



PEARLS FROM THE
OCEAN UNSEEN

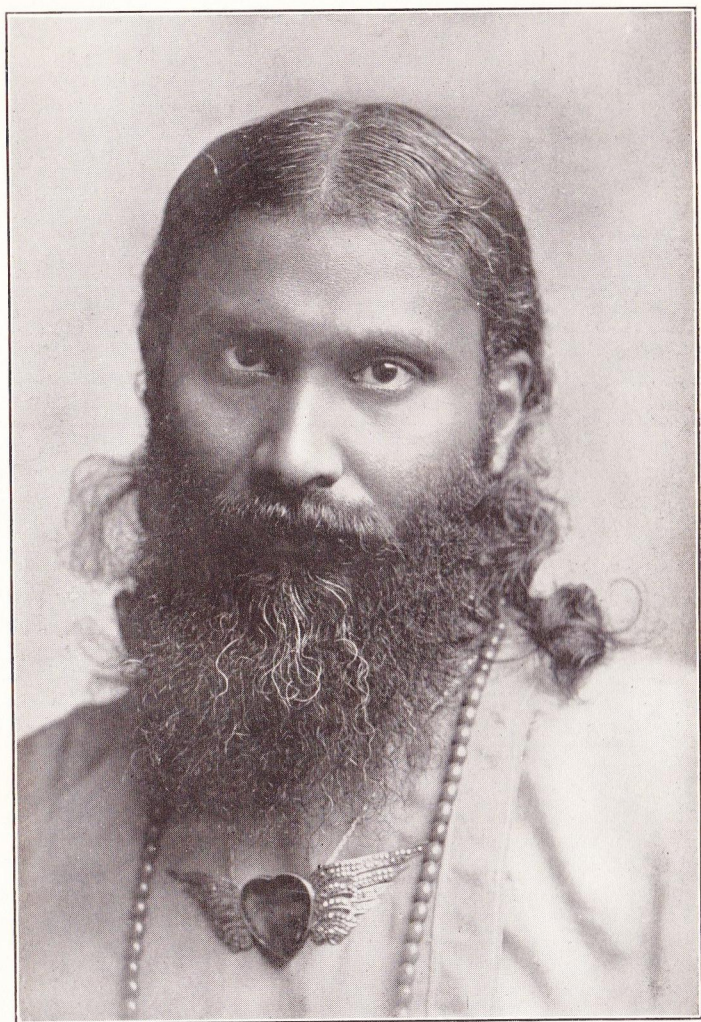
("WORD OF INAYAT" SERIES)

ZOHRA MARY WILLIAMS



Sufi Movement International
Moscow Sufi Center
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PEARLS FROM THE OCEAN UNSEEN



INAYAT KHAN.

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(“WORD OF INAYAT” SERIES)

BY
ZOHRA MARY WILLIAMS

SUFISM IS THE RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY OF LOVE
HARMONY AND BEAUTY

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PREFACE

ON the shore of the ocean are pebbles, but in its depths are found pearls; so it is with human life; he who dwells on the surface has but imaginations, but he who dives deep in the ocean of the self within, which is unseen and unlimited, will bring forth pearl-like inspirations. The evidence of this I have found in the words of Pir-o-Murshid, Inayat Khan, under whose spiritual guidance it has been my life's privilege to be. There is a saying in the East that you must share all your treasure with others, so I have tried in my small way to thread together these thought pearls that the Murshid has given in his addresses at the Khankah on Sunday mornings, and offer this necklace to truth-seeking souls as my most humble offering.

ZOHRA MARY WILLIAMS

April, 1919

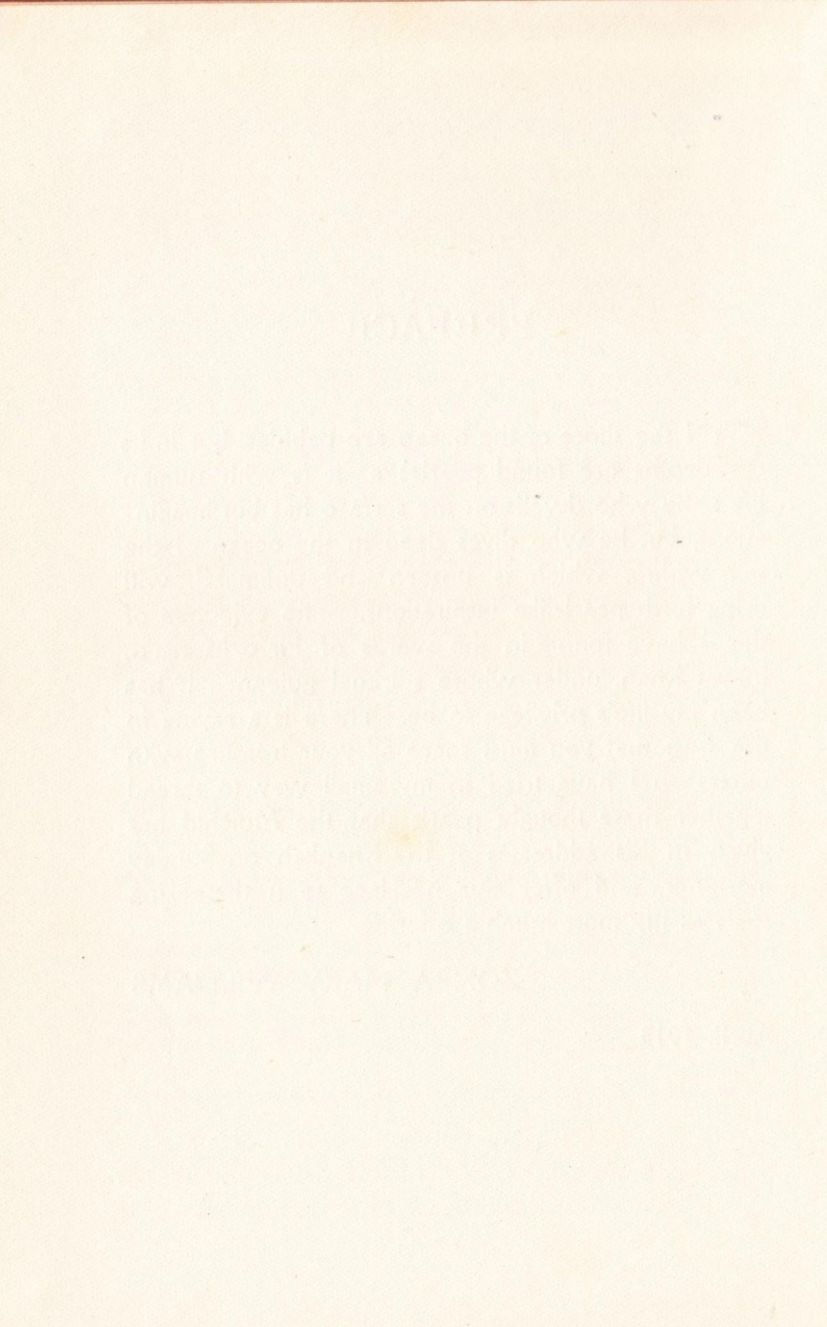
PEARLS FROM THE OCEAN UNSEEN

SUFISM

SUFISM is not a religion, but may be called a super religion, for it is beyond the limitations of faiths and beliefs which make the diversity of religions in the world.

Sufism, in short, is a change of outlook on life. It is as viewing from an aeroplane a town, the streets of which one has known and walked through, and yet one has never before seen the whole town in a glance.

The Sufi's idea is to view life by raising himself beyond it. If a man be in pain, how can he relieve the pain in another? If a person be already burdened with a load, how can he take on another person's burden? If a person be quarrelsome himself, how can he bring peace between others who are fighting? Therefore, it is considered necessary by a Sufi to live in the world, and at the same time not to be of the world. When the Yogi lives the life of an adept in the forest, or in the cave of a mountain, the Sufi lives it in the world. For he considers to awaken one's heart to human sympathy, one must experience oneself the struggles and responsibilities of life in the world, and realize that man is not for himself alone, but that his greatest joy must be to share every benefit and bliss he has in life with others.



