

PUNJABI UNIVERSITY PAPERBACKS

SPIRIT OF THE SIKH

PART II
VOLUME ONE

PURAN SINGH



PUBLICATION BUREAU
PUNJABI UNIVERSITY, PATIALA

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SPIRIT OF THE SIKH (PART II-VOL. I)

by

PURAN SINGH

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INTRODUCTION

The manuscript of *Spirit of the Sikh*, as left by Professor Puran Singh, is in three large-sized typed volumes, corrected at numerous places in the author's hand along with additional matter which suggested itself to him after the typing had been done. This voluminous work was in the process of composition from 1923 to 1930, but because of the fatal illness that came upon the author in 1930, the publication of this as also of a good deal of his other work could not be arranged in his lifetime. A group of lyrical essays of homage to the holy Gurus, entitled 'The Kinship of Ages' was completed in 1923-24 and intended for publication the same year as a separate work. This arrangement could not come through, as the Lahore publisher who was approached, kept silent. 'The Kinship of Ages' has already appeared in this series as Part I of 'Spirit of the Sikh'. The larger work was projected in three volumes, including 'The Kinship of Ages', which was later included as Part III of volume I (the present volume). This volume is now appearing as volume I of Part II of *Spirit of the Sikh*, to be followed by its companion volume II.

The portion entitled 'The Kinship of Ages' which has already appeared under the imprint of Punjabi University, Patiala, appears from internal evidence in the autobiographical reverie attributed to the Yogi Bharthari Hari to have been composed in 1923, when the author was forty-two years of age. In the reverie occurs the sentence : 'Infancy seizes me at times, and I find myself now, even at this age of forty-two, a

little babe lying in the lap of my Mother, covered under her shawl, with both my tiny, white hands still clutching at her breasts, with the life-nipples in my mouth, and sucking the Nectar of love from those fountains of love, from those fountains of Immortality' The date 1923, which perhaps spilled over into 1924 is supported by the brief preface prefixed by the author to the 'Kinship of the Ages', appearing after the English rendering of *Siddha Goshti* that closes the present volume. This Preface is dated August, 1924 and is signed at Dehra Dun. Professor Puran Singh's younger son, the late Raminder Singh, however, in a short monograph on his father, has indicated 'Spirit of the Sikh' as written at Jaranwala between 1927 and 1930. This last statement, however, appears to be substantially correct. In the opening chapter of Part I of the present volume, the author in the first paragraph indicates that at the time of undertaking to put down his spiritual experience in this work he is forty-five years of age. So, while 'The Kinship of Ages' published already as Part I of the total work belongs to 1924, the major work now being published, must come after 1926. *Spirit of the Sikh* is the author's testament to his faith *in extenso*, and brings to fulfilment what had been his theme in the rest of his writings, in English and Punjabi.

While 'The Kinship of Ages' stands out as a distinct work, containing reveries on the teachings of the holy Gurus and the Spiritual experience under the names of several *personae*, the other two volumes following now, are a continuity, expressing the author's own meditations and outpourings, along with renderings from Gurubani in his own soulful, though somewhat free, manner of treating the sacred Word.

About Puran Singh's literary achievement some studies have already appeared, and others are under preparation, which should give an adequate idea of the astounding range and output of this writer, who in the course of his brief life of fifty years

beset with various distractions, was able to create a vast mass of writing in English and in his mother-tongue, Punjabi, in which he is acknowledged as a pre-eminent poet and a pace-setter in the modern idiom of poetry, which with freedom from the conventions of prosody combines the qualities of superb imagination and rhythm. At a time, back in the twenties, when hardly any Sikh writer had been published abroad and little on Sikhism itself was published from any Sikh, or for the matter of that any Indian writer, three of Puran Singh's books got published in Britain and won high acclaim. These works, *Book of the Ten Masters*, *Nargas* and *The Spirit of Oriental Poetry* have ever since remained classics of Indian poetry in English, on themes expressing the mystical experience.

The reader, as he goes through the expository portions of this work, will meet a flowing harmony, a uniformity of style and vision. This writing, saturated with influences from Gurubani and enshrining half-conscious memories of expressions from poets of spiritual experience like Blake, Tennyson and Whitman, becomes lyrical in style, in long, flowing sentences and turns of phrase, somewhat in the manner of Carlyle, whose influence may be noted not only in the vehemence with which the writer asserts his vision, but also in 'The Kinship of Ages' where *persona* like Carlyle's Teufelsdröckh in *Sartor Resartus* are created to voice the author's own convictions. Puran Singh also translated Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero-Worship* into noble Punjabi prose. The selection of this work is indicative again, of his preference for personalities whose mystical vision found expression in socially valuable, heroic action. Another influence on the poet is Walt Whitman, the appeal of whose free verse style, as has been pointed out often, Puran Singh so successfully captured in his own Punjabi poetry. Over and above these influences, Whitman's gospel of work as dedication appeals to Puran Singh's grasp of the Sikh ethos. Sikhism has evolved

a unique synthesis of mysticism with socially beneficial work, *Seva*. Writing in the twenties, when to idealistic Eastern eyes, oppressed by the shackles of European imperialism, the new dispensation in the Soviet Union appeared to presage the fulfilment of all that mankind in their visions of utopia had dreamed, he is again and again slipping into a somewhat hazy identification of the Sikh idealism with the new Soviet order. In the course of the editing of this work, such an imbalance, as certain others, had necessarily to be set in proper focus. On certain other Asian countries, especially Japan and China, his views again echo the situation in the twenties. For Japan, where Puran Singh had lived and imbibed the Buddhist faith which he later outgrew, he felt great fascination because of its ordering of its corporate national life. The harsh, imperialist face of Japan was yet to show itself more than a decade later.

Buddhism and Christianity held great appeal for this writer, whose mysticism partook of the basic teachings of each of these faiths. Time and again he expresses himself in the mystic phraseology of these faiths, which again tend to get mixed up with and overlay his passion for Sikhism. Such spots too needed delicate handling by the Editor.

The Writer's power in capturing vision and experience and the prophetic mode of his expression will encounter the reader too frequently to need isolated pointing out. This is his characteristic style, in which alone he can satisfactorily express himself. In the course of his outpourings, sometimes he tends to break loose from the laws of controlled prose-writing, but most often what comes from his pen has significance and appeal. Here is a man who is recording his testament of faith and relating it to what insights he feels he has got from other systems of faith and from certain social organizations. As a necessary corollary, he is seen to be allergic to the religion of mere contemplation divorced from action and a dynamic vision of

society. That is what makes him such a severe critic of the ancient thought of India. And yet, embedded as his thought is in the best that belongs to modern Indian idealism, he is always able to balance his reaction. In a passage on India in the rather lengthy Foreword he thus builds up his synthesis in India : ‘Our mother-country is India, our language is derived from Sanskrit, but we are modern in our outlook, though also ancient as Prahlad and Krishna. We (implying Sikhs) have got a new and intensely reactive past of over 400 years and we are cut off from the decadent past of India. In view of the political solidarity of India it is mischievous for any to suggest that we are not of the Hindus, and not equally of the Muslims. It is mischievous to multiply the points of difference with the Hindu, which are not fundamental. Now the process of Hindus joining the Guru under his flag for the freedom of India has been discontinued by the Hindus themselves. It is suicidal for them to have done so. The Gurus have shown the Hindus the way to freedom of mind and soul and also to political freedom....for the Hindus, the way to survival and freedom is the Guru’s way.’

Not all Hindus may be expected to assent to this above viewpoint, but it proceeds from Puran Singh’s fervour of faith in the Guru’s teachings and practice, no less than his sympathy for the Hindu, through long ages lying torpid and victim of aggression. The theme of the books has been summed up by the author himself in words breathing deep and fervent faith at the opening of Part I in the chapter entitled ‘Music of the Soul.’ This noble passage, expressive so masterfully of his source of inspiration and his mode of embodying it may here be reproduced :

“In the following pages I try to indite what I, as a Sikh, a disciple of the glorious Gurus, have in a dim way felt to be the rhythm of their life-giving hymns. As to its authenticity, it is what I imbibed with my mother’s milk. Most of what I took

into my subliminal mind by my association with the Sikh song and life for the last *forty-five* years, has now come out in a day or two as fast as I could write. This writing is like a nestful of birds coming in one swarm out of their eggs. I feel this is the condensed translation of a small portion of the Guru's writings that has so impressed me. They are all flowers of the Guru's garden. I have only gathered some out of them in this particular mind-born configuration of colour.

“I know I am dealing with the untranslatable beauty of music of the soul, and yet I dare to put in prose the poetry which is understood only when it is sung, and that too, when sung by angels in the soul of man, when it is heard chanted by him who is lost in it.”

These outpourings of a soul inspired by the mystico-romantic appeal of religion, bring to the reader's consciousness the fervour and passion of faith, binding itself to the personalities of the holy Gurus of Sikhism. While constituting running points of experience, they at the same time touch on philosophical issues, that may be seen to lie at the basis of the cosmic vision of Sikhism. Sikhism is viewed also as a great liberating force, and the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh as the embodiment of the ideal of man's spiritual and moral life. The emotionally-directed life—generous and full of faith is commended, and mere speculation, such as has characterized the decadent aspects of Indian thought, discountenanced. All through is in evidence what the author himself has called his inebriation—the inebriation of one who at the appeal of religion cannot restrain his emotional fervour. The appeal that touches the reader in these pages is of a life of dedication, with the urge to express itself in beneficent action. The writer goes out to seek sympathetic echoes for his Sikh ideal life in Whitman's America and in the Soviet Union of the twenties of the present century. Along with these, the scientific and industrial progress and

elegance of Japan holds a powerful appeal for him. Some of these views would be looked upon as the rather passionate commendations of a mind that did not care to go into the realities of things in the cold analytical spirit, and hence perhaps made blurred judgements. That is a matter not only for opinion but also for a careful study, so that Sikh ideals do not get presented in a wrong light.

This ecstatic exposition of the ideals of the Gurus, and a devotee's outpourings bespeak a soul hungry for self-dedication. Withal they are joined with social ideals upholding liberalism and humanitarianism. A simple but healthy approach to such synthesis, as has been in evidence in the course of the history of Sikhism, has throughout been maintained. Thus, a mason's work, honestly undertaken, is regarded as true religion. Other aspects of the Sikh spiritual life, such as Nam (the holy Name), Simrin (remembrance, contemplation), Sangat (the holy congregation), the Khalsa salutation are dilated upon in a spirit so as to draw one's devotion and fervour. Brought in for estatic presentation are also *keshas* (long, unshorn hair, the wearing of which is enjoined upon a Sikh) and Guru Gobind Singh's conferring sovereignty on the Khalsa, the corporate body of devout Sikhs.

A valuable feature of these studies in Sikhism is the author's rendering of several portions of Gurubani, texts taken out of Guru Granth Sahib. Earlier occurs *Bara-maha* in the measure Tukhari, Guru Nanak's outpourings of Divine love, in the yearly cycle depicting the pangs of separation from the Divine Person and joy of union. Later, in Part II 'Readings from Guru Granth' are extensive renderings from Raga Prabhati, Var Majh, Var Asa and Siddha-Goshti. Brief study-notes about the characteristic quality of these renderings have been appended by the Editor in the course of this prepared text. As said there, while these renderings have power and fervour, they remain in

the nature of transcreations, with the translator's elucidatory insights added. Especially valuable in giving exposition insights added. Especially valuable in giving exposition of the Guru's teaching and its contrast with the hath-yogi Siddhas is the rendering of *Siddhu-Goshti*, a difficult text, but one whose spirit the mystic Puran Singh was particularly equipped to interpret. Of no less value are the renderings from the other texts, including the two Vārs, in Majh and Asa.

Part III of this volume, written earlier but appended to it, and entitled 'The Kinship of Ages' has, as already stated, been published earlier as Part I of this series.

While these outpourings bring the reader close in spirit to the essence of Sikhism, they are inevitably placed in the background of the author's own period, that is the early twentieth century and the spirit of Buddhism and Christianity that held such appeal for him. For anyone attuned to the spirit of religion they are a source of spiritual joy; for anyone seeking to understand the essence of the Sikh spirit, they are a valuable guide.

This work, *Spirit of the Sikh*, is being brought out by the Punjabi University, Patiala, as part of their scheme to present the complete works of Puran Singh on the occasion of the centenary of his birth, which falls in 1981.

Gurbachan Singh Talib

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FOREWORD

I

Guru Nank embodied in himself a revolution—religious, social and political. The years from A.D. 1469 until 1708 saw in the world of the Punjab the unique succession of the Ten Masters whose lives gave a pattern for the ideal type of man.

Upanishads and the other Hindu philosophical systems that had possessed the soul of the race for centuries taught an impersonal Real, the Para-Brahman, though the common man continued to believe in superstitions of various kinds and in a thousand unreal deities which claimed the people's worship. That metaphysical Para-Brahman being unrealizable, unapproachable by the human senses, incomprehensible to the human mind, remained but an academic god, a theoretical concept; so the people had to invent gods to live by, thus imperceptibly becoming the victims of these unreal gods and slaves of their political and religious superiors.

Guru Nank invokes the highest Person, Purusha, which had become wholly divine in his first hymn of *Japji*. It is remarkable that he invokes no concept god. He calls forth the Great One Cosmic Spirit of the Universe, who is Person and Guru, and is a Personal God, who is Word-embodied (*Sat Nām*), creative personality (*Karta Purakh*), devoid of the sense of fear, of hatred, whose form is timeless, eternal; born of the Spirit. He has the power to impart the sparks of true life of the Spirit. Guru Nanak was not understood, since the whole country was steeped in religious ignorance and superstition—

ultimately he bowed down to his disciple Angad, and installed him as the Guru; all did then understand what was meant, and began worshipping the Guru in Guru Angad. The Guru thus enshrines the holy word, which Guru Nanak calls forth in the first hymn of *Japji*.

The ardent spirit of devotion to the Guru, the highest man-personality, the Nam-entity breathes the spirituality of Guru Nanak, with which he has made the Sikh inspiration forever life-giving.¹ As Bhai Gurdas says, "With Guru Nanak the sense of true spirituality dawns in India and the world." So simple as this was the beginning of this religious revolution brought about by Guru Nanak, that it cannot be seen till the human world has travelled a long way yet to perfection. The Guru called his disciples a *panth*, (a path) and it was no more a sect. It is the common road for all humanity to perfection.

This revolution in the religious world was manifested also by a corresponding revolution in society. A reconstruction followed. The individual was made so happy that he willingly shed his ego-centred individuality. Selfishness was washed into unselfishness by his great love, in the great gladness of life so realized.

Every disciple is to bow down to the Guru : it is self-surrender complete and unconditional. The secret of social being lies in this surrender of opinions, principles and idiosyncracies. In this realization of individualism as socialism, caste was abolished. Geographical limits separating man from man were eliminated by all being bound in one love, in one humanity.

No man or society that has risen from the dead into the life of the spirit can tolerate political subjugation or social slavery

1. This crystalline Personal Truth shining in the Guru's imagination and his living faith that "this all", "this creation" is but a mode of the Great Spirit of the Universe, is the Guru's Secret of Divine Personality.

to unjust laws or rules. Politics, in the sense of fighting against all social injustice, all tyranny, all wrong taxation of the poor, all subjugation of man to man were the 'politics' of the Guru. Without freedom no true religion or art can flourish anywhere. Human love, too, degenerates if freedom fails.

Liberty is the very breath of true culture. The Sikhs raised by the Guru fought for freedom. They were defeated, they might be defeated again; all attempts at liberty generally end in defeat. But their very fighting for liberty is the mark of the new soul-consciousness that the Guru had awakened in them.

A living inspiration came to the common daily life of the people. Labourer and king alike were intoxicated with the person of the Guru. Hearts were kindled with divine passion, and all men and women were fired with a new sense of freedom. It is remarkable that the Gurus' minds were 'modern' in outlook and they abhorred the outworn forms of religiosity—the mere mechanical formalities and hoary theological hypocrisies which go by the name of religious orthodoxy. They called for the natural simple life of deep spontaneity imbued with sympathy and informed of the mystery of creation. The Beloved is beautiful. Beauty is Truth—when it is carried into the shape of the Personal God out of the Divine Spirit of creation—that is the theme of their song.

Their idealism is broad-based on the magic realism of the Creator. Their joy is the blossoming of their infinite pain in sympathy with life. The pure and easy breathing of the Spirit of God is their religion. It is the life of a well-blown flower living in the great expanse of sunlight or moonlight, elevated above all pain of goodness. The Guru-man is the personal God round whom humanity is to revolve from life to life, from mystery to mystery. The study of the wisdom and the lives of the Gurus, therefore, cannot but be essential for all the seekers of the creative originality of human thought, of the secrets of making

God out of man.

Like some common, uncouth labourer I have but hewn a track towards the door of the Guru in the following pages. The fitful chances by which these pages were written from time to time necessarily involved some repetition of ideas in different contexts, but I hope the shape of the Guru's ideal will be visible in the crowded clouds of hopes and visions that hang over the page.¹

II

The history of the Sikh spirit, in which lies the true and only right interpretation of the Guru's Word, is still a sealed book. The secret love of the people for the Guru is buried in their bosoms, and so far it has been transmitted only as a holy passion from generation to generation. It is that invisible faith which flourishes in the shade. For the people the person of the Guru is the only fact of the soul. I love Him, I die for him. Why ask me why ? I love. He loves me. That is all. Our history ? This much. How he was put in a cradle and rocked, how he talked as a child and as a boy; what games he played; how he looked when young; how he looked sitting on the ground, or discoursed; what words fell from his lips; what replies he gave to questions; how his glances dispelled doubts; the stories of his inspiring faith, of sowing heroism in others, all little details of his life which our poets like Bhai Santokh Singh and Bhai Vir Singh² have gathered for us, all this is our history. We are never tired of listening to its endless repetition, now laughing,

1. A certain amount of information about the lives of the Gurus given in *The Book of Ten Masters* may be found useful in elucidating any references to the Sikh tradition mentioned in the body of this book.

— Editor.

2. Bhai Santokh Singh (19th century), author of the great epic of Sikhism, *Guru Partap Suraj*; Bhai Vir Singh (1872-1957) the great poet, biographer, historian and scholar of Sikhism.

— Editor.

now weeping, now longing to see him, to hear about him. This is what we call history, which whenever read, strikes sparks of love in our soul. Through a flood of tears of love we see our Gurus. The frail clay mounds and mud walls of our Gurudwaras encase immortal memories; perishable materials glow for us with imperishable visitors. We see them in our soul.

Much is in sprouting and more in the seed, and all is in the Guru who made us so to love freedom as to prefer death and dissolution to slavery of the soul. Better wholesale ruination than the extinction of the Guru's Lamp of Love, lit in the shrine of our hearts. This burning love for freedom in the Sikh soul is bound to make life on this earth full of perils, and any unjust kings and despotic potentates against him; and so it has ever been.

