhelmed with fear when they stand in the court of their King.

STORY OF A FIRE-FLY

Perhaps thou mayest have seen the fire-fly shine like a lamp in the garden at night.

"O night-illuminating moth!" some one said, "why comest thou not out in the daytime?"

The fly gave an answer full of wisdom: Because I am not visible before the sun."

STORY OF A MOTH AND A CANDLE

Some one said to a moth: "Go, thou contemptible creature, and make friendship with one worthy of thyself; go where thou seest the path of hope. How different is thy love from that of the candle! Thou art not a salamander—hover not around the fire, for bravery is necessary before combat. It is not compatible with reason that thou shouldst acknowledge as a friend one whom thou knowest to be thine enemy."

"What does it matter if I burn?" the moth replied. "I have love in my heart, and this flame is as a flower to me. Not of my own accord do I throw myself into the fire; the chain of her love is upon my neck. Who is it

that finds fault with my friendship for my friend? I am content to be slain at her feet. I burn because she is dear to me, and because my destruction may affect her. Say not to the helpless man from whose hands the reins have fallen, 'Drive slowly.'

ANOTHER STORY ON THE SAME SUBJECT

One night, as I lay awake, I heard a moth

say to a candle: "I am thy lover; if I burn, it is proper. Why dost thou weep?"

The candle replied: "O my poor friend! Love is not thy business. Thou fliest from before a flame; I stand erect until I am entirely consumed. If the fire of love has burned thy wings, regard me, who from head to foot must be destroyed."

Before the night had passed, some one put the candle out, exclaiming: "Such is the end of love!"

Grieve not over the grave of one who lost his life for his friend; be glad of heart, for he was the chosen of Him.

If thou art a lover, wash not thy head of the sickness of love; like Sadi, wash thy hands of selfishness.

A devoted lover holds not back his hand from the object of his affections though arrows and stones may rain upon his head.

Be cautious; if thou goest down to the sea, give thyself up to the storm.

CHAPTER IV

CONCERNING HUMILITY

THOU, O creature of God, vast created of the dust; therefore, be humble as the dust. Be not covetous, nor oppressive, nor headstrong. Thou art from the dust; be not like fire. When the terrible fire raised his head in pride, the dust prostrated itself in humility.

And since the fire was arrogant and the dust was meek, from the former were the demons formed, and from the latter mankind.

STORY OF A RAINDROP

A raindrop fell from a spring cloud, and, seeing the wide expanse of the sea, was shamed. "Where the sea is," it reflected, "where am I? Compared with that, forsooth, I am extinct."

While thus regarding itself with an eye of contempt, an oyster took it to its bosom, and Fate so shaped its course that eventually the raindrop became a famous royal pearl.

It was exalted, for it was humble. Knocking at the door of extinction, it became existent.

STORY ILLUSTRATIVE OF PIOUS MEN REGARDING THEMSELVES WITH CONTEMPT

A sagacious youth of noble family landed at a seaport of Turkey, and, as he displayed piety and wisdom, his baggage was deposited in a mosque.

One day the priest said to him: "Sweep away the dust and rubbish from the mosque."

Immediately, the young man went away and no one saw him there again. Thus, did the elder and his followers suppose he did not care to serve.

The next day, a servant of the mosque met him on the road and said: "Thou didst act wrongly in thy perverse judgment. Knowest thou not, O conceited youth, that men are dignified by service?"

Sorrowfully, the youth began to weep. "O soul-cherishing and heart-illuminating friend!" he answered; "I saw no dirt or rubbish in that holy place but mine own corrupt self. Therefore, I retraced my steps, for a mosque is better cleansed from such."

Humility is the only ritual for a devotee. If thou desire greatness, be humble; no other ladder is there by which to climb.

STORY OF SULTAN BAYAZID BUSTAMI

When Bayazid was coming from his bath one morning during the Id festival, some one unwittingly emptied a tray of ashes from a window upon his head. With his face and turban all bespattered, he rubbed his hands in gratitude and said: I am in truth worthy of the fires of hell; why should I be angered by a few ashes?"

The great do not regard themselves; look not for godliness in a self-conceited man. Eminence does not consist in outward show and vaunting words, nor dignity in hauteur and. pretension.

On the Day of Judgment thou wilt see in. Paradise him who sought truth and rejected vain pretension.

He who is headstrong and obdurate falleth headlong; if thou desire greatness, abandon pride

DISCOURSE ON CONCEIT

Expect not him who is possessed of worldly vanities to follow the path of religion, nor look for godliness in him who wallows in conceit.