This process of viewing life doubly from below and from above makes his sight keen. He not only knows the law of nature, known to all, but he understands the inner law which is working behind all, which gives him an insight into things and awakens his sympathy for others.

The Sufi's God is the only Being that exists. His teacher is the spirit of inner guidance; his holy book is the manuscript of nature, his community is the whole of humanity. His religion is Love. There is no God of any people who is not his God, no spiritual teacher of any creed who is not his teacher. There is no sacred scripture that he does not accept, since he is the worshipper of light and the follower of love, and yet he is free from all the world's distinctions and differences.

The diversity of names of the universe is a veil of illusion to him, which covers Unity, the one life—One only lives, and all manifestations are to him the Phenomenon of that one life. All things which are born, made and formed are as bubbles in life's ocean. He, instead of looking at their limitations, sees in them the unlimited life.

The Sufi's Allah is his Divine Ideal to whom he attributes all that is good and beautiful in its perfection, and he himself stands before Him in humility realizing his imperfection, being a Soul, the free farer of the heavens, now captive on earth in the physical body. His aim in life is to release the captive soul from the bondage of limitations which he accomplishes by the repetition of the Sacred names of God, and by a constant thought of his Divine Ideal, and an ever-increasing fondness for the Divine Beloved until the Beloved God with

His perfection becomes manifest to his vision, and his imperfect self vanishes from his sight.

This he calls "Fana"—the merging in the Ideal. In order to attain the final goal he gradually raises his ideal, first to "Fana-fi-Shaikh," the ideal seen in a mortal walking on earth, and he drills himself as a soldier before battle in devotion to his ideal.

Then comes "Fana-fi-Rassul," when he sees his ideal in Spirit, and pictures Him in all sublimity, and fashions Him with beautiful qualities which he wishes to obtain himself.

Then he raises it to "Fana-fi-Allah," the love and devotion for that ideal who is beyond qualities, and in whom is the perfection of all qualities.

The Sufi knows that progress in every direction in life depends upon the ideal. As high as is the ideal of a person, so high he rises in life. Then he sees in the end that each ideal was made by himself; he is the creator of every ideal that he desired for his high attainment.

But the ideal itself is a limitation of the perfect Being, because there is You and Me in it. Then the breaking of the ideal comes as the final attainment when the ego realizes Humamanam, "I am All."

THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

THERE are two classes of people in the world, the spectators of life and the students of life. The former class may be compared to those people who go to the theatre and see acted either comedy or tragedy, and are moved by it to laughter or tears.

The latter may be compared to those who go up in an aeroplane and view at a glance a whole city where hitherto they had only seen one street at a time. The students of life understand the reason of the comedy and tragedy, while the spectators of life get only a passing impression of them.

About this the Koran says : " Thy sight shall be made keen." When this happens the spectator of life becomes the student of life. We sometimes ask ourselves, " What is the purpose of life? Is it to eat, drink, and to make merry?" Surely not. The animals do this, and man is a higher creation than the animals. Is life's purpose then to become an angelic being? This likewise cannot be the case, for the angels were created before man, and are near to God, and continually praise Him.

Man must be created therefore for something other than either the animals or the angels; for if man by reason of his piety became like unto an angel, he would not have fulfilled the purpose for which he was created. Man is created that he may awaken within himself humanity, sympathy, brotherhood, love and kindness for his fellow man.

He may think that he is kind and sympathetic, but in thinking so he makes the greatest possible mistake, for kindness is comparative. This may be illustrated by a story that is told in India of an Afghan soldier, who was once travelling with a Brahmin. The Brahmin, who was a mild and harmless man, careful not to injure the smallest of God's creation, was repeating to himself the word " Deah," which means " kindness." The Afghan, who was a warrior, and understood only the rough side of life, asked him what the word meant. The

Brahmin explained that the word was the same as "Rahm" in his language. "Ah," he exclaimed, "I understand very well now what it means. I remember I was once kind in my life, for on the field of battle I saw a wounded man writhing in agony, and I was touched, and I put my dagger through him and ended his suffering."

The claim to be kind and sympathetic is like a drop of water saying, "I am water," but on seeing the ocean realizes its nothingness. In the same way, when man has looked on perfection, he realizes his shortcomings. It is then that the veil is raised from his eyes and his sight becomes keen.

He then asks himself, "What can I do that I may awaken this love and sympathy in my heart?"

The Sufi begins by realizing that he is dead in blindness, and he understands that all goodness as well as all that is bad comes from within. Riches and power may vanish because they are outside of us, but only that which is within can we call our own. In order to awaken love and sympathy in our hearts, sacrifices must be made. We must forget our own troubles in order to sympathize with the troubles of others.

To relieve the hunger of others we must forget our own hunger. Everybody is working for selfish ends, not caring about others, and this alone has brought about the misery in the world to-day. When the world is evolving from imperfection towards perfection, it needs all love and sympathy; great tenderness, and watchfulness is required of each one of us. The heart of every man, both good and bad, is the abode of God, and care should be taken never to wound anybody by word or act.

We are only here in this world for a short time; many have been here before, and have passed on, and it is for us to see that we leave behind an impression for good.

“BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT”

THE words “Poor in Spirit” are an unsatisfactory translation, and do not convey the real meaning of the text. There are certain words in the original which cannot be accurately translated. In Sufic terms this poorness of spirit is called “Halim Tuba,” and means mild spirited. The more true meaning of the words is, “Blessed are the mild in ego,” and this is the teaching of Jesus throughout. He Himself is spoken of in the Bible as “The Lamb of God,” conveying the meaning of the mild in ego, like a lamb.

The ego is seen in the animal creation, but much more strongly in the carnivorous than in the herbivorous animals. It is very strong in the lion, and in the dog who will not suffer the presence of another dog when he is eating a bone. Elephants, on the contrary, the largest of all animals, are docile and harmless, and obey the commands of man. They live together in herds, and seldom fight. The same is the case with horses and sheep.

When we consider the ego in connection with the whole consciousness, we first look at the earth and rocks, the lowest form of life, and find how stiff and hard, how unmovable and unbendable

they are. When we come to the water element, we find that it is pliable, and can be poured from one vessel to another. The course of a river or a stream may be diverted and made to go in another direction. It is poorer in spirit than the earth, for it is a higher element. A more exalted state of consciousness belongs to the poor in spirit, the pliable and the serviceable, than to the stiff and set. When we come to the fire element, we find that it is still more pliable. It can be taken from the rock, and from the atmosphere, and it is more serviceable and more pliant. Air is still more pliable and is everywhere, and man cannot live without it. Ether is the highest element, and is nearest to us, for it surrounds us, and is within us.

When we come to consider we frequently find that we say, "I dislike him," "I wish to avoid her," but if we examine carefully we find that it is the same element in all that we dislike, *i.e.*, the ego. We then turn to ourselves to see if we have it in us, and we find it there. We should forget it, therefore, in all others, and first turn our attention to crushing it within ourselves; we should determine to have our house clean even if other people neglect theirs. We should be careful to take away from ourselves any thorns that prick us in the personality of others. There is a verse in the Koran which says, "Arise in the midst of the night, and commune with thy God, thy ego will be crushed, and things will be revealed to thee thou didst not know before, and thy path in life will be made smooth." This is not only a command to arise in the night and pray, but it also means that by rising in the night we crush the ego, for the ego demands

its rest and comfort, and when denied, is crushed. The mystics fast for the same reason.

The Sufis base the whole of their teaching on the crushing of the ego which they term "Nufs Kushi," for therein lies all magnetism and power. Jesus Christ meant this power of magnetism when He told His disciples that they would become the "Fishers of Men." This can be acquired by developing the personality by poorness of spirit.

"BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN"

THE idea of mourning for the most part is distasteful to the world in general. People say, "Let us enjoy ourselves and be happy; there is plenty of sorrow in the world without choosing to mourn," and they strive after happiness in whatever way they can. But these passing and momentary joys do not give a lasting happiness, and the people who pursue them are either asleep or dead. The soul's true happiness lies in experiencing the inner joy, and it will never be fully satisfied with outer seeming pleasures. Its connection is with God, and nothing short of perfection will ever satisfy it. The purpose of life is to become aware of our imperfections, and to mourn for them. The whole universe in miniature is within man, and as the earth is composed of land and water, so the mind of man is like land and water, the water under the land, and the land above the water. The land represents the thoughts and imaginations, while the water represents the feelings; and just as the

water rises and falls, so it is with the emotions and feelings of man. The people who only know the light side of life, and who are afraid to have their feelings touched, represent the land through which the water has never pierced. If one wishes to see a foreign country, the water has to be crossed, and so it is with those who wish to fare forth to the world unseen; they have to cross the water of feeling, and the land needs to be pierced in order that the waters may rise. There is a picture of Shiva, with the sacred river flowing out of his head, showing that man becomes Shiva-like when his thoughts come, not only from the head, but from the heart also. It is the thoughts that spring from the depths of the heart which become inspirations and revelations, and these come from the hearts of the awakened souls, called by the Sufis, "Sahib-e-dil." The bringers of joy are the children of sorrow. Every blow we get in life pierces through the heart, and awakens our feelings to sympathize with others, and every swing of comfort lulls us to sleep, and we become unaware of all. This proves the truth of these words, "Blessed are those who mourn."

Thought is the more solid form of feeling, and needs to be melted in order to become water. All water is the same, but when it is bitter or sweet to the taste it is because some element of the earth has become mixed with it, and so it is with the emotions in the water of feeling which have come in contact with things of the earth.

There are two classes of people in the world, those who like comedy and those who like tragedy. Those who like tragedy are the wise and thought-

ful, not because they like what is tragic, but because they experience life through the pain of tragedy, and this experience they want to keep at the cost of pain.

Everybody in life has an ideal, and that ideal is the religion of his soul, and coming short of that ideal is what we term sin. The thoughtful and serious-minded man repents in tears for his shortcomings, and thus proves himself to be alive, while the shallow man is angry at his fall, and is ready to blame those who seem to him to have caused it. He apparently is dead. This shows that it is blessed to mourn over our imperfections, and by so doing we are striving after perfection, and thus fulfilling the command of Christ, "Be ye perfect even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect."

"REPENT YE, FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND"

THESE words were in the first place spoken by John the Baptist in reference to the coming of Jesus Christ. But apart from this there is a spiritual meaning in the words, "Kingdom of Heaven."

All things that belong to any person constitute his kingdom, be they great riches and power, or petty possessions.

The Kingdom of Heaven means the perfect possession of anything, when the thing possessed is in itself sufficient. There was once a well-known Dervish in Gwalliar, Mohamed Ghows, who sat in

the jungle, unclothed, and only ate when food was brought to him. He was poverty stricken in the eyes of the world, but was respected by all. Evil days came on Gwalliar. The State was threatened by a powerful enemy, with an army twice the size of that belonging to the ruler who, in his distress, sought Mohamed Ghows. The sage at first asked to be left in peace, but his help being further entreated by the Chief of the State, he at last said, "Show me the army that is threatening you." They took him outside of the city and showed him the vast host that was coming on.

Mohamed Ghows waved his hand, repeating the word "Maktul."* As he did so the army of the Maharajah of Gwalliar appeared immense to the oncoming army, which in fear turned and fled. This Sufi saint was the possessor of the Kingdom of Heaven. His tomb is now in a palace, and the kings of the earth come and bow before it.

The Kingdom of Heaven is in the hearts of those who realize God. This is recognized in the East, and great respect and regard is always shown to the holy ones.

Sufi Surmad, a great saint who was absorbed in the vision of the One, lived in the time of Aurungzebe, the great Mogul Emperor. Aurungzebe demanded that Sufi Surmad should come to the Mosque. On refusing to do so, he was beheaded at the command of the Emperor. From that time dates the downfall of the Moguls. This story shows that the possessor of the Kingdom of Heaven has the power even when dead to overthrow the kingdoms of the earth.

* "Maktul" = Be destroyed.

We see this same truth again in the story of Krishna and Arjuna. Arjuna and his five brothers had to fight alone against a mighty host. The prince sought the god, and wanted to renounce the kingdom. But Krishna said, "Nay, thou must first win back what thou hast lost, and then come to me."

The story goes on to tell how Krishna himself drove the chariot, and the enemies of Arjuna were defeated, for the possessor of the Kingdom of Heaven was with Arjuna.

Speaking from a metaphysical point of view, the "Kingdom of Heaven" may be attained by the way of repentance. If we have offended a friend, and he turns away from us, and we in fullness of heart ask forgiveness, his heart will melt towards us. If, on the other hand, we close our heart, it becomes frozen. Repenting and asking for pardon, not only melts the heart of those we have offended, but of those also of the world unseen.

Scientifically speaking, these words can also be explained. Warmth melts, while cold freezes. Drops of water fallen on a warm place and on a cold place are affected differently. The drop in the warm sphere spreads and becomes larger, covers a larger space, whereas a drop in the cold place freezes, becomes limited. Repentance has the effect of a drop spread in the warm sphere. It causes the heart to expand and become universal, while the hardening of the heart brings limitation.

The bubble does not last long, it soon breaks, but with its break it joins the mighty ocean. So with us. When by warmth of heart we can break

our limited self, we merge in the One, the unlimited. When our limited kingdom is lost from our sight, we inherit the Kingdom of God.

CAUSE

THERE is an innate desire in every human being for knowledge. The child wants to know the cause of everything, and asks countless questions. The desire for knowledge, if our eyes were but open to perceive it, is even in the plants. It is this desire which develops the mineral to the vegetable, and the vegetable to the animal, and the animal to the human being. It is well developed in man, and fully attained in super-man, the master mind. The Sufis say that the whole of Creation took place to satisfy the desire for knowledge.

With man this desire is never satisfied. He always wants to know more. There is ever a restless craving within him for knowledge. This is because he does not look for the cause in the right way; he only sees the external causes, and not the cause underlying the cause, and below that, the primal cause. For example, a man who has become estranged from his friend only sees perhaps the superficial cause, and calls his friend unkind, or he may even admit that he himself is in fault, or he may go still deeper and say that owing to a certain planetary influence he cannot be friendly, yet he has not probed the cause of this cause.

If we study nature aright, we shall find that its whole being is wisdom ; life itself is wisdom. Look at the delicate structure of the eye, and the protection afforded it by the eyelid. Does not this prove that nature's wisdom is much more developed than the science and art of man? Has man ever been able to create what is not in nature? We know that the rain falls and waters the ground, and makes the plants grow, and we say that rain is the cause of this, but if we delved deeper we should discover the cause of the rain; even then the inner cause remains hidden.

For this reason the religions taught the God ideal, that the primal cause might be sought by the pursuit after God.

“ It is when man has lost the idea of duality and feels himself at one with all creation, that his eyes are opened and he sees the cause of everything. A scientific man comes forward and claims to have made some new and wonderful discovery, but as Solomon says, “ There is nothing new under the sun.” Christ said He had come not to give a new law, and Mohammed said He had come to reveal the same law given by the teachers in the past, which had been corrupted, misunderstood, and forgotten by the followers of the old.

“The mystics have possessed all knowledge from the beginning, and yet have never claimed it as their own, recognizing that all knowledge is possessed by one Being alone, and will always be so.

What is called super-natural, becomes natural to one who understands, but to the ignorant it remains super-natural. He calls it miracle or

phenomena, if he believes in it, if not, he mocks at it.

There is a light within every soul. It only needs the clouds which overshadow it to be broken for it to beam forth. This is the light of revelation. It is as a lantern to us, it lightens up every dark corner we wish to examine, and gives an answer to every question we would ask. This light can only shine where the heart is pure, and in order to purify the heart, the Sufi has a contemplative process suited to the evolution of each individual.

There is a beautiful Indian tale that illustrates the meaning of this light. It is said that there is a certain kind of cobra which has a diamond in his head, and when he goes into the jungle, he takes out the diamond and places it on a tree, and by means of its light searches out all he wants, and when he has finished, he places the diamond back on his head. The cobra represents the soul, and the diamond the light of inspiration guiding it.