III

If you wish to know the Sikh, love him. There is a gleam under the shock of hay, such as Moses beheld at Sinai. The Sikh body politic is a heap of immense matter in which still scintillates the spirit. The hair of the Sikh distinguishes him and his unique love. In Brahmanical India the spirit itself would have died without those who have worn this rather unkempt exterior. And those of Brahmanical India who might desire life, and having got the life spark to maintain it, have similarly to isolate themselves.

“Profound, O Vaccha, is this doctrine : recondite and difficult of comprehension, excellent and not to be reached by mere reasoning, subtle and intelligent only to the wise, it is a hard doctrine to learn for you who belong to another sect, another faith, another persuasion, another discipline and sit at the feet of another teacher.” Thus the Buddha.

Happily, Sikh history is not written in the kind of style favoured of the modern historian. The whole story is fully revealed in the heart of a living man. As Dr. Ananda

Coomaraswamy says, history is treated by the Oriental more as an art than as a science, and it is an impossible hope to put Sikh history—emotional, poetic, and wholly personal—in a modern critical style without depriving it of value; for the holy Gurus of Sikhism wrote no autobiographies except their songs.

As the true history of the modern democratic ideal is writ in Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, so Sikh history lies to some extent and will continue to do so still more in the future, in the lyrics that the Sikhs have sung unbidden in the abundance of their love of the Guru. Sikh history will ever be in the uncut, uncouth, wild, burning words of poet-labourers and artisan singers. The names of the ten Gurus inspire us with life and love, and we sing their praises and live and die in a sweet, soft, continuous inebriation. He brought us here, He takes us away. Pain and pleasure are His gifts, dispensations of His love. Thinking of Him, we pass through life. When called by Him, we give up breath. What pleases our God is the best. Such is our scale of values. The command of the Guru is the duly moral act. He is beautiful. He is truth and He fascinates our souls. We live remembering Him and ploughing and sweating and labouring and toiling, as He told us. This is for us the only way to transcend the physical and be spiritual. Such is His will, such His pleasure. He is verily, verily our personal God. This indeed is the *motif* of Sikh history, poetry and life. And the Guru has saved us from the evils of mere man-worship, because His vision is the Infinite and his association is of the living God—personalities of invisible spiritual Realms. There is no void in the ecstatic consciousness of the true discipline. It is peopled with the celestials.

How mean and small in contrast is the new demand on the Sikh chroniclers, (on poets like Santokh Singh, who by their writings can ingrain in the soul of a people this feeling, this personal feeling, which constitutes all the vital history of the

Sikh (and the Guru) to give prosaic, impersonal accounts of the lives of the Gurus, other than those we possess in every heart and in every home now. It is leaving the soul behind and clutching at shadows. And why ? Because some disputations scribe or historian suggested that Guru Nanak never went to Mecca and Baghdad ! Because to a Muslim writer of that hopeless muddle, it might be detracting something from the glorious accuracy of their history to admit what is now a fact of our soul. We Sikhs possess this as absolute knowledge of the soul, that Guru Nanak made Shah Bahlol of Baghdad his Sikh (disciple). We know also that the Guru went to Mecca and told the Muslims there that God's House, as they call Mecca, is everywhere. If now, a Muslim scribe asserts that this was not so, let him keep his historical prejudice to preserve his pride. But for a believing Sikh no further proof if necessary. Intellectual analysis is never right, preception by the soul is never wrong.

Impersonal events, as isolated facts so much prized by the curious historian are poor orphans, they would certainly die of exposure if these accurate historians were not to indulge in little passions of their own. But the historian is always as poor and accurately inaccurate as his so-called facts. True fiction of our kind is certainly more elevating. What do we know really ? Kings and other actors of history are but empty names and dates and false exteriors. Our wholly wrong opinions are formed about them at too great a distance of time. As a matter of fact, it would not have been at all possible to know the real and inner men even if we had been sitting by their sides and living with them. How much more difficult it is to make accurate records of the actions of the soul-consciousness of the great makers of man !

Historical criticism, aiming at literal accuracy and exactness, comes riding on a tempest to a clumsy old end of hopeless

inaccuracy. The historian is right in abstracting general humanities of olden times which were exactly as they are now. Stories are true histories; man always has been like himself. Every period grows wiser after the event—seldom before, because history gathers in and reveals itself quietly and in confidence to every individual in his soul and sensations. Closely-written pages with foot-notes and references cannot nourish the soul of a people.

IV

The *Khalsa* is the ideal, future international state of man: it is an absolute monarchy of the kingdom of heaven for each and every man—the absolute democracy, distribution of bread and raiment of the kingdom of labour on this earth—all in one. It is democracy of feeling all on this physical plane of life, where most misery is due to man's callousness to man. It is brotherhood of the soul, where intensity of feeling burns out all differences.

In the realms of the soul, each is to have his own measure of the Guru's joy and sorrow and love and feeling and spiritual delight, according to his individual capacity. This will constitute the measure of the real aristocracy of each one's genius; but bread and raiment, the barest necessities of the physical body shall, in this kingdom of love for the Guru, never be denied to any one. If the Guru's ideal state, or even an approach to it, is ever made by man, no one will thenceforward die of hunger or go naked. Death cannot be prevented, innate differences cannot be destroyed; but physical privation will be prevented here on this earth by man himself. Let mountains be high, flowers small and grass low, but all shall be clothed with the beauty of God and fed with His abundance. The true vindication of the *Khalsa* commonwealth and its ideals as announced by Guru Gobind Singh, have yet to appear in terms of the practice of those ideals by those having faith in the Guru. The modern world is,

however, busy evolving its version of the Guru's *Khalsa* State out of social chaos. This much be said at once, that the *Khalsa* is more than a mere republic of votes of little men who must be influenced to give votes. It is more than the Soviet, which aims at the change of political environment and law, to bring the Heaven of equal distribution on earth because without the transmutation of the animal substance of man, of selfishness into sympathy, there can be no true socialism. The Guru *Khalsa* state is based on the essential goodness of humanity, which longs to share the mystery and secret of the Creator, and longs to love the Beautiful One living in His creation. The Guru thus admits man to an inner kingdom of the soul, where each and every person receives such abundance of pleasure and the beauty of His Love, that selfishness dies of itself. Inspiration to the higher life drives out the lower. Each one, according to his worth and capacity to contain, has enough of the inner rapture of the beauty of God in him, so that he lives quite happy and contented without interfering in anyone's affairs or robbing any of his rightful freedom to increase his own pleasures. This endless self-sacrifice in utter gladness of a new realization is the sign and symptom of the true *Nām* culture of the Guru. The Guru has inspired him with Himself, and however small the spark of that life, man sees that the "otherness" and "selfishness" are the two most ugly spectres that can not survive in that wholly moral and spiritual aroma of delight.

The "I" that has ceased to be 'I' continues in its new life of spiritual delight, its new-found joy in *Nām*. No one can be a man of truly human society, who has not obtained this divine spark which puts the self at rest, which thereby imbibes a nobility from God to leave everything alone and gaze at Him with unending rapture and renunciation. Man needs to be truly and inwardly a divine aristocrat to be truly democratic in this world. True democracy lives in the shadow of the soul-consciousness

of Guru Nanak.

Thus true history is personified in such an elevated Sikh character. Bhai Vir Singh is right in having initiated an inspiring style in writing the personal history of a live religion and the lives of its followers. And what is his design ? A burning lamp and round it the moths. Before the greatness of devotion even the sun and the moon appear but as lamps.

V

*Guru Granth*¹ of the Sikhs is the most authentic account of the Guru's soul. It is a pity that some Sikh enthusiasts and half-baked scholars, perverted by the thought of the age, have tampered with its contents to make its songs accord with the meanings they themselves wish to give it. But the authentic word of *Guru Granth* can never be lost to the world. And as the Bible is translated into different languages, so *Guru Granth* will have to be put by poets of different nations into their own language direct from their own souls. Life alone can translate life.

There is no other way to convey the passion of repeating the "Name of the Beloved" as in *Guru Granth*. This repetition is tiring to those who are not aching with that love which, in its acute pang and pain, needs the sound of the "Name of the Beloved", some tidings of Him for its cure. Such do not feel relieved by any philosophy, but by a bird-like piping of His Name. It is true, when we are suffering from the pangs of love, just one mention of one we love is the only effective solace. Only such a "love-afflicted" one can understand the significance of the repetition of the love lyrics of *Guru Granth*. And so, when the modern men would need a love-cure here in *Guru Granth*, will be found the nectar of *Nām* and its effectiveness.

1. The holy Granth (Scripture) of the Sikh faith, embodying the hymns and revelations of its Gurus (apostles). - Editor.

No other book is so single in its suggestion and practice. All is love. And the love lyrics of the whole world will echo the holy passion for God, as in *Guru Granth*. Those great songs of the whole world, will form a true history of the soul of the *Khalsa* for the modern man. Then will the Guru's message be known. To be known, is for it to be universally accepted. Truth conquers the darkness of untruth in a flash; it takes no time for light to dispel darkness. And, on that day this new illumined understanding coming to man, it will be known that the Gurus are the true poet-prophets, friend-guides. The Gurus adore "an indescribable state of life where life begets life." They describe a cosmic process for the elevation of mankind *en masse*, and of man the individual and, as such, they have promulgated no so-called "religion", but a living faith in the Universal Divine Spirit of all existence.

In essence, all things and all life are spiritual. The Guru's religion is a lyrical condition of the soul both of the individual and the mass, induced by sight of the Guru's God, and through the Guru revealed and realized. Men and their resulting social reconstructions arise from changed hearts; they are rich, really rich men, who can sacrifice endlessly for others without ever being conscious that they are in any way making a sacrifice. They are as spontaneously glad to give as men in present society are to receive. They are men of transcendent spontaneity, as the river in flow.

They love creation, because their hearts have been changed by the Guru to love the Creator, the *Kartar*. They take all nature to be a poem of God. They are poets who drink the beauty of the sun and moon, the earth, the forest and the dry desert, and they feel so satisfied in their souls that, in their turn, they flood Nature with the rapture of their own life and song. Thus they go on fertilizing the soul of a whole people and making the humble earth blossom with virgin beauty in joyous pride.

They are intensely lyrical, and their soul quivers with the uncrushable spirit of delight, and with the beauty of being. The Gurus feel in the depths of their soul-consciousness the unfading joy-emanations of creation as the flower feels the sun's rays. Differences vanish in that vibrant radiation. The poetry and music of the Gurus, therefore, needs translation through the spirit of poets; dead words can never translate the poetry of these prophets. Scholars toil in vain to catch "the rainbows in the sky" with their hands. The Guru reveals himself in a beautiful innocence of soul; he will always be misunderstood by the learned, for they learn by analysis.

The Guru Granth is the history of the Sikh soul, and its translation is to come through the great figure of the social reconstruction of human society as the *Khalsa*, where shall reign love, and not hatred. It is a society founded on the highest verity of love of man, inspired by the inspiration of God-like men who symbolize truth as personalities of Love, Grace and Mercy. Such personalities are images of the personalities in the unseen. Giving ourselves in infinite self-sacrifice in the name of God, washing away the selfishness of man in the supreme love of the Guru, is the simple, but extremely difficult path of discipleship and its greatest humanity. Without the Word of the Guru, and the ideal, the *Khalsa*, which stands for the sovereign society, there is no key to the heart of Guru Nanak and his anthems for the liberation of man. Its interpretation lies in our human soul, not in the meanings of this life-creative music. In the majesty of such living interpretation, mere intellect is a husk; the soul wakes up to great noble acts. The destruction by the Guru of the Brahmanical citadels of superstition (as in Guru Nanak's *Asa-ki-Var* or in the great *Kabits* and *Sawayyas* of the Tenth Master, Guru Gobind Singh, or in the *Vars* of Bhai Gurdas, the great exponent of Sikh ideals), is symbolic of the destruction of all lies on which human society might be wrongly

I am a sacrifice unto Thee;
 I live by singing Thy praises.
 I have no one; whose am I ?
 I cannot abide without God.
 I have sought the shelter of His Feet and
 dwell there,
 And my body hath become pure.
 It raineth a current of nectar,
 whose drops are delightful.
 God entereth the temple of the
 body when it pleaseth Him,
 and the woman riseth up and
 repeateth His praises.
 Lowering clouds have overspread
 the heavens; it raineth pleasantly,
 and love comforteth my soul and body.
 Agreeable is the spring,
 The humble-bee is pleasing.
 In the *bar* (wilderness) the forests are
 flowering.
 My Beloved ! return to me !
 When her beloved returneth not home,
 How can a wife obtain comfort ?
 Her body wasteth away with the pain of
 separation
 The *Kokil* singeth sweetly on the
 mango-tree; Why should I endure
 pain of body ?
 The humble-bee is flitting on the flowering
 branch;
 How shall I survive ?
 I am dying, O Mother.

In *Sawan* (rainy month) be happy, O my soul :
 It is the season of clouds and rain :
 I love my Spouse with my soul and body,
 But the Dear One hath gone abroad;
 My Spouse cometh not home;
 I am dying with the pang of separation :
 The flash of the lightning terrifieth me.
 I am alone on my couch and greatly grieved :
 O mother, my pain is as bad as death.
 Say how can sleep and appetite
 come to me without God ?
 Raiment affordeth my body no comfort.
 The lakes and meadows are filled
 with water : it is the rainy
 season—the time for pleasure.
 It raineth during the dark night:
 How can the young wife have comfort
 without her mate ?
 Frogs and peacocks are croaking;
 “Prio ! Prio !” crieth the *chatrik*;
 Serpents go abroad biting;
 Mosquitoes sting;
 Lakes are filled to the brim;
 How shall man obtain comfort without God ?
 Nanak, I will ask my Guru and go where the
 Lord is.
 O Beloved; the wife is pining
 and dying for Thee.
 There bloom the *Kukah* and the *kahi* reeds,
 The heat is over, the cool
 season is approaching;
 On seeing this my mind is uneasy.

On all sides the trees are green and verdant;
 That which slowly ripeneth is sweet.
 The lamp which is lit by divine
 knowledge easily burneth.
 Love is the oil of the lamp;
 The woman and her Beloved have met.
 She is everwhelmed with delight.
 Meet us, O God, and open the
 doors of our understanding;
 Otherwise one hour shall be as six months.
 The songs, music and poems of bards have I
 heard.
 But it is at the name of God, sorrow fleeth
 away.
 It freezeth;
 The moisture of the forest and of the grass
 drieth up.
 Why comest Thou not ?
 Thou dwellest in my body, in my soul,
 and in my mouth.
 The light of God is contained
 in the hearts of animals.
 Woman becometh pure when she knoweth the
 place of pilgrimage within her,
 I have easily met the Friend, and, by
 adopting His attributes, have become
 blended with Him.
 Hear me, O beloved and beautiful God.
 I made Thine attributes mine ornaments,
 If it please Thee, I shall bathe in Thy tank.
 The Ganges, the Jumna, the meeting
 of the three rivers at Tribeni at

Priyag, the seven oceans,
 Alms, charity, and worship are all
 contained in God's name.
 I recognize Him as the One God in every age.
 I repeat God's name with great delight
 I bathe at the sixty-eight places of pilgrimage.
 O Lord, mercifully come to my home,
 Though I bedeck myself in various
 garbs, yet without thee
 Beloved, I shall not obtain a place in
 heaven.
 I decorated myself with necklaces,
 strings of pearls,
 Perfumes, silks, and satins,
 when my Beloved desired me.
 Nanak, my Guru hath blended me
 with God and I have obtained
 Him as my Spouse.
 I am dear to Him who decorated me.
 I have met Him and am happy.
 The couch of my house is beautiful
 when my Beloved enjoyeth me.
 The holy have good fortune written
 on their foreheads.
 Nanak, the Beloved enjoyeth me
 day and night, having obtained
 God as my Spouse.
 I am His bride (now and forever)
 By day the sun travelleth,
 By night the moon;
 Hundreds of thousands of stars pass away.
 The one God alone is our resting place,
 Nanak saith verily.

Wealth, youth, and flowers
 and guests are only for four days;
 They wither and fade like the
 leaves of the water lily.
 Enjoy God's love, O dear one,
 in the freshness of youth,
 Few are the days, thou art
 wearied and the vesture of
 body hath grown old;
 My merry friends have gone to sleep in
 the grave.
 I too shall depart in sorrow
 and weep with a feeble voice.
 O fair one, why not attentively
 listen to this message ?
 Thou must go to thy father-in-law's
 (Realms beyond death).
 Thou mayest not dwell for ever
 in thy father's house (this earth).
 Nanak, know that she who sleepeth
 in her father's house, is robbed
 at an untimely season.

And the following couplet from *Guru Granth* addressed by Guru Arjan Dev to a disciple, Musan, puts in a nut-shell the gospel of love¹:

- Jap...* Mechanical Muttering of "Ram" "Ram" or other names of Gods (as in Brahmanical Theology).
Tap... Penance and austerities. (as in Brahmanical practices),
Sanjam... Self-control and inner concentration of mind. (as in Brahmanical methods of yoga),

1. Chaubole Mahalla, V, Page 1364, *Guru Granth*.

- Harkh...* Pleasure of all kinds,
Sukh... Joys,
Mān... Honour, rank and dignity and their prides,
Mahat... Greatness (of scholarship of the vain egoistic attitude of one's power of doing miracles of having other extra-ordinary accomplishments,
Garb... The self-consciousness of beauty, birth, riches of intellectual greatness,
Musan... Says Musan,
Nimikh : For one little particle of a moment,
Ik Prem Par : Of love,
Vār, Vār, Diyon Sarb : I would "throw away". (as in weddings men throw silver and gold over the palanquin of a bride when bringing her home. *Vār dena* is this joyful throwing away of love).

Guru Gobind Singh, the Tenth Guru says :

Sach kahun,

Sun leho sabhai

Jin prem kiyo Tin hi Prabhu payo.

I say truly unto all :

Those who love, obtain God,

None else, None else.

Again in his conversations with Bhai Nand Lal, the cherished scholar and poet-disciple, the Guru says :

Khalq Khaliq ki jan kai

Khalq dukhawe nahin

Khalq dukhe Nandlalji

Khaliq kopai tahin"

Know, the creation is of God,

Hurt not any.

If God's creatures are hurt,

It afflicts His heart.