If thou desire dignity, do not, like the mean, regard thy fellows with contemptuous eyes.

Seek no position more honourable than that of being known to the world as a man of laudable character.

Thou deemest him not great who, being of equal rank, is haughty towards thee; when thou makest a similar display before others, dost thou not appear before them as the arrogant appear before thee?

If thou art eminent, laugh not, if thou art wise, at them that are lowly. Many have fallen. from high whose places have been taken by the fallen.

Though thou be free from defect, revile not me who am full of blemishes.

One holds the chain of the Kaba temple in his hands; another lies drunken in the tavern.

If God call the latter, who can drive him away? If He expel the former, who can bring him back? The one cannot implore the divine help by reason of his good deeds, nor is the door of repentance closed upon the other.

STORY OF THE DARWESH AND THE PROUD CADI

À poorly-clad doctor of law and divinity sat one day in the front row of seats in a Cadi's court. The Cadi gave him a sharp look, whereupon the usher took the man by the arm and said: "Get up; dost thou not know that the best place is not for such as thee? Either take a lower seat, or remain standing, or leave the court altogether. Be not so bold as to occupy the seat of the great. If thou art humble, pose not as a lion. Not

every one is worthy of the chief seat; honour is proportionate to rank, and rank to merit."

He who sits with honour in a place lower than that of which he is worthy falls not with ignominy from eminence.

Fuming with anger, the doctor moved to a lower seat. Two advocates in the court then entered into a spirited discussion, and flew at each other with their tongues like fighting-cocks with beak and claw. They were involved in a complicated knot which neither could unravel. From the last row of seats the tattered doctor roared out with the voice of a lion in the forest.

"It is not the veins of the neck that should stand out in argument," he said, "but the proofs, which should be full of meaning. I, too, have the faculty of argument."

"Speak on," they answered.

With the quill of eloquence that he possessed, the doctor engraved his words upon the minds of his listeners like inscriptions on a signet-ring; and, drawing his pen through the letters of pretension, he invoked applause from every corner. So hard did he drive the steed of speech that the Cadi lagged behind like an ass in the mire. Removing his cloak and turban, the latter sent them to the doctor as a token of his respect.

"Alas!" he said, "I did not discern thy merit, nor welcome thee on thy arrival. I regret to see thee in this condition with such a stock of knowledge."

The usher then approached the stranger courteously in order that he might place the Cadi's turban upon his head. But the doctor repelled him with his hands and tongue, saying:

"Place not upon my head the fetters of pride, for tomorrow this fifty-yarded turban would turn my head from those in jaded garb. Those who called me 'lord' and 'chief' would then appear insignificant in mine eyes. Is pure water different whether it be contained in a goblet of gold or an earthen ewer? A man's head requires brain and intellect, not an imposing turban like thine. A big head does not make one worthy; it is like the gourd, void of kernel. Be not proud because of thy turban and beard, for the one is cotton and the other grass. One should aim at the degree of eminence that is conformable with one's merit. With all this intellect, I will not call thee man, though a hundred slaves walk behind thee. How well spoke the shell when a greedy fool picked it out of the mire: 'None will buy me for the smallest price: be not so insane as to wrap me up in silk? A man is not better than his fellows by reason of his wealth, for an ass, though covered with a satin cloth, is still an ass.'"

In this way the clever doctor washed the rancour from his heart with the water of words. Thus do those who are aggrieved speak harshly. Be not idle when thine enemy has fallen. Dash out his brains when

thou art able, for delay will efface the grudge from thy mind.

So overcome was the Cadi by his vehemence that he exclaimed, "Verily, this day is a hard one." He bit his fingers in amazement, and his eyes stared at the doctor like the two stars near the pole of the lesser bear. As for the latter, he went abruptly out and was never seen there again. They in the court clamoured to know whence such an impertinent fellow had come. An official went in search of him, and ran in all directions, asking whether a man of that description had been seen. Some one said: "We know no one in this city so eloquent as Sadi."

A hundred thousand praises to him who said so; see how sweetly he uttered the bitter truth!

STORY OF THE HONEY-SELLER

A man of smiling countenance sold honey, captivating the hearts of all by his pleasant manner. His customers were as numerous as flies around the sugar-cane—if he had sold poison people would have bought it for honey.

A forbidding-looking man regarded him with envy, being jealous of the way his business prospered. One day he paraded the town with a tray of honey on his head and a scowl on his face. He wandered about crying his wares, but no one evinced desire to buy. At nightfall, having earned no money, he went and sat

dejectedly in a corner, with a face as bitter as that of a sinner fearful of retribution.

