

RUBÁIYÁT OF
OMAR KHAYYÁM

RENDERED INTO ENGLISH VERSE BY
EDWARD FITZGERALD

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Edward FitzGerald

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OMAR KHAYYÁM was born at Naishápúr in Khorásán in the latter half of our Eleventh, and died within the First Quarter of our Twelfth Century. The slender Story of his Life is curiously twined about that of two other very considerable Figures in their Time and Country: one of whom tells the Story of all Three. This was Nizám-ul-Mulk, Vizier to Alp Arslan the Son, and Malik Shah the Grandson, of Toghrul Beg the Tartar, who had wrested Persia from the feeble Successor of Mahmud the Great, and founded that Seljukian Dynasty which finally roused Europe into the Crusades. This Nizám-ul-Mulk, in his *Wasiyat*—or *Testament*—which he wrote and left as a Memorial for future Statesmen—relates the following, as quoted in the *Calcutta Review*, No. 59, from Mirkhond's *History of the Assassins*.

‘One of the greatest of the wise men of Khorásán was the Imám Mowaffak of Naishápúr, a man highly honoured and revered,—may God rejoice his soul; his illustrious years exceeded eighty-five, and it was the universal belief that every boy who read the Koran or studied the traditions in his presence, would assuredly attain to honour and happiness. For this cause did my father send me from Tús to Naishápúr with Abd-us-samad, the doctor of law, that I might employ myself in study and learning under the guidance of that

illustrious teacher. Towards me he ever turned an eye of favour and kindness, and as his pupil I felt for him extreme affection and devotion, so that I passed four years in his service. When I first came there, I found two other pupils of mine own age newly arrived, Hakim Omar Khayyám, and the ill-fated Ben Sabbáh. Both were endowed with sharpness of wit and the highest natural powers; and we three formed a close friendship together. When the Imám rose from his lectures, they used to join me, and we repeated to each other the lessons we had heard. Now Omar was a native of Naishápúr, while Hasan Ben Sabbáh's father was one Ali, a man of austere life and practice, but heretical in his creed and doctrine. One day Hasan said to me and to Khayyám, "It is a universal belief that the pupils of the Imám Mowaffak will attain to fortune. Now, even if we *all* do not attain thereto, without doubt one of us will; what then shall be our mutual pledge and bond?" We answered, "Be it what you please." "Well," he said, "let us make a vow, that to whomsoever this fortune falls, he shall share it equally with the rest, and reserve no pre-eminence for himself." "Be it so," we both replied, and on those terms we mutually pledged our words. Years rolled on, and I went from Khorásán to Transoxiana, and wandered to Ghazni and Cabul; and when I returned, I was invested with office, and rose to be administrator of affairs during the Sultanate of Sultán Alp Arslan.

'He goes on to state, that years passed by, and both his old schoolfriends found him out, and came and claimed a share in his good fortune, according to the school-day vow. The Vizier was generous and kept his word. Hasan demanded a place in the government, which the Sultán granted at the Vizier's request; but discontented with a gradual rise, he

plunged into the maze of intrigue of an oriental court, and, failing in a base attempt to supplant his benefactor, he was disgraced and fell. After many mishaps and wanderings, Hasan became the head of the Persian sect of the *Ismailians*, — a party of fanatics who had long murmured in obscurity, but rose to an evil eminence under the guidance of his strong and evil will. In A.D. 1090, he seized the castle of Alamút, in the province of Rúdbar, which lies in the mountainous tract south of the Caspian Sea; and it was from this mountain home he obtained that evil celebrity among the Crusaders as the OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAINS, and spread terror through the Mohammedan world; and it is yet disputed whether the word *Assassin*, which they have left in the language of modern Europe as their dark memorial, is derived from the *hashish*, or opiate of hemp-leaves (the Indian *bhang*), with which they maddened themselves to the sullen pitch of oriental desperation. or from the name of the founder of the dynasty, whom we have seen in his quiet collegiate days, at Naishápúr. One of the countless victims of the Assassin's dagger was Nizám-ul-Mulk himself, the old school-boy friend. *

'Omar Khayyám also came to the Vizier to claim his share; but not to ask for title or office. "The greatest boon you can confer on me," he said, "is to let me live in a corner under the shadow of your fortune, to spread wide the advantages of Science, and pray for your long life and prosperity." The Vizier tells us, that, when he found Omar was really sincere in his refusal, he pressed him no further,

* Some of Omar's *Rubáiyát* warn us of the danger of Greatness, the instability of Fortune, and while advocating Charity to all Men, recommending us to be too intimate with none. Attár makes Nizám-ul-Mulk use the very words of his friend Omar [*Rub.* xxviii], 'When Nizám-ul-Mulk was in the Agony (of Death) he said. "Oh God! I am passing away in the hand of the wind."'

but granted him a yearly pension of 1200 *mithkáls* of gold, from the treasury of Naishápúr.

‘At Naishápúr thus lived and died Omar Khayyám, “busied,” adds the Vizier, “in winning knowledge of every kind, and especially in Astronomy, wherein he attained to a very high pre-eminence. Under the Sultanate of Malik Shah, he came to Merv, and obtained great praise for his proficiency in science, and the Sultán showered favours upon him.”

‘When Malik Shah determined to reform the calendar, Omar was one of the eight learned men employed to do it; the result was the *Jaldli* era (so called from *Jaldl-ud-din*, one of the king’s names)—“a computation of time,” says Gibbon, “which surpasses the Julian, and approaches the accuracy of the Gregorian style.” He is also the author of some astronomical tables, entitled *Ziji-Maliksháhi*,’ and the French have lately republished and translated an Arabic Treatise of his on Algebra.

‘His Takhallus or poetical name (Khayyám) signifies a Tentmaker, and he is said to have at one time exercised that trade, perhaps before Nizám-ul-Mulk’s generosity raised him to independence. Many Persian poets similarly derive their names from their occupations; thus we have Attár, “a druggist,” Assár, “an oil presser,” etc. * Omar himself alludes to his name in the following whimsical lines:—

*Khayyám, who stitched the tents of science,
Has fallen in grief’s furnace and been suddenly burned;
The shears of Fate have cut the tent ropes of his life,
And the broker of Hope has sold him for nothing!*

‘We have only one more anecdote to give of his Life, and

* Though all these, like our Smiths, Archers, Millers, Fletchers, etc., may simply retain the Surname of an hereditary calling.

that relates to the close; it is told in the anonymous preface which is sometimes prefixed to his poems; it has been printed in the Persian in the Appendix to Hyde's *Veterum Persarum Religio*, p. 499; and D'Herbelot alludes to it in his *Bibliothèque*, under *Khiām*.—★

“It is written in the chronicles of the ancients that this King of the Wise, Omar Khayyám, died at Naishápúr in the year of the Hegira, 517 (A.D. 1123); in science he was unrivalled,—the very paragon of his age. Khwájah Nizámi of Samarcand, who was one of his pupils, relates the following story: ‘I often used to hold conversations with my teacher, Omar Khayyám, in a garden; and one day he said to me, “My tomb shall be in a spot where the north wind may scatter roses over it.” I wondered at the words he spake, but I knew that his were no idle words. † Years after, when I chanced to revisit Naishápúr, I went to his final resting-place, and lo! it was just outside a garden, and trees

★ *‘Philosophe Musulman qui a vécu en Odeur de Sainteté dans sa Religion, vers la Fin du premier et le Commencement du second Siècle,’* no part of which, except the *Philosophe*, can apply to our Khayyám.

† The Rashness of the Words, according to D'Herbelot, consisted in being so opposed to those in the Koran: ‘No Man knows where he shall die.’—This story of Omar reminds me of another so naturally—and when one remembers how wide of his humble mark the noble sailor aimed—so pathetically told by Captain Cook—not by Doctor Hawkesworth—in his *Second Voyage* (i. 374). When leaving Ulietea, ‘Oreo’s last request was for me to return. When he saw he could not obtain that promise, he asked the name of my *Marai* (burying-place). As strange a question as this was, I hesitated not a moment to tell him “Stepney;” the parish in which I live when in London. I was made to repeat it several times over till they could pronounce it; and then “Stepney Marai no Toote” was echoed through an hundred mouths at once. I afterwards found the same question had been put to Mr. Forster by a man on shore; but he gave a different, and indeed more proper answer, by saying, “No man who used the sea could say where he should be buried.”’

laden with fruit stretched their boughs over the garden wall, and dropped their flowers upon his tomb, so that the stone was hidden under them.'""

Thus far—without fear of Trespass—from the *Calcutta Review*. The writer of it, on reading in India this story of Omar's Grave, was reminded, he says, of Cicero's Account of finding Archimedes' Tomb at Syracuse, buried in grass and weeds. I think Thorwaldsen desired to have roses grow over him; a wish religiously fulfilled for him to the present day, I believe. However, to return to Omar.