His love of the people become tearful in the following

saying :

“I am of them as of none other,
By them I am what I am
Without these divine people¹, many like me
waste away.²”

VI

In the constitution of the Khalsa commonwealth, the greatest act of genius of Guru Gobind Singh was when he transferred the divine sovereignty vested in him to the God-inspired people, the Khalsa. When speaking of the people, the Guru speaks of the people whose personality is transmuted into the divine personality of selfless being. As the chemist talks of pure elements just as they occur in nature, the Guru refers to the ‘pure’ of the cosmic Spirit and not as they are found with their blind animal instincts. In this one act lies our history and the future history of human progress. At Chamkaur when all was lost, he made His Five Disciples representative of the Guru, and gave them his insignia of Guruship and saluted them. The constitution of the Khalsa was thus built on the heart-shrines of humanity inspired with love of God, on the God-consciousness of Disciples, not on law-books. Guru Gobind Singh would have died fighting on the battlefield even, as a while before, his two young sons had obtained the glory of martyrdom. But these “Five Enthroned” asked him to go from the scene, and to do for the Khalsa, what only he, Guru Gobind Singh, could do. So, he went. Herein the Guru’s benign submission to the will of the Khalsa was complete and unconditional. To obey, to continue to live instead of fighting

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1. ‘The people’ means spirit transmuted, people inspired with His love, the Guru’s franchise extended to the true disciples.
 2. These lines are from a Swayya (quatrain) of Guru Gobind Singh, included in *Khalse-di-Mahima* (In praise of the Khalsa). — Editor.

and dying, even in that great personal affliction of having seen his sons and his dear disciple soldiers dying before him, overwhelmed by odds, yet to go and live for them, as bidden by them, is the supreme self-sacrifice of God for man, out of whose red flames of blood is born this Khalsa with the mysterious destiny.

In his *Hindu Polity*, K.P. Jayaswal refers to this, but he is not familiar with the life of Guru Gobind Singh, in whose mind no revival of the Hindu Polity was contemplated as Jayaswal thinks, but those mind, in this matter foreshadows the transference of sovereignty to the peoples' *Padishahi*. This is not of the Moghul type, but of the Carlylean ideal of the 'Hero-King'. The Guru was called *Sacha Padishah* (True King) long before Carlyle cried out for Him. And Guru Gobind Singh's polity is to transfer the true sovereignty of the soul of a True King to a whole people. In the Khalsa constitution, the people inspired by the natural goodness of humanity, by the spontaneous Divinity of God, by the Guru's mystic presence in all beings, are made supreme. They are the embodiment of Law and Justice fulfilled for ever in the love of Man. This state has but the Guru as Personal God. In this State, the Khalsa, the law of man's natural goodness is the only law. The following words crudely reported were addressed by Guru Gobind Singh to the Sikhs at Nander on the day of his departure from this world¹ :

"Wherefore always abide in cheerfulness and never give way to mourning. God is ever the same. He is neither young nor old. He is not born, neither doth He die. *He dealeth not pain nor poverty*. Know that the true Guru abideth as He. His creatures who are steeped in bodily pride are very unhappy, and night and day subject to love and hate. Ever entangled

1. Based on Macauliffe, *Sikh Religion*, V, page 243-44.

— Editor.

and involved in the deadly sins, they perish by mutual enmity and at last find their abode in hell. Yet for the love of such creatures, the Guru assumeth birth to deliver them. He hath instructed them in the true Name and very fortunate are they who have received and treasured his instruction. By it, they are enabled to save themselves and others from the perils of the world's ocean. And as when after drought, rain falleth and there is abundance, the Guru, seeing human beings suffering and yearning for happiness, came to bestow it on them and remove their sorrows by his teachings. And as the rain remaineth where it falleth, so the Guru's instruction ever abideth with his disciples.

“The Sikhs who love the true Guru are in turn beloved by him.”

“O Khalsa, remember the true Name.

The Guru hath arrayed you in arms to procure you the sovereignty of the Earth. Those who have died in battle have gone to an abode of Bliss. I have attached you to the skirt of the immortal God and entrusted you to Him Read the Granth Sahib or listen to it, so shall your minds receive consolation and shall undoubtedly obtain an abode in the Guru's Heaven. They who remember the true Name render their lives profitable, and when they depart enter the mansions of Eternal happiness.

“I have entrusted you to the Immortal God. Ever remain under His protection, and trust none besides. *Wherevèr there are five Sikhs assembled who abide by the Guru's teachings, know, that I am in the midst of them.* He who serveth them shall obtain the reward thereof—the fulfilment of all his heart's desires.

“Read the history of your Gurus from the time of Guru Nanak.

“Henceforth the Guru shall be the Khalsa and the Khalsa the Guru. I have infused my mental and bodily spirit into the

Grantha Sahib and the Khalsa.”

“He then put on a muslin waist-band string his bow on his shoulder and took his musket in his hand. He opened the Granth Sahib and placing a coconut before it, solemnly bowed to it as his successor. Then uttering “*Wah Guruji ka Khalsa, Wah Guruji ki Fateh*” he circumambulated the sacred volume and said, “*O Beloved Khalsa, let him who desireth to behold me, behold the Granth Sahib. Obey the Granth Sahib. It is the visible body of the Guru, And let him who desireth to meet me deligently search its hymns. And lastly keep my kitchen ever open and receive offerings for its maintenance.*”

And, had the Punjab had a seaport, his disciple the great Maharaja Ranjit Singh, would have put into practice the Guru’s polity. This much he did, he loved the people as no other king did, and called himself “His Servant” knowing that it was He who had entrusted the people to him. He was the “Peoples’ servant” and the Guru’s bond slave. Treason and intrigue brought down the roof of the Sikh Court at Lahore.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh, in obedience to the will of “Sovereignty vested in the Sangat !¹ obeyed the *Gurmutta*. *Gurmutta* was the constitutional institution of the Sangat and submitted himself to it, and all the heads of the different Khalsa confederacies assembled together and held *Gurmutta* and submitted to it. It was no mere resolution of a haphazard congregation. *Gurmutta* was the will of the Guru felt in their soul by the assembled Sikhs whose function was of the seers. The last *Gurmutta*², of the Khalsa was held just before the action of Saicho, the battle in which Akali Phula Singh lost his

1. The assembled Sikh congregation.

— Editor.

2. This was an assembly of Sikhs where the will of the Guru prevailed and all the difference of mere opinion and mere principles was hushed.

life. Maharaja Ranjit Singh did not approve of nor did he order the advance, but when the *Sangat*, the Khalsa wished it, he obeyed. This obedience of kings to the people is from the example of the Guru and as an idea first came from the Guru to the world. The Khalsa's was a truly divinely representative monarchy, the soul of a people gathered in one Man. Guru Gobind Singh was neither a Caesar nor an Aurangzeb. He was the true king of the people and a comrade of the people. In the truest representative spirit, Guru Gobind Singh founded the true democracy of the people in which there were no dead votes or votes won by mental persuasion or interested coercion. Democracy was a feeling in the bosom of the Khalsa and it gave an organic cohesion to the people who founded both society and State on the Law of Love, on Justice and Truth, not an impersonal system of the will of the blinded mob-representation by sympathy and not by dead votes. The Khalsa-State is an Ideal; Sikhs may die, it does not. It is immortal.

But the "polity" of Guru Gobind Singh was not allowed to grow, far less to flourish, owing to the growth of hostile elements. And the Jatha Bandi¹ organisation and discipline of obedience to the leader that the Sikhs still show, however, untutored and primitive, entered originally into their very blood from the Guru; and whether in the old Sikh life as portrayed in the noble book *Sundari* by Bhai Vir Singh, or in the visible but a bankrupt revival of the same spirit in the Akali Movement of the Punjab, which took its shape from the descriptions given of old in *Sundari*, it is the continuation of the spirit as in the age of the Guru. Assuredly the Sikh's is not the Moghul *Padishahi*, but a state representing a fore-shadowing of some future Society and State. And only the future perfection of the

1. Jatha-bandi, organisation of the State.

State will make clear the significance of the Guru's Khalsa. Assuredly, it is no revival of the Caste-Polity of the Brahmin, that damaged Hindu society.

VII

It might seem that owing to the hostility of the environment, and the not unoften deliberate attempts of the Hindu society to obliterate the Sikh ideals, Sikhs tend to deny any relationship with Hindu society. The Sikh may deny him or not, the Hindu has already denied the Sikh. The great Hindu culture and its innate influence on Sikh culture, however, cannot be denied. It would be to deny one's parentage. Such denials add nothing to the stature of the Sikh. All that is lofty and noble must be and is fully reflected in the soul of Sikhism, for the matter of that, not Hindu culture alone, but all human culture itself. Sikhism primarily is the culture of Divine Humanity whose fundamental principle is unity that shall be realisable in feeling and action, not in mere thinking and pious intentions. The divine plurality of form is more of that unity than the mere dead concept of Unity. The Sikh is rather spiritualistic in his consciousness than metaphysical.

Vedanta's fascinating philosophy of Maya-Illusion is the *a priori* condition of every Indian mind, and no Sikh can escape, even if he so desires, the fascination of the Vedantic theory of Maya—so entrancingly put in *Yoga Vashishtha*. Vedanta is the background of all religions of India. For all restless brilliant philosophic intellects, nothing can be so full of solace. This objective universe is all illusion—such is the soul of all oriental poetry and religion. Our idealism is flat without it. Without Advaitism, that is, non-dualism of Vedanta our religion would become too modern—something shallow, loquacious and insipid. That our religious tradition would be bankrupt without the literary and mental background of Sanskrit literature admits of no doubt. Unlike the Muslim religion, Sikhism is not alien in

this land. The religion of the Muslim makes him an alien to the glorious heritage of this great culture continuing through numerous centuries. Arabic more than Sanskrit, Arabia more than India, colours the Muslim's thought in India. This is the most disappointing side of the Islamic fraternity, especially of converts born and bred in India. Even their names must be Arabic in this country with its traditions of Sanskrit. They wish to alter their mother-languages and dialects and be part of the Islamic world outside India. This is a sin against human affections. It may be desirable from the Muslim view-point, but for the Sikh of India this would be suicidal. The Sikh is in no sense an alien; he is born in India; he has the glorious heritage of Indian culture; he cannot be without *Prahlad* and *Mira*¹. Guru Gobind Singh sent his Sikhs to Banaras to study Sanskrit. He is said to have translated *Krishna Lila*² himself. And all the holy associations of the resplendent past of Hindu culture inspires the Sikh with its essential goodness and nobility, just as the blood of the father flows as inspiration in the veins of the son. His forms of worship partake of Hindu traditions, the poise of the Sikh's face is distinctly Hindu. But we differ with Brahmanism and its social inequalities. We are more Buddhistic³ than Brahmanical, essentially more artistic than philosophical. Lord Buddha's simple humanity is the true spirituality for us. Historically he is the first to think of reconstructing society *en masse* on good Karma and start it on the noble eight-fold path. The Buddha's pure Buddhism, however, has been vitiated by the subtle Brahmanical thought. Mahayana Buddhism is actually Brahmanism in disguise. Bhai Gur Das, 300 years ago, calls

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1. Two devotees, Prahlad is a legendary figure, while the princess Mira lived in the medieval times in India. - Editor.
 2. The saga of Krishna's loves and battles. - Editor.
 3. This preference is the author's personal view-point. - Editor.

the Brahmanical ideal Yogi Shiva—a *tamsi*, and all the Hindu Avatara are to him only magnified Egos. This shows how the Sikh differs from the Brahman and is close to the original pre-Mahayana doctrine of Buddhism. Our mother-country is India, our language is derived from Sanskrit, but we are modern in our outlook, though also ancient as *Prahalad* and Krishna.

We have got a new and intensely reactive past of over 400 years and we are out off from the decadent past of India. In view of the political solidarity of India it is mischievous for any to suggest that we are not of the Hindus, and not equally of the Muslims. It is mischievous to multiply the points of difference with the Hindu, which are not fundamental. Now the process of the Hindus joining the Guru under his flag for the freedom of India has been discontinued by the Hindus themselves. It is suicidal for them to have done so. The Gurus have shown to Hindus the way to freedom of mind and soul and also to political freedom. The Hindus, out of the spirit of vain intellectual pride have withheld themselves from the resurgence that Sikhism world bring. For the Hindus, the way to Survival and freedom in the Guru's way. Unless they accept *Guru Granth* as their new *Gita*, the old Scriptures and the stories from *Ramayana* and *Mahabharatha* can no longer inspire new life into the mass of 300,000,000 people whose backbone has been crushed by systematic metaphysical and theological burdens. Political slavery has been the result of their metaphysical mentality.

The modern Islamic fraternity however aggressive to non-Muslims, has in it a remarkable homogeneity for an ordered material advancement over most others in the East, who are hopelessly broken among themselves by reason of religious superstitions and theological unrealities so systematically and deliberately passed as realities of life. It is, therefore, necessary

for the balancing up of the perspective of things in human affairs, that the pendulum should now swing the other way. As I have hinted earlier, for the good of the Hindu people, *Guru Granth* ought to have been the new *Veda* and the new *Gita* and new *Upanishads*, if they are to share in the great life-urge of the modern world. In the scheme of human progress there is such a thing as the physics of spirituality; the Hindu has ignored it, the Western races have realized it. Because of their comprehensive vision, the Khalsa shall have the spiritual and temporal sovereignty and all shall submit to it, soon or late. Only those shall be saved, who gather under this flag. The Hindus, so far, have not seen the significance of the Guru's creation, the Khalsa. Great Hindu philosophers like Tilak, Aurobindo and Tagore are reinterpreting the *Gita* and the *Upanishads* in order to come abreast with modern Western thought and scientific conclusions. But they do not see that more than four hundred years ago, their own countrymen, the Sikh Gurus, actually worked all these modern tendencies into the constitution of the mind and society of this unhappy land, by creating the Khalsa. Their lives gave birth to a new country in this old one, and peopled it with a new race, with a universal religion of faith in man, and fired it with the spiritual passion for progress. Out of the Gurus came a daring, colonizing race, lovers of land and agriculture, ready to start a new page of life at every turn. And of all the older texts the Sikh texts alone need not be tortured to come abreast with modern developments : they have woven the philosophy of the ancient scriptures in an organic whole. The Sikh life is the vindication of natural manhood and womanhood.

The Hindus failed Guru Gobind Singh; but Guru Gobind Singh has not failed them. They have not understood him; he understood them. As they have grown so apathetic, almost antagonistic to the message of the Gurus, it is essential that the

basic unique character of Sikh culture should now be expressed. Such isolated expression is essential for its flourishing.

VIII

The culture created by the Guru is in one word, the all-mind divine culture. The Sikh, like the Guru, like sunlight and air and water belongs to all: he is culture embodied, love incarnate, sweet fragrance of humanity that kindles dead souls. Men are very rare and the Sikh still more so.

The past, the whole past, of India, with all its spiritual culture lives again in the Guru's mind, but it is the shadow of His immense personality that looms up in the future which interests me most at the present moment. To find Walt Whitman chanting almost the Guru's great ideas in his *Chants of Democracy* is what inspires me. To find Sir Oliver Lodge and Bertrand Russell saying things that almost coincide with the visions of the Guru makes me tremble with the great prophetic nature of the song in the *Guru Granth*. The purpose of this book is not to express that is grand in Hindu culture—that is more than adequately known and has found powerful advocacy throughout the world—but to express what are the essentials of Sikh culture, and what are the distinctive features of the latter. I have all along spoken of Brahmanism and Buddhism and Sikhism together and my comparisons are as I feel them in my soul, for I believe the voice of history has its whisper for me, which possible none else can hear. I have lived through ages, and I, too, have individual consciousness of it all; and that makes my present "me" a mere vehicle of all the past experience of man. So this discussion is not mere polemics, it is the blood of my soul. It is in the nature of my soul's experience, right or wrong—it is there by a right of its own.

IX

If I were to isolate some philosophy merely for the purpose

of thinking aloud, the Guru has it that the spiritual infinite is made real to us by the material finite nucleus around which, for us, the infinite glows. The infinite is for us, a radiation from the finite centres. Speaking from the position in which we find ourselves here, any life of spirit without a finite magneto-material point centre of God-consciousness must be a myth, a deception. “God-concept” or the “Concept-God” is certainly a myth to all who have not heard his name from the Guru—such is the theme of Guru Nanak. For all practical purposes under these conditions, the Guru is God. The talk about the infinite, and right or wrong, is mere abstract conception of the theory of things and is, as such, full of lifeless abstract mental concepts about God and the nature of reality. Such are not always necessarily the right descriptions of the true spiritual states of the soul. All may be only partial descriptions. Impersonalizing and infinitizing on the part of the intellectual man may be theoretical philosophy, but it is not of the living arts of life. On the contrary, the finitizing of the Infinite, of God as Guru, of Form-transcending beauty in forms as “things of Beauty”, and, then again, in the molten glory of human feeling infinitizing, impersonalizing, if you please, of the Guru as very God, of Formed Beauty as Transcendental Beauty—is the art of the inner culture of manhood. It is here that the whole difference lies between the Brahmanical and Sikh culture. The latter is like Buddhism, artistic, spiritual and personal—the former is metaphysical, merely mental and impersonal. One starts from what one sees and works it out, the other starts from the unseen and wishes to think it away. Life clings to forms. Forms are eternal realities. Beauty is of the Form. And it is the Formed *Om*, *Om* with *Akar*, that the Guru invokes.¹ The Guru’s *Om* is the word-in-flesh—the whole creation which is the vesture of

1. This is the Omkār, Oankār of Mūl Mantra.

— Editor.

that soul. The soul of Beauty is the Guru. To the disciples, this *Om* is Guru Nanak himself. It is Guru Nanak who restores the traditions of Islam to the Mussalman and of Hinduism to the Hindu : Find the Personal God in whatever experience comes to you.

The Guru fulfils all philosophies of life in his devoted practice of *Nām*, but does not agree fully with any. His word has the expanse and mystery of all time and space. His position about all philosophic attempts of men to comprehend Reality seems to be, towards each—so far this is right, and further it is lost and must be lost in the curvature of the human mental horizon.¹ No system of human thought can run on an infinite straight line. Each one has its point of curve beyond which it cannot go. The Guru, therefore, fulfils all gospels, and so universal is he that he refuses to be classified or counted with anyone particularly, though he shines with his own individual lustre in all spaces and times, in all modes of thought. None can say the Guru says this and does not say that. His voice is like the voice of Nature, and God. He is interpretable in a thousand ways. He is of the *Vedas* and he is not. He is of all the Six *Shastras* and he is not. He is of *Al-Quran* and the *Bible* and *Zend-Avesta* and yet he is not. What is he then ? This is left to the self-realisation of every seeker of God, and each can understand the Guru as such and as far as his own capacities permit him. Above all, the Guru honours the seeker of God, the striving man, the doer, and not the mere babbler. The Guru loves the craftsman more than the mere theologian or the metaphysician.