The same truth is portrayed in the story of "Aladin and His Lamp." The lady he loved represented the ideal of his soul, and the lamp he had to find was the light of inner guidance, which when found would lead him to the attainment of his ideal. The starting on the spiritual path is like descending into the dark, as man knows not what he will find.

Mystics in the East have spent many years in the jungle on this spiritual quest, and later have come forth to show the way to mankind. This is a path, however, which cannot be taught; it must be realized, for language is inadequate to express even the experience of the heart, and how can the

soul's experience of its highest attainment be explained in words?

HIGHER ATTAINMENT

HIGHER attainment in the material sense of the word is easily explained; if we possess a hundred pounds, we may hope for the higher attainment of two hundred, or we may look upon higher attainment as a rise in the social world. In spiritual matters there is nothing we can recognize as higher attainment. The striving for higher attainment on the spiritual path is like shooting an arrow into the mist. We know that we have shot it, but we do not know whither it has gone, or where it has hit. It is so with our spiritual progress. We cannot see where we are, or how far we have advanced on the spiritual path, for there is nothing to show. Some people say that higher attainment in the spiritual life means communion with God. But this would not satisfy the agnostic, for God to him is a stranger, and he would not wish for communion with a stranger. Some would travel along this path if they could attain to their worldly desires, wealth or fame. To such the answer may be given, seek for things of the earth on the earth, and for heavenly things in heaven. There are some who follow this path in order to gain occult and psychic powers, but the attainment of these powers is not necessarily higher attainment. There are only a few who travel along the path for higher spiritual attainment.

What, then, is higher attainment? If we look at

our five fingers, we realize that all the power in them comes from the one arm. If we want to come to higher attainment in the spiritual life, we must get into the plane of the abstract, and we find everything there. We must come to the realization of the One Life running through all. To the question, Is it by contemplation, religion and prayer that we attain to the realization of unity? the answer is, Yes, to a certain degree, but the one thing most necessary is sincerity in our way of life. What we are is all that really matters; and contemplation and meditation help in this, but our manner of life is all-important, such as sincerity in our actions, and to live the life practically and not in theory. There is a story told in India of the boyhood of Bullah Shah, a great saint. He went to school when a young boy, and was set to learn the alphabet. He was given the first letter Alif, the figure one (a straight line) and he never progressed any further than this one letter. His master was in despair, also his parents. In the end they became weary of him, and he went to live in the jungle. After many years he returned and sought out his old master. He told him that he had now learned Alif, and had he anything else to teach? He then made a sign of Alif on the wall, saying, "Look, is it right?" Immediately the wall split in two pieces, making the sign of Alif. On seeing this phenomenon, the master exclaimed, "Thou art my teacher; I am thy pupil." From this story we learn what it means actually to realize what is meant by unity, because we always see the one. Two is one and one, the same with three, four or five, hundreds or thousands, but in

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the end all numbers, even millions and billions except the one are zeros.

In conclusion we may say that the higher spiritual attainment is the realization of Unity.

WORSHIP

THERE are three aspects of worship.

The worship of God in heaven by those who understand Him as a separate being; the worship of God on earth, as a god or goddess, in the form of an idol; or the worship of some being who is considered as an incarnation of God, and who is worshipped by the multitudes; and the worship of the God within, the innermost self of our being. It is this aspect of God that is understood by the Sufis, the Vedantists, and the great teachers such as Christ and Mohammed.

In the beginning, the great masters taught the worship of some concrete object to those who could not understand any higher ideal of worship, to lead them up to the God Ideal, that they might finally come to know the God within.

There are some people who have realized that the innermost self is God, and who say, "Why should we approach God in forms of worship," believing themselves to be self-sufficient.

This self-knowledge leads man either astray or towards perfection. It seldom leads him to perfection, but it frequently leads him astray, for man in the unseen world is unlimited, but in the outer world he is a very limited being. He is dependent on the whole of creation around him, and he is in

every way dependent on his surroundings. At one end of the pole he is unlimited and self-sufficient, at the other end of the pole he is limited and dependent. It is therefore a great mistake for a man to claim self-sufficiency. In Moslem language these states are called Allah and Banda. The Allah state is the unlimited and self-sufficient, and the Banda state is the limited and dependent. As a man's ideal is, so is his state of evolution. The man who is only interested in himself is very narrow and limited, whereas the man who has expanded his interests to his family and surroundings is greater, while he who expands them still further to his nation is yet greater, and he who extends them to the world at large is the greatest. But in all these cases man is limited. It is the same with material ideals, one person may be content with a hundred pounds, while another may aspire to a million; in accordance with his ideal, so man becomes.

The highest ideal of man is to realize the unlimited, the immortal self within. There is no need for any higher ideal, for when man holds this ideal in his vision, he expands and becomes all he wants to be, and he in time attains to that peace which is the longing of every soul.

The worship of God expands the Soul towards perfection.

This is illustrated in the words of a Persian poet, who says: "Praise be to Allah, whose worship is the means of drawing closer to Him, and in giving thanks to Whom is involved an increase of benefits. Every breath which is inhaled prolongs life, and respired, accelerates the frame. In every

breath, therefore, two blessings are contained, and for every blessing a separate thanksgiving is due.”
—*Sadi*.

THE PRAYERFUL ATTITUDE

IN speaking of prayer we may say that there are five attitudes assumed by different classes of people with regard to it. In the first place there is the praiseful attitude of those who are grateful for their daily bread. The second class of people are those who are not only grateful for material benefits, but who hope also for power and position; or for forgiveness of their sins.

The third class of people are those whose eyes are opened, who recognize the beauty of God in nature and in all around them, and glorify Him for that beauty.

The fourth class of people are those who recognize the greatness of God in His power, who is able to provide for all His creation, from man to the smallest worm or germ.

The fifth class are the mystics and thinkers. Their attitude of prayer is far higher than that of the four former classes; they understand the truth of the being of man, that God and man are not separate. Notable among these are the Sufis. Many people who are free-thinkers, and have this understanding, do not bother about prayer, and some even say, “To whom should we pray?” The Sufi realizes the truth of his being, and his whole life becomes an attitude of prayer, in spite of his free thought and his rising above good

and bad, right and wrong. When a person loves he may be in the crowd, yet be unaware of those around him, being absorbed in the thought of the loved one; so it is with the love of God. He who loves God may be in the crowd, yet, being in the thought of God he is in seclusion. To such an one the crowd makes no difference. Sadi says, "Prayer is the expansion of the limited being to the unlimited, the drawing closer of the soul to God."

Huzrat Ali, the most distinguished among Sufis of the past, says, "To know the Self is to know God," yet he spent much of his day and most of his nights in prayer. The Sufis prayer is his journey to the eternal goal—his realization of God.

The question now arises how to attain to this prayerful attitude in life.

In the first place, for those whose prayer is one of praise, if their whole life is to assume a prayerful attitude, they must carry this praise and gratitude into the smallest details of life, to feel grateful for the slightest act of kindness done to them by anybody. Man falls very short of this ideal in life, he is so stiff, he misses so many chances of giving thanks. It is sometimes because of his riches, at other times he is blinded by his power, all that is done for him he thinks is his due because of his money or his influence. When man has been able to get into this attitude of praise and thanksgiving for all things in life, then his life may indeed be called a prayerful life.

Then the class of people who in their prayer have a hope; for then if, in every pursuit in life, they, with a trust in God, hoped, and gained the

objects of their desire, and considered them all from one and the same source, then they can turn their everyday striving into prayer.

Those people who glorify God for His beauty, must see the beauty of God in all His creatures. It is of no use to praise God for His beauty, and then to criticize and find faults in His creation; for the life to be prayerful one must always seek the good in man. Even the worst man has a good spot, and this should be sought and not the bad points. We can learn virtue even from the greatest sinner, if we consider him as a teacher. There is a tradition that Moses asked Satan to tell him the secret of life.

Those who glorify God for the greatness of His power must be able to see greatness in His creation. There are some who so pride themselves in their power, position, and money that they cannot see the greatness in another. For these it is of no avail to worship God for His greatness; it is only lip service.