Though the Sultán 'shower'd Favours upon hin,' Omar's Epicurean Audacity of Thought and Speech caused him to be regarded askance in his own Time and Country. He is said to have been especially hated and dreaded by the Sufis, whose Practice he ridiculed, and whose Faith amounted to little more than his own, when stript of the Mysticism and formal recognition of Islamism under which Omar would not hide. Their Poets, including Háfiz, who are (with the exception of Firdausi) the most considerable in Persia, borrowed largely, indeed, of Omar's material, but turning it to a mystical Use more convenient to Themselves and the People they addressed; a People quite as quick of Doubt as of Belief; as keen of Bodily Sense as of Intellectual; and delighting in a cloudy composition of both, in which they could float luxuriously between Heaven and Earth, and this World and the Next, on the wings of a poetical expression, that might serve indifferently for either. Omar was too honest of Heart as well as of Head for this. Having failed (however mistakenly) of finding any Providence but Destiny, and any World but This, he set about making the most of it; preferring rather to soothe the Soul through the Senses into Acquiescence with Things as he saw them, than to

perplex it with vain disquietude after what they *might* be. It has been seen, however, that his Worldly Ambition was not exorbitant; and he very likely takes a humorous or perverse pleasure in exalting the gratification of Sense above that of the Intellect, in which he must have taken great delight, although it failed to answer the Questions in which he, in common with all men, was most vitally interested.

For whatever reason, however, Omar, as before said, has never been popular in his own Country, and therefore has been but scantily transmitted abroad. The MSS. of his Poems, mutilated beyond the average Casualties of Oriental Transcription, are so rare in the East as scarce to have reached Westward at all, in spite of all the acquisitions of Arms and Science. There is no copy at the India House, none at the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris. We know but of one in England: No. 140 of the Ouseley MSS. at the Bodleian, written at Shiráz, A.D. 1460. This contains but 158 *Rubáiyát*. One in the Asiatic Society's Library at Calcutta (of which we have a copy), contains (and yet incomplete) 516, though swelled to that by all kinds of Repetition and Corruption. So Von Hammer speaks of *his* Copy as containing about 200, while Dr. Sprenger catalogues the Lucknow MS. at double that number. * The Scribes, too, of the Oxford and Calcutta MSS. seem to do their Work under a sort of Protest; each beginning with a Tetrastich (whether genuine or not), taken out of its alphabetical order; the Oxford with one of Apology; the Calcutta with one of Expostulation, supposed (says a Notice prefixed to the MS.) to have arisen

* 'Since this paper was written' (adds the Reviewer in a note), 'we have met with a Copy of a very rare Edition, printed at Calcutta in 1836. This contains 438 Tetrastichs, with an Appendix containing 54 others not found in some MSS.'

INTRODUCTION

from a Dream, in which Omar's mother asked about his future fate. It may be rendered thus:—

*Oh, Thou who burn'st in Heart for those who burn
In Hell, whose fires thyself shall feed in turn;
How long be crying, 'Mercy on them, God!'
Why, who art Thou to teach, and He to learn?*

The Bodleian Quatrain pleads Pantheism by way of Justification.

*If I myself upon a looser Creed
Have loosely strung the Jewel of Good deed,
Let this one thing for my Atonement plead:
That One for Two I never did mis-read.*

The Reviewer, * to whom I owe the Particulars of Omar's Life, concludes his Review by comparing him with Lucretius, both as to natural Temper and Genius, and as acted upon by the Circumstances in which he lived. Both indeed were men of subtle, strong, and cultivated Intellect, fine Imagination, and Hearts passionate for Truth and Justice; who justly revolted from their Country's false Religion, and false, or foolish, Devotion to it; but who fell short of replacing what they subverted by such better *Hope* as others, with no better Revelation to guide them, had yet made a Law to themselves. Lucretius, indeed, with such material as Epicurus furnished, satisfied himself with the theory of a vast machine fortuitously constructed, and acting by a Law that implied no Legislator; and so composing himself into a Stoical rather than Epicurean severity of Attitude, sat down to contemplate the mechanical Drama of the Universe which he was part Actor in; himself and all about him (as in his own sublime description of the Roman Theatre) discoloured with the lurid reflex of the Curtain

* Professor Cowell.

suspended between the Spectator and the Sun. Omar, more desperate, or more careless of any so complicated System as resulted in nothing but hopeless Necessity, flung his own Genius and Learning with a bitter or humorous jest into the general Ruin which their insufficient glimpses only served to reveal; and, pretending sensual pleasure as the serious purpose of Life, only *diverted* himself with speculative problems of Deity, Destiny, Matter and Spirit, Good and Evil, and other such questions, easier to start than to run down, and the pursuit of which becomes a very weary sport at last!

With regard to the present Translation. The original *Rubáiyát* (as, missing an Arabic Guttural, these *Tetrastichs* are more musically called) are independent Stanzas, consisting each of four Lines of equal, though varied, Prosody; sometimes *all* rhyming, but oftener (as here imitated) the third line a blank. Somewhat as in the Greek Alcaic, where the penultimate line seems to lift and suspend the Wave that falls over in the last. As usual with such kind of Oriental Verse, the *Rubáiyát* follow one another according to Alphabetic Rhyme—a strange succession of Grave and Gay. Those here selected are strung into something of an Eclogue, with perhaps a less than equal proportion of the ‘Drink and make-merry,’ which (genuine or not), recurs over-frequently in the Original. Either way, the Result is sad enough: saddest perhaps when most ostentatiously merry; more apt to move Sorrow than Anger toward the old Tent-maker, who, after vainly endeavouring to unshackle his Steps from Destiny, and to catch some authentic Glimpse of TOMORROW, fell back upon TO-DAY (which has outlasted so many To-morrows!) as the only Ground he had got to stand upon, however momentarily slipping from under his Feet.

INTRODUCTION TO THIRD EDITION

WHILE the second Edition of this version of Omar was preparing, Monsieur Nicolas, French Consul at Resht, published a very careful and very good Edition of the Text, from a lithograph copy at Teheran, comprising 464 *Rubáiyát*, with translation and notes of his own.

Mons. Nicolas, whose Edition has reminded me of several things, and instructed me in others, does not consider Omar to be the material Epicurean that I have literally taken him for, but a Mystic, shadowing the Deity under the figure of Wine, Wine-bearer, &c., as Háfiz is supposed to do; in short, a Sufi poet like Háfiz and the rest.

I cannot see reason to alter my opinion, formed as it was more than a dozen years ago (1868) when Omar was first shown me by one to whom I am indebted for all I know of Oriental, and very much of other, literature. He admired Omar's Genius so much, that he would gladly have adopted any such Interpretation of his meaning as Mons. Nicolas' if he could. * That he could not, appears by his Paper in the *Calcutta Review* already so largely quoted; in which he argues from the Poems themselves, as well as from what records remain of the Poet's Life. And if more were needed

* Perhaps would have edited the Poems himself some years ago. He may now as little approve of my Version on one side, as of Mons. Nicolas' Theory on the other.

to disprove Mons. Nicolas' Theory, there is the Biographical Notice which he himself has drawn up in direct contradiction to the Interpretation of the Poems given in his Notes. (See pp. xiii-xiv of his Preface.) Indeed I hardly knew poor Omar was so far gone till his Apologist informed me. For here we see that whatever were the Wine that Háfiz drank and sang, the veritable Juice of the Grape it was which Omar used, not only when carousing with his friends, but (says Mons. Nicolas) in order to excite himself to that pitch of Devotion which others reached by cries and '*hurlemens*.' And yet, whenever Wine, Winebearer, &c., occur in the text—which is often enough—Mons. Nicolas carefully annotates '*Dieu*,' '*La Divinité*,' &c.: so carefully indeed that one is tempted to think that he was indoctrinated by the Sufi with whom he read the Poems. (Note to Rub. ii. p. 8.) A Persian would naturally wish to vindicate a distinguished Countryman; and a Sufi to enrol him in his own sect, which already comprises all the chief Poets of Persia.

What historical Authority has Mons. Nicolas to show that Omar gave himself up '*avec passion à l'étude de la philosophie des Soufis*?' (Preface, p. xiii.) The Doctrines of Pantheism, Materialism, Necessity, &c., were not peculiar to the Sufi; nor to Lucretius before them; nor to Epicurus before him; probably the very original Irreligion of Thinking men from the first; and very likely to be the spontaneous growth of a Philosopher living in an Age of social and political barbarism, under shadow of one of the Two and Seventy Religions supposed to divide the world. Von Hammer (according to Sprenger's Oriental Catalogue) speaks of Omar as '*a Free-thinker, and a great opponent of Sufism*;' perhaps because, while holding much of their Doctrine, he would not pretend to any inconsistent severity of morals. Sir W. Ouseley has written a note to something

of the same effect on the fly-leaf of the Bodleian MS. And in two *Rubáiyát* of Mons. Nicolas' own Edition Suf and Sufi are both disparagingly named.