The wife of one of his neighbours jokingly remarked: "Honey is bitter to one of sour temper."

It is wrong to eat bread at the table of one whose face is as wrinkled with frowns as the cloth on which it is served.

O sir! add not to thine own burdens, for an evil temper brings disaster in its train.

If thou hast not a sweet tongue like Sadi; thou hast neither gold nor silver.

STORY ILLUSTRATING THE FORBEARANCE OF GOOD MEN

I have heard that a debased drunkard caught a pious man by the collar. The latter received his blows in silence, and in forbearance lifted not his head.

A passer-by remarked: "Art thou not a man? It is a pity to be patient with this ignorant fellow."

The pious man replied: "Speak not thus to me. A foolish drunkard collars one by the neck in the thought that he is fighting with a lion; there is no fear that a learned man will contend with an inebriated fool."

The virtuous follow this rule in life—when they suffer oppression they display kindness.

STORY ILLUSTRATING THE NOBLE-MINDEDNESS OF MEN

A dog bit the leg of a hermit with such violence that venom dropped from its teeth, and the poor man could not sleep all night through pain.

His little daughter chided him, saying: "Hast thou not teeth as well?"

The unfortunate parent wept, and then smilingly replied: "Dear child! Although I was stronger than the dog, I restrained my anger. Should I receive a sword-blow on the head, I could not apply my teeth to the legs of a dog."

One can revenge oneself upon the mean, but a man cannot act like a dog.

STORY OF A KIND MASTER AND HIS DISOBEDIENT SLAVE

An eminent man, famous for his many virtues, possessed a slave of evil disposition, who in ugliness of feature surpassed every one in the city. He closely attended his master at meal-times, but he would not have given a drop of water to a dying man. Neither reproof nor the rod influenced him; the house was in a constant state of disorder through him. Sometimes,

in his bad temper, would he litter the paths with thorns and rubbish; at other times, throw the chickens down the well. His unhappy temperament was written on his face, and never did he perform a task successfully.

Some one asked his master: "What is there that thou likest in this slave—his agreeable manners, or his skill, or beauty? Surely, it is not worth while to keep such an unruly knave and burden thyself with such an affliction. I will procure for thee a slave of handsome appearance and good character. Take this one to the slave-market and sell him. If a price is offered for him, do not refuse it, for he would be dear at that."

The good-natured man smiled and said: "O friend! although the character of my slave is certainly bad, my character is improved by him, for when I have learned to tolerate his manner I shall be able to put up with anything at the hands of others. It were not humane to sell him and thus make known his faults. And it is better to endure his affliction myself than to pass him on to others."

Accept for thyself what thou wouldst accept for others. If distressed thyself, involve not thy fellows.

Forbearance is at first like poison, but when engrained in the nature it becomes like honey.

STORY OF MARUF KARCHI AND THE SICK TRAVELLER

No one follows the path of Maruf Karchi who does not first banish the idea of fame from his head.

A traveller once came to Maruf's house at the point of death—his life was joined to his body by a single hair. He passed the night in wailing and lamentation, sleeping not himself nor permitting any one else to sleep by reason of his groans. His mind was distressed and his temper was vile; though he died not himself, he killed many by his fretting. Such was his restlessness that every one fled from him. Maruf Karchi alone remained. He, like a brave man, girt his loins and sat up many nights in attendance at the sick man's bedside. But one night Maruf was attacked by sleep—how long can a sleepless man keep up?

As soon as the invalid saw him asleep he began to rave: "Cursed be thy abominable

race!" he cried: "what knows this glutton, intoxicated with sleep, of the helpless man who has not closed his eyes?"

Maruf took no notice of these words, but one of the women of the harem, overhearing them, remarked: "Didst thou not hear what that wailing beggar said? Turn him out, and tell him to take his abuse with him and die elsewhere. Kindness and compassion have their occasions, but to do good to the evil is evil; only

a fool plants trees in barren soil. A grateful dog is better than an ungrateful man."

Maruf laughed: Dear woman," he replied, "be not offended at his ungracious words. If he rave at me through sickness, I am not angered. When thou art strong and well thyself, bear gratefully the burdens of the weak. If thou cherish the tree of kindness, thou wilt assuredly eat of the fruits of a good name."

They attain to dignity who rid themselves of arrogance.

He who worships grandeur is the slave of pride; he knows not that greatness consists in meekness.

STORY ILLUSTRATING THE FOLLY OF THE IGNOBLE

An impudent fellow begged of a pious man, but the latter had no money in his house. Otherwise, would he have showered gold upon him like dust. The infamous rascal, therefore, went out and began to abuse him in the street.