Bhai Vir Singh, the modern Sikh savant, the poet and mystic of the Punjab, once told me : It is difficult to form one view of

1. Says the Guru : "All that one can speak about Him, the Truth, falls short of Truth."

the Guru's mind, but if all the views could be taken, they together might form a whole view of his mind, and yet I would drop it all, the part and the whole. Drop one view of it, drop the other too. He is more than all our views. On God, I sometimes form a partial view of the Guru's mind and it must be correct only up to a point and no further. God is, as it were, an aggregate of moral sublimation out of this gross matter, an aggregate which is constantly being increased. But so perfect is its self-effulgence that nothing can brighten it further, nothing can add to it; but all that is formed perfect, the perfect soul, the living one out of the struggling matter is added unto Him—increasing that effulgence that is God : The significance of all effects of life is for man to be God. And this God of Guru Nanak is something like the personal Allah of Mohammed, something like the impersonal immanence of the Hindu's Para-Brahman and it is the Father-like concept of the Christian. In the Guru, with his exhortation to holy *Simrin*, is inspired remembrance of all that is beautiful and good. *Simrin* imparts a perpetual rose-like youth to the human flesh and the body of a chosen lover of God radiates soul-like for ever. Physical indulgence wastes and old men and women who have spent their youth without His remembrance are mere flesh in the process of slow decay and utter dissipation. The youth of everything is a God-like substance. How wonderful !

“The whole world of beauty is to give the Sikh pure spiritual thrill. There can stir no desire in a Guru touched breast to possess beauty in the physical sense. Beauty is the reality of the soul : its realisation is beyond body and mind—above them and yet in them, by them and for them. Angels of the Guru watch the Sikh consciousness, they support it and maintain the faith of the Sikh at a level where his happiness never assumes the posture of a beggar or, what is the same, a poseur. Subjectivity is the true state of the Sikh's absolute polarity of

soul. There seem to be some mighty springs of God's favour forced in under his soul consciousness, that is infinitely elastic and powerful. He bears his cross of life and its suffering and burdens and, at times, bends below its weight, but soon the springs assert their power and all despair and sadness are shed like dew-drops from the white wings of the hawk. The way to live this God-consciousness is Guru-inspired *Simrin*, holy Rememberance. The maintenance of this spiritual *elevation* is the inner function of the Sikh's personality, which is more responsive to the Divine thrill than the leaves of the sensitive plant are to the touch of man. Altruism, doing good, rendering service—that is, being human—is to the Sikh as natural as shade is to a tree. He does not think of being so, he is so. He is a man first and that to all men, and he is God afterwards to himself and that within himself and only to his God. He feels his salvation lie in the ripened God-consciousness, in the Guru's love. He feels the fruitfulness of his body, and the bodily labour of his earthly existence lie in what the modern intellectual world calls the "service of humanity". But all the time, he is so filled with the "*Nām*-entity that he thinks nothing about his doings. It is like a perfume oozing out of him. As fragrance is the quality of the rose perfuming goodness is of the Sikh."

X

Some modern typical Hindus are trying to interpret *Upanishads* and the *Gita* in modern modes. But such attempts are against the traditional faith that has gathered round these books. And, however easily they may be interpreted in the modern modes, they have never shown the great reactivity that is attributed to them. In the past the teaching of the *Gita* has never been harnessed to action nor the *Upanishads* to love of the people. There has been no phenomena of transmutation of personality by a Higher Being's personal touch on any large scale, as in Sikh history. The *Upanishads* are examples of

mental splendour, unique and truly glorious. But without Buddhism and now without Sikhism in Indian, and without the modern spirit of the West, which lives and works and attains to knowledge by the experimental method, which is, as I term it, 'physics of spirituality', the *Upanishads* and *Bhagavat Gita* could never have been so interpreted. On the other hand, from my close and devoted study of the Guru's hymns. I assert that many revolutionary tendencies are found in the Sikh thought, song and life. No texts need be turned upside down for it. It was atrocious not to have seen this, and to have ignored Sikh history, from the main features of the hostility of the racial environment in which Sikhism took its birth. The Sikh believes in one great culture of man which is yet to come. There is more future and past in Sikhism while there is all the emphasis on the past in Hinduism.

XI

All past civilisations, whether of the East or the West, were at first forest cultures and subsequently city civilisations. Rabindranath Tagore is wholly out of perspective when he distinguishes the Hindu civilisation alone as having its cradle in the forest. A few good men of culture oppressed by the Aryan civilisation of the cities, of the conquest and plunder, renounced society in utter disgust and took to living in forest solitude, but they never could modify the civilisation of aggressive action that was also flourishing in the cities of Arya Vrata of old. Man was not born then, he is not yet born now : he was and in most of his doings still is a brute. The Aryans looked down upon the conquered peoples and crushed them just as the white nations denigrate and crush the coloured races today. Kalidas, in *Sakuntala* paints with knowledge, his social surroundings and it is clear that King Dushyanta represents the Aryan civilisation which in no way differs from that of the Western civilisation of today, tacitly condemned by Tagore and Gandhi. Kanvas and

Kashyaps are suffered in their anchorite holiness and respected just as goody goody things, as Gandhi is today all over India, without being followed. The Ashramas had no influence on the court of kings beyond some courtesies due to them and even those were purely formal. How does Dushyanta turn out the little monk-boys of Kanva ? Kalidas in *Urvashi* says : "How could this scripture-scorched anchotite be the father of such beauty ?" While this Ashrama life had no influence on the Aryan civilisation of the city in general, but the love of the forest animals and conscious feeling kinship with the trees and creepers and rivers, as shown by *shakuntala*, was the fast disappearing poetic spirit of the Ashrama life in those days. The knowledge and the routine tradition of the love of nature have departed from this country, leaving a vague slothful, dirty superstitious reverence for Nature as it is felt in the mass mind today, reminding us of primitive and crude humanity. Today the love of Nature has almost vanished from Hindu thinking. Nature's music is not listened to, nor do the red cheeks of a full-blown rose send any thrill into the Hindu consciousness. It is ludicrous for the average Indian, devoid of all true culture of sympathy with Nature in the mass life, to assert his past superiority to the moderns of America and Europe and condemn them, when even in the glorious past of India the culture of Beauty was attained by only a few amongst millions. In India, the masses have been always kept out of touch with their highest men, as the plains of India are from the snow-peaks of Kinchinjunga and Gauri Shankar. Alone of Asia the Japanese, and perhaps the Persians, of today retain the spiritual light of the love of roses, moon and mountains and streams. Their Nature poetry is a social speech. But the rest of Asia is full of mental filth, dirt of selfishness, squalor of poverty* . China

* These generalizations pertain to the Asia of the twenties when this book was written. - Editor.

is too huge to be alive and having light in this sense. India is dead in the pride of its past and longs still to hear sweet lullabies of orientalist of the West. Japan alone rises like the Sun, but it has yet to be seen, in spite of Okakura's fervent faith, whether Japan can stand against the onslaughts of the vulgar civilisation of the modern times. Japan, however, is virile with a deep and spontaneous physics of spirituality. Japan has in its social life and soul the aromatic art of the Buddhist worship of man. Asia and all lovers of beauty can only pray that she may remain true to this artistic religious inheritance of the inner man. Except Japan, where every child born is the child of the cherry and the lotus, where every geisha girl has the supreme intuition of the beautiful in nature, where every man and woman's hand is trained in expression of Art and worship, where everyone is unconsciously conscious of the deity, where all society is so noble that sin itself becomes virtue—except in Japan Asia's soul is sick and India has suffered most, owing to a decadent Brahmanism and its erudite emptiness.

The animal in man is never subdued by the synthetic, artificial and dramatic refinement of minds like Kalidas's and Tagore's and this animal is the same, whether it is the East or the West. On the other hand, the inner man, the God in him bows to the simple and sweet humanity of a saint and loves to clothe himself in the glory of love whenever it is possible, and this inner man has the same shape all over the world. The soul shines on all features, on all colours, as does the Sun.

There is no superiority of the East over the West, nor of the West over the East, but some particular aspects of the human mind, in certain epochs of human history in the East have been developed. If *Shakuntala* is the product of an Eastern mind, there is *Faust* of the Western. Let me say, no one in the East ever appreciated *Shakuntala* as did the genius of Goethe. Pricelessly precious is the gem, but more is he who

knows its value. There is the spirit of *Shakuntala* in Wordsworth's dumb attachment to Nature. The large humanity of Whitman cannot differentiate between East and West. He embraces the Sun and Moon, India and Norway in his arms. There is not antique celestialty in him, but he is a voice of a man intoxicated with the beauty of God in Man and in Nature, that drowns the sentimentality and Oriental affectation of poets of the modern age, Eastern and Western, in the savage sincerity of a man of sympathy. All other poets seem to be pigmies playing with microscopic dissections of rhyme and metre, while Whitman's telescope sweeps the skies and the centuries. His poems rhyme in the eyes of men and women, in the waves of the sea, in the arms of the continents, in the suns and stars. This man, the bold natural confidante of prostitutes, the dresser of the wounded on the battlefield, the wistful gazer on the moon and stars, obliterates all divisions of East and West, of dark and fair. How foolish it looks before Whitman to speak of the East's superiority. In what? How few are there who are truly Eastern in the East and those few are more both of East and West rather than of the East alone. And how few in the West that are truly Western! And there are they not equally Eastern? Let us deal with men, ignore animals.

XII

In true knowledge, there is no difference between man and man, between God and God. Allah and Rama are one and the same. They as mere symbolic names embodying the ineffable and indescribable experiences in one's own soul of the Great Spirit of this wondrous creation. These experiences of joy and union, of love and sympathy, of knowledge, must be universal and not merely sectarian, and most experiences are original with a few geniuses, with others in the case of a few blessed followers only a form of the cooling shade of shelter; but with most but a superstition. There is no such thing as Eastern Art

and Western Art, Eastern poetry and Western poetry, any more than there can be such a thing as Eastern Chemistry or Western Chemistry. This we learn as we read in the lives and writings of the Ten Gurus. The student will, indeed, find that early literature finds expression in the Western world also ; and it could not be otherwise, for the value of these thoughts is universal and final, and therefore they could not be more oriental than accidental : the East has advanced beyond the West only in a wider and fuller acceptance. This might be mainly due to environment. Ananda Coomaraswamy in *Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism* quotes Matsunga Tailoku, the Japanese poet and compares him with Henry King.

The morning glory blossoms but an hour and
yet it differs not at heart
From the giant pine that lives for a thousand years.
Brave flowers that I could gallant it like you,
And be as little vain.
You come abroad and make a harmless show
And to your beds of early again.
You are not proud; you know your birth;
For your embroidered garments are from Earth.

Henry King. Contemplation upon Flowers.

Ananda Coomaraswamy writes more candidly on this identity of the spiritual aspirations of the East and the West and compares Walt Whitman with the poets of Buddhism; it is truly refereshing to see that the soul of the East and the West is one. Man is essentially divine.

Walt Whitman and all 'disciple-poets' are in themselves the beautiful descriptions of the life of the Buddha, Christ and Guru Nanak. These Walt Whitmans do not create men like themselves, they only burst forth into ecstasy, love everything they see and touch, and for a time galvanize their coveyfarers and give an impetus onward. They are the disciples, not the

Guru. For them all is beautiful in those moments of theirs that are dyed with the divine passion. And those who see them feel an inebriation stealing over them, for such ones fill the soul. Progressiveness is a trait of the spiritual life. Japan has shown herself capable of the greatest mass upheaval. I call it spiritual vigour as shown in the changes of her Meiji era, while it is a huge pall of darkness, this mental stagnancy of India and China that moves not. The Chinese, however, through their incessant labour have made themselves more capable of movement than the Hindus, and by their thought and constitution of mind are more capable of spiritual action than the latter. The Hindus, if they do not come out of their old moorings, will suffer extinction. An intellect that thinks and thinks, and stagnates, and does not test its products with the realities of life, is only a curious museum exhibit, albeit sometimes interesting and amusing.

The Sikh idea of "spirituality" on the earthly aspect of it, as conceived by the Gurus, is more akin to the dynamic aspect of life which we witness in the progressive marching man. It is remarkable how both the Gurus and the disciples love to sing of the processions of humanity in God and in Truth and visualize these processions and their march so repeatedly that the march of the people is almost audible in different hymns of the Guru. The Gurus are for progress. They love to see the people marching in history. And according to the Sikh mind, the stagnant mentality is the self-excreted poison of races.

The soul is more than the intellect and the will. The Guru merges the intellect into intuition, when wondering at the beauty of creation and thinking of that great Craftsman, but he isolates it away, leaving a fine thread connecting subliminally with intuition, and thereby sharpens this separated intellect like a thousand-edged tool with which to handle matters within its rightful cognition, and thus allows it to function increasingly on the objective side of life. The Sikh thus, even in the objective

world and the world's knowledge, lives under the shade of the finite Infinite—the Guru—and feels that without this relation invisibly and visibly, in a live and lyrical continuousness, man with all his intellect becomes a branch torn from a tree. So great and old, however, is the past of India and so inextricably knitted with the races of Central Asia and the pre-Asian existence of older races of man and consequently with the whole world of man both geographical and historical, that even Buddhism and Sikhism, which are great world movements from very humble beginnings and which in themselves are the two great original new impulses of human progress towards democracy in love of man, have been absorbed up in the Gobi desert of this empty intellectualism and concept-life of Brahmanism, and their life-giving inspiration, the very radium of mind, has been slowly allowed to degenerate into sinking lead.

The attitude of the learned Hindus both of the past and the present, towards Buddhism, and towards the Gurus, have caused me, both as a Sikh and as Hindu born, a deep wound, as I believed that they and their ancestors before them, in their intellectual pride and merely speculative spirit of clinging to some mental unrealities as truths, have not permitted Buddhism in the past—the great Buddhism that went and leavened the masses of Japan and Burma and even China—and the Religion of the Gurus now, to wipe out the prevalent inertia and not impart the leaven of life which would make for progress. We, the Sikhs, appreciate a plan of regeneration of culture, such as given by Mr. John Middleton Murry in the *Adelphi* (July, 1926) with this difference that leaven from a higher life is essential to regenerate the lower. Mr. Murry has well put it “As opposed to the extremely romantic “intellectualism” which is rampant today, we maintain that a true intellectualism must be first conceived to establish the proper function of the intellect. It is

the servant, not the master of life. It cannot prescribe what is or what is to be; its business is to learn to be loyal in learning. It cannot determine what is the real. Reality is immediately given. The intellect is wisely used only when it faithfully follows the conformation of the real. It is essentially a plastic faculty whose function is to obey and not to promulgate.”

Our culture is to be river-like, freed in the bondage of the Great Spirit. When an obstacle impedes cosmic progress, or the river-waters gather, gather and gain strength and break forth and flow out again, so does our love-liquid personality gather, and gain strength. Concentration as taught in Yoga of the Hindus is to us but a geometrical, intellectual attempt. We are for cosmic concentration, born in and out of the nature surrounding us. We only flow and let life flow in its limpid stream through us. Beautiful talk is meaningless, unless Heaven is at one's back.

The famous intellectual Hindus of our age are merely excited in their intellectual centres, and they excite others also in the same centres. They talk and declaim. Excitement begets excitement, and they all end in a dense fog. All is a passing phase, nothing goes deep. The modern intellectual giants are as kites in mid-air, which look pretty as they flutter; but prettiness is not all the truth, at least not the vital one, nor the life-giving one. They are metaphysicians trying to conquer realms of truth by their wonderful logic.

The Guru on the other hand says, “Life is conquered by the spade and plough and by a look upward to God.”¹

Shall not those who have seen the Sikh's soul in his history and in the evanescent flashes of spirit of a whole people in the Akali² movement in the Punjab, be reminded of the resemblance

1. This is not a quotation, but a summing up.

— Editor.

2. The militant Sikh movement of the twenties to liberate places of worship.

— Editor.

between Sikh humanity and the humanity of Whitman in the following lyrics from him.

Does not this modern poet sing of the Guru's Khalsa in these passionate pieces ?

“Of life immense in passion, pulse and power.

Cheerful, for freest action found under the laws divine,

The Modern Man I sing.

Comerado, this is no book;

Who touches this, touches a man.

(Is it right ? Are we here together alone ?)

It is I you hold and who holds you,

I spring from the pages into your arms; de cease calls me forth.”

(Cf. Guru Gobind Singh asking his disciples to see him in the Word, the Book when he gave His Throne to the Word.)

Is not the following a description of the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh ?

“I announce natural persons to rise,

I announce justice triumphant,

I announce uncompromising liberty and equality.

I announce the justification of candour and the
justification of pride.

I announce a life that shall be copious, vehement,
spiritual, bold,

I announce an end that shall rightly, joyfully meet
its translation.

I announce myriads of youths, beautiful, gigantic,
sweet-blooded,

I announce a race of splendid and savage old men,

Race of veterans, and race of victors,

Race of the soil, ready for conflict, race of the
conquering march,

(No more credulity's law-abiding tempered races)
Race henceforth owing no law but the law of itself,
Race of passion and the storm."

Cf. Guru Gobind Singh when he supervises the making of "Ranjit", his war-drum at Anandpur. The poet sings again, as of the Guru :

In peace, I chanted peace,
But now the drum of war is mine,
All comes by the body, only health puts you
en rapport with the Universe.

Produce great persons; the rest follows.

The following describes the congregations of the Khalsa singing divine hymns of *Asa-ki-Var*:

"Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs
O Arrangement of things, even the least particle.
O Spirituality of things."

With the above citations compare the following taken from the very literal translations of hymns of Guru Granth by Macauliffe.

God made the light,
All men and things created are made of light,
None is good,
None is bad
(All are as he made them)

(Kabir, measure Parbhati)

"Guru Gobind Singh obtained from Guru Nanak, Hospitality, the Sword, Victory and Prompt Aid." These lines are impressed on a seal made by the Sikh monarch Ranjit Singh on his coinage.

XIII

Contrasted with Whitman's true Sikh way of singing and his lyrical expansion into the very infinity of life and his "melting away" into the joy of the Infinite found in the Finite, his mouth

full of deliciousness, his eyes full of the colour of the raptures of the Nibbana of the Buddhist, his soul gleaming with vistas of the Eternal, and the whole of him a dew-drop glistening with the light of God on a lotus leaf: contrasted with this, Tennyson, Shakespeare, Milton, Yeats and Tagore seem like wax-toys set in glass cases. They and the like of them are the poets of the intellect, not of the soul. They are stuck there, deep in the intellectual conventions, while Whitman lies broad like the seas, high like the mountains. He flows like the rivers. It is the spirit of poetic feeling, of poets like Whitman that can come near to the comprehension of the description of the "Indescribable" of the Guru, The "Indescribable" of the Guru is what Whitman expressed by raising huge word-palaces and word-cities like the cities of New York and Boston in his pages. He rebuilds continents to name Him in his own way. Walt Whitman is thus the only poet of depths, in which resounds the Guru's music of love for man. Immensity of matter is put together to give a strong suggestion of that great spiritual strength. The immense Himalayan mountains suggest the divine. When matter concentrates in one place in heaps, it becomes spirit by its very immensity. Whitman's heaping of Words and cataloguing of mere names gives the outlines of his inner joy of things. The repetition of Whitman is possibly unconscious, spontaneous, inspired description of the soul of the Khalsa.