No doubt many of these Quatrains seem unaccountable unless mystically interpreted; but many more as unaccountable unless literally. Were the Wine spiritual, for instance, how wash the Body with it when dead? Why make cups of the dead clay to be filled with—'La Divinité'—by some succeeding Mystic? Mons. Nicolas himself is puzzled by some 'bizarres' and 'trop Orientales' allusions and images—'d'une sensualité quelquefois révoltante' indeed—which 'les convenances' do not permit him to translate; but still which the reader cannot but refer to 'La Divinité.' * No doubt also many of the Quatrains in the Teheran, as in the Calcutta, Copies, are spurious; such *Rubáiyát* being the common form of Epigram in Persia. But this, at best, tells as much one way as another; nay, the Sufi, who may be considered the Scholar and Man of Letters in Persia, would be far more likely than the careless Epicure to interpolate what favours his own view of the Poet. I observe that very few of the more mystical Quatrains are in the Bodleian MS., which must be one of the oldest, as dated at Shiraz, A.H. 865, A.D. 1460. And this, I think, especially distinguishes Omar (I cannot help calling him by his—no, not Christian—

* A Note to Quatrain 234 admits that, however clear the mystical meaning of such Images must be to Europeans, they are not quoted without 'rougissant' even by laymen in Persia—'*Quant aux termes de tendresse qui commencent ce quatrain, comme tant d'autres dans ce recueil, nos lecteurs, habitués maintenant à l'étrangeté des expressions si souvent employées par Khéyam pour rendre ses pensées sur l'amour divin, et à la singularité de ses images trop orientales, d'une sensualité quelquefois révoltante, n'auront pas de peine à se persuader qu'il s'agit de la Divinité, bien que cette conviction soit vivement discutée par les moullahs musulmans et même par beaucoup de laïques, qui rougissent véritablement d'une pareille licence de leur compatriote à l'égard des choses spirituelles.*'

familiar name) from all other Persian Poets: That, whereas with them the Poet is lost in his Song, the Man in Allegory and Abstraction; we seem to have the Man—the *Bonhomme*—Omar himself, with all his Humours and Passions, as frankly before us as if we were really at Table with him, after the Wine had gone round. I must say that I, for one, never wholly believed in the Mysticism of Háfiz. It does not appear there was any danger in holding and singing Sufi Pantheism, so long as the Poet made his Salaam to Mohammed at the beginning and end of his Song. Under such conditions Jeláluddín, Jámi, Attár, and others sang; using Wine and Beauty indeed as Images to illustrate, not as a Mask to hide, the Divinity they were celebrating. Perhaps some Allegory less liable to mistake or abuse had been better among so inflammable a People: much more so when, as some think with Háfiz and Omar, the abstract is not only likened to, but identified with, the sensual Image; hazardous, if not to the Devotee himself, yet to his weaker Brethren; and worse for the Profane in proportion as the Devotion of the Initiated grew warmer. And all for what? To be tantalised with Images of sensual enjoyment which must be renounced if one would approximate a God, who according to the Doctrine, is Sensual Matter as well as Spirit, and into whose Universe one expects unconsciously to merge after Death, without hope of any posthumous Beatitude in another world to compensate for all one's self-denial in this. Lucretius' blind Divinity certainly merited, and probably got, as much self-sacrifice as this of the Sufi; and the burden of Omar's Song—if not 'Let us eat'—is assuredly—'Let us drink, for To-morrow we die!' And if Háfiz meant quite otherwise by a similar language, he surely miscalculated when he devoted his Life and Genius to so equivocal a Psalmody as, from his Day to

this, has been said and sung by any rather than Spiritual Worshippers.

However, as there is some traditional presumption, and certainly the opinion of some learned men, in favour of Omar's being a Sufi—and even something of a Saint—those who please may so interpret his Wine and Cup-bearer. On the other hand, as there is far more historical certainty of his being a Philosopher, of scientific Insight and Ability far beyond that of the Age and Country he lived in; of such moderate worldly Ambition as becomes a Philosopher, and such moderate wants as rarely satisfy a Debauchee; other readers may be content to believe with me that, while the Wine Omar celebrates is simply the Juice of the Grape, he bragged more than he drank of it, in very defiance perhaps of that Spiritual Wine which left its Votaries sunk in Hypocrisy or Disgust.

EDWARD FITZGERALD

RUBÁIYÁT OF OMAR KHAYYÁM
The First Edition, 1859

I

AWAKE! for Morning in the Bowl of Night
Has flung the Stone that puts the Stars to Flight:
And Lo! the Hunter of the East has caught
The Sultán's Turret in a Noose of Light.

2

Dreaming when Dawn's Left Hand was in the Sky
I heard a voice within the Tavern cry,
'Awake, my Little ones, and fill the Cup
Before Life's Liquor in its Cup be dry.'

3

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The Tavern shouted—'Open then the Door!
You know how little while we have to stay,
And, once departed, may return no more.'

4

Now the New Year reviving old Desires,
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,
Where the WHITE HAND OF MOSES on the Bough
Puts out, and Jesus from the Ground suspires.

5

Iram indeed is gone with all its Rose,
And Jamshýd's Sev'n-ring'd Cup where no one knows;
But still the Vine her ancient ruby yields,
And still a Garden by the Water blows.

6

And David's Lips are lock't; but in divine
High piping Pehleví, with 'Wine! Wine! Wine!
Red Wine!'—the Nightingale cries to the Rose
That yellow Cheek of her's to'incarnadine.

7

Come, fill the Cup, and in the Fire of Spring
The Winter Garment of Repentance fling:
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To fly—and Lo! the Bird is on the Wing.

8

And look—a thousand Blossoms with the Day
Woke—and a thousand scatter'd into Clay:
And this first Summer Month that brings the Rose
Shall take Jamshýd and Kaikobád away.

9

But come with old Khayyám, and leave the Lot
Of Kaikobád and Kaikhosrú forgot:
Let Rustum lay about him as he will,
Or Hátim Tai cry Supper—heed them not.

I O

With me along some Strip of Herbage strown
 That just divides the desert from the sown,
 Where name of Slave and Sultán scarce is known,
 And pity Sultán Mahmud on his Throne.

I I

Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
 A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou
 Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
 And Wilderness is Paradise enow.

I 2

‘How sweet is mortal Sovranty!’—think some:
 Others—‘How blest the Paradise to come!’
 Ah, take the Cash in hand and waive the Rest;
 Oh, the brave Music of a *distant* Drum!

I 3

Look to the Rose that blows about us—‘Lo,
 Laughing,’ she says, ‘into the World I blow:
 At once the silken Tassel of my Purse
 Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw.’

I 4

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
 Turns Ashes—or it prospers; and anon,
 Like Snow upon the Desert’s dusty Face
 Lightning a little Hour or two—is gone.

I 5

And those who husbanded the Golden Grain,
 And those who flung it to the Winds like Rain,
 Alike to no such aureate Earth are turn'd
 As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

I 6

Think, in this batter'd Caravanseraï
 Whose Doorways are alternate Night and Day,
 How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
 Abode his Hour or two and went his way.

I 7

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
 The Courts where Jamshýd gloried and drank deep:
 And Bahrá'm, that great Hunter—the Wild Ass
 Stamps o'er his Head, and he lies fast asleep.

I 8

I sometimes think that never blows so red
 The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled;
 That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
 Dropt in its Lap from some once lovely Head.

I 9

And this delightful Herb whose tender Green
 Fledges the River's Lip on which we lean—
 Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
 From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

20

Ah, my Belovéd, fill the Cup that clears
 To-DAY of past Regrets and future Fears—
To-morrow?—Why, To-morrow I may be
 Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n Thousand Years.

21

Lo! some we loved, the loveliest and best
 That Time and Fate of all their Vintage prest,
 Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
 And one by one crept silently to Rest.

22

And we, that now make merry in the Room
 They left, and Summer dresses in new Bloom,
 Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of Earth
 Descend, ourselves to make a Couch—for whom?

23

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
 Before we too into the Dust descend;
 Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
 Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and—sans End!

24

Alike for those who for To-DAY prepare,
 And those that after a To-MORROW stare,
 A Muezzin from the Tower of Darkness cries
 'Fools! your Reward is neither Here nor There!'

25

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discuss'd
 Of the Two Worlds so learnedly, are thrust
 Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to Scorn
 Are scatter'd, and their Mouths are stopt with Dust.

26

Oh, come with old Khayyám, and leave the Wise
 To talk; one thing is certain, that Life flies;
 One thing is certain, and the Rest is Lies;
 The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.

27

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
 Doctor and Saint, and heard great Argument
 About it and about; but evermore
 Came out by the same Door as in I went.

28

With them the Seed of Wisdom did I sow,
 And with my own hand labour'd it to grow:
 And this was all the Harvest that I reap'd—
 'I came like Water and like Wind I go.'

29

Into this Universe, and *why* not knowing,
 Nor *whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing:
 And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
 I know not *whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

30

What, without asking, hither hurried *whence?*
 And, without asking, *whither* hurried hence!
 Another and another Cup to drown
 The Memory of this Impertinence!

31

Up from Earth's Centre through the Seventh Gate
 I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sate,
 And many Knots unravel'd by the Road;
 But not the Knot of Human Death and Fate.

32

There was a Door to which I found no Key:
 There was a Veil past which I could not see:
 Some little Talk awhile of ME and THEE
 There seemed—and then no more of THEE and ME.