The eye of the fault-finder sees no merits. What regard has he who has acted dishonourably for the honour of another?

Being informed of his words, the pious man smiled and said: "It is well; this man has enumerated only a few of my bad qualities—only one out of a hundred that are known to me. The evil that he leas supposed

in me I know for certain that I possess. Only one year has he been acquainted with me; how can he know the faults of seventy years? None but the Omniscient knows my faults better than myself. Never have I known one who has attributed to me so few defects. If he bear witness against me in the Day or Judgment, I shall have no fear. If he who thinks ill of me seek to reveal my faults, tell him to come and take the record from me."

Be humble when the veil is torn from off thy character. If a pitcher were made of the dust of men, the calumnious would shatter it with stones.

STORY OF ONE WHO HAD A LITTLE KNOWLEDGE

A certain man knew something of astronomy and his head, in consequence, was filled with pride. Journeying far, he visited Kushyar, the sage, who turned his eyes from him and would teach him nothing. When the disappointed traveller was on the point of leaving, Kushyar addressed him with these words:

"Thou imaginest that thou art full of knowledge. How can a vessel that is full receive of more? Rid thyself of thy pretensions, so that thou mayest be filled. Being full of vanity, thou goest empty."

STORY ILLUSTRATING THE HUMILITY OF THE PIOUS

Some one heard the barking of a dog in the ruined hut of a pious man. Reflecting upon the strangeness of the fact, he went and searched, but found no traces of a dog. In truth, the devotee alone was in the house.

Not wishing his curiosity to be revealed, the man was departing, when the owner of the house cried out: "Come in; why standest thou upon the door? Knowest thou not, O friend, that I it was who barked? When I discerned that humility was acceptable to God, I banished pride and vanity from my heart, and clamoured with barks at the door of God, for I saw none more lowly than a dog."

If thou desire to attain to dignity, let humility be thy path.

Behold, when the dew lies low upon the earth, the sun doth raise it to the skies.

STORY ILLUSTRATING THE VALUE OF SOFT WORDS

The slave of a king escaped, and, though a search was made, was not discovered. Later, when the fugitive returned, the king, in anger, ordered that he should be put to death.

When the executioner brought out his scimitar, like the tongue of a thirsty man, the despondent slave cried out:

O God! I forgive the king the shedding of my blood, for I have ever enjoyed his bounty and shared in his prosperity. Let him not suffer for this deed on the Day of Judgment, to the delight of his enemies."

When the king heard these words his anger was appeased, and he appointed the slave to be an officer of the standard.

The moral of this story is that soft speech acts like water on the fires of wrath. Do not the soldiers on the battle-field wear armour consisting of a hundred folds of silk?

O friend! be humble when thou dealest with a fierce foe, for gentleness will blunt the sharpest sword.

STORY ILLUSTRATING THE WISDOM OF FEIGNING DEAFNESS

Many writers affirm the falsity of the idea that Hatim was deaf.

One morning his attention was attracted by the buzzing of a fly, which had become ensnared in a spider's web. "O thou," he observed, "who art fettered by thine own avarice, be patient. Wherever there be a tempting bait, huntsman and snare are close at hand."

One of his disciples remarked: "Strange it is that thou couldst hear the buzzing of a fly that hardly reached our ears. No longer can: they call thee deaf."

The Sheikh replied: "Deafness is better than the hearing of idle words. Those that sit with me in private are prone to conceal my faults and parade my virtues; thus, do they make me vain. I feign deafness that I may be spared their flattery. When my assumed affliction has become known to them they will speak freely of that which is good and bad in me; then, being grieved at the recital of my faults, I shall abstain from evil."

Go not down a well by a rope of praise. Be deaf, like Hatim, and listen to the words of them that slander thee.

STORY ILLUSTRATING FORBEARANCE FOR THE SAKE OF FRIENDS

A certain man, whose heart was as pure as Sadi's, fell in love. Although taunted by his enemies in consequence, he showed no anger.

Some one asked him: "Hast thou no sense of shame? Art thou not sensible to these indignities? It is abject to expose oneself to ridicule, and weak to endure patiently the scoffs of enemies. To overlook the errors of the, ignorant is wrong, lest it be said that thou hast neither strength nor courage."

How elegantly did the distracted lover make reply!
His words are worthy to be writ in letters of gold:

"Alone in my heart there dwelleth affection for my
loved one; thus, it contains no room for malice."