The following, from his *Democratic Vistas* shown how disappointed he feels in the actual "democratic humanity" for want of depth. He deems all modernity, in its colossal outward shape, has no soul, and so he sings to the people his ideal dreams of a democratic State. In this connection, I cannot help thinking that the veils of earth and heaven had lifted once in the Punjab and in the times of the Guru there was that State and society which Whitman asks for in the following passage.

“After an absence, I am now (September, 1870) again in New York City and Brooklyn, on a few weeks vacation. The splendour, picturesqueness, and oceanic amplitude and rush of these great cities, the unsurpassed situation, rivers and bay, sparkling sea-tides, costly and lofty new buildings, the facades of marble and iron, of original grandeur and elegance of design, with the masses of gay colour, the preponderance of white and blue, the flag flying, the tumultuous street, Broadway, the heavy, low musical road, hardly ever intermitted even at night; the jobber’s houses, the rich shops, the wharves, the great Central Park and the Brooklyn Park of Hills (as I wander among them this beautiful Fall weather, musing and watching, absorbing) the assemblage of citizens in their groups, conversations, trade, evening’s amusements, or along the bye-quarters, these, I say, completely satisfy my senses of power, fulness, motion, etc. and give me, through such senses and appetites and through my aesthetic conscience, a continued exaltation and absolute fulfilment. Always and more and more, as I cross the East and the North rivers on the ferries, or with the pilots in their pilothouses, or pass an hour in Wall Street, or the Gold Exchange, I realise, (if we must admit such partialisms) that not nature alone is great in her fields of freedom, and the open air in her storms, the shows of day and night and the mountains, forests and seas-but in the artificial. The work of man, too, is equally great in this profusion of teeming humanity, in these ingenuities, streets, goods, houses, shops, these seething, hurrying feverish crowds of men, their complicated business genius (not least among the genuises) and all this mighty many-threaded wealth and industry concentrated here.

“But sternly discarding, shutting your eyes to the glow and grandeur of the general effect, coming down to what is of the only real importance, *Personalities*, and examining minutely, we question, we ask, are there indeed, *men* here worthy of

the name ? Are there athletes ? Are there perfect women to match the generous material luxuriance ? Is there a pervading atmosphere of beautiful manners ? Are there arts worthy of freedom and a rich people ? Is there a great moral and religious civilisation—the only justification of a great material one ?

“Confess that rather to the severe eyes, using the moral microscope on humanity, a sort of dry and flat sahara appears. These cities crowded with petty grotesque malformations, phantoms playing meaningless antics, confess that everywhere in shop, street, church, theatre bar-room, are pervading flippancy and vulgarity, low cunning, infidelity. Everywhere the youth, puny and impudent, foolish, prematurely ripe—everywhere abnormal libidinousness, unhealthy forms, male, female, painted, padded, dyed, chignoned, muddy complexions, bad blood, the capacity of good motherhood deceasing or deceased, shallow notions of beauty, with a range of manners, or rather lack of manners (considering the advantage enjoyed) probably the meanest to be seen in the world.”

Thus does Walt Whitman describe the people's condition in a modern democratic state : and those who are intimate with the manhood or womanhood of the Guru's Khalsa, (at least at the times of the Guru's presence and inspiration) can answer to all the most remarkable set of questions put by the poet to the modern democracy of votes. Those who know, have borne ample evidence already to the fine manhood and womanhood of Guru Gobind Singh's Khalsa, and what splendid youths and fine old men the Khalsa did produce and is still capable of producing.

Thus the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh is what clearly the soul of the great American poet is invoking in the modern States of America. Pity that the Indian people failed to welcome and publish the Guru's Khalsa broadcast. None of the great Hindus

as could find the secret of the wonderous reactivity of the Guru's man-freeing and man-making genius. Men like Tilak, the political leader, had no better occupation than to find an Arctic home of the Vedas or to write a learned commentary on the *Bhagavād Gita*. Walt Whitman, in full of love of the grandeur of his country's material progress, and bemoans the ineffectuality and vanity of the wholes show without the real men and women adorning it. He confesses defeat in the essences and fruits of political American democracy so far as the main thing, the development of human personalities, is concerned, And how wonderful, even as a spectacle of history: it is to see the Guru insisting first and foremost for his Democratic State, the Khalsa, on the creation of the right type of men and women, the reactive and creative spirit-imbued Personalities. It is for the present-day Sikhs now to answer the very same questions of Walt Whitman. The Guru has given his answer.

The Guru did not eschew politics—in fact he made the liberation of the people the cause of the assertion of his heroism; but surely, if the Sikh lives on the surface only, like the Englishman, for mere politics, votes and such inanities, one straying from the Guru's path forthwith becomes a traitor to his case. All freedom is but a spiritual tradition of the life of the Khalsa : if the Khalsa spirit is dead, all freedom fails. The Khalsa is the son of the Guru who brings everywhere his Heaven and its delectable freedoms.

The Guru's commandment in asking the disciples to preserve their hair unshorn has in it an abiding depth of truth, giving men some deeper concerns of the soul, for thereby he has precluded men and women living only for the futile foppishness of sartorial arts or the barber-made civilization. The hair seems redundant to the modern man, but to Guru Gobind Singh, the hair, *Keshas*, was essential for protecting

and continuing an antique worthiness of man, and for bringing on of a great moral and religious civilisation. His chosen shape of man in the image of the forest and the river and the sky, is like clothing God in the mystery of human life. This shape mellows down the harshness of the naked flesh; it limns human life with a divine dye.

At least, for the isolation of his living people from the dead mass of Brahmanism and for starting man afresh on his pilgrimage to God and freedom and the joys of life, this was essential in India. A friend was arguing that the whole of India would be Sikh if the hair of man were left free for the operations of the razor and the scissors. But how foolish it would be to preach a religion and to demand whole herds on compromised principles ! If the Guru has a cure for man in distress, everybody is free to come and partake of it. The moon shines, the poet can look and take joy in it. How foolish to think of making men poets by preaching the comely face of the moon, And it is foolish also to preach Hair. We have to preach by our presence if we have cultivated a superior presence. If hair is grass, then bones are mere lime. The clean-shaven Hindu, claiming the Guru as one of his race, has cast the Guru's work away. The Guru's thought had according to their supine opinions nothing new for the Hindu. But the low castes, the sweepers, the labourers, the carpenters, the masons, the farmers of the Punjab, found everything new in the Guru and they realized the new dignity of their manhood; they found freedom, they found their lost soul, they became their selves. By the Guru's touch they became great, noble, alive; and it is they who found that if such a great liberator, who has turned the butcher's knife into gold, pure gold, knows what he is saying, the preservation of their personal love for him means that they must wear hair as the tree its leaves. Assuredly without the hair-idea of Guru Gobind Singh, there would have been no Sikh Song and life

today, except that *Guru Granth* would possibly have been another *Purana*, to a dead mass. Taking away the Sikh's hair is to cut him off from his intensely reactive inspiration which has been so far a source of strength to the Hindu also. The disappearance of the Sikh as such means the loss of a great national asset of power and inspiration for the Hindu himself.

If the disciples of Guru Gobind Singh wish to become great as only a political force, great as Walt Whitman says America seemed to be, then they may do what they will, but they cease to be His disciples. Where are those so-called *Sahaj-dharis* of the Punjab, who had resolved that they would be the Guru's ? Swallowed up by such movements as the *Arya Samaj* in the Punjab, and others by the sound of the ringing bells around the Shiva-lingam. Of late, some spurious imitation of the Guru Banis and of Sikh sacred literature have appeared. Such imitations do no one any good. The Sikhs have no exclusive right in the meaning, import, effectiveness and spiritual effects of the compositions of the Guru, and if the Guru is of the Hindu, why this mockery of making of his word travesty ? The Hindus in the Punjab have much to answer for. They find more in *Bhagavad Gita* and the old *Veda* than in *Guru Granth*—They love Hindi more than their mother-tongue. They relate themselves to the bards of Vedas more than the Gurus. For the Sikh, the hair on his head is always a source of inspiration; so too for all other people of the Punjab. Whatever the absolute value of such means adopted by Guru Gobind Singh for the spiritual elevation of his disciples might be, it has at least so far established its relative value under the local conditions of this country, that those who wear their hair have a true personal history and an inspiring tradition which steels the people. And possibly there is some spark of inspiration, at least, for those who understand and sympathize with Guru Gobind Singh, This "Hair" is a deep, silent gratitude of the people whose past is

but the personal love of the Guru Gobind Singh, who fought with all he had, to bestow on them the dignity of manhood and womanhood and to save them from degrading servitude.

XIV

It is significant that none of the Gurus ever wrote a line of prose. What they said is poetry, music. Their whole lives are Ten long continuous Songs. The people they created are the poems, the epic description of their inner state, giving a glimpse of their immense personalities. The Gurus wrote more in the characters of men made by them, than in words. While the Upanishadic mentality produces a genius with eyes closed, sitting in caves or forests, abstracted and thinking of the nature of reality, the Guru's spirituality is watching the blacksmith at work, the carpenter making wooden pegs, the farmer sowing and reaping the harvests of wheat and maize. Guru Gobind Singh refused to see a Jain Mahatma because he was the Mahant in charge of a Jain monastery and had punished a girl by blinding her eyes for the crime of her having conversed with a young Jain celibate of the same monastery. The young Jain monk, too, was punished by the leader by being condemned to a life-long penance. When the blind girl and the young Jain monk were brought to the Guru, both were nourished by the spirit of the Guru and the Guru celebrated the nuptials of the couple and finally forgave the Jain Mahatma too—*Hansa* as the Sikh call him in their history. The Guru's delight in restoring people to their natural simple joy of life was immense. Here comes to this great Darbar¹ of the Guru, Walt Whitman, in his snow-white tresses, that flowing beard, as the great disciple-poet sings the Guru's deeds. How he sits in his portrait as an old man in the profusion of the Guru's Keshas. It is my faith, he is the Guru's Sikh reborn in America to plant His Khalsa

1. Court, audience-Chamber.

Ideal in the modern mind. The Guru had actually shaped humanity for the world in the Khalsa commune¹. Walt Whitman is one of the Western apostles of the Guru's spirit. Many more will rise and the *Guru Granth* shall be sung by Humanity gathered in the Great Guru's Heart. The modern world is in a ferment. The new restlessness is universal. The remote past of the Hindu and the Jew has to say nothing to it. The Guru's Ideal of the Khalsa is pregnant with that fount of power of the Deep Repose² which the modern world is seeking.

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1. The writer is bubbling over with the ideal picture of the Soviet Union as it appeared in the decade of the twenties when these words were written.
— *Editor.*
 2. This is Sahj (Spontaneous joy and Enlightenment) so greatly commended in the Guru's teaching.
— *Editor.*

MUSIC OF THE SOUL

I

In the following pages I try to indite what I, as a Sikh, a disciple of the glorious Gurus, have in a dim way felt to be the rhythm of their life-giving hymns. As to its authenticity, it is what I imbibed with my mother's milk. Most of what I took into my subliminal mind by my association with Sikh song and life for the last forty-five years has now come out in a day or two, as fast as I could write. This writing is like a nestful of birds coming in one swarm out of their eggs. I feel this is the condensed translation of a small portion of the Guru's writings that has so impressed me. They are all flowers of the Guru's garden; I have only gathered some out of them in this particular mind-born configuration of colour.

I know I am dealing with the untranslatable beauty of music of the soul, and yet I dare to put in prose the poetry which is understood only when it is sung, and that, too, when sung by angels in the soul of man, when it is heard chanted by him who is lost in it.

Guru Nanak could not live without inspirational music, as he always said, coming to him from Heaven. And he said again, when they asked him about God, God lives upon music and wears colour.¹

His hymns were to be heard from his lips or from the lips of his devotees. Brother Lehna² heard his name Guru Nanak—

1. This is an impressionistic summing-up of the Guru's vision. — *Editor.*
2. The disciple who later on succeeded him with the name of Guru Angad. — *Editor.*

as being sung by a devotee on the river-bank, and there was a tempest of passion in his soul. Thenceforward he loved the Name and he went and saw the Name and was forever lost in him.

His hymns were sung—to sinner and saint alike. It will be sad if the worldly sense ever reduces his healing message, like the Brahmans of old, to be heard by the saints only : Guru's Word is for all; it is the secret friend of a sinful woman, no less than of the noblest purest womanhood. All human beings, men and women, need comfort in this hard struggling life of sorrow and pain, and the Guru's Word has for them the deep solace of the soul. It fills those who are empty. It is pure gladness. It is of the substance of joy.

To the Guru, the stars are the little pearls offered to God in the salver of sky held in his hands for His worship, and the sun and moon are as lamps place in the this salver.¹ This is Guru Nanak standing in this sky-roofed Temple of God. All these are the stately mansions of his God. Winds and waters sing to him of that Glorious Being. For the Guru, the leaves of the forest have the eternal melody of the soul. In them is the eternity of joy. All space is filled with beautiful celestial dancers, those maidens of the silver feet, and there is still deeper music of the invisible. The unheard is heard by him. The light, the mind, the earth, the sea, the rock excite him. His passion is rich, deep and infinite. Nothing suffices. Life and death are merged into one in the fire of his passion. All differences die in that one Glory, as waves die in the sea. And he is silent in his infinite wonder. His pleasure is only of the unutterable, infinite pain of separation from the Divine Beloved.

He is the Guru, Enlightenment incarnate, fulfilled and completed. Incomparable, peerless. Bhai Santokh Singh the

1. Reference to Arati in Dhanasari : Gagan mai thal.

Sikh poet, sends forth pean after pean of passionate praise and exhausts the entire vocabulary of Braji poetry and still cries like a helpless child for the Guru. To him "He is the Lord of all the Lords of creation."

This Guru Nanak comes to us like a father, sweetly and simply, loving us as no one has ever loved us. He sits by us like the teacher in a child-school and pours into us silently when we are asleep on his knee as school children the whole mystery of the universe and love of God. He smiles at robbers and thugs and they salute the eternal verity. He touches the sinner and the sinner rises, realizing the God in himself.

The Guru teaches us through arousing in us our humanity and divinity. He makes large divinities of our small sweet humanities, as affirmed at the opening of Var Asa. To him, the love of man and woman is the most beautiful symbol of his own great love. He is glad when we, maddened by our passion for the Beautiful Divine Beloved, embrace man and rock and river as one and live the life of a willing *death-in-love*.¹ Love's other name is self-sacrifice; it is surrender to infinite joy unending. The life of self-sacrifice, every moment flowing as a stream out of that fountain of life which never runs dry, is a life of incessant rapture for the disciple. This life is *self-intoxicated*, it needs no wine cups.

In these days of incessant desire for the pleasures of flesh, of wine, and of neglect of all that might lift up man to a higher union to everlasting friendships, to infinite passions, to deeper thoughts than those creeping on the "body consciousness", to the vision that might still make of the physical unions of man and woman also a holy of holies, a religion by itself, a prayer and a song as of old, let me hope that these small sparks may yet fall on some inflammable material and set up a blaze. This

1. Such expressions are found in Guru Nanak's *Bani*.

— Editor.

may turn inward the eyes of the modern world, so that we may yet come to the simple divine union of man and woman in mutual surrender, to the noble unselfishness of the man who bears his cross for others, and we may yet realize that this word is but a flickering shadow of the Higher Worlds where all is love, peace, and music of union. True Religion is an after-effect of the joy of meeting Him; character is self-realisation on seeing His vision.

Perfection comes by itself in the love of God. And love is always spontaneous. All systems try in vain to create love by different methods of religious discipline. These have only led man into mazes of inanity and spiritual atrophy. Love is the essential function of the soul—it is the soul.

The Guru's Word, like God's creation, is open to innumerable interpretations according to man's own soul-development. I can but give one, as I feel it in my soul. The message is of simple Truth. Live and love ! First of all it calls for a clean, simple life for good men, aye, for clean, good animals, strong and healthy with a God-ward tendency. As the field of crops waits for wind, sunshine and rain, so have we to open all the windows of our soul to the powers of inspiration and live as fearless and as patient as the earth. Such inebriation is true life. The beauty of man and nature is enough to keep us inebriated, and whatever we do when selfishness is lost in joy of the Beautiful, is service both of God and Man, Too much knowledge might become heavy to bear, but one can never exhaust the simple joy of being.

The body of man is the temple of God.¹ We touch Heaven when we touch man. But the Guru says *man* is a rare being, very rare indeed.

All nature waits with panted breath for him; she is in travail

1. Here the thoughts of Novalis and Sir Oliver Lodge are forestalled by four hundred years by the Guru.

with him. He is the Guru, the Saviour.¹

Love on this earth is jealous, so is the Love of God, jealous in its anxiety to protect the seeds of the spiritual life. His name is written on the Face of Creation. Live uttering His Name, says the Guru. Remembrance, Simrin is true holiness of love and we cannot live without clinging to the names of those we love.

Between the Unseen World, and world of visible appearances is unity and harmony. There are higher realms than this, says the Guru, where love reigns; there pervades the love of God truly is !

His presence is made manifest by the Guru and in the Guru. Without the Guru, all is dark. Love needs a centre to revolve round, as energy needs a nucleus, even if it be a fictitious point made of its own positive and negative balances. Without a Centre, there can be no moral life. Mere talking about things great or small is not living; fancying oneself anything is not being. Thinking is vaporous; the real need is for living what one thinks in one's higher moments.

The realms of the spirit are lighted only for those in whose eyes lives the figure of the Guru. In the Guru all the Immortals come and meet the disciple. In the Guru are resumed many universes of life. To live for Him is real life; to live for oneself is "but a mere physical burning."²

Idle are ideas of all-pervading unity if you have not realized His great love, in this beautiful diversity. And to see the "other" in this universe of God, is sin.

If your eyes are full of Him and your heart is full of Him, vain is all talk of me and thee; the veil lifts and there is no me,

1. The ideas embodied in this paragraph and some that follow, present only the 'interpreted' essence of holy teaching, and are by no means literal transcripts from Gurubani except here and there. — *Editor.*
2. Todi, Guru Arjan Dev, page 712. — *Editor.*

no thee, no one and no many.

Therefore, say not He is “one” or “many”, only look within if you have really Seen Him, if you have touched His garments and if you have really felt blessed. Enough, if you are blessed.

What the Buddha and Christ thought, you too can think, but what the Buddha and Christ were, you will need aeons to be and even after aeons perhaps may not be.

Emancipate yourself from the tyranny of lust, anger, greed and the vain sense of judgment of all things. Secure your emancipation by any means you can. Good and evil do not touch you in the passage through darkness, if your face is towards God and your direction is right. You are heated by the feverish excitement of your little self—this is a veritable hell within you.

The Man who too remains long an individual becomes sour, bitter and poisonous. Seek the company of men of God who will cure you of your sick self. Go and jostle in the joyous crowds and your poison of mere individuality will be shed.