33

Then to the rolling Heav'n itself I cried,
 Asking, 'What Lamp had Destiny to guide
 Her little Children stumbling in the Dark?'
 And—'A blind Understanding!' Heav'n replied.

34

Then to this earthen Bowl did I adjourn
 My Lip the secret Well of Life to learn:
 And Lip to Lip it murmur'd—'While you live
 Drink!—for once dead you never shall return.'

35

I think the Vessel, that with fugitive
Articulation answer'd, once did live,
And merry-make; and the cold Lip I kiss'd
How many Kisses might it take—and give!

36

For in the Market-place, one Dusk of Day,
I watch'd the Potter thumping his wet Clay:
And with its all obliterated Tongue
It murmur'd—'Gently, Brother, gently, pray!'

37

Ah, fill the Cup:—what boots it to repeat
How Time is slipping underneath our Feet:
Unborn TO-MORROW, and dead YESTERDAY,
Why fret about them if TO-DAY be sweet!

38

One Moment in Annihilation's Waste,
One Moment, of the Well of Life to taste—
The Stars are setting and the Caravan
Starts for the Dawn of Nothing—Oh, make haste!

39

How long, how long, in infinite Pursuit
Of This and That endeavour and dispute?
Better be merry with the fruitful Grape
Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

40

You know, my Friends, how long since in my House
For a new Marriage I did make Carouse:

Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.

41

For 'Is' and 'Is-NOT' though *with* Rule and Line,
And 'UP-AND-DOWN' *without* I could define,

I yet in all I only cared to know,
Was never deep in anything but—Wine.

42

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
Came stealing through the Dusk an Angel Shape
Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and
He bid me taste of it; and 'twas—the Grape!

43

The Grape that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute:

The subtle Alchemist that in a Trice
Life's leaden Metal into Gold transmute.

44

The mighty Mahmud, the victorious Lord,
That all the misbelieving and black Horde
Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
Scatters and slays with his enchanted Sword.

45

But leave the Wise to wrangle, and with me
The Quarrel of the Universe let be:
And, in some corner of the Hubbub coucht,
Make Game of that which makes as much of Thee.

46

For in and out, above, about, below,
'Tis nothing but a Magic Shadow-show,
Play'd in a Box whose Candle is the Sun,
Round which we Phantom Figures come and go.

47

And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
End in the Nothing all Things end in—Yes—
Then fancy while Thou art, Thou art but what
Thou shalt be—Nothing—Thou shalt not be less.

48

While the Rose blows along the River Brink,
With old Khayyám and Ruby Vintage drink:
And when the Angel with his darker Draught
Draws up to Thee—take that, and do not shrink.

49

'Tis all a Chequer-board of Nights and Days
Where Destiny with Men for Pieces plays:
Hither and thither moves, and mates, and slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

50

The Ball no Question makes of Ayes and Noes,
 But Right or Left, as strikes the Player goes;
 And He that toss'd Thee down into the Field,
He knows about it all—*HE* knows—*HE* knows!

51

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ
 Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit
 Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
 Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.

52

And that inverted Bowl we call The Sky,
 Whereunder crawling coop't we live and die,
 Lift not thy hands to *It* for help—for *It*
 Rolls impotently on as Thou or I.

53

With Earth's first Clay They did the Last Man's knead.
 And then of the Last Harvest sow'd the Seed:
 Yea, the first Morning of Creation wrote
 What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

54

I tell Thee this—When, starting from the Goal,
 Over the shoulders of the flaming Foal
 Of Heav'n Parwîn and Mushtara they flung,
 In my predestin'd Plot of Dust and Soul.

55

The Vine had struck a Fibre; which about
If clings my Being—let the Sufi flout;
Of my Base Metal may be filed a Key,
That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

56

And this I know: whether the one True Light,
Kindle to Love, or Wrath—consume me quite,
One Glimpse of It within the Tavern caught
Better than in the Temple lost outright.

57

Oh, Thou, who didst with Pitfall and with Gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestination round
Enmesh me, and impute my Fall to Sin?

58

Oh, Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make,
And who with Eden didst devise the Snake;
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blacken'd, Man's Forgiveness give—and take!

Kuza-Nama

59

Listen again. One Evening at the Close
Of Ramazán, ere the better Moon arose,
In that old Potter's Shop I stood alone
With the clay Population round in Rows.

60

And, strange to tell, among that Earthen Lot
Some could articulate, while others not:

And suddenly one more impatient cried—
'Who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?'

61

Then said another—'Surely not in vain
My Substance from the common Earth was ta'en,
That He who subtly wrought me into Shape
Should stamp me back to common Earth again.'

62

Another said—'Why, ne'er a peevish Boy,
Would break the Bowl from which he drank in Joy;
Shall He that *made* the Vessel in pure Love
And Fancy, in an after Rage destroy!'

63

None answer'd this; but after Silence spake
A Vessel of a more ungainly Make:
'They sneer at me for leaning all awry;
What! did the Hand then of the Potter shake?'

64

Said one—'Folks of a surly Tapster tell,
And daub his Visage with the Smoke of Hell;
They talk of some strict Testing of us—Pish!
He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be well.'

65

Then said another with a long-drawn Sigh,
 'My Clay with long oblivion is gone dry:
 But, fill me with the old familiar Juice,
 Methinks I might recover by-and-bye!'

66

So while the Vessels one by one were speaking,
 One spied the little Crescent all were seeking:
 And then they jogg'd each other, 'Brother! Brother!
 Hark to the Porter's Shoulder-knot a-creaking!'

67

Ah, with the Grape my fading Life provide,
 And wash my Body whence the Life has died,
 And in a Windingsheet of Vine-leaf wrapt,
 So bury me by some sweet Garden-side.

68

That ev'n my buried Ashes such a Snare
 Of Perfume shall fling up into the Air,
 As not a True Believer passing by
 But shall be overtaken unaware.

69

Indeed the Idols I have loved so long
 Have done my Credit in Men's Eye much wrong:
 Have drown'd my Honour in a shallow Cup,
 And sold my Reputation for a Song.

70

Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before
 I swore—but was I sober when I swore?
 And then and then came Spring, and Rose-in-hand
 My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.

71

And much as Wine has play'd the Infidel,
 And robb'd me of my Robe of Honour—well,
 I often wonder what the Vintners buy
 One half so precious as the Goods they sell.

72

Alas, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
 That Youth's sweet-scented Manuscript should close!
 The Nightingale that in the Branches sang,
 Ah, whence, and whither flown again, who knows!

73

Ah Love! could thou and I with Fate conspire
 To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
 Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
 Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

74

Ah, Moon of my Delight who know'st no wane,
 The Moon of Heav'n is rising once again:
 How oft hereafter rising shall she look
 Through this same Garden after me—in vain!

75

And when Thyself with shining Foot shall pass
Among the Guests Star-scatter'd on the Grass,
And in thy joyous Errand reach the Spot
Where I made one—turn down an empty Glass!

'TAMÁM SHUD

RUBÁIYÁT OF OMAR KHAYYÁM

The Second Edition, 1868

I

WAKE! For the Sun behind yon Eastern height
Has chased the Session of the Stars from Night;
And, to the field of Heav'n ascending, strikes
The Sultán's Turret with a Shaft of Light.

2

Before the phantom of False morning died,
Methought a Voice within the Tavern cried,
'When all the Temple is prepared within,
Why lags the drowsy Worshipper outside?'

3

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The Tavern shouted—'Open then the door!
You know how little while we have to stay,
And, once departed, may return no more.'

4

Now the New Year reviving old Desires,
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,
Where the WHITE HAND OF MOSES on the Bough
Puts out, and Jesus from the ground suspires.

5

Iram indeed is gone with all his Rose,
And Jamshýd's Sev'n-ring'd Cup where no one knows;
But still a Ruby gushes from the Vine,
And many a Garden by the Water blows.

6

And David's lips are lockt; but in divine
High-piping Pehleví, with 'Wine! Wine! Wine!
Red Wine!'—the Nightingale cries to the Rose
That sallow cheek of her's to incarnadine.

7

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling:
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing.

8

Whether at Naishápúr or Babylon,
Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,
The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop,
The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

9

Morning a thousand Roses brings, you say;
Yes, but where leaves the Rose of yesterday?
And this first Summer month that brings the Rose
Shall take Jamshýd and Kaikobád away.

I O

Well, let it take them! What have we to do
 With Kaikobád the Great, or Kaikhosrú?
 Let Rustum cry 'To Battle!' as he likes,
 Or Hátim Tai 'To Supper!'—heed not you.

I I

With me along the strip of Herbage strown
 That just divides the desert from the sown,
 Where name of Slave and Sultán is forgot—
 And Peace to Mahmud on his golden Throne!

I 2

Here with a little Bread beneath the Bough,
 A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou
 Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
 Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

I 3

Some for the Glories of This World; and some
 Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come;
 Ah, take the Cash, and let the Promise go,
 Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum!

I 4

Were it not Folly, Spider-like to spin
 The Thread of present Life away to win—
 What? for ourselves, who know not if we shall
 Breathe out the very Breath we now breathe in!