STORY OF LUQMAN, THE SAGE

I have heard that Luqman was of dark complexion and careless of his appearance. Some one mistook him for a slave, and employed him in digging trenches at Baghdad. Thus he continued for a year, no one suspecting who he was. When the truth was known the master was afeared, and fell at Luqman's feet, offering excuses.

The sage smiled and said: "Of what use are these apologies? For a year my heart has bled through thine oppression. How can I forget that in one hour? But I forgive thee, good man, for thy gain has caused to me no loss. Thou hast built thy house; my wisdom and knowledge have increased. I, too, possess a slave, and frequently set him to arduous labour. Nevermore, when I remember the hardships of my toil, will I afflict him."

He who has not suffered at the hands of the strong grieves not at the frailness of the weak.

If thou be sorrowed by those above thee, be not harsh with thine inferiors.

CHAPTER V

CONCERNING RESIGNATION

HAPPINESS comes from the favour of God, not from the might of the powerful. If the heavens bestow not fortune, by no valour can it be obtained.

The ant suffers not by reason of its weakness; the tiger eats not by virtue of its strength.

Since the hand reaches not to the skies, accept as inevitable the fortune that it brings.

If thy life is destined to be long, no snake nor sword will harm thee; when the fated day of death arrives, the antidote will kill thee no less than the poison.

STORY OF A SOLDIER OF ISFAHAN

In Isfahan I had a friend who was warlike, spirited, and shrewd. His hands and dagger were for ever stained with blood. The hearts of his enemies were consumed by fear of him; even the tigers stood in awe of him. In battle he was like a sparrow among locusts; in combat, sparrows and men were alike to him. Had he made an attack upon Faridun, he would not have given the latter time to draw his sword. Neither in bravery nor magnanimity had he an equal.

This warrior formed a liking for my company; but as I was not destined to remain in Isfahan, Fate

transferred me from Iraq to Syria, in which holy land my staying was agreeable. After some time the desire for my home attracted me, so I returned to Iraq.

One night, the memory of the sepoy passed through my mind; the salt of his friendship opened the wounds of my gratitude, for I had eaten salt from his hand. To meet him, I went to Isfahan, and inquired as to where he lived.

I chanced upon him. He who had been a youth had become old; his form, once erect as an arrow, had become as a bow. Like a hoary mountain, his head was covered with snowy hair; Time had conquered him and twisted the wrist of his bravery. The pride of his strength had gone; the head of weakness was upon his knees, "O tiger-seizer!" I exclaimed, "what has made thee decrepit like an old fox?"

He laughed and said: "Since the day of the battle of Tartary, I have expelled the thoughts of fighting from my head. Then did I see the earth arrayed with spears like a forest of reeds. I raised like smoke the dust of conflict; but when Fortune does not favour, of what avail is fury? I am one who, in combat, could take with a spear a ring from the palm of the hand; but, as my star did not befriend me, they encircled me as with a ring. I seized the opportunity of flight, for only a fool strives with Fate. How could my helmet and cuirass aid me when my bright star favoured me not? When the key of victory is not in the hand, no one can break open the door of conquest with his arms.

"The enemy were a pack of leopards, and as strong as elephants. The heads of the heroes were encased in iron, as were also the hoofs of the horses. We urged on our Arab steeds like a cloud, and when the two armies encountered each other thou wouldst have said they had struck the sky down to the earth. From the raining of arrows, that descended like hail, the storm of death arose in every corner. Not one of our troops came out of the battle but his cuirass was soaked with blood. Not that our swords were blunt—it was the vengeance of stars of ill fortune. Overpowered, we surrendered, like a fish which, though protected by scales, is caught by the hook in the bait. Since Fortune averted her face, useless was our shield against the arrows of Fate."

STORY OF THE DOCTOR AND THE VILLAGER

One night a villager could not sleep owing to a pain in his side. A doctor said: "This pain is caused by his having eaten the leaves of the vine. I shall be astonished if he lasts through the night, for the arrows of a Tartar in his breast were better for him than the eating of such indigestible food."

That night the doctor died; forty years have since passed, and villager yet lives.

STORY OF THE VILLAGER AND HIS ASS

The ass of a villager died, so he set the head upon a vine in his garden in order that it might ward off the Evil Eye.

A sage old man passed by and laughingly remarked: "Dost think, O friend, this will effect thy purpose? In life, the ass could not protect itself from blows; so, in weakness, did it die."

What knows the physician of the condition of the sick, when, helpless, he himself will die through illness?

STORY ILLUSTRATING LUCK

A poor man dropped a dinar in the road. He searched much, but at last, despairing, abandoned the attempt.

Some one came along and found the coin by chance.