For the fifth class of people, those who realize the truth of their being, they recognize their ideal God in all of His creation. They see their Divine beloved in all this manifestation in every name and form.

PRAYER

THE necessity for prayer has been taught at all times by all religions, and a form of prayer has been given to their followers.

Various people hold different opinions with re-

gard to prayer. Some maintain that "God knows all their wants, therefore why should they pray?" Others wonder "if it is right to pray?" when God knows best what is good for them. Others say that praise is the only prayer, while some even claim that they themselves are God, so that for them there is no necessity for prayer.

In answer to the last-named class of people it may be said that all the masters and holy ones not only have taught the necessity of prayer, but their own lives have been lives of continual prayer. The following little story gives us an illustration of this :

Abdul Kadar Jelani, a great Sufi saint, was one day engaged in prayer, when in a vision he saw the semblance of an angel, who addressed him, saying: "O thou who hast prayed continuously all thy life, to thee God sends the good tidings that no more prayers are required of thee." The Saint recognizing the tempter, replied, "Begone, thou wicked one, I recognize thee in spite of thy angelic guise: thou art a devil come to tempt me. All the holy ones have passed their lives in prayer, and how can I deem myself worthy to be exempt from it?" On hearing these words the evil one vanished.

To those who ask, "Is it right to pray for our wants?" it may be said that man has always sought to express himself. If, for instance, he has conceived some scheme or plan that he wants to carry out, he, as a rule, seeks out a capable and trusted friend to whom he can confide his ideas, and whose advice he values; or if he is in trouble or distress, he goes to a loving and kind friend for

sympathy. In both cases he shows his limitation. If man with his sense of justice judges himself worthy of that for which he prays, then he is amply justified, regardless of the opinion of the world as to its rightness, and he attracts the answer to his prayer. If a man has agreed to work for a certain sum of money, and knows he has worked well and earned it, he feels himself justified in asking for his money; and so it is with prayer when a man knows he deserves that for which he prays.

Before praying for the mercy of God, man must first learn to recognize God in all around him, in the care and protection he receives from all; God's mercy shows its hands and eyes everywhere in nature, so man must try and imitate it in his own life. He then will attract the mercy of God to himself.

If our actions are harsh, we naturally attract the wrath of God. To the class of people who claim that they are God, the answer may be given in the words of the Urdu poet, who says, "Man is not God, but man is not apart from God."

One drop cannot call itself the ocean, yet the drop is a part of the ocean. Those who lay claim to this should bear witness to it in their lives, and, if they can do this, then they will keep silent, and not speak one word about it in the presence of another.

There is a necessity for praise in prayer, praise of the beauty of God, for man must learn to recognize and praise the beauty of God as manifested in all His creation. In this way he impresses beauty on his soul, and he is able to manifest

it in himself, and he becomes the friend of all, and is without prejudice.

For this reason the Sufi cultivates his heart. The emblem of the Sufi is a heart between two wings, meaning that when the heart is cultivated man can soar up into the heights of heaven.

When man is on the lower planes, he sees things as tall, short, beautiful, or ugly, but if he ascends up in an aeroplane and looks down from above, things appear uniform and the same. So it is when man has raised himself to the higher planes; all things are the same to him, he only sees the One.

Man is perfectly justified and right in praying for all his desires, and there is nothing that God is not able and willing to grant, but man should distinguish between what is transitory and what is lasting, what is worth while for his own benefit, and what is worthless. Beauty of personality, devotion, love, all these are desirable, and not those things that are transitory and unsatisfying. There are some people who have reached the stage where they are beyond all desires, both earthly and heavenly, but they still continue to pray, because prayer brings them still closer to God in their limitation, and they expand from the state of limitation to the state of unlimited being. This is the highest meaning of prayer.

A man who does not believe in prayer, in the time of illness seeks a doctor, as no one is self-sufficient. Everyone needs in life kindness, sympathy and the help of another, however rich or mighty he may be, and this same reason explains the need of prayer. What man cannot do, God can do, and what through man is done, is

done also by the command of God. "Not one atom moves without the will of God" (*Koran*).

There is a story that illustrates this need of prayer. A king was once hunting in the forest, when he was overtaken by a storm and had to take refuge in the hut of a peasant.

The peasant set before the king a simple meal, which he partook of with gratitude. On his departure he asked the peasant if there was any service he could render him. The man, not knowing that it was the king who was speaking with him, replied that his needs were simple, and that he had all he required. The king then drew off a ring from his finger, and gave it to the peasant, saying, "Take this ring, and if ever you are in need of anything, bring it to the city and show it to some official, and ask for me." Some months later bad times came, and famine was rife in the land, and the peasant was near starvation, when he be-thought himself of his ring. He set out to the city, and on arrival there showed it to an official, who immediately conducted him to the king's presence. When he arrived he found the king on his knees in prayer. When the king had finished he rose from his knees, and asked the peasant what he could do for him.

The man, who was surprised to find his friend was the king, and still more surprised to find him on his knees, asked him why he was in that posture. The king replied that he was praying to Allah. The peasant asked, "Who is Allah?" The king replied, "One even higher than myself, the King of kings, and I am asking Him for my own needs and those of my people."

The peasant, on hearing these words, said, "Do you, the king, have to pray to somebody above you; then why should not I ask Him direct, and not trouble you?"

This story teaches us that every seeming source is a limited source when compared with the real source, the God whose domain is over all.

ISLAM

IT is well for all those who are interested in religion to understand the essential meaning of Islam. Islam signifies peace. It comes from Salaam, which means peace, and the mistake which followers of religion have made is to call the means by the name of the goal. Peace is the longing of every soul, and the soul seeks it either wisely or unwisely. Those who seek it wisely are called pious, and those who seek it in ignorance are called worldly.

Islam, or peace, is the goal of every soul, and the different teachers of humanity have all come to show the way that leads to this goal.

The first ship to sail to America had to find out the way, and it took very long, but afterwards a course was mapped out, and the way became known, and the ship made the journey in a short period of time. America is the goal, and the ship is the means of getting there. In the same way religion is a means of getting to the goal, but it is *not* the goal itself. It is possible to reach the goal without a ship, but it is quicker and easier to reach it with a ship.

The God ideal was taught to man gradually. There was a time when a certain rock was recognized as God. People at one time considered some plants as sacred, at another time some animals and birds. For instance, the cow and eagle were considered as sacred creatures. Many worshipped the primal elements in nature, such as earth, water, fire and air. People worshipped the spirits of mountains, hills, trees, plants, birds and animals, until the God ideal was raised to the absolute.

The planets and their gods were worshipped, and prayer was offered to the moon and sun. This lasted until God was realized in man. The light of the soul of man was recognized as higher than the light of the sun. Then came hero-worship.

Warriors, speakers, physicians, musicians, poets, prophets, and teachers were idealized and worshipped by Hindoos as incarnations of God, until from the Semitic race came Abraham, the father of religions, who taught the ideal of the formless God, which was explained stage by stage by different prophets who came after him.

It was openly proclaimed by Moses and spiritually taught by Christ, and this truth was disclosed in plain words by Mohammed, who bore the final message himself that "None exists save God." This final message expands the ideal of worship to the visible and invisible Being, in other words to the Absolute.

The perfection of the God-ideal leads up to the goal which is the true Islam or Peace.

THE EFFECT OF DEEDS

ALL religions have taught that there will be either punishment or reward for our deeds. But, if we examine more closely, we shall see that the punishment or reward is the outcome of our deeds; it is our tendency for idealization that causes us to name as punishment and reward what is merely the outcome of our actions. Good cannot be the outcome of evil, neither can evil be the outcome of good. If a thoughtless child is sent to buy eggs, and on the way home becomes so interested in the surroundings that he does not notice where he is going, and falls and breaks all the eggs, we are apt to say, "You have broken all the eggs, and this is a punishment for your carelessness," but in reality there was no one who dealt out this punishment, it followed as the natural result of carelessness.