I 5

Look to the blowing Rose about us—'Lo,
Laughing,' she says, 'into the world I blow:
At once the silken tassel of my Purse
Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw.'

I 6

For those who husbanded the Golden grain,
And those who flung it to the winds like Rain,
Alike to no such aureate Earth are turn'd
As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

I 7

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes—or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,
Lighting a little hour or two—was gone.

I 8

Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai
Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
Abode his destin'd Hour, and went his way.

I 9

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshýd gloried and drank deep:
And Bahrám, that great Hunter—the Wild Ass
Stamps o'er his Head, but cannot break his Sleep.

20

The Palace that to Heav'n his pillars threw,
 And Kings the forehead on his threshold drew—
 I saw the solitary Ringdove there,
 And 'Coo, coo, coo,' she cried; 'Coo, coo, coo.'

21

Ah, my Belovéd, fill the Cup that clears
 To-day of past Regrets and future Fears:
To-morrow!—Why, *To-morrow* I may be
 Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n thousand Years

22

For some we loved, the loveliest and the best
 That from his Vintage rolling Time has prest,
 Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
 And one by one crept silently to rest.

23

And we, that now make merry in the Room
 They left, and Summer dresses in new bloom,
 Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of Earth
 Descend, ourselves to make a Couch—for whom?

24

I sometimes think that never blows so red
 The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled:
 That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
 Dropt in her Lap from some once lovely Head.

25

And this delightful Herb whose living Green
Fledges the River's Lip on which we lean—
Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

26

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;
Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and—sans End!

27

Alike for those who for TO-DAY prepare,
And those that after some TO-MORROW stare,
A Muezzin from the Tower of Darkness cries,
'Fools! your Reward is neither Here nor There!'

28

Another Voice, when I am sleeping, cries,
'The Flower should open with the Morning skies.'
And a retreating Whisper, as I wake—
'The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.'

29

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discuss'd
Of the Two Worlds so learnedly, are thrust
Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to Scorn
Are scatter'd, and their Mouths are stopt with Dust.

30

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
 Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
 About it and about: but evermore
 Came out by the same door as in I went.

31

With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,
 And with mine own hand wrought to make it grow:
 And this was all the Harvest that I reap'd—
 'I came like Water, and like Wind I go.'

32

Into this Universe, and *Why* not knowing,
 Nor *Whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing:
 And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
 I know not *Whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

33

What, without asking, hither hurried *Whence*?
 And, without asking, *Whither* hurried hence!
 Ah, contrite Heav'n endowed us with the Vine
 To drug the memory of that insolence!

34

Up from Earth's Centre through the Seventh Gate
 I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sate,
 And many Knots unravel'd by the Road;
 But not the Master-Knot of Human Fate.

35

There was the Door to which I found no Key:
 There was the Veil through which I could not see
 Some little talk awhile of ME and THEE
 There was—and then no more of THEE and ME.

36

Earth could not answer; nor the Seas that mourn
 In flowing Purple, of their Lord forlorn;
 Nor Heav'n, with those eternal Signs reveal'd
 And hidden by the sleeve of Night and Morn.

37

Then of the THEE IN ME who works behind
 The Veil of Universe I cried to find
 A Lamp to guide me through the Darkness; and
 Something then said—'An Understanding blind.'

38

Then to the Lip of this poor earthen Urn
 I lean'd, the secret Well of Life to learn:
 And Lip to Lip it murmur'd--'While you live,
 Drink!—for, once dead, you never shall return.'

39

I think the Vessel, that with fugitive
 Articulation answer'd, once did live,
 And drink; and that impassive Lip I kiss'd,
 How many Kisses might it take—and give!

40

For I remember stopping by the way
 To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay:
 And with its all-obiterated Tongue
 It murmur'd—'Gently, Brother, gently, pray!'

41

For has not such a Story from of Old
 Down Man's successive generations roll'd
 Of such a clod of saturated Earth
 Cast by the Maker into Human mould?

42

And not a drop that from our Cups we throw
 On the parcht herbage but may steal below
 To quench the fire of Anguish in some Eye
 There hidden—far beneath, and long ago.

43

As then the Tulip for her wonted sup
 Of Heavenly Vintage lifts her chalice up,
 Do you, twin offspring of the soil, till Heav'n
 To Earth invert you like an empty Cup.

44

Do you, within your little hour of Grace,
 The waving Cypress in your Arms enlase,
 Before the Mother back into her arms
 Fold, and dissolve you in a last embrace.

45

And if the Cup you drink, the Lip you press,
End in what All begins and ends in—Yes;
Imagine then you *are* what heretofore
You *were*—hereafter you shall not be less.

46

So when at last the Angel of the darker drink
Of Darkness finds you by the river-brink,
And, proffering his Cup, invites your Soul
Forth to your Lips to quaff it—do not shrink.

47

And fear not lest Existence closing *your*
Account, should lose, or know the type no more;
The Eternal Sákí from that Bowl has pour'd
Millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour.

48

When You and I behind the Veil are past,
Oh but the long long while the World shall last,
Which of our Coming and Departure heeds
As much as Ocean of a pebble-cast.

49

One Moment in Annihilation's Waste,
One Moment, of the Well of Life to taste—
The Stars are setting, and the Caravan
Draws to the Dawn of Nothing—Oh make haste!

50

Would you that spangle of Existence spend
 About THE SECRET—quick about it, Friend!
 A Hair, they say, divides the False and True—
 And upon what, prithee, does Life depend?

51

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

52

Whose secret Presence, through Creation's veins
 Running, Quicksilver-like eludes your pains:
 Taking all shapes from Máh to Máhi; and
 They change and perish all—but He remains;

53

A moment guess'd—then back behind the Fold
 Immerst of Darkness round the Drama roll'd
 Which, for the Pastime of Eternity,
 He doth Himself contrive, enact, behold.

54

But if in vain, down on the stubborn floor
 Of Earth, and up to Heav'n's unopening Door,
 You gaze To-day, while You are You—how then
 To-morrow, You when shall be You no more?

55

Oh, plagued no more with Human or Divine,
To-morrow's tangle to itself resign,
And lose your fingers in the tresses of
The Cypress-slender Minister of Wine.

56

Waste not your Hour, nor in the vain pursuit
Of This and That endeavour and dispute;
Better be merry with the fruitful Grape
Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

57

You know, my Friends, how bravely in my House
For a new Marriage I did make Carouse:
Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.

58

For 'IS' and 'IS-NOT' though with Rule and Line,
And 'UP-AND-DOWN' by Logic I define,
Of all that one should care to fathom, I
Was never deep in anything but—Wine.

59

Ah, but my Computations, People say,
Have squared the Year to human compass, eh?
If so, by striking from the Calendar
Unborn To-morrow, and dead Yesterday.

60

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
Came shining through the Dusk an Angel Shape
Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and
He bid me taste of it; and 'twas—the Grape!

61

The Grape that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute:
The sovereign Alchemist that in a trice
Life's leaden metal into Gold transmute:

62

The mighty Mahmud, Allah-breathing Lord,
That all the misbelieving and black Horde
Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
Scatters before him with his whirlwind Sword.

63

Why, be this Juice the growth of God, who dare
Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare?
A Blessing, we should use it, should we not?
And if a Curse—why, then, Who set it there?

64

I must abjure the Balm of Life, I must,
Scared by some After-reckoning ta'en on trust,
Or lured with Hope of some Diviner Drink,
When the frail Cup is crumbled into Dust!

65

If but the Vine and Love-abjuring Band
Are in the Prophet's Paradise to stand,
Alack, I doubt the Prophet's Paradise
Were empty as the hollow of one's Hand.

66

Oh threats of Hell and Hopes of Paradise!
One thing at least is certain—This Life flies:
One thing is certain and the rest is lies;
The Flower that once is blown for ever dies.

67

Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us pass'd the door of Darkness through
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel too.

68

The Revelations of Devout and Learn'd
Who rose before us, and as Prophets burn'd,
Are all but Stories, which, awoke from Sleep
They told their fellows, and to Sleep return'd.

69

Why, if the Soul can fling the Dust aside,
And naked on the Air of Heaven ride,
Is't not a shame—is't not a shame for him
So long in this Clay suburb to abide?

70

But that is but a Tent wherein may rest
A Sultán to the realm of Death address;
The Sultán rises, and the dark Ferrásh
Strikes, and prepares it for another guest.

71

I sent my Soul through the Invisible,
Some letter of that After-life to spell:
And after many days my Soul return'd
And said, 'Behold, Myself am Heav'n and Hell:'

72

Heav'n but the Vision of fulfill'd Desire,
And Hell the Shadow of a Soul on fire,
Cast on the Darkness into which Ourselves,
So late emerg'd from, shall so soon expire.

73

We are no other than a moving row
Of visionary Shapes that come and go
Round with this Sun-illumin'd Lantern held
In Midnight by the Master of the Show;

74

Impotent Pieces of the Game he plays
Upon this Chequer-board of Nights and Days;
Hither and thither moves, and checks, and slays;
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

75

The Ball no Question makes of Ayes and Noes,
But Right or Left as strikes the Player goes;
And He that toss'd you down into the Field,
He knows about it all—*HE* knows—*HE* knows!