God and ill fortune are predestined. Our daily portion depends not upon our strength and efforts, for those who are strongest and strive the most stand often in the direst need.

STORY OF ONE WHO BLAMED HIS DESTINY

There was once a rich and prosperous man named Bakhtyar. The wife of one of his neighbours, who was in the other extreme of poverty, upbraided her

husband one night when he went to her empty-handed, saying: "No one is so poor and unfortunate as thee. Take a lesson from thy neighbours, who are well-to-do. Why art thou not fortunate, like them?"

The man replied: "I am incapable of aught; quarrel not with Fate. I have not been endowed with the power to make myself a Bakhtyar."

STORY OF A DARWESH AND HIS WIFE

A Darwesh remarked to his wife, who was of ill-favoured countenance: "Since Fate has made thee ugly, do not encrust thy face with cosmetic."

Who can attain good fortune by force! Who, with collyrium, can make the blind to see?

Not one among the philosophers of Greece or Rome could produce honey from the thorn.

Wild beasts cannot become men; education is wasted upon them.

A mirror can be freed from stain, but it cannot be made from a stone.

Roses do not blossom on the branches of the willow; hot baths never yet made an Ethiop white.

Since one cannot escape the arrows of Fate, resignation is the only shield.

STORY OF A VULTURE AND A KITE

A vulture said to a kite: "No one can see so far as I."

"Possibly," replied the kite; "but what canst thou see across the desert?"

Gazing down, the vulture exclaimed: "Yonder do I see a grain of wheat."

Thereupon, they flew to the ground. When the vulture settled upon the wheat he became caught in a trap. He had not known that, through his eating the grain, Fate would ensnare him by the neck.

Not every oyster contains a pearl; not every archer hits the target.

"Of what use," the kite inquired, "was it to see the grain when thou couldst not discern the trap of thine enemy?"

"Caution," said the captive vulture, "availeth not with Destiny."

When the decrees of past eternity are brought to action, the keenest eyes are rendered blind by Fate.

In the ocean, where no shore-line appears, the swimmer strives in vain.

STORY OF A CAMEL

A young camel said to its mother: "After thou hast made a journey, rest awhile."

"If the bridle were in my hands," was the reply, "no one would ever see me in the string of camels with a load upon my back."

Fate is the helmsman of the ship of life, no matter though the owner rend his clothes.

O Sadi! look not for aid from any man. God is the giver, and He alone. If thou worship Him, the door of His mercy sufficeth thee; if He drive thee away, no one will ease thee. If He make thee to wear a crown, raise thy head; if not, bow thy head in despair.

DISCOURSE CONCERNING HYPOCRISY

Who knows that thou art not pledged to, God even though thou standest in prayer without ablution?

That prayer is the key to hell which thou performest only before the eyes of men.

If the high-road of thy life lead to aught but God, thy prayer-mat will be thrown into the fire.

He whose heart is good and makes no outward show of piety is better than one of outward sanctity whose heart is false.

A night-prowling robber is better than a sinner in the tunic of a saint.

Expect not wages from Omar, O son, when thou workest in the house of Zaid.

If in private I am bad and mean, of what avail is it to pose before the world with honour? How much will the bag of hypocrisy weigh in the Scales of Justice?

The outside of the hypocrite's coat is neater than the lining, for the one is seen and the other is hidden.

CHAPTER IX

CONCERNING REPENTANCE

O THOU of whose life seventy years have passed, perhaps thou hast slept in negligence that thy days have been thrown to the winds. Worldly aims hast thou well pursued; no preparations hast thou made for the departure to that world to come.

On the Judgment Day, when the bazar of Paradise will be arrayed, rank will be assigned in accordance with one's deeds.

If thou shouldst take a goodly stock of virtues, in proportion will be thy profit; if thou be bankrupt, thou wilt be ashamed.

If fifty years of thy life have passed, esteem as a precious boon the few that yet remain.

While still thou hast the power of speech, close not thy lips like the dead from the praise of God.

AN OLD MAN'S LAMENT

One night, in the season of youth, several of us young men sat together; we sang like bulbuls and raised a tumult in the street by our mirth.

An old man sat silent, apart; like a filbert-nut, his tongue was closed from speech. A youth approached him and said: "O old man! why sittest thou so mournfully in this corner? Come, raise thy head from the collar of grief and join us in our festivity."

Thus did the old man reply: "When the morning breeze blows over the rose-garden, the young trees proudly wave their branches. It becomes not me to mingle in thy company, for the dawn of old age has spread over my cheeks. Thy turn it is to sit at this table of youth; I have washed my hands of youthful pleasures. Time has showered snow upon my crow-like wings; like the bulbul, I could not sport in the garden. Soon will the harvest of my life be reaped; for thee, the new green leaves are bursting. The bloom has faded from my garden; who makes a nosegay from withered flowers? I must weep, like a child, in shame for my sins, but cannot emulate his pleasures."