If we look down deeper within ourselves, we shall find that our deeds have a great effect on our inner being, and re-act and manifest on the surface as good or bad results. This explains right and wrong, good and evil. In other words, our body, mind and heart (the factor of feelings) re-act on each other. If the body control the mind, or the mind the feelings, the result is wrong, for it is the lower plane having a control over the higher plane of existence. On the other hand, when the heart controls the mind, and the mind the body, the result can only be good, as the higher self has then the control over the lower self. The body

having control over the mind is as if the horse were to ride on man, and not the man on the horse. If the horse were to ride on man, he would lead him astray, but if man rides on the horse he will guide it rightly.

For instance, if the soldier were to control the sergeant, and the sergeant the captain, matters naturally go wrong. The captain must have the control over the sergeant, and the sergeant over the soldier. To take another example. A kind-hearted person, when controlled by his thoughts, may lose his kindness, and may keep another from some benefit by thinking that he should have it for himself; but, when his kind feelings have risen above his thoughts, he may repent and say to himself, How could I have thought such a thing?

There are three grades of activity in our lives called in the Hindu religion, Satva, Raja and Tama.

(1) Satva, the activity that always brings good.

(2) Raja, the balanced activity that brings sometimes good, sometimes bad results.

(3) Tama, the intense activity that always results in destruction.

Extreme intensity in all its aspects is bad, for the vibrations increase so in speed, that they clash together and cause destruction. When there is an intense love on the part of one for another, something usually happens to destroy it. This is also the case with intensity of desire or action, which ends in destruction.

Raja, the balanced activity, is always desirable. The result of our action may be good or bad, but it can never be very bad, as there is a balance.

Satva, the activity that always results in good, is the controlled activity, when we have a rein over it. This is the most difficult to attain, and is the work and effort of a whole life-time. All the saints and sages have had to journey through these grades, and learn from experience, and they understand how difficult it is to attain control over our activity in life. There are two ways in which we may attain to the control over our activity. The first is confidence in the power of our own will; to know that if we have failed to-day, that to-morrow we will not do so. The second is to have our eyes wide open, and to watch keenly our activity in all aspects of life. It is in the dark that we fall; but in the light we can see where we are going. So it is in life; we should have our eyes wide open to see where we walk. We should study life, and seek to know why we say a thing, and why we so act. We have failed hitherto, perhaps, because we have not been wide awake. We have fallen, and felt sorry, and have forgotten all about it, and perhaps may have fallen again; this is because we have not studied life. A study of life is the greatest of all religions, and there is no greater and more interesting study. Those who have mastered all grades of activity, they, above all, experience life in all its aspects; they are as swimmers in the sea who float on the water of life and do not sink. It is they on whom the deed has no effect; they are both the doers of the deed, and the creators of its effect.

BALANCE

IN balance lies the whole secret of life, and the lack of it explains death. All that is constructive comes from balance, and all destruction comes from lack of balance. It is when balance goes that sickness and death comes. There are many people who are sickly and ill for years, yet their life is prolonged, because they have some balance. They are physically on the decline, but to counterbalance this they have an ambition in life that keeps them alive. It may be the desire to see the success of a loved son, or the happiness of a daughter.

All religions and philosophies have laid down certain principles such as kindness, truthfulness, and forgiveness, but the mystic lays no stress on principles, he allows all people to have their own principle, each according to his point of view and evolution. For example, there are two men, one is so merciful that he will not even harm an insect, and he could not draw a sword to kill another human being, while the other man for the sake of his people is content to fight and to die.

These are two opposite views, and both are right in their way. The Sufi therefore says, "Let each one have the principle suited to his evolution," but for himself he sees beyond the principle to that which is at the back of it, the balance, and he says what makes one lose balance is wrong, and what makes one keep it is right. The main point is not to act against one's principles. If the whole world says a thing is wrong, and you yourself feel that it is right, it is perhaps so for you.

The question of balance explains the problem of sin and virtue, and the one who understands it is the master of life.

There should be a balance in all our actions; to be either extreme or lukewarm is equally bad.

There is a saying, "Jack of all trades, and master of none." This is very true, as there has been too little effort given, so that no one thing has been done thoroughly.

A balance in repose and activity is necessary, as too much weight on the side of repose leads to idleness, and even sickness, whereas an unbalanced activity results in nervousness, and frequently in a mental or physical breakdown.

THE SEEN AND THE UNSEEN

ALL religions and philosophies speak of the seen and the unseen, and perhaps may understand somewhat about them, but in all cases the explanation differs. The Christian explanation of the soul differs from the Moslem explanation, while the Vedantic explanation differs from that of the Buddhist, and these differences are very confusing to the student. The confusion, however, arises from the variety of names and forms; in other words, it is due to differences of words, not of meanings. To the illuminated soul these differences mean nothing. He sees the one truth underlying all, for he listens to his soul for the truth, and compares what he learns with all Scriptures, and finds his conception of truth in harmony with all.

There are many different beliefs held by the followers of various religions and philosophies about life after death, manifestation, liberation, and re-incarnation. Some people believe in one God, and some in many gods, and others do not even believe in the existence of God; but in all of these beliefs the mystic sees the same truth, because he can look at it from different points of view. Just as a photographer realizes when taking the photograph of a large palace from the four points of the compass, that each photograph shows a different view of the palace, yet that they are all views of one and the same palace.

The real teaching comes from within, and when the Holy Ones received illumination from the Original Source, their souls understood it, but the words in which they gave the message differed, for one spoke in Zand, one in Hebrew, another in Sanskrit, and another in Arabic. This explains why the same truth is told in different words. The sense and meaning is the same, the only difference being in the explanation, for it was meant to be given at different times to different people, of different evolutions. The study of the unseen is the most important study in life, but it cannot be pursued in the same way as the study of the seen.

The study of the seen is always disappointing, as it is ever changing. Therefore one should look from the seen to the source of all things. In the study of the unseen one must not look for signs. The spiritual pursuit, as Al-Ghazali says, is like shooting an arrow into the dark; you cannot see whither it has gone, or where it hits. The two

important things in life are the praise of God and the pursuit of God.

The praise of God is important, and it gives bliss in life, but it is not the real attainment. The all-important work in life is the attainment of God. God cannot be explained; there is always failure when this is attempted. The knowledge of Him can only be attained in the silence and in solitude, and how to do this cannot be explained better than in the word of the Urdu poet, Zahir, "He who the peace of God attaineth best, his very self must lose."

THE OTHER SIDE OF DEATH

THE intelligent thinker sooner or later always asks, "What is on the other side of Death?" To the materialist, who believes in the brain as the only factor of perception, there is no hereafter. To those who believe in tradition, there is another life, but for the most part they are very vague as to its real meaning. For those who are seeking the truth there is a right way and a wrong way of finding out about it. The right way consists in the study of the self, and the wrong way in seeking to communicate with spirits.

When we are awake, the consciousness is for the most part on the physical plane, and a very small part on the mental plane. This is proved by the fact that we are unconscious sometimes of what is going on around us, because our consciousness is at that time on another plane, and we are apt then to call any thought or feeling an imagination. The

dream plane is higher than the physical plane, for everything that happens there is a reality to the consciousness. It is only in our waking state that we say that what we experienced then was a dream. It is the physical body that makes the contrast between the dream and the wakeful state of being; in the dream we are free of this body, and the consciousness experiences things as real and not as a dream or an imagination, for it is the tendency of the consciousness to experience as real what it is experiencing at the moment.

All experiences, thoughts, feelings and emotions are stored in the mental plane, and when rid of the physical body, the consciousness experiences all these to their full extent. If a man has been cheerful and happy all through life, the consciousness, when it has left the physical body, experiences the state of happiness to its full extent on the mental plane, and, if he has been unhappy and miserable all through life, the consciousness experiences that state to its full extent on the mental plane. This explains the meaning of heaven and hell. We experience heaven or hell in this way each day of our life, and our heaven or hell depends on what impressions we allow ourselves to store in our mental plane. Our minds need to be dusted and swept just as much as our houses, and this we do by meditation and concentration, which wipe away all wrong impressions. We must be masters of our minds as well as of our houses, and not allow them to be like a furniture warehouse with all the furniture mixed up together. We must direct where everything has to be placed, so that complete order may reign therein. We must not

allow any impression we do not wish to impress itself on our mental plane. On this side of life we have more will power to control our impressions than we have on the other side. There we experience the impressions we have formed in our life.