76

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

77

For let Philosopher and Doctor preach
Of what they will, and what they will not—each
Is but one Link in an eternal Chain
That none can slip, nor break, nor over-reach.

78

And that inverted Bowl we call The Sky,
Whereunder crawling coop'd we live and die,
Lift not your hands to *It* for help—for *It*
As impotently rolls as you or I.

79

With Earth's first Clay They did the Last Man knead,
And there of the Last Harvest sow'd the Seed;
And the first Morning of Creation wrote
What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

80

Yesterday *This* Day's Madness did prepare;
 To-morrow's Silence, Triumph, or Despair:
 Drink! for know you not whence you came, nor why:
 Drink! for you know not why you go, nor where.

81

I tell you this—When, started from the Goal,
 Over the flaming shoulders of the Foal
 Of Heav'n Parwín and Mushtari they flung,
 In my predestin'd Plot of Dust and Soul

82

The Vine had struck a fibre: which about
 If clings my Being—let the Dervish flout;
 Of my Base metal may be filed a Key,
 That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

83

And this I know: whether the one True Light,
 Kindle to Love, or Wrath-consume me quite,
 One Flash of It within the Tavern caught
 Better than in the Temple lost outright.

84

What! out of senseless Nothing to provoke
 A conscious Something to resent the yoke
 Of unpermitted Pleasure, under pain
 Of Everlasting Penalties, if broke!

85

What! from his helpless Creature be repaid
Pure Gold for what he lent us dross—allay'd—
Sue for a Debt we never did contract,
And cannot answer—Oh the sorry trade!

86

Nay, but, for terror of his wrathful Face,
I swear I will not call Injustice Grace;
Not one Good Fellow of the Tavern but
Would kick so poor a Coward from the place.

87

Oh Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestin'd Evil round
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin?

88

Oh Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make,
And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake:
For all the Sin the Face of wretched Man
Is black with—Man's Forgiveness give—and take!

89

As under cover of departing Day
Slunk hunger-stricken Ramazán away,
Once more within the Potter's house alone
I stood, surrounded by the Shapes of Clay.

90

And once again there gather'd a scarce heard
 Whisper among them; as it were, the stirr'd
 Ashes of some all but extinguisht Tongue,
 Which mine ear kindled into living Word.

91

Said one among them—'Surely not in vain,
 My Substance from the common Earth was ta'en.
 That He who subtly wrought me into Shape
 Should stamp me back to shapeless Earth again?'

92

Another said, 'Why, ne'er a peevish Boy
 Would break the Cup from which he drank in Joy;
 Shall He that of his own free Fancy made
 The Vessel, in an after-rage destroy!'

93

None answer'd this; but after silence spake
 Some Vessel of a more ungainly Make;
 'They sneer at me for leaning all awry;
 What! did the Hand then of the Potter shake?'

94

Thus with the Dead as with the Living, *What?*
 And *Why?* so ready, but the *Wherefor* not,
 One on a sudden peevishly exclaim'd,
 'Which is the Potter, pray, and which the Pot?'

95

Said one—'Folks of a surly Master tell,
 And daub his Visage with the Smoke of Hell;
 They talk of some sharp Trial of us—Pish!
 He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be well.'

96

'Well,' said another, 'Whoso will, let try,
 My Clay with long oblivion is gone dry:
 But, fill me with the old familiar Juice,
 Methinks I might recover by-and-bye!'

97

So while the Vessels one by one were speaking,
 One spied the little Crescent all were seeking:
 And then they jogg'd each other, 'Brother! Brother!
 Now for the Porter's shoulder-knot a-creaking!'

98

Ah, with the Grape my fading Life provide,
 And wash my Body whence the Life has died,
 And lay me, shrouded in the living Leaf,
 By some not unfrequented Garden-side.

99

Whither resorting from the vernal Heat
 Shall Old Acquaintance Old Acquaintance greet,
 Under the Branch that leans above the Wall
 To shed his Blossom over head and feet.

100

Then ev'n my buried Ashes such a snare
 Of Vintage shall fling up into the Air,
 As not a True-believer passing by
 But shall be overtaken unaware.

101

Indeed the Idols I have loved so long
 Have done my credit in Men's eye much wrong:
 Have drown'd my Glory in a shallow Cup,
 And sold my Reputation for a Song.

102

Indeed. indeed, Repentance oft before
 I swore—but was I sober when I swore?
 And then and then came Spring and Rose-in-hand
 My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.

103

And much as Wine has play'd the Infidel,
 And robb'd me of my Robe of Honour—Well,
 I often wonder what the Vintners buy
 One half so precious as the ware they sell.

104

Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
 That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close!
 The Nightingale that in the branches sang,
 Ah whence, and whither flown again, who knows!

105

Would but the Desert of the Fountain yield
 One glimpse—if dimly, yet indeed, reveal'd,
 Toward which the fainting Traveller might spring,
 As springs the trampled herbage of the field!

106

Oh if the World were but to re-create,
 That we might catch ere closed the Book of Fate,
 And make The Writer on a fairer leaf
 Inscribe our names, or quite obliterate!

107

Better, oh better, cancel from the Scroll
 Of Universe one luckless Human Soul,
 Than drop by drop enlarge the Flood that rolls
 Hoarser with Anguish as the Ages roll.

108

Ah Love! could you and I with Fate conspire
 To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire.
 Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
 Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

109

But see! The rising Moon of Heav'n again
 Looks for us, Sweet-heart, through the quivering Plane:
 How oft hereafter rising will she look
 Among those leaves—for one of us in vain!

I IO

And when Yourself with silver Foot shall pass
Among the Guests Star-scatter'd on the Grass,
And in your joyous errand reach the spot
Where I made One—turn down an empty Glass!

TAMÁM

RUBÁIYÁT OF OMAR KHAYYÁM

The Fifth Edition, 1889

1

WAKE! For the Sun, who scatter'd into flight
 The Stars before him from the Field of Night,
 Drives Night along with them from Heav'n, and strikes
 The Sultán's Turret with a Shaft of Light.

2

Before the phantom of False morning died,
 Methought a Voice within the Tavern cried,
 'When all the Temple is prepared within,
 Why nods the drowsy Worshipper outside?'

3

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
 The Tavern shouted—'Open then the Door!
 You know how little while we have to stay,
 And, once departed, may return no more.'

4

Now the New Year reviving old Desires,
 The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,
 Where the WHITE HAND OF MOSES on the Bough
 Puts out, and Jesus from the Ground suspires.

5

Iram indeed is gone with all his Rose,
 And Jamshýd's Sev'n-ring'd Cup where no one knows;
 But still a Ruby kindles in the Vine,
 And many a Garden by the Water blows.

6

And David's Lips are lockt; but in divine
 High-piping Pehleví, with 'Wine! Wine! Wine!
 Red Wine!—the Nightingale cries to the Rose
 That sallow cheek of hers to' incarnadine.

7

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
 Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling:
 The Bird of Time has but a little way
 To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing.

8

Whether at Naishápúr or Babylon,
 Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,
 The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop,
 The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

9

Each Morn a thousand Roses brings, you say;
 Yes, but where leaves the Rose of Yesterday?
 And this first Summer month that brings the Rose
 Shall take Jamshýd and Kaikobád away.

I O

Well, let it take them! What have we to do
 With Kaikobád the Great, or Kaikhosrú?
 Let Zál and Rustum bluster as they will,
 Or Hátim call to Supper—heed not you.

I I

With me along the strip of Herbage strown
 That just divides the desert from the sown,
 Where name of Slave and Sultán is forgot—
 And Peace to Mahmud on his golden Throne!

I 2

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
 A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
 Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
 Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

I 3

Some for the Glories of This World; and some
 Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come;
 Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go,
 Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum!

I 4

Look to the blowing Rose about us—'Lo,
 'Laughing,' she says, 'into the world I blow,
 At once the silken tassel of my Purse
 Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw.'

I 5

And those who husbanded the Golden grain,
 And those who flung it to the winds like Rain,
 Alike to no such aureate Earth are turn'd
 As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

I 6

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
 Turns Ashes—or it prospers; and anon,
 Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,
 Lighting a little hour or two—is gone.

I 7

Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai,
 Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
 How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
 Abode his destined Hour, and went his way.

I 8

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
 The Courts where Jamshýd gloried and drank deep:
 And Bahrám, that great Hunter—the Wild Ass
 Stamps o'er his Head, but cannot break his Sleep.

I 9

I sometimes think that never blows so red
 The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled;
 That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
 Dropt in her Lap from some once lovely Head.

20

And this reviving Herb whose tender Green
 Fledges the River-Lip on which we lean—
 Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
 From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

21

Ah, my Belovéd, fill the Cup that clears
 TO-DAY of past Regrets and future Fears:
To-morrow!—Why, *To-morrow* I may be
 Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n thousand Years.

22

For some we loved, the loveliest and the best
 That from his Vintage rolling Time hath prest,
 Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
 And one by one crept silently to rest.

23

And we, that now make merry in the Room
 They left, and Summer dresses in new bloom,
 Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of Earth
 Descend—ourselves to make a Couch—for whom?