Well has Luqman said: "It is better not to live at all than to live many years in sinfulness." Better, too, may it be to close the shop in the morning than to sell the stock at a loss.

ADVICE AND WARNING

To-day, O youth, take the path of worship, for to-morrow comes old age. Leisure thou hast, and strength—strike the ball when the field is wide. I knew not the value of life's day till now that I have lost it.

How can an old ass strive beneath its burden?—go thy way, for thou ridest a swift-paced horse.

A broken cup that is mended—what will its value be? Now that in carelessness the cup of life has fallen from thy hand, naught remains but to join the pieces.

Negligently hast thou let the pure water go; how canst thou now perform thy ablutions, except with sand?

SADI'S REBUKE FROM A CAMEL-DRIVER

One night in the desert of Faid my feet became fettered with sleep. A camel-driver awoke me, saying: "Arise; since thou heededst not the sound of the bell, perhaps thou desirest to be left behind! I, like thee, would sleep awhile, but the desert stretches ahead. How wilt thou reach the journey's end if thou sleepest when the drum of departure beats?"

Happy are they who have prepared their baggage before the beat of the drum! The sleepers by the

wayside raise not their heads and the caravan has passed out of sight.

He who was early awake surpassed all on the road; what availed it to awaken when the caravan had gone?

This is the time to sow the seeds of the harvest thou wouldst reap.

Go not bankrupt to the Resurrection, for it availeth not to sit in regret. By means of the stock that thou hast, O son, profit can be acquired; what profit accrueth to him who consumeth his stock himself?

Strive now, when the water reacheth not beyond thy waist; delay not until the flood has 'passed over thy head.

Heed the counsel of the wise to-day, for to-morrow will Nakir question thee with sternness. Esteem as a privilege thy precious soul, for a cage without a bird has no value. Waste-not thy time in sorrow and regret, for opportunity is precious and Time is a sword.

STORY CONCERNING SORROW FOR THE DEAD

A certain man died and another rent his clothes in grief. Hearing his cries, a sage exclaimed: "If the dead man possessed the power he would tear his shroud by reason of thy wailing and would say: ° Do not

torment thyself on account of my affliction, since a day or two before thee I made ready for the journey. Perhaps thou hast forgotten thine own death, that my decease has made thee so distressed."

When he whose eyes are open to the truth scatters flowers over the dead, his heart burns. not for the dead but for himself.

Why dost thou weep over the death of a child? He came pure, and he departed pure.

Tie now the feet of the bird of the soul; tarry not till it has borne the rope from thy hand.

Long hast thou sat in the place of another; soon will another sit in thy place.

Though thou be a hero or a swordsman, thou wilt carry away nothing but the shroud.

If the wild ass break its halter and wander into the desert its feet become ensnared in the sand. Thou, too, hast strength till thy feet go into the dust of the grave.

Since yesterday has gone and to-morrow has not come, take account of this one moment that now is.

In this garden of the world there is not a cypress that has grown which the wind of death has not uprooted.

STORY OF A PIOUS MAN AND A GOLD BRICK

A gold brick fell into the hands of a pious man and so turned his head that his enlightened mind became gloomy. He passed the whole night in anxious thought, reflecting: "This treasure will suffice me till the end of my life; no longer shall I have to bend my back before any one in begging. A house will I build, the foundation of which shall be of marble; the rafters of the ceiling shall be of aloe-wood. A special room will I have for my friends, and its door shall lead into a garden-house. Servants shall cook my food, and in ease will I nourish my soul. This coarse woollen bed-cloth has killed me by its roughness; now will I go and spread a carpet."

His imaginings made him crazy; the crab had pierced its claws into his brain. He forsook his prayers and devotions, and neither ate nor slept.

Unable to rest tranquil in one place, he wandered to a plain, with his head confused with the charms of his vain fancies. An old man was kneading mud upon a grave for the purpose of making bricks. Absorbed in thought for a while, the old man said:

"O foolish soul! hearken to my counsel. Why hast thou attached thy mind to that gold brick when one day they will make bricks from thy dust? The mouth of a covetous man is too widely open that it can be closed again by one morsel. Take, O base man, thy

hand from off that brick, for the river of thy avarice cannot be dammed up with a brick.