What chiefly concerns us is to study what makes things right or wrong, good or bad, and we shall find that good, bad, right or wrong is according to the point of view in which we look at each one of them, and when we understand this thoroughly well, then we shall know the secret of making things right or wrong, good or bad at will.

This stage of understanding gives mastery, and raises men above Heaven and Hell.

THE ALCHEMY OF HAPPINESS

THE word alchemy comes from an Arabic word, *alchemia*, which means the art of making gold.

There are two ways of getting gold; the gold that we get from outside, and the gold that the Eastern alchemist knew how to make for himself.

The same may be applied to happiness. Every soul seeks for happiness, and each one depends on external objects for it, or like the alchemist of old, creates for himself happiness.

Those who seek for happiness from external sources are never really satisfied. Man imagines that if he could have a certain sum of money he would be happy, but if he gets it he is not really content; he wants more. No earthly happiness is lasting because it never remains. The only cause

for this lack of happiness is the discomfort of the spirit. If we were offered all the homage and riches of the world, if we would remain floating in the air, we should forego all, for our body belongs to the earth, and if a like offer were made to us, if we would remain standing always in the water, we should refuse for the same reason. For our earthly body has its comfort on earth. So it is with our spirit. The Bible says "The spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing." Our spirit is the real part of us; the body is but its garment. There is absolute peace in the abode from whence the spirit came, and the true happiness of the soul lies in that peace. As man would not find peace at the tailor's because his coat came from there, so the spirit cannot get true happiness from the earth just because the body belongs to the earth. The soul experiences life through the mind and body and enjoys it, but its true happiness lies in peace. In order to gain this peace we have to commence with ourselves. There are fights going on within us between spirit and matter. Struggles for our daily bread, and want of peace with our surroundings; we must first get this peace within ourselves before we can talk of peace in the world. Then we must be at peace with our surroundings, and never do or say anything that disturbs that peace. All thoughts, words and actions that disturb the peace are sin, and all thoughts, words and actions that create peace are virtue. In our dealings with those with whom it is difficult to keep peace, a constant effort to do so has a great effect.

There are two forces in us, love and reason. We must keep an even balance between the two. If we

give too great an expression to love we become unbalanced and fall into troubles, and if on the other hand we lean too much on the side of reason we become cold.

WISDOM AND IGNORANCE

MYSTICS, Philosophers, and Thinkers have all agreed that the greatest blessing in life is wisdom, and the greatest curse is ignorance. All people, according to their evolution, are seeking for what they consider the greatest bliss in life. For some it takes the form of wealth or power, for others renown, while for others it may be religion or spiritual bliss. All of these, when there is a lack of wisdom, turn into a curse, for wealth brings no happiness when there is an absence of wisdom. The law courts are fed and kept going by the wealth of the foolish. Then again, what a curse to himself and to others power becomes in the hands of an unwise person; whereas wielded by the hand of wisdom power brings a blessing with it. Fame, unless used wisely, only breeds enemies. The wise man on the contrary may lack wealth, but he is quite happy, and he can, if he desires, create it for himself. The same may be said of power and renown. A man may start life in a humble position, but by reason of his wisdom may become powerful and famous. The wise man knows how to make his life, while the foolish man for the most part mars his.

It is the same with the spiritual life. So often

a really religious person, earnestly striving after good, mars its effect by some foolish thought, word or action, and thus destroys the work of years. The wise man never allows himself to be caught in such a net. He carefully watches his every thought, word, and action, and thus ever progresses on the spiritual path. He may at times have a set-back, but he knows how to profit even by his falls, and uses them as stepping-stones to higher things. There is no real happiness in life where there is a lack of understanding. This is the case with wife or husband, child or friend. The closest and greatest relationship in life is that with one who understands, and this again is only experienced by the wise.

KAZA AND KADAR

THERE are two forces in the universe, Kaza, the Divine Force, that is working through all things and being; and Kadar, the free will of the individual.

If the Divine Will is working through all things and beings, and man is but the instrument through which the Divine Will works, he is helpless, and how can he be responsible for his deeds? Man is nevertheless held responsible, for the free will of the individual is the perfect will, working through the intelligence of the individual. This may be illustrated in the following way: A merchant who owns a factory employs many hands to work it. It is his will and wish that all shall work har-

moniously together, but the success of the factory is equally the responsibility of each individual worker, for the owner of the factory works it through the workers. If anyone works contrary to his will, things go wrong, and the one working contrary is responsible for it. In like manner the will of the Whole Being works through all, yet it is the responsibility of the individual to carry out that will, and if we consider this carefully we shall find that *this* will is also our will, and when we act contrary to it we get no satisfaction, for we have not carried out our own will. We are, as it were, a pole, at one end of which is the limited individual and at the other end is the Perfect Self.

In seeking to carry out the will of God our attitude should be that of a child who is kept from doing wrong by the thought that he might vex his parents. In the same way we should watch our every thought and action lest they should be displeasing to God, the Perfect Self. The question may be asked, "Is it just that human beings with intelligence should have to give in to the perfect or Divine Will, which seems so contrary to the ideal of freedom?" This question may be answered in the following way: Let us suppose that one wishes to move forward, and the feet move in the contrary direction, or one wants to look straight up, and the eyes against the will look down: would life be happy although the feet and the eyes in acting so are only using their free will? The answer is no, for they in so doing are working against the will of the whole individual being. In like manner the inharmonious free will which may be called sin disturbs the whole being, the harmony of which

is upheld by each individual, from largest to smallest, and from highest to lowest.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE RESURRECTION

WE find the word "Resurrection," not only in the Bible, but also in the Koran and other Scriptures. What is truth becomes false when wrongly understood, and even the false is made true when rightly understood.

The following story will explain somewhat the meaning of the word resurrection : There was once a king who desired that his son should experience all aspects of life, and for this reason kept him in ignorance of the fact that he was a prince. He caused to be built a palace with seven stories. The ground floor was very simple and plain. Each story was a little more decorated than the last, until the seventh was reached, which was most magnificently furnished, and was in every way worthy of the habitation of a king. The little prince was put to live on the ground floor with his nurses and attendants, and in his simple surroundings lived happy and content for many years. When he grew older he became curious, and asked if there was anything to see on the other floors of the house. The servants replied that there were six other floors, and that he was at liberty to see them. He was also told that he might ascend by means of the lift. The boy entered the lift, but he was careful not to let go his hold on the rope, as he wanted to

make sure of his return to the ground floor with which he was so familiar. In this way he explored all the seven stories. The father had determined that he should not be called the Crown Prince until he could ascend alone and investigate the palace, which was after all his own.

This is the interpretation of the story : The seven stories are the seven planes of existence, and are ours by right of inheritance. We are placed on the ground floor (the earth), as we have work to accomplish there. The most important work we have to do in life is to take charge of all seven floors. The Master, Jesus Christ, passed through all the seven planes, and gave the command, "Be ye perfect even as my Father which is in Heaven is perfect." This state of perfection is the passing from the limited to the unlimited state of existence. The lift is breath, and when our physical body passes on to the next floor and loses hold on the breath, that is its death. Speaking really, through death the soul enters the higher planes of existence freely, and that is the meaning of resurrection. There are two aspects of the resurrection, the negative and the actual. The negative resurrection takes place when we pass to the higher planes of existence in the lift (by means of the breath), and hold on to the rope (the physical body), and come back to the first floor (the earth) again. This is the meaning of those words in the Koran, "Die before death." This negative resurrection is the teaching of the Sufis, and is the object of all the contemplative life which they lead. It takes away the fear of death, and death becomes "the bridge that unites friend with friend." Jesus, when passing from the earth, left

behind His physical body for ever, and that was His positive resurrection.

When we are asleep and dream, we leave our physical body and live in our finer body for the time being. The finer body is a replica of our physical body; both bodies have been impressed with each other, and are exactly alike. This solves the question as to how it was that Jesus appeared to His disciples in what they believed to be His physical body. He had promised them that He would come to them again, and it was their earnest desire and loving devotion that created His presence. This whole universe was created by the power of mind. This power is in each one of us, and our power of creating it is in proportion to the earnestness and reality of our desires. Such was the case with the faithful disciples. It was their earnest love and longing that created the presence of their Lord.