24

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
 Before we too into the Dust descend;
 Dust into Dust, and under Dust to lie,
 Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and—sans End!

25

Alike for those who for TO-DAY prepare,
 And those that after some TO-MORROW stare,
 A Muezzin from the Tower of Darkness cries,
 'Fools! your Reward is neither Here nor There.'

26

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discuss'd
 Of the TWO Worlds so wisely—they are thrust
 Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to Scorn
 Are scatter'd, and their Mouths are stopt with Dust.

27

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
 Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
 About it and about: but evermore
 Came out by the same door where in I went.

28

With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,
 And with mine own hand wrought to make it grow:
 And this was all the Harvest that I reap'd—
 'I came like Water, and like Wind I go.'

29

Into this Universe, and *Why* not knowing
 Nor *Whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing;
 And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
 I know not *Whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

30

What, without asking, hither hurried *Whence?*
 And, without asking, *Whither* hurried hence!
 Oh, many a Cup of this forbidden Wine
 Must drown the memory of that insolence!

31

Up from Earth's Centre through the Seventh Gate
 I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sate,
 And many a Knot unravel'd by the Road;
 But not the Master-knot of Human Fate.

32

There was the Door to which I found no Key;
 There was the Veil through which I might not see:
 Some little talk awhile of ME and THEE
 There was—and then no more of THEE and ME.

33

Earth could not answer; nor the Seas that mourn
 In flowing Purple, of their Lord forlorn;
 Nor rolling Heaven, with all his Signs reveal'd
 And hidden by the sleeve of Night and Morn.

34

Then of the THEE IN ME who works behind
 The Veil, I lifted up my hands to find
 A lamp amid the Darkness; and I heard,
 As from Without—'THE ME WITHIN THEE BLIND!'

35

Then to the Lip of this poor earthen Urn
 I lean'd, the Secret of my Life to learn:
 And Lip to Lip it murmur'd—'While you live,
 Drink!—for, once dead, you never shall return.'

36

I think the Vessel, that the fugitive
 Articulation answer'd, once did live,
 And drink; and Ah! the passive Lip I kiss'd,
 How many Kisses might it take and give!

37

For I remember stopping by the way
 To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay:
 And with its all-obliterated Tongue
 It murmur'd—'Gently, Brother, gently, pray!'

38

And has not such a Story from of Old
 Down Man's successive generations roll'd
 Of such a clod of saturated Earth
 Cast by the Maker into Human mould?

39

And not a drop that from our Cups we throw
 For Earth to drink of, but may steal below
 To quench the fire of Anguish in some Eye
 There hidden—far beneath, and long ago.

40

As then the Tulip for her morning sup
 Of Heav'nly Vintage from the soil looks up,
 Do you devoutly do the like, till Heav'n
 To Earth invert you—like an empty Cup.

41

Perplext no more with Human or Divine,
 To-morrow's tangle to the winds resign,
 And lose your fingers in the tresses of
 The Cypress-slender Minister of Wine.

42

And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
 End in what All begins and ends in—Yes;
 Think then you are TO-DAY what YESTERDAY
 You were—TO-MORROW you shall not be less.

43

So when that Angel of the darker Drink
 At last shall find you by the river-brink,
 And, offering his Cup, invite your Soul
 Forth to your Lips to quaff—you shall not shrink.

44

Why, if the Soul can fling the Dust aside,
 And naked on the Air of Heaven ride,
 Were't not a Shame—were't not a Shame for him
 In this clay carcase crippled to abide?

45

'Tis but a Tent where takes his one day's rest
A Sultán to the realm of Death address;
The Sultán rises, and the dark Ferrásh
Strikes, and prepares it for another Guest.

46

And fear not lest Existence closing your
Account, and mine, should know the like no more;
The Eternal Sáki from that Bowl has pour'd
Millions of Bubbles likes us, and will pour.

47

When you and I behind the Veil are past,
Oh, but the long, long while the World shall last,
Which of our Coming and Departure heeds
As the Sea's self should heed a pebble-cast.

48

A Moment's Halt—a momentary taste
Of BEING from the Well amid the Waste—
And Lo!—the phantom Caravan has reach'd
The NOTHING it set out from—Oh, make haste!

49

Would you that spangle of Existence spend
About THE SECRET—quick about it, Friend!
A Hair perhaps divides the False and True—
And upon what, prithee, may life depend?

50

A Hair perhaps divides the False and True;
 Yes; and a single Alif were the clue—
 Could you but find it—to the Treasure-house,
 And peradventure to THE MASTER too;

51

Whose secret Presence, through Creation's veins
 Running Quicksilver-like eludes your pains;
 Taking all shapes from Máh to Máhi; and
 They change and perish all—but He remains;

52

A moment guess'd—then back behind the Fold
 Immerst of Darkness round the Drama roll'd
 Which, for the Pastime of Eternity,
 He doth Himself contrive, enact, behold.

53

But if in vain, down on the stubborn floor
 Of Earth, and up to Heav'n's unopening Door,
 You gaze TO-DAY, while You are You—how then
 TO-MORROW, You when shall be You no more?

54

Waste not your Hour, nor in the vain pursuit
 Of This and That endeavour and dispute;
 Better be jocund with the fruitful Grape
 Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

55

You know, my Friends, with what a brave Carouse
I made a Second Marriage in my house;
Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.

56

For 'IS' and 'IS-NOT' though with Rule and Line
And 'UP-AND-DOWN' by Logic I define,
Of all that one should care to fathom, I
Was never deep in anything but—Wine.

57

Ah, but my Computations, People say,
Reduced the Year to better reckoning?—Nay,
'Twas only striking from the Calendar
Unborn To-morrow, and dead Yesterday.

58

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
Came shining through the Dusk an Angel Shape
Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and
He bid me taste of it; and 'twas—the Grape!

59

The Grape that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute:
The sovereign Alchemist that in a trice
Life's leaden metal into Gold transmute:

60

The mighty Mahmud, Allah-breathing Lord,
That all the misbelieving and black Horde
Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
Scatters before him with his whirlwind Sword.

61

Why, be this Juice the growth of God, who dare
Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare?
A Blessing, we should use it, should we not?
And if a Curse—why, then, Who set it there?

62

I must abjure the Balm of Life, I must,
Scared by some After-reckoning ta'en on trust,
Or lured with Hope of some Diviner Drink,
To fill the Cup—when crumbled into dust!

63

Oh threats of Hell and Hopes of Paradise!
One thing at least is certain—*This* life flies;
One thing is certain and the rest is Lies;
The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.

64

Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us pass'd the door of Darkness through,
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel too.

65

The Revelations of Devout and Learn'd
Who rose before us, and as Prophets burn'd,
Are all but Stories, which, awoke from Sleep
They told their comrades, and to Sleep return'd.

66

I sent my Soul through the Invisible,
Some Letter of that After-life to spell:
And by and by my Soul return'd to me,
And answer'd 'I Myself am Heav'n and Hell:'

67

Heav'n but the Vision of fulfill'd Desire,
And Hell the Shadow from a Soul on fire,
Cast on the Darkness into which Ourselves,
So late emerged from, shall so soon expire.

68

We are no other than a moving row
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go
Round with the Sun-illuminated Lantern held
In Midnight by the Master of the Show;

69

But helpless Pieces of the Game He plays
Upon this Chequer-board of Nights and Days;
Hither and thither moves, and checks, and slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

70

The Ball no question makes of Ayes and Noes,
 But Here or There as strikes the Player goes;
 And He that toss'd you down into the Field,
He knows about it all—*HE* knows—*HE* knows!

71

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
 Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
 Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
 Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

72

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,
 Whereunder crawling coop'd we live and die,
 Lift not your hands to *It* for help—for *It*
 As impotently moves as you or I.

73

With Earth's first Clay They did the Last Man knead,
 And there of the Last Harvest sow'd the Seed:
 And the first Morning of Creation wrote
 What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

74

YESTERDAY *This* Day's Madness did prepare;
 TO-MORROW's Silence, Triumph, or Despair:
 Drink! for you know not whence you came, nor why:
 Drink! for you know not why you go, nor where.

75

I tell you this—When, started from the Goal,
Over the flaming shoulders of the Foal
Of Heav'n Parwín and Mushtari they flung,
In my predestined Plot of Dust and Soul

76

The Vine has struck a fibre: which about
If clings my Being—let the Dervish flout;
Of my Base metal may be filed a Key,
That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

77

And this I know: whether the one True Light
Kindle to Love, or Wrath-consume me quite,
One Flash of It within the Tavern caught
Better than in the Temple lost outright.

78

What! out of senseless Nothing to provoke
A conscious Something to resent the yoke
Of unpermitted Pleasure, under pain
Of Everlasting Penalties, if broke!

79

What! from his helpless Creature be repaid
Pure Gold for what he lent him dross-allay'd—
Sue for a Debt he never did contract,
And cannot answer—Oh the sorry trade!

80

Oh Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestined Evil round
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin!

81

Oh Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make,
And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake:
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blacken'd—Man's forgiveness give—and take!