The Guru's¹ keeping a shop is symbolical of the Sikh life. It is the life of the Giver. It is to weigh out store as the Guru did, and weighing away and giving away everything; but not knowing that one is giving. The true throb of life is ripe intoxication.

The disciple, like the Guru, is rapturously saying all the time, “Thine, O Lord. Thine ! Thine ! Thine ! Thine ! Thine ! “Tera ! Tera ! Tera ! Tera !²

While weighing and giving, both the self and the world is forgotten, entirely lost in the Song of “Thine ! Thine ! Thine !” “Tera ! Tera ! Tera !”

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1. Guru Nanak had a shop and there sold provisions both for man's body and soul.
 2. The constant word hummed by Guru Nanak at Sultanpur Lodhi, when he was the Khan's weighman and store-keeper.

The sense of "I" is lost in Thee. 'Thee ! Thee ! Thine ! Thine ! Thine !' Such is Guru's intense dynamic divinity.

The Guru there yonder, Guru Gobind Singh the Liberator, is riding a charger and wearing a sword, and there he is, dying as cheerfully as he lived; this time giving away not only stores, in his Tenth Appearance, but life itself, not only the whole of his own, but all those whom the man holds dearer than himself, and this too is the very same act of giving away.¹

The Sikh is to fight for God and the Guru.

In the noble excitement of the idea that what he is doing is for love, whether in lyrical self-sacrifice of his daily life or the impassioned fighting and death of a soldier, he only sings, "Thine ! O Lord ! Thine ! Thine ! Thine" "Tera ! Tera ! Tera !" He is lost in the Guru. When one is lost in this beautiful infinity of love, what are acts ? All acts are but acts of self-sacrifice, oblations at the altar of God. It is dedication, incessant and complete to the highest. Such acts are pure.

Weighing stores, and giving away, and fighting and dying do become of equal value, in Guru Nanak's Song of "Thine O Lord; Thine ! Tera."

No act of the Sikh arises out of self-interest, for he is the mere vehicle of the Guru's song, for he is absorbed beyond his knowing in the Song of "Tera ! Tera !"

No act of the Sikh arises out of self-interest, for he is the mere vehicle of the Guru's song, for he is absorbed beyond his knowing in the Song of "Tera ! Tera !"

Physical labour is the only way to transcend the physical. Labour is true knowledge that resides in human limbs, it is brought out by work. Work is worship. Transcending the physical is to rise above the physical in rest, in sleep, in ecstasy,

1. Guru Gobind Singh fought for the liberties of the people and gave away his all to the people.

in rapture of the spiritual infinite by incessant labour. Bird and beast, man and tree are in physical labour to this great end.

The Guru exalts all kinds of labour,¹ he abhors indolence. There is indolence of body, there is indolence of mental life, of mere conceptions, and both are not of the true spiritual activity. Service through work is the best of thoughts—it is thought personalized. Mere *thinking* is *impersonal*. Labour is the worship both of man and God. Labour is the perfume of life. In the Guru's system, Labour is the only right knowledge. Ecstasy that is not the fruit of labour is superstition. Sweating is true praying. Tolling bells and telling of beads is the mockery of eternal truth.

Perception of beauty, and feeling an irresistible, spontaneous attracting towards it; realizing beauty not so much physical as moral, not so much moral and intellectual as spiritual, realizing beauty is Truth, is knowledge.

Beauty is the song of self-sacrifice as it flowers in the human flesh, when blood and bone sing in sweet union : “Thine, *Tera*, *Tera*.”

The Guru's Tera ! Tera ! Tera ! (Thine ! Time ; Thine !) is the tune of the Infinite. It is the cry of joyful dedication. This exuberance or spontaneous self-sacrifice is the life of the spirit. It is love of Him. It sweetens life with a word, with a name. The Guru calls that irresistible, spontaneous, untaught and untutored simple love of beauty, the Name, “Naming Him.” Beauty lies in the Name of that Beloved.

Rapture felt within, sensation realized within as a subjective experience is true knowledge. True freedom and true love is one. It is *Simrin*, “Rememberance of Him.” It is a state of higher, inspired life—the spiritual state, the “fourth”² as the Guru

1. Here implies *seva*, *kirat*.

— Editor.

2. Chautha-pad (the fourth state) of absorption in Par-Brahm.

— Editor.

calls it. It comes to those who have been elevated to the friendship of the higher unseen worlds of the soul. There are innumerable worlds beyond; there is an infinite number of spirits and even ghosts there; there are saints and adepts and saviours of men, gods and angels, just as there are thousands of species of living men and animals, birds, trees and things here. To form friendships there, one has but to call upon Guru Nanak, to practise *Simrin* or Remembrance of Him. This is the person of the Guru that saves one from a hundred torments in the lower regions of the Unseen, and from the despair of dreary loneliness of the darkened Beyond.

Nam, the Guru says, “spreads the cool shade over the heads of the disciples in yonder realms where there is so much heat and oppression.”¹ and *Nam* is the passage to the best worlds beyond death. “*Nam* is, therefore, the highest spiritual culture. *Nam* is the highest love. The highest realms beyond are where the great lovers of God, these constantly uttering His Name, dwell and they are powerful and they save men by the sheer might of their spirit.”² They are kind, gentle, and merciful, and oceans are not so powerful as they. *Nam* is literally “name” but we all live by names—our life and history is sweetened by names. As here, so there.

Physical union takes place just for a moment, but the sweet memory of it lasts through both time and space. Remembrance is true love and God melts to us in our remembrance, of Him. As here, so there; He is ecstasy and spontaneous elevation come to our soul. This greatness to which the Guru calls us is of the soul. It consists not in physical size or mental calibre; nor in the expanse of worldly wisdom and experience. It is not of the aristocratic art and refinement and the sick aestheticism

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1. Sukhmani, Ashtpadi 2
 2. Reflection of Japuji, Sloka.

— Editor.
— Editor.

of the finite, or of the military arts of an Alexander or a Napoleon; nor is it of the ghostly magic of acquaintances with mere spirits beyond these eyes of the lower death-worlds of desire. Magic and miracle, power of any kind that subordinates others are attainments ('tastes') of a very low level.¹

This greatness that the Guru contemplates is of perfected humanity, of its love, beauty. It is of freedom from desire and of freedom from the inglorious self-aggrandisement of all kinds: it is of the greatness of pure song, pure joy, pure goodness, singing "Glory, Glory to God."¹ The Guru sings of the good, the pure, the beautiful; it is the Song of Love : "Thine ! Thine ! Thine !"

And peal after peal rises from the Guru's heart for the man who has risen above the ego to the vision of such glory of God, and for the man, who, at every turn, is filled with the spiritual gladness that says, Thy will be done."³ It is moral perfection. It is selflessness of man in his noblest manifestation. It is the victorious opposite of "Nature red in tooth and claw."⁴

The Guru loves man and animal. To him they are great manifestations of the spirit, and he, with his boundless sympathy, works them into the soul of a whole people as great truths.

When a thousand of us gathered together chant "*Anand Sahib*"⁵ of the third Guru, it seems we, men and women are singing some eternal wedding song.

The Guru speaks of the land and the state where love reigns supreme, where angels gather in holy songs; where beauty is all the music and truth and life; where service is gladness of

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| 1. Cf. Japuji 29 | — Editor. |
| 2. This is a beautiful transcription of Wahguru. | — Editor. |
| 3. Echoes Guru Arjan's <i>Tera kiya mitha lage</i> . | — Editor. |
| 4. This line occurs in Tennyson's <i>In Memoriam</i> . | — Editor. |
| 5. In Ramkali, in the Granth Sahib. | — Editor. |

soul as intoxicating as drinking of wine, as exhilarating as love come to a beautiful maiden for the first time, as her pure divine, budding, rosy youth; where there is no oppression, no compulsion, where each has an unlimited kingdom, whose sovereignty is eternal.

Guru Nanak is our King of Heaven, and we can reach Him only through His love. "The Way", says the Guru, "is *Nam* and there is no other way." *Nam* breaks the chains of the ego which make the soul a prisoner in eternal loneliness. *Nam* liberates. In its solitude is society and in its society a throbbing solitude. There is no liberty except in and with the company of the celestials who gather in the magic garden of *Nam*. All life is an effort for this soul-fusion. *Nam* is union.

Nām is that by which our very flesh becomes a mind and a memory, by which our limbs are struck dumb with the maddening relish of the touch of the flesh of God.¹ Or is it body become soul, meeting the Pure Soul ?

Nām is a phenomenon of the soul which comes as the after-effect of the inner reaction that takes place, under certain undetermined conditions, between the Guru and the Disciple. Guru Nanak calls this reaction "*Guru Prashadi !*"² This reaction transmutes the metal to man, as the philosophers store does. All merits and virtues, till this inner illumination comes, are but weariness of flesh. And so are all vices. But after the *soul-reaction*, "*Guru Prashadi*" all is truly vindicated, all is truly re-evaluated. The Guru is for giving a spiritual direction to humanity. Once directed God-ward, Guru-ward, he leaves man alone to a free and unhampered development. Religiosity has been the curse of the world and the worst bondage for the mind of man. He puts his disciples to farming, to wood-cutting,

1. This is an echo of Christianity.

- Editor.

2. Lit. By the holy master's grace.

- Editor.

to building cities, to raising new commerce-centres; and all the activity of men so directed, the Guru calls religious. And he insists that the toilers on land or on sea should be holy as priests, informed of God's Beauty, who is love. Religion is the greatest freedom. The Guru does not say "do this", "don't do that." He only raises your face up to the Beauty of God and says repeatedly, "Grow, little flower. Grow for ever. I work in your veins and arteries. I work in your soul. You be what your vision shall be. I shall make you a man. I am determined to make you a god. This invested man, transmuted man and God-directed Man is the embodiment of Nam !"

Remember, you are His. And knowing as a fact that He is and stands by you, in the field, on the river bank, in your bed; and comforts you when you are distressed, live by the sweat of your brow. Earn and distribute; this is the way of the good man.¹

Be man, full of charity for all. Let there be no frontiers to your human sympathy. You are as much of God as you have sympathy. Let mercy be your law of religion; He loves your law of life.

Men and women ! labour ye together on the fields singing the Guru's hymns. Create the wheat grains which are the sustenance of man; clothe him, feed him, give him comfort and rest when he visits you.

This is the first and most exquisite fragrance of the Guru. Praise the Creator. Be this your vocation. Freely distribute your bread and song on the roadside of life. Hoard not. Trust the Guru. Call upon Him who sustains the smallest insect in the stray crevices of rocks.²

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1. Echo of Guru Nanak's teaching, *Ghal khai kichh hathaun deh*, and in *Var Asa*. — Editor.
 2. Cf. *Rahiras* — Editor.

Your share has been bestowed upon you. Fear not, be not anxious for yourself. The Guru looks after you. Be such the renunciation of your selfishness. In difficulties, in times of need, call upon me, I shall stand by you, says the Guru. And help will surely come to you from unexpected quarters.

Suffer death, hunger, nakedness with equal joy, for you have seen Truth when you have seen the Guru, and for them who know Truth, the bread that sustains them is different.

You know how all inflict pain here to live themselves with ease. Such is the inertia of material life; and when you suffer and refuse to inflict pain as others, do, the whole Creation rejoices at sight of you. In a holy man's suffering there is no meaning for people of little faith : holy men suffer because of a mandate from their God !

Sorrow is the share of the living saints. Know, there is no difference between God and His saints, as the wave is not different from the sea. They live as a divine event in the chain of events whose beginning and end is not visible ; live trusting yourselves to the Guru.

They call this way the way of resignation to His will, but it is not so; it is the way of love that trusts and doubts not. You live for Him, dedicated to Him; and it pleases you, since all that happens to you is but His will and of His will.

To live with the Beloved One, and be His joy is the great desire of lovers.

Behold the Glory of *Kartar*, the Creator; all is well as it happens. All shall be well. God is the Guru makes God manifest.

Let the blessed state of peace and repose be inspired by your full passion for the Guru, so that it may cause you intense delight to live in Him, in His beauty; for love consists in drinking His beauty under all outward conditions of life.

All outward conditions of life are passing; but love abides for ever and your realization of His Love is thus everlasting.

And in the march of events, wait the coming of the Beloved to you in a real, vivid, personal manner, as a woman waits for her spouse who is gone away on his travels. And like her, be excited inwardly with the joy and pain of love, yet outwardly be self-controlled, modest and self-possessed, quivering with the eternal desire for union.

Like her, let your lips be sealed with the immensity of love. Let your eyes burn like hers, with the light that calls with star-like mystery on the Divine Spouse.

When you have seen the Guru, conceal your passion like Nature itself, and let your beauty be seen and felt in the whole of the silent you. Be your lovelit labour such ! Without His Love, without being wedded to Him, all labour is a curse.

All vital and creative rapture must be concealed; is so concealed by the very nature of things. For do not men conceal the source of their transient pleasure ? Conceal your raptures of spirit, soul, for it is the music of the soul that is disturbed by descriptions, expositions and explanations, as well as by vain and idle curiosity.

II

Talk not of your love; still less of your highest love, religion, for by talking of it you will waste it away.

Talk freely only of things which are unravelled by talking. Be gay and happy over matters of wit and reason, and over matters which give you the understanding of each other.

What use is bandying words and wasting of breath on things and themes of which no one can tell the meaning or the answer ?

What use describing the indescribable to those who have neither the ear to hear the Ineffable, nor eyes to see the Unseeable, not that feeling with which a blind mother can feel the presence of her son and thus see the Unseen and know the Unknowable ?

Not these the markets for that jewel for these the buyers thereof. When there comes one, then unlock the doors of your treasure-house and show your heaps of gems burning within.

Beware when you talk. There is power in you which makes a whole unreal universe of things look so real. Later, this unreal assumes shapes of the real and you are flung away from the great realities of your soul for the sake of very small things, by these petty delusions of your mind, by your vain words. You are then separated from your Beloved.

So be quiet. Look up to Me, name Me, says the Guru. Call upon Me as children call on the mother, for the cup of rapture and knowledge is in the hands of the Divine Spouse and He gives as He wishes.

Everything your soul needs by way of grace, beauty, knowledge, everything of My side of your life goes from here; you must look up and be passive, wholly passive.

No help can be for you if you break not the barriers of the "ego". Do not shut yourself through pride of knowledge of the Not-self, against Me. This shutting up of your soul to Me turns all virtues into vices.

My religion is of naming Him; and those alone know of that Name, who have drunk of the cup of the Spouse.

My religion is His love and that love, too, is a thing of the soul, a light from the heart of that world of God. It is the inebriation that is in the cup of the master. This love of God is the state of fearlessness and the very immortality-in-flesh.¹

This wine is of the inspiration of God and they know of it who have drunk from the cup of the Husband.²

Know, when man and woman think they are united, they

1. This state is of the jivan-mukta—one liberated while living or in the flesh.

— Editor.

2. These are symbols for God, as in Gurubani.

— Editor.

are not. When the mother meets the son, they meet not. Union of which I tell you is different, it is very rare. When the adamantine walls of the ego fall, when the soul's utter isolation is destroyed, when its chains drop, when the soul is free, with God's love and by His favour, the disciple fuses into the Guru, the Guru into the disciple.¹ Of this union that union is but a symbol when on rare occasions, man melts into woman, woman into man. The intervals for the disciple are filled with the memory thereof as the veritable inspiration, while for man and woman the interval is filled up by vain desire for this union again, which is beyond them.

As two birds, male and female, shut in strong iron cages might flutter in vain within their cages to meet each other, so do men and women try to be united to each other, but only the cages clash. The cages break not, the souls fly not and there is no true union. In the disciple, it is submission to that great ecstasy of union and the disciple is as a virgin still waiting for the Bridegroom to come and meet her. The disciple has become a passionate song and a lyric, and the desire of union a vibration of memory, a holy remembrance.

Lo ! the moment has come and you have toiled up to this Grace of God. And the time is ripe, there is the Husband raising to your lips the Cup. Drink, O Disciple ! Behold the Sun, its falling from the folds of the Sun-Turbanned Guru.

You have met Him. Henceforth no breath shall go in vain, even if you try to waste it in affairs of darkness, for it would be as difficult for you to darken the Sun you have not seen, as it was for you to make the Sun you had not seen, rise in the sky.

No step shall go astray, all steps shall go forward on the path in the direction from where your Sun rises in your heart.

1. The identity of the Master and the Disciple is an accepted doctrine of Sikhism. - Editor.

Sleep well, for you might meet him to whom you can send no message, from whom no message comes to you.¹

Sleep, for you may see that Beautiful one and your sleep shall be full of sweet dreams of Him.

Remember, I have no surface-name that all men and things have. I am he who sings love and sweetness in your heart and soul, and this love and this sweetness never had a name. The honey of the Divine Presence is its name. When I say, "Name Him" you know what is meant. Be not ignorant and merely tell not beads !

Listen, thou disciple ! Be so full of the nectar of God's Name that you be like a living fountain, where men and women may come to drink His Praise !

In the deep recesses of your soul let there be love, that is the sacred Name of God, dwelling in you. If that be there, the life on earth, as you then might live it is all love, a living sing of Divine love.

Says the Lord : Those living in the lower worlds of desire, and ignorant of this soul-fusion, the *Nām* shall know Me only through you, and from the beams of holiness that they may see on your face. For to them who have not seen Me, I can be nothing more than a vague shadow of the past, unless they come and see Me in you. The philosophers, I shall only be a ghost made up of vaporous thinking.

So, O disciple, you must be on earth as both you and Me. And this union of you and Me shall be the figure of *Nām*, the Name of God, for those who are yet too deep in the valleys to have a glimpse of the far off snows.

And I promise my company always to you, in the Name of

1. Echo of Guru Nanak's beautiful hymn in Wadhans : "Morin run jhun laiya" in which the sight of the Divine Beloved comes to the devotee in dream.

God that you alone of others have heard from my own lips. You have seen its colour, and it has the same shape, the same glow, the same beauty. You are satisfied that the word is God. I am but a Song.

My song is Me. When you are singing My songs, I am with you. But all singing, all vain naming, I tell you, has not and cannot have that meaning which it has after you have seen Me, touched Me, and have drunk the wine of the cup of the Spouse. Without drinking of the cup, without fusing into Me, even my song cannot have its true meaning clear to you. You will degrade it into superstition and degenerate. I am as passionate for you as you are for the woman you love, and the woman towards you; but you know the joy of true union is beyond both of you. Yet the joy rarely felt provides you the union of remembrance through all days and nights. So shall it be with you and Me and My word, through eternity. The soul-fusion where "I" and "You" are transcended is the true song of Love. Know, therefore, O disciple that they shall sense me in your labours. They shall not know Me from you by word of mouth, even as you never knew me by any word of mouth.

You have taken long to come to me; remember, how much you toiled and longed for and sought and worked and laboured and cried for Me ! Seeing you for your sake they shall now be spared all that agony of love you have gone through. Their way is easier, for one amongst them has found the way. But they shall find it only in the infinite gladness of your being, and their not knowing is but through you.