THE MURSHID

THE Murshid is one who is passive to the word of God from within, who is illuminated, and who holds communion with God.

There are two kinds of Murshid. In the first place there is the Murshid who, in the jungle or in retirement, receives inspiration, and when he arrives at the fulness of message comes out to find a suitable Talib or Mureed (one who is responsive) to whom he can give this message, for the light must find expression. For this light to manifest, no learning is necessary. The most unlettered have

been the greatest teachers in the World. One notable example is Kabir, the weaver who wrote volumes of inspired verse. His poems were in the language of an illiterate man, but in spite of this they have been read and admired all over India, and Kabir is looked upon as one of the greatest and most enlightened teachers. This class of Murshid therefore gathers round him Mureeds who are responsive, and who will make themselves become passive to receive his training. This is a difficulty for some people who say that they cannot give up their individuality to another. But when we consider this question, we ask ourselves, "Who is another?" Then we realize that in the true sense of being there is but one. When the veil of ignorance is raised there is no longer any "I" and "you," but only the One exists. This is the teaching of the Bible and of all Scriptures. The Murshid and the Mureed are one.

The other Murshids are Khalifs, those who belong to a special school such as the Chisties, Kadary, Nakh, Bandi, and Sohorwardi, who base their training on a careful and special observation of human beings, and their character and tendencies.

They teach exactly the same truth as the other class of Sufi, but they follow a method adapted to suit the faith, belief, Nature and manner of the people who come under their care. The system is only the outer garment, the coat as it were. So many people claim to know all about Sufism from simply reading about it in books. What such people know is in reality only the system, the outer garment, not the inner truth.

Some people who see Sufism taught by a Moslem, preaching in the mosque, naturally call it a branch of Islam ; but they do not know that the seed which is found in the fruit was in its origin the root of that same plant. Those who see it in the garb of Hinduism, say it is derived from Hinduism. Those who see its resemblance to Buddhism, say that its origin is Buddhism.

Now the message of Sufism is being proclaimed in this country where the people are mostly Christian, and as it is given to suit the faith, belief, custom and manners of the inhabitants, a person who does not know the real idea of Sufism may say that this is a new sect of Christianity. Let people call it what they will, Sufism being the essence of all religion, it matters little what faith people profess, provided they understand rightly.

In the East there are many such schools. There is a great spiritual advantage in being initiated into one of them, as the initiate has the help, not only of his Murshid, but of all the former Murshids who have passed over to the other side. He is, in fact, as a link in a chain. The Murshid is like a gardener who knows all the flowers, plants, and fruits in his garden, and carefully tends them. In like manner the Murshid tends all those who have entrusted themselves to his guidance.

The Murshid is also like a physician. He prescribes to each Mureed medicine suited to his needs. The same medicine could not be given to all.

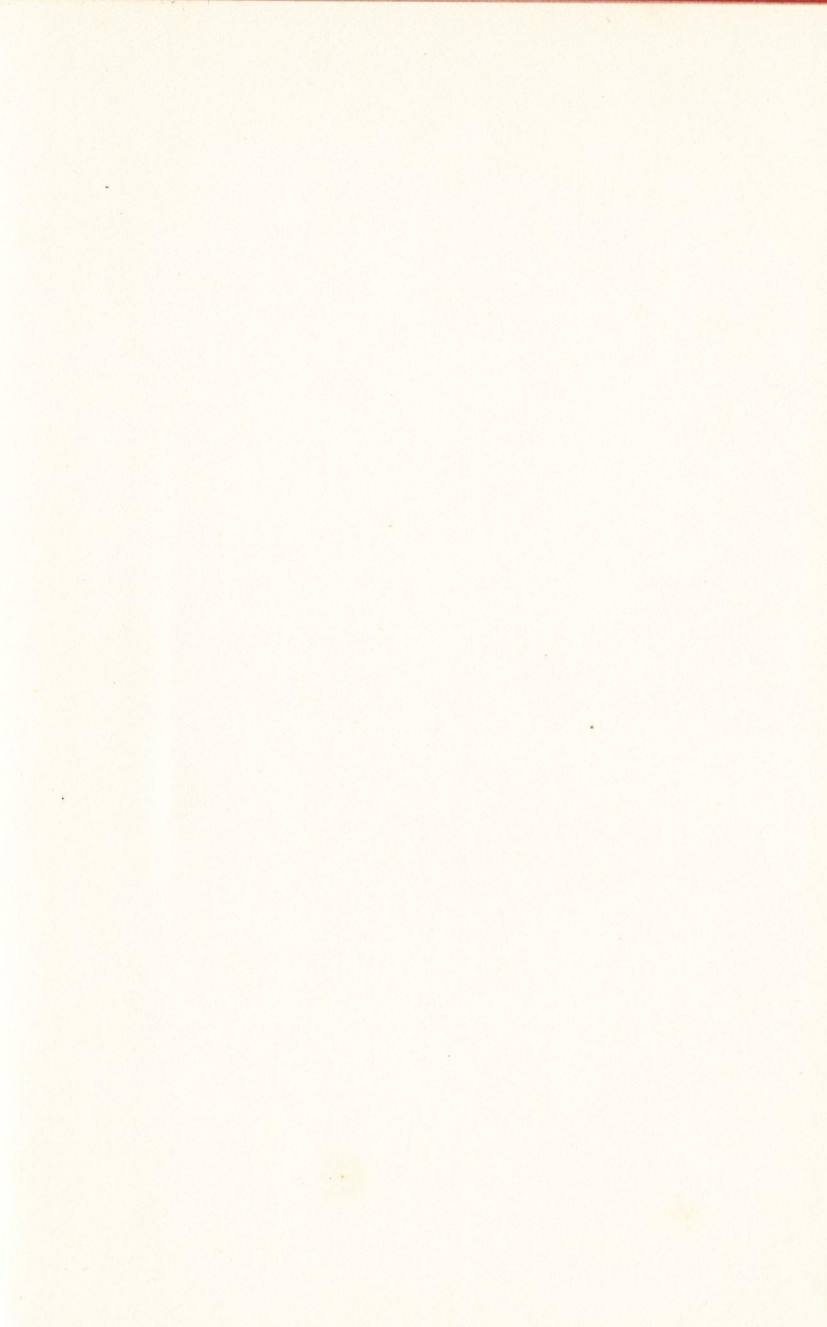
A true Murshid is looked upon as a bridge to unite his Mureeds with their Lord. He is, as it were, the gatekeeper of the king's palace, and he can guide only to the inner door which leads to the

presence chamber. The Murshid is far greater than an earthly sovereign, for by his glance or his word he can change the life of another who comes to him in faith, for his kingdom is the Kingdom of Heaven, which has its domain over all the kingdoms of the earth. Hafiz says: "Do not mistake the ragged sleeves of the Dervish, for under those sleeves that are full of patches, most powerful arms are hid."

The Murshid desires all earthly as well as heavenly blessings for his Mureeds; but he can do but little where there is no response and faith. The Murshid sets far greater stress on the *life* of his Mureed than on his punctuality in his meditation. He teaches that it is of far greater importance to cultivate in one's life those attributes such as kindness, gentleness and love. It is when the Mureed fails in this that the Murshid is unable to inspire him, for the Mureed is standing in his own light.

There is a story told of a Mureed who had been under the guidance of a Murshid for some years, and had not yet attained his goal. He had seen many come and depart inspired. In the end he went to the Murshid, and asked why this is so? The Murshid in answer, said, "My son, the fault is not with me, but in thyself." A mad dog was passing at the time, and the Murshid glanced at it, and the dog was cured instantly of his madness. He then pointed out that it was not lack of power on the part of the Murshid, but lack of response on the part of the Mureed.

About this, Hafiz says: "The darkened fated ones cannot be guided even by the illuminated ones."



When the Murshid sees one among his pupils in whom the light is manifesting, he does not hesitate to make him a Khalif, and to give him the power to initiate and teach.