82

As under cover of departing Day
Slunk hunger-stricken Ramazán away,
Once more within the Potter's house alone
I stood, surrounded by the Shapes of Clay.

83

Shapes of all Sorts and Sizes, great and small,
That stood along the floor and by the wall;
And some loquacious Vessels were; and some
Listen'd perhaps, but never talk'd at all.

84

Said one among them—'Surely not in vain
My substance of the common Earth was ta'en
And to this Figure moulded, to be broke,
Or trampled back to shapeless Earth again.'

85

Then said a Second—‘Ne’er a peevish Boy
 Would break the Bowl from which he drank in joy;
 And he that with his hand the Vessel make
 Will surely not in after Wrath destroy.’

86

After a momentary silence spake
 Some Vessel of a more ungainly Make;
 ‘They sneer at me for leaning all awry:
 What! did the Hand then of the Potter shake?’

87

Whereat some one of the loquacious Lot—
 I think a Sufi pipkin—waxing hot—
 ‘All this of Pot and Potter—Tell me, then,
 Who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?’

88

‘Why,’ said another, ‘Some there are who tell
 Of one who threatens he will toss to Hell
 The luckless Pots he marr’d in making—Pish!
 He’s a Good Fellow, and ’twill all be well.’

89

‘Well,’ murmur’d one, ‘Let whoso make or buy,
 My Clay with long Oblivion is gone dry:
 But fill me with the old familiar Juice,
 Methinks I might recover by and by.’

90

So while the Vessels one by one were speaking,
 The little Moon look'd in that all were seeking:
 And then they jogg'd each other, 'Brother! Brother!
 Now for the Porter's shoulder-knot a-creaking!'

91

Ah, with the Grape my fading life provide,
 And wash the Body whence the Life has died.
 And lay me, shrouded in the living Leaf,
 By some not unfrequented Garden-side.

92

That ev'n my buried Ashes such a snare
 Of Vintage shall fling up into the Air
 As not a True-believer passing by
 But shall be overtaken unaware.

93

Indeed the Idols I have loved so long
 Have done my credit in this World much wrong:
 Have drown'd my Glory in a shallow Cup,
 And sold my Reputation for a Song.

94

Indeed, Indeed, Repentance oft before
 I swore—but was I sober when I swore?
 And then and then came Spring, and Rose-in-hand
 My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.

95

And much as Wine has play'd the Infidel,
 And robb'd me of my Robe of Honour—Well,
 I wonder often what the Vintners buy
 One half so precious as the stuff they sell.

96

Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
 That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close!
 The Nightingale that in the branches sang,
 Ah whence, and whither flown again, who knows!

97

Would but the Desert of the Fountain yield
 One glimpse—if dimly, yet indeed, reveal'd,
 To which the fainting Traveller might spring,
 As springs the trampled herbage of the field!

98

Would but some wingéd Angel ere too late
 Arrest the yet unfolded Roll of Fate,
 And make the stern Recorder otherwise
 Enregister, or quite obliterate!

99

Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire
 To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
 Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
 Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

100

Yon rising Moon that looks for us again—
 How oft hereafter will she wax and wane;
 How oft hereafter rising look for us
 Through this same Garden—and for *one* in vain!

101

And when like her, oh Sáki, you shall pass
 Among the Guests Star-scatter'd on the Grass,
 And in your joyous errand reach the spot
 Where I made One—turn down an empty Glass!

TAMÁM

NOTE BY W. ALDIS WRIGHT

(Added to the Fifth Edition)

It must be admitted that FitzGerald took great liberties with the original in his version of Omar Khayyám. The first stanza is entirely his own, and in stanza 33 of the fourth edition (36 in the second) he has introduced two lines from Attár (see Letters 1,320). In stanza 81 (fourth edition), writes Professor Cowell, "There is no original for the line about the snake: I have looked for it in vain in Nicholas; but I have always supposed that the last line is FitzGerald's mistaken version of Quatr. 236 in Nicholas's ed. which runs thus:

*O thou who knowest the secrets of every one's mind,
Who graspest every one's hand in the hour of weakness,
O God, give me repentance and accept my excuses,
O thou who givest repentance and acceptest the excuses of every one.*

FitzGerald mistook the meaning of *giving* and *accepting* as used here, and so invented his last line out of his own mistake. I wrote to him about it when I was in Calcutta; but he never cared to alter it.'

GLOSSARY

- ALIF [*a'-lif*] The first letter in the Persian alphabet.
- ALLAH [*al'-lā*] Arabic name for God. The Absolute.
- AMIR [*a-meer'*] Prince.
- ASSÁR [*as'-sār*] Oil pressers.
- ATTÁR [*at'-tār*] Druggist.
- ATTÁR The persian poet Farrîd-uddîn Attâr, author of *The Mantiq al-Tayr*, i.e., Discourse of the Birds.
- BAHRÁM GUR [*bah'-rām goor*] Bahram of the Wild Ass, Persian king and hunter.
- CARAVANSERAI [*kar-a-van'-se-ray*] Inn where caravans rest at night.
- DANAD He knows, third person singular of *dân*, to know.
- FANUSI KHIYAL [*fā-noo'-see khee'-yal*] Magic lantern.
- FERRÁSH [*fer-rāsh'*] Servant, tent-pitcher.
- HÁFIZ [*hā-fiz*] Persian lyric poet (d. 1389).
- HÁTIM TAI [*hā'-tim tye*] A pre-Islamic Arab famed for his generosity.
- HIJRA, more commonly HEGIRA [*he-jye-ra*] The migration of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina in A.D. 622 from which Muslims date their era.
- IMÁM [*i-mām'*] A Muhammadan leader of prayer.
- IRAM [*ee'-ram*] A fabulous garden supposed to have been planted in Arabia by Shaddád bin Ad.
- JÁMI [*jā'-mi*] Persian poet (d. 1492).
- JAMSHÝD [*Jam'-sheed*] Mythical Persian king. According to Firdausî he reigned seven hundred years. His palace was at Persepolis.
- JELÁLUDDÍN [*je-lāl'-ud-deen*] Malikshah. A Saljuk sultán (1072-1092)

RUBÁIYÁT OF OMAR KHAYYÁM

KAIKHOSRÚ [*Kye'-khos-roo*] Mythical Persian king.

KAIKOBÁD [*kýe'-ko-bād*] Mythical king.

KHORÁSÁN [*kho-rā-sān'*] The largest of the Persian provinces where Omar was born.

KUZA-NAMA [*koo'-za nā'-ma*] Book of pots, title given to stanzas 59-66 in first edition of the *Rubáiyát*.

MÁH Moon.

MÁHI Fish.

MAHMUD [*mah'-mood*] King of Ghazna, b. 969, d. 1030.

MIHRÁB [*mee-rāb*] The niche in a mosque which indicates the direction of Mecca towards which the Muslim worshipper turns in prayer.

MUEZZIN [*moo-ez'-zin*] Muhammadan crier of the hour of prayer.

MUSHTARÍ [*mush'-ta-ree*] The planet Jupiter.

NAISHÁPÚR [*nay'-shā-poor*] Nishapur, the city of Khorásán, Iran, where Omar was born.

NOW ROOZ New Year's Day.

NIZÁM UL MULK [*nee-zām' ool moolk'*] Vizier to Alp Arslan the Younger.

OMAR KHAYYÁM [*o'-mar khye-yahm'*] Persian philosopher, astronomer and poet, author of *The Rubáiyát*, who died in 1132.

PARWÍN [*par'-ween*] The constellation of the Pleiades.

PEHLEVÍ [*peh'-le-vee*] The principal language of the Persians from the third to the ninth centuries A.D.

RAMAZÁN [*ram-a-zān*] Ramadan, the ninth month of the Muhammadan year, devoted to strict fasting.

RUBÁIYÁT [*roo'-bye-yāt*] Plural of the Arabic word *rubáiyáh*, a quatrain or stanza of four lines.

RUSTUM [*rus'-tum*] A mythical Persian hero, son of Zāl and father of Sohráb in the *Shah-nama*.

SÁKÍ [*sā-kee*] Cupbearer.

SHAH-NAMA *The Book of Kings* by Abul Kasim Mansur, better known as Firdausi.

SHEIKH [*shaykh*] An Arabian chief; literally, old man.

SUBHÍ KAZIB [*soob'-hee kā'-zib*] False dawn.

SUBHÍ SADIK [*soob'-hee sā'-dik*] True dawn.

GLOSSARY

SUFI [*soo'-fee*] Muhammadan mystic. The elaborate Sufi symbolism was much used by the poets.

SULTÁN [*sul-tān*] King.

TAKHALLUS [*ta-khal-lus*] Pen-name used by Persian poets; for example, Abul Kasim Mansur, author of the *Shah-nama*, called himself Firdausî from Firdaus which means *Paradise*. Omar called himself Khayyám, i.e., Tent-maker.

TAMÁM [*ta-mām*] The end.

TAMÁM SHUD [*ta-mām' shood*] The very end.

VIZIER [*vi-zeer'*] A minister or counsellor of state.

ZÁL [*zāl*] The father of Rustum.