Conceal, therefore, my name from all who do not yet know me, and publish the nameless spirit that is human love become divine in your presence, and by your presence, and in you manifested.

Do not confine God in names that have no meaning. Confine not God who is Love, in the lines of colour and creed.

He is beyond form and feature and colour !¹

Those who did not know Me, divided man into groups and sects to be separate and alone by themselves; it was the sowing of hatred. Religion thus become the curse of man, his worst bondage.

And all hatred is due to their having preached their names and sowed not the name of God, the great name of love, in the soul of man.

Therefore, O disciple, beware lest you preach empty names, Preach if you can, but union is unpreachable; it can only be effected. You cannot preach, you can only be it !

Let your love and labour and your aching silence publish the Name of God like the stars that shine and yet are silent. Their silence imparts eternity to their message !

Till they have seen Me, their surface vices and virtues are of little worth; their reading of scriptures on the river banks, in yellow, pure silk,² is as good as the singing of the dancing-girls in the theatre halls; centres of religion are as much the cause of death of the soul as gambling dens; the humanitarian is on the same earth, on the same plane of existence as that in which the depraved street woman lives; her physical compulsions are exactly those of a great scholar or of a pious man. A new spiritual life opens before them only when the dawn of soul breaks upon them. Guru Parshad³ and the sun of Love rises without reckoning the deeds of men; we may say the Sun knows not the names and deeds of darkness. It only knows its own light and the flowers that blow in the blithe morning. As the Sun is born for you, out of the gloom of night, so who knows—a man, a woman may shine out of the dark depths of

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| 1. Echoes the opening lines of Guru Gobind Singh's Jap. | — <i>Editor.</i> |
| 2. This colour is the Buddhist monk's wear. | — <i>Editor.</i> |
| 3. Divine grace. | — <i>Editor.</i> |

what you call vice ? Therefore, judge not ! Sometimes the highest powers are born in a vicious environment and are bred there, as a tree growing in filthy land may bud with all its canopy and spread its shades over a temple of God. The secret of Truth of life is in the Guru's love of you, not in your love of Him: in the Guru's acceptance of you, not of your acceptance of Him.

I, many times, love to accept the flowers offered to me by even a harlot; I love to accept the acute prayer in the faint groans of a dying doe, in the last cry of a sinner; but the eloquent words of priests offering prayers, and burning incense at their altars offends me.

There are times when antelopes in distress; aye, snakes in pain—know Me more than men.

The sparrow that fills her beak with water from the running river and looks up to the empty sky finds Me in her allayed thirst more than men in their acute thirst for knowledge of Me.

Hence, be not proud that you are more than birds of the air and beasts of the forest and trees.

At times the birds' vain flying and rushing upwards reaches Me more than the glistening, lofty spires of your temples.

The shade of trees is a city to Me and your cities but heaps of burning desire, that are falling to ashes. Animals in their dumb longing for Me are hymns of silence and their music delights my heart. The music of your harps and citharas and guitars is heaviness that drives Me out into the wilderness of pines, where the passing winds strike the music of God and I feel refreshed.

The little ant has silver anklets on her feet, you have not seen them; I hear her lyrics of prayer sooner than the trumpeting of wild, strong elephants.¹

1. Echo of one of Guru Gobind Singh's prayers.

O disciples, be not proud and vain of your piety and worship of Me; nor of your moral elevation over others. Do not judge all from your own knowledge of the absolute; there are many ways of knowledge of the Absolute. Many are the mere accidents of life through which men find the way to Me. At times accidents open the royal roads to Me.

Idol worship ! I kiss the maiden come for the first time to bathe that shapeless stone with milk and water with her hands, but she has come unconsciously naming Me in her soul. No one has heard her utterance; neither you nor she herself and she knows not that I have met her; only she feels supremely happy. The moment of this supreme happiness comes to all, even those wrapped in many-coloured rags of superstitions. As in the cloud, the lightning spark is hidden and burns it not.

So in frail superstitions of wind-blown hair, the half-closed eyes of joy, the unsteady steps of a devotee, the insane melting away, melting away into some one not yet seen, I live and meet all. You have not found me yet.

If some think they meet Me on the heights, they are mistaken, for I live in small huts in the valleys below, and they climb the heights in vain.

I am both the soil-tiller who looks up to the Sun, the stars, kisses his wife and child; and anon is naked and starved; and I am the jewel-wearer, the king, who is locked in the embrace of pleasures. I, too, love pleasures and that is why I will make you, though ground down by misery, happy.

But if you seek Me in pleasure, I am the lonely anchorite, despising the rotten, putrid odours of flesh that you love to kiss, thinking to kiss me. You have not found me yet.

Deny your natural charity of heart and mind to no one. Enquire no one's claims to your gifts of kindness and forgiveness. Give ! Give ! Give ! God is the Giver. To be like God, you must give. And you cannot be yourself till you have

given the whole of yourself to the Guru, and still you make ready to hold yourself in perpetual joy of His service. No self-sacrifice or self-surrender shall be enough for your joy in Me. Are you so happy ? Then know you have met me. Be as the clouds of mercy, fly as rainless vapour or when so hidden, break like a rain of mercy; wait for the signal of the Guru and obey.

Be as the tree, send your roots into the being of the Guru, slowly absorbing His essence in the dark, unknown infinite soil of life; and go on absorbing for aeons the pleasure of Me, without ever getting weary. For every breath will be new to you because of Me. Only will they be tired and fatigued, who have not tasted Me in the Infinite.

Remember, I am the sweetness of all things.

Spread your leaves, breathing Me as the Light of Heaven, and thus naming Me forever, be as full blown flowers, with your veins full of the warmth of eternal spring !

So grow in yourself the Guru, and give shade, give fruits and flowers and simple welcome of your full-grown branches to those who come weary of their travels of life, to whom life is still a torment.

Under your shade, for a while, let them have the comfort of God that they find nowhere else; let them have, under your shade, the quiet solace that is found nowhere in the excitement of senses or the intellect or art or even in the loves of men with women, that pass as the excitement of Spring.

And let them have the quiet solace of the Guru's bosom, who in autumn and dreary winter have come to know that all relations, the lovers of the wayside were too self-engrossed, were mere shadows of a far-off memory. Let them know all were too poor to give that gift to love that holds its votaries in its arms beyond death and through all the storms that rage over the head of man, and clings to him to save him despite all his faults and imperfections.

Let also those, who find at last that these relations of the waking illusions are not of love, but of passing likes and dislikes of a transient and unreliable self, have from you the glimpse of the Guru's grace. And let it be also the share of those who loved and lost, having seen the Beloved from their own angle, and once strayed from that angle, were rendered incapable of loving Him. Give it to the wife cast out when she turned her heart away from her husband, and to the husband left by the wife when a lovelier person was found. Give to all such weary travellers the foretaste of the GURU's great love that, like the sunlight, embraces all and asks neither name nor deed nor even that faithfulness of conventional mores that man needs by way of requited love.

Man always longs to be faithful to the highest in him and that is why you find him so often faithless to his own ill-made choices. But the Guru's love goes on for aeons, following those who turn their back on Him, and goes gathering the wanderers as the shepherd searches the strayed sheep and brings all home and comforts them.

Great is God's love; no mother can love her child more. God runs bare-footed from Heaven to save a crying elephant from the teeth of death, the there He flings His shining disc to save the living from the jaws of death.¹

His shining spears² are flung into the empty gulfs, into the gaping mouths of dead darkness of illusion.

And night flies before the dawn that breaks from the brow of the Guru.

Death is conquered ! Rejoice !

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1. These figures are redolent of Puranic legends of Vishnu-Bhakti in India.
— *Editor.*
 2. The image of the spear may have been derived from Blake, the English poet of mysticism.
— *Editor.*

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Think not of miracles, for in no sense can you reach the significance of the Guru as the miracle-worker. If He choose not, you will never know Him by miracles.

But you have seen all miracles when you have seen the Guru. The Guru is the greatest miracle-worker. He pours love into your soul and makes you see what you had never seen before.

If the birth of the sun in the morning, the moon at night, and the wonder of the stars shining in the heart of black night give you not enough of the wonder of "Whence ? O Whither ?", then the shock to your reason given by the little stirring of the Infinite in the consciousness of man would not impart to you the true knowledge of that great wonder.

Your curiosity is as a simple rustic that never needs any real knowledge; it always judges in its own way and passes. Know you, that healing the sick, raising the dead, walking on waters, flying in the air, reading the minds of man, insect, or animal, subjugating beasts by the magic wand—all this can create no greater faith in hidden things than all that you do kindles wonder in you. After a while, you pay no heed to such miracles, for you love your little humanities more than those wonders that are in the touch of the dust of the men come from the higher worlds you yet know not of.

The true miracle is when the Guru sends a man down from His realms; all that he does is miracle He himself is a miracle. He is always, in all ages, whenever He appears amongst you, more than all that you had seen or heard or done before; and yet He is a man like you. Only, whatever He says comes to pass, whatever He touches is made whole with the ease with which you wink your eyes You remember his wonder-working humanity for centuries and yet you can never do what He did and in the way in which he did. Seek you therefore, the wonder

of Creation and if you truly see and wait, there can be no end to the wonder of our unknown destiny.

Wonder fills the mind of man with the light that no one has yet seen, with the sound that no one has yet heard. You hear names that no one has yet pronounced. The thrill of love comes to your soul that no one has ever before yet sensed. And new meanings of yourself and life and death dawn in your heart, such as no one had ever read to you. You read yourself ! You have no need to read what others read for you.

Know you, that believing is always blind, but it is the blindness that can feel its way onward by an omniscient touch; it can grope ! The blindness that steps forward is better than the idle wish to see the path that winds beyond a million stars with the broken lamps of the mind's eyes, of the reason that dies at night.

Long is the journey and far away the Mansion of the King of Love. Blind or lame, man or woman, up ! You have to travel the path on your own feet, on hands or heads; the light of the way shines on your blind going on !

Therefore, you disciples, believe when I tell you, there is a world beyond this world; there is a Sun beyond the Sun, a life beyond life. Your present toy-realities here will be as faint illusions beyond recall there, and what here are the illusions of the dreams of the prophets and the faithful, the mere chimeras of the fancies of God's devotees, will be mighty realities there.

What is day here is night there; the night there is day here.

Here the miracles seem to you so ordinary, and many of you toil so hard all your lives to gain the power of subjugating and overwhelming all by some stray uncommonness; there every waving of an arm is as the shower of blessing, every glance full of the enchantment of love, and no one shall have the leisure from the deep raptures of union with Him even to think. What need then has one for power or for authority ? In that slumber

of joy, are not prince and pauper alike ?

With God, all are happy and free. Poverty is not easy anywhere. We need be poor to be truly noble here to show what misery is the happiness of the rich; but we shall be happy and all-sufficient unto ourselves. Here the rich are miserable and small of soul; heaps of gold do not make men rich; they are poor wretches, more miserable than the poor and all are self-deceived. But up there none is poor; the joy of heaven makes kings of all. There each one has a kingdom so infinite that no one else can assail it with the violence of might.

God is a lord, an absolute monarch, who makes many like Himself joy in His absolute monarchy.

Poor indeed, is the vision of those miserable levellers of things high and low who think Him as poor and miserable as those that are made to grovel in abject squalor here on earth.

Those of you who seek by being poor to reach God, and those of you who seek to rob others to be rich and comfortable also to reach God—both do not know what is in Heaven. That lustre of the soul is yet unknown to you !

The rich are dead to it, and the poor have not reached it. Your asking all to be poor contains not yet the visions of the reality beyond; for it is all different from what you think.

As mere dying and living is of no consequence, mere arranging and rearranging of the heaps of wealth can have but idle intent.

Be poor, if you feel you are thereby nearer the Guru, and with equal reason, be rich if you feel you are thus nearer Him.

But oppress no one, injure no one, hurt no one, break no one's heart, rob no one of his or her beauty of soul, for no one is nearer to His God who is not kind. Freedom given first to others and through their joy to oneself, is the essential condition of being men. All angelic goodness is the after-effect of self-realisation. Love comes first and all else is added thereto.

In Heaven all is compassion; justice is forgiveness and absolute freedom is the law of love.

Rapture alone is the true service of God. Faith is no faith if you keep it by argument and by saying this is that, and that is this, and so it is, and so must it be, and thus it ought to be.

If you have to sustain it forever by an effort of will or a vow or a vigil, then it has not the spontaneous sweetness of the love of God.

Religion which is to be bought or achieved at great cost is not worth having, for what is not of me can never be of me.

When a man sees the Sun, he has no more those strange fears that over-powered him at night. Faith is direct knowledge of the Guru, just as in your travels you have the knowledge of your city, home and friends left behind.

It is no personal and private knowledge that no one of these different journeys you thus undertake, knows of the contents of your memory. Spiritual realities are the contents of your inner memory.

How vain is life poor or rich or sick or healthy, wretched or happy, if you have not your memory full of the love of the Guru.

You see the sun, and you see the moon rising in the sky, the stars shine and you press your breast and say, it is "I"; but you see not that *within, without, behind, beyond* is He alone.

If you have not filled your memory with Me, I tell you faith is a wax toy. You are not yet a little child who is full of the name and presence of its mother. Toil for the ripening of your youth; then, and at the bend of the road yonder, far, far away, I promise, I will surprise you.

When your eyes meet Mine and receive the flame of love, then will burn the lamp of faith in the shrine of your heart.

You may be asleep or awake, you may be in dust or lounging in languid ease, you may be poor or rich, king or

peasant—you will know what you can never know me by any other means, after you have truly met me.

Only then will you know that riches and poverty are as clothes and ornaments, things of the choice of your own joy. Better some day to be rich, another day to be poor.

I will be by your side arranging your tresses when you are wild, and bear with you; for you never know when I will lie with you at night and warm your sleep. There shall be no difference in the sweet slumber of love in your eyes, whether you be on a throne or in the dust.

When you have known Me thus, your every hair will name Me. Every hair shall be a tongue full of praise and thankfulness, and to you, it would then be nothing short of cutting off tongues if you let cut a tiny hair of your body. Every hair breathes the rapture of love, as do the petals of the flower. As leaves are to the trees, as wings to the birds, you will then find, in every hair, a breath that sends forth a peal of "Naming Him." Till then even your whole body means little to you. Sometimes you get tired of it out of fear, or distress, or ennui, even so tired as to destroy it, not knowing that such cannot be the speedy end of human life. And all your sorrow or ennui or weariness was of the soul, not of the body, as you so listlessly cut your hair. "The body was your greatest opportunity and you gladly lost it. Strange, you are losing it all your life. What joy is in wasting your body in vain pursuits? Your pleasures bite you and yet you know not. The body makes the soul so invisible to you, while the body is but a vehicle of the splendour of the soul.

The only cure for the utter futility of physical life towards which your outgoing senses drive you, and finally uproot you out of the infinite as trees are uprooted by a storm, is your living deep down in the dignity of the divine and the beautiful and breathing the sympathetic spirit of the great mystery of life and death.

Plough the earthen soil for wheat and plough the soil of the heart for love, the soil of the soul for life.

This world is *Kartarpur*, City of the Creator. These are mansions of the King.

Work to awaken men to their destiny of this gladness of soul. Gather no taxes and go and give away all wealth that gathers round you in taxes of love. Live and let others live. Desire not anyone's woman or wealth. And suffer in self-poignancy of soul if you think they must come to you. Resign to others what you covet in secret renunciation of everything.

Renunciation of all pleasures is the highest pleasure to the truly cultured; renunciation of all possessions is the highest possession of the truly cultured. How much subtle selfishness still sways you, how far away are you from the delectable atmosphere of those great moral heights of true culture.

Discard greed and lust and desire, for it you know not the freedom of the soul, know that today it may be in your power to oppress and rob others, tomorrow it will be in their power to ruin you. And there will be no end to savagery and blindness.

Somewhere it must end, let it end in you. There can be no freedom for you if you do not free yourself from your blind fury or desire.

There is nowhere, at no time, any comfort for you in the outer universe, if your inner is tossed on the tempests of anger and lust, greed of possession of things and women.

Know that all jealousy that comes to you is due to your own inner fever and illness; it is sickness of possession to call all things yours and wishing to have all for yourself. This is the great violence to your soul by the ignorance of Desire.

If God sends you a wife, welcome her, labour for her, feed her, clothe her and sustain her with your love as a river sustains the birds that come to it. If God send you children, welcome them, serve them, feed them and sustain them with your love

as the sun feeds the earth with light.

All human faces are the happy faces of the flowers of God's great garden of creation, and all gather like the trees in the garden. They gather in God; only they come and just group by you. Look at them and be happy and be at peace with the universe. Do not think they group round your shape and form, for your shape and form by itself has no charm.

Be kind to them and gather the laughter of children and their smiles and their slumbers in your soul, for they are the vital emanations of God.

But if the wife goes away and if the children turn away from you, let them; for they are as free as you when you were a new-born babe. The babe had no such things when he came to this world; they were added to it and it can again be as happy without them as once it was. Surely, man is truly dignified in his own moral stature. Not how much faithful others are to you, but how much of it you are to your God and to your love, is what matters.

The woman and child of man are free, no slaves. The laws of man are wrong and they offend the law of God if they establish any right of man over woman or of woman over man or man over man, All relations and ties are of sweet pleasure that wanders; it is free to wander and be happy where it can be. The best of man has to come out and be free to choose and be happy and faithful.

And He surely wills not if they separate and love to live outside that particular group of bushes that once grew together in His garden of Eden.

Delight not in any love forced out of slaves of vows, of custom or of compulsion or ignorance. Such love is a curse. To first enslave humanity and then to call for its faithfulness to the will of the tyrant is the ancient brutality of mere physical power.

Service received from such miserable ones is itself wretchedness; love is then a chronic sickness of the soul, and you are not a man yet, if you receive forced loves tainted with even the least compulsion.

Like a man, never interfere with the choice of souls. Freedom is eternally theirs. Wait. All is well, for God indwells everyone of us—in woman no less than man, and in animal no less than in both; and in trees no less than in all other forms of life. In lands and waters is He, and the forest is beautiful because of Him; the very blades of grass have the exquisite pride of Him, they know He is with them.

I declare woman is free; she is the architect of love on this earth, and she must be free. By slavery man has degraded her. How ridiculous for her to adorn her hair and face and form and figure for the mere animal pleasure of man !

Shame on society, where she is to find her pleasure in man's vague sense of himself. Long have you used her thus, and woman is all unwomaned by man. Harbour no jealousy of her and possess no woman unless in the simple and sweet trembling of the lyrics of *Nām*.

Without *Nām*, the flashes of love of a mere man light the human heart for a moment. Man, like a child, delights in the flesh; then all his life mistakes man for God. He ruins both woman and child.