"So negligent hast thou been in the thought of gain and riches that the stock of thy life has become trodden underfoot. The dust of lust has blinded the eyes of thy reason—the simoom of desire has burned the harvest of thy life."

Wipe the antimony of neglect from off thine eyes, for to-morrow wilt thou be reduced to antimony under the dust.

ADMONITION

Thy life is a bird, and its name is Breath. When the bird has flown from its cage it cometh not back to captivity.

Be watchful for the world lasts but a moment, and a moment spent with wisdom is better than an age with folly.

Why fix we thus our minds upon this caravanserai? Our friends have departed and we are on the road. After us, the same flowers will bloom in the garden, together will friends still sit.

When thou comest to Shiraz, dost thou not cleanse thyself from the dust of the road?

Soon, O thou polluted with the dust of sin, wilt thou journey to a strange city. Weep, and wash with thy tears thy impurities away.

MORAL FROM AN INCIDENT IN SADI'S CHILDHOOD

I remember that, in the time of my childhood, my father (may God's mercy be upon him every moment!), bought me a gold ring. Soon after, a hawker took the ring from my hand in exchange for a date-fruit.

When a child knows not the value of a ring he will part with it for a sweetmeat. Thou, too, didst not recognise value of life, but indulged thyself in vain pleasures.

In the Day of Judgment, when the good will attain to the highest dignity and mount from the bottommost depths of the earth to the Pleiades, thy head will hang forward in shame, for thy deeds will gather around thee.

O brother! be ashamed of the works of the evil, for ashamed wilt thou be at the Resurrection in the presence of the good.

STORY OF A MAN WHO REARED A WOLF

Some one reared a wolf-cub, which, when grown in strength, tore its master to pieces. When the man was on the point of death a sage passed by and said: "Didst thou not know that thou wouldst suffer injury from an enemy thus carefully reared?"

How can we raise our heads from shame when we are at peace with Satan and at war with God?

Thy friend regards thee not when thou turnest thy face towards the enemy.

He who lives in the house of an enemy deems right estrangement from a friend.

STORY OF A CHEAT

Some one robbed the people of their money by cheating, and whenever he had accomplished one of his nefarious acts he cursed the Evil One, who said:

"Never have I seen such a fool! Thou hast intrigued with me secretly; why, therefore, dost thou raise the sword of enmity against me?"

Alas! that the angels should record against thee iniquities committed by the order of the Evil One!

Go forward when thou seest that the door of peace is open, for suddenly the door of repentance will be closed.

March not under a load of sin, O son, for a porter becomes exhausted on the journey.

The Prophet is the Mediator of him who follows the highway of his laws.

A RECOLLECTION OF CHILDHOOD

In the time of my childhood I went out with my father during the Id Festival, and in the tumult of the mob got lost. I cried in fear, when my father suddenly pulled my ear, and said: Several times did I tell thee not to take thy hand from the skirt of my robe."

A child knows not how to go alone; it is difficult to travel on any road unseen.

Thou, poor man, art as a child in thine endeavour; go, hold the skirt of the virtuous. Sit not with the base, but fasten thy hand to the saddle-straps of the pious.

Go, like Sadi, glean the corn of wisdom so that thou mayest store a harvest of divine knowledge.

STORY OF ONE WHO BURNED HIS HARVEST

In the month of July, a certain man stored his grain and set his mind at ease concerning it. One night, he

became intoxicated and lighted a fire, which destroyed his harvest.

The next day he sat down to glean the ears of corn, but not a single grain remained in his possession. Seeing him thus afflicted, some one remarked: "If thou didst not wish for this misfortune, thou shouldst not in folly have burned thy harvest."

Thou, whose years have been wasted in iniquity, art he who burns the harvest of his life.

Do not so, O my life! Sow the seeds of religion and justice, and throw not to the winds the harvest of a good name.

Knock at the door of forgiveness before thy punishment arrives, for lamentation beneath the lash is of no avail.

DISCOURSE ON REPENTANCE

He who supplicates the Deity by night will not be shamed on the Day of Judgment.

If thou art wise, pray for forgiveness in the night for the sins that thou hast committed in the day.

What is thy fear if thou hast made thy peace with God? He closes not the door of forgiveness upon them that supplicate Him.

If thou art a servant of God, raise thy hands in prayer;
and if thou be ashamed, weep in sorrow.

No one has stood upon His threshold whose sins the
tears of repentance have not washed away.

*The Bustan of Sadi, Translated by A. Hart Edwards,
[1911], sacred-texts.com*

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This issue's 'Question and Answer' section contains an inquiry about the vision held by the author about the fifty four steps of the Holy Mass in the Mystical Realms.

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