The bliss of life lies in *Nām* where all are kind; no one is cruel or jealous or unjust—nay, where they are more than just, they are forgiveness itself.¹

The moments come from Heaven and pass and those moments are divine; and the next instant all are as clouds devoid of the glow of the trembling red of the setting sun or the silver white of the soft moon of the night.

1. Cf. Ravi Das's hymn in Guru Granth : Beghampura shahar ko naun. (Gauri, page 345) — Editor.

They who truly know, forgive. Justice is a property of the lower realms and is forever blind and unjust, for it knows not the time, the moment when God comes and when He goes away from us. So all justice is in being kind in the *Nami*¹ society. Where the law of love operates, there is only Justice : None is to be deprived of freedom, no one is to be deprived of the benefits of His mercy. Go, woman, you have your life, to hold it on your palm and you are to come alone free and self-possessed to the door of the Guru. Here alone is freedom of soul for you; even though you be a sinner, you are free—the Guru acquits you.

The rapture of your being so realized in the Guru, recognises no husbands, no children, no masters, no slaves. All are the Guru's servitors. All is His. Nothing is ours ! We surrender for ever.

All those distinctions are of the common moments when the mind is not dead in God, when labour of limbs for bread calls man and woman and child to the field, where the golden corn ripens and the woman harvests and the man husbands and the children gather the ears and the bullocks tread and make wheat and straw. And when the waters flow and grind the corn and the fire burns and bread is baked and all—"Angel, ox and ass" sit together and dine and remember their God and give to the Guru and love each other as they laugh and talk and live. And this empty expanse of life on earth is just lighted by those bright flashes of God when all is Gold. The *Nam*-mood of man and woman is the sun that lights their path.

To keep woman heavily laden with ornaments behind the veil, away from field and farm, to conceal her like your gems in sandalwood boxes, in the golden chest, behind heavy screens of false honour and false shame and impure virtue, is a barbarity

1. Where the *Nam* reigns.

— Editor.

that poisons hearth and home, denies God and makes the human soul a toy, life an oppression, a suffocation, death; and of love, self-respect, honour and virtue a dead mockery ! Shame on such society, down with it !

This sword-forced order is chaos, if the soul is not abounding in freedom in God.

Make a new society of freed souls, and have no law except the law of the Love of God. Burn all scriptures that enslave you as do the kings of the earth. What is religion, if man, to be man, needs centuries and so much struggle ?

Come, let the women distribute bread and water and milk of human kindness; you be *men*.

There is no distress in this world but hunger, no greater misery than slavery, no greater pang and agony than love when suffering pain of separation from the Beloved.

Those who broadcast their cheap prayers and wishes are hypocrites. Better hoard your prayers, but hoard not at all what might go ever so little a way to quench the thirst and appease the hunger, aye, even of one more by your side. Behold, God comes first to man's door as a man and is hungry. God needs a loaf of bread and a cup of water and a roof to shelter his head.¹

But remēmbēr, bread is blood, it poisons if it is not offered to the God in man with love. Better be misers of bread, give not at all if you have no gladness of giving to God, and weight your noble intentions when you are in the lowest and meanest moments of your spirit. And see if you have the utmost gladness in the least of your moments. What is that little least in you today, the Guru asks to be the all in you.

Giving alms is a curse, if given in the spirit of arrogance. Never give alms if you feel the giving of it decreases the

1. Cf. The New Testament.

substance of the soul in you. Do not think of man in distress—who are you to think of him? First think if you are not in worse distress yourself, when in the ebb-time of your soul you are not in the highest tide of giving all you have.

Doing good is poison that sometimes kills the doer—have you ever known this? Let men do as they choose, but all your doing must be only of “Naming Him and for Naming Him”. Without Naming Him, life is but a process of burning¹, your very breathing is a kind of sin, and all is vanity.

You have not come here to give or take or to gain virtue or vice; these are empty names. Your acts and idle views and thoughts about men and things are as the vain rising of the waves on the surface of the sea. Such things have no meaning in spite of your thinking much about them, and about yourself.

Help, if you can, the manifestation of God and the Guru in your gifts and your song. You have come here as a revelation of the soul. What are you if you reveal not Him?

Life without sympathy is as the rotting of a fruit inside a fine-looking skin.

Without Him, life is horror as the stabs of the butcher’s knife, places are as graves, the wine cups as the cutting of sharp poniards. Paradise is the dustfloor with the Beloved². What are thrones without Him?

V

The mothers of bird, beast and man love without an effort; they have not to learn the art of loving from any one, it is the wisdom God gave them. How foolish it is for you to think you can get love by any effort.

Some men are born kind, and some are cruel—great is the blessing of one and great the curse of the other. Mothers of the

1. Echo of Gurbani in Todi V (p. 712).

2. Echoes Guru Gobind Singh’s hymn, *Mittar piyare nan hul muridan da kehna*. — Editor.

race desire the birth of God as man; no other fruit of the labour of motherhood do they desire.

Alas ! in the human bodies, the man is not yet born. A true man is the beloved of God, who has His love in his heart without even knowing it. To such a man, who has the love of God in his heart, I speak as the Guru's disciple. Such love cannot be born of effort and what is produced by effort is not simple. What is not simple, shall be dissolved.

Renunciation, asceticism, training in arts of concentration, Yoga long silence, vows of celibacy and all such things, beyond what is forever comprehended and resumed in living a simple good, sincere human life of honest ignorance¹, honest labour like the bees of the hive and like the birds of the forest is merely a mechanical perfection—truly an accomplishment which by itself can have no value in the true progress of man. Like a gem, it can adorn good ear, a sparkling forehead, otherwise it is all dead accomplishment, buried in a box of lead.

Love is always His Creations, His favour, His handicraft as the stars in their lustre or as the little blades of grass feel the delight of waving their heads in the air,

Love is not a thing of attainment or training !

And still greater is the mystery that is all comes about by the merest chance. By the merest chance we meet God. By the merest chance, we meet our best friends. So unknowable is the perfection of God's cosmic process of making men out of stubble.

And such is the scheme of revelation here that you cannot meet Him, except in an infinite scattering—almost haphazard scattering—of events.

In human life, too, we do not meet by meeting, we do not separate by separating. We just meet for a far-off happy

1. Here reference is to Sahj, the process of 'simple', faith.

moment, in star-scattered silver points of souls. We meet even when separated from each other; and we do not meet even if we meet in a physical or mental sense. In a merest point, we meet and the rest is memory of that union, and we continue to live in but sweet remembrance of that silver-point meeting.

A lamp of the heart shines here and there. After centuries, appears a prophet and then all is dark; again a prophet, a man of God and then despair. The cities which invite us are also scattered and the homes, too, one here and one there. The disciple whose face is towards the Guru, *Guru-mukh*,¹ is one in a million.

Diamonds are rare, objects are rare, men are rarer still.

Aye, union with Him is the largest, noblest, truest love in the timeless, spaceless moment. Once now, then after aeons. Aeons and aeons should pass before a traveller attains his Love, and aeons and aeons are one night of union can return to the lover.

And to the disciples who have come to know Him by that far-off event of union, all is different.

Love is a continuous lyric of remembering Him. For love is remembrance; then, after the union they cannot but remember—they die when they forget Him. This is 'Naming him', says Guru Nanak. What is not seen now and actually felt in one's embrace of soul, as once it was, is remembered and they live in a continuous sense of Him. This is *Simrin, Nām*.

Remembrance (*Simrin*) is love made continuous in space and in time. It is inspiration made to flow in a perennial stream into little heartbeats; it is losing oneself through the intensity of inspiration in the Name of the Beloved.

Their heads rest on the pillow of His knee. They have the full comfort of His touch in their Naming Him. To them, the

1. The God-directed, believing man.

vague sense of these depths of affectionate childlike dependence, trust, abandon, leaning on Him forever in walking, in sleep, in action and in life activity is enough knowledge, and solace of soul.

And this perpetual union in *Nām* is their courage. It is the self-reliance of the whole universe come to their little "I". It is self-respect of the Creator. Death has no terror for them. Fear is destroyed, for it is the light of God in which they live and breathe. They are more souls than bodies. Their bodies are borne as mere shadows of the soul by them, as the unenlightened bear the soul as the shadow of the body.

Eternal loneliness and its blank despair vanish in the hearing of the sweet speech of angels that come and whisper cherubic love in their ears. All is so gay and cheerful; the void is peopled with beautiful people. There is society in all spheres. Man is assuredly not alone in his soul; he is alone only in his crimes against this beautiful infinite.

I was a beggar girl; He came and caught me by the wrist; and in a moment. He made me His queen.¹ In a moment, I felt, I am the queen. In a moment, came to me the joy of being what I never was before. A forlorn beggar girl sees mighty kingdoms laid at her feet. In a moment of His favour all this perfection came to me, in its perfect cosmic suddenness. I am not beautiful, as other maidens are. What has He seen in me that He has chosen Me ? Me, my husband the King² knows; I could not say why. And who else knows ? Who can tell of the infinite meaning of His intention ? In a moment, I am what I could never have been by myself.

In this sudden union with Him in an instant, I am grown

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1. Echo of hymn of Guru Arjan : *Mohe anath gharb nimani ; Banh pakar ham kini rani.* — Editor.
 2. The imagery of husband and wife in the relationship of devotion is ubiquitous in Sikh sacred writings. — Editor.

what I could not grow to be in the fulness of time. Many have I seen who have been toiling to be beautiful. Others there were who thought themselves very very beautiful. They were beautiful and clever indeed, but in my poor rags He made me the loveliest of all.

My clay sparkled, my shapeless stone¹ awoke in loveliest features. How can I say what is beauty, for me it has all been His favour. His touch made me a song. I am bewildered with his suddenness of the raptures of my wedded life and I know not how to say, what it all is ? I am astonished with joy to see how great things come about in small ways when His favour descends, softly as a bird alights on the flower-sprayed twig of a tree.

I look at him and I melt in love, and He favours me; I look up again and He favours me; this is my endless life. I repeat this fascination of loving and being loved, and in its repetition is that blessing which no variation can ever give. Variety is a surface ruggedness, but the sameness, the changelessness of the love of my Beloved is of strange deeps in the oceans of the Infinite, the bottom of which no one has seen. He needs nothing more and my happiness is complete. So I live and love from day to day ever since He has favoured me.

The disciples are as the wedded women and the Guru the Spouse².

The universe is a tree of life, on the topmost branches out of the new shoots, come the flowers. The leaves need not be restless, and shall come by and by. Yet they are restless; the winds make them so. I call for rest in all the restlessness of the leaves.

I may come as a guest to give you a sudden delight. If you

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1. Image taken from Bhai Vir Singh's poetry. – Editor.
 2. Imagery usual in devotional portions of Gurubani. – Editor.

have not lived in the folly of lavishing hospitality of guests who were strangers to you, you will never recognize Me without thinking, and I shall have then, no time to wait till your thoughts are quite formed about *Me*.

I may stand one day as a beggar at your doorstep, and if you have not cultivated the folly to be kind to beggars at your door you will not recognise me, and I shall have no time to announce Myself to you. For by the time your door-keepers go to tell you about it, and you rise and come out, I shall be nowhere to be seen.

I may come to you as a beautiful *peri*, and if you have not known how to love women and how to be kind to them, all austerities you would have done to find Me will be gone in a moment for nothing.

You must wait for Me in the surprises of love, and none else shall know when and where you have met Me.

In moments of union, which are rare and scattered like the stars, like the visits of angels, like the visits of friends and strangers—in those supreme moments, men and women—aye the fowls of air and the flowers of the deserts and the animals—pass beyond what you all know as earthly relations and ties. Wife becomes no wife, friend no friend, husband no husband.

Try to forge as many fetters as you like ; the soul escapes from all cages and all prisons of clay of stone or gold. I do not say, love not your children or wife or mother; I only wait for those moments when you know God and Man and the Self are one. I do not call to the sinners to halt; nor do I call on the saints to stay; all go the way they are going, and they must go, and no one can alter the directions in which they are led. I only say, wait for the moments when God and man and the self are one.

I do not condemn thrones. I do not prefer poverty, nor the abjectness of squalor and dirt—for both have the same

significance when the Master is gracious. I only say, wait for the moment when all are one.

I have seen thrones become begging bowls and begging bowls turn into strange spheres from where a thousand suns take their rise. Only gleams of His *Nām* are scattered for men from chance. In those rare moments of union with the ineffable, what are mere beams here, mere passing visions, are the great kindoms of light there. Men, be men and gather the rays of love and light.

You say you have not understood Me, but what else have you really understood ? The song of the stream, of the twinkle of the star, or the sunrise and sunset, the winds, or the hills, birth and death, sorrow and joy, man and woman, union and separation—all have been ever since all began, as a mere letter of the alphabet before a mind just born. What an endless effort you make to learn one letter ! You learn and yet learn again ! So is the universe. But I tell you, this universe that swings in your eye is for you to Name Me, to feel the mystery of the very first letter, the very first sound that falls on your ear.

Child of Time !¹ Still you know not and have not been able to learn the very first letter of this alphabet. How can I change the page of the Universe ? How can you have yet a new universe ? You are tired, but you are ignorant : The primer is in your hand and there is no way out but to learn this alphabet.

Ages have gone by; you are not yet kind to yourself. Your senses need you, O man ! there is nothing outside of you. Whither are you running in haste ?

You have not understood yet, you shut yourself from Me behind a thousand iron-bolted doors; but when you see Me not, I stand by you and I burst upon your view and bathe you

1. Kāl or time in Sikh spiritual thought is the basis of all matters that is perishable.

in a new holiness to learn of Me again.

You still say you see Me not. Understand me or not, I am pursuing you, I shall catch you as the teacher catches a truant child.

You are charmed by toys made of wet rags. Mere dolls fascinate your mind, I know. But doll-playing is just to give you the leisure to grow into a full, ripe soul. You can never shut yourself away from Me, nor fly anywhere any time from My embrace of that love, which is yet unknown to you.

Enough are my mercies for man. In the dark sea of faithlessness and lies and treachery and falsehood, there is one boat for you too, thou afflicted man ! that will take you safe across.

And a little skiff of dead wood is enough to console you in your distress at last; for the dead wood has learnt before you how to float on the waters.

To find a little skiff is enough.

And thus I meet the bulbul in the blushes of the rose and man in the warm embraces of his love. But I am always on the earth—a flash, a moment, a glimpse, and a dream—just that much—yet that is enough.

VI

All books of knowledge are right. All knowledge, in all sacred books, is for man. All that is wrong about all these things is that men have no key to the contents of these books of knowledge, and so all such books are of no avail when you are not endowed with life for them. What can food do, if it cannot be swallowed down the throat ?

I do not say, this system of thought is right or that is wrong. I tell you all are right up to a point, and all get wrong an inch beyond that point where Truth shines in that particular system of thought.

Therefore, know, O disciple ! there is nothing in systems or in books. The only thing is whether your soul has already been lighted by the lamp of love. Men are led to God by God Himself. They go the way He has started them on; no one is to be blamed for being on thing and not another. True knowledge of the soul of things is a small shining point. It is just a shining point here and a point there, beyond that point it has an expanse of blackness. They tear all the scriptures by pulling them asunder to make of that little point a whole extension in space.

Know, therefore, that beyond a certain bend of the horizon your thoughts on God and man can no more breathe Truth; they sink forever in the sand and die. All philosophies are wrong, all philosophies are right—if you live them and live your natural life.

Thoughts are as beautiful as glow-worms, but they never can be pole-stars, nor save the life of the mariner whose boat is on the dark sea. Those stars impart direction to the upspread sails; there is more in those than in our thought.

Intellectual brilliance excites, it spends life and makes brilliant fire-works; thinking or the products of thinking, thoughts, consume life. All such sparks are the result of friction of the soul.

The lure is very charming, but souls are lost through intellectual excitement and all expanses of intellectual abstraction and its subtle peace are covered with blank darkness. True progress is not in all these “flarings up”, but living and devouring these golden gleams of Heaven’s light, as the bird devours glow-worms.

So know, ye disciples,¹ thoughts are good rush-lights, they are pleasures of the night of understanding; but the great visions

1. Literal parallel of *Sikh*, a devotee.

of the disciples are like comets that sweep centuries in their shining tails, where poor thoughts of this man or that die of their frailness.

The disciples are so large of heart that all views of life taken from different angles have some truth for them.

One infinite is comprehended, yet another infinite remains to be understood, and there is yet a new infinite. There are myriads of skies, there are myriads of stars and myriads of Nether Regions.¹ There is no end to vastness.

So take up a view and give the seeing of it as you see, to others if you can; but be charitable and forgive them if they do not see as you see. For they, too, are led on the way by Him who leads you.

This is the spirit of reverence for knowledge. Never talk lightly of efforts that others are making to know God. All are moving on to Him. All progress of soul is towards God. Those of you who are educated should be still more humble, for who can be educated when there is so much knowledge, so much art still before you unearned, and when at your back and around there are so many like you, who live without knowing as many things as you know ?

Ponder, if what you call your knowing may not after all, be as good as that ignorance in which so many live better lives and are, even in ignorance, better men than you, with all your redundant knowing of so many stars.

If a little man feels wonder at the flame of his evening lamp, and in awe of the great mystery bows down to it, and does so when he looks at the new moon, is not his life better than yours— you who see whole skies with the telescope and declare with so much of “right” insistence and gusto that belongs to the

1. An echo of Japuji, 22.

educated, that there is no God.

If there is no God, after all what is ? Whence ? Whither ? You may not call it God, you may call it anything, by any name, but is it not greater ignorance to be irreverent to mystery than that old worship of wonder and blind faith ?

You disciples ! be humble in this matter of knowledge, He reveals to the unlearned and to children what He conceals from the wise.

Revelation of knowledge too, is His. He vouchsafes it unto us; of ourselves we can do naught. How wonderful that in a little skull, in a tiny heart, in a small eye, He reveals so much ! A mere nothing of a man says, "I am God." How wonderful ! Even the Ego, how beautiful. The bleatings of a lambkin and the running of a stag is, indeed, miraculous. The falling of a leaf is as momentous as the mighty shooting of a star in space.

VI

Above all, be it in religion, or in the domain of your knowledge, you be men, natural men. Be simple as the animals, as unsophisticated and as innocent.

Lambs in glad innocence frisk about, fawns gambol, and calves roam gleaning innocence and gladness at a mouthful of grass. You have a whole kingdom to yourself; how much more should be the brightness about you ! But you kill the lambs, and death garners you. Beautiful is all while it lasts here; but it is all everlasting there.

It is no good binding yourself to the superstitions of a past ancestry, and putting your faith in the musty theories and half-burnt truths of a bygone age. Move on, see with the wisdom of animals what will make you strong and what is good for you.

Shame on you if you have not the instinct even of animals to live your own life. Make your own nest and choose your own grass and herbs. While even the beasts live for more than the merely physical, strange that you should live for less. If

there be no other way to live but by difference, differ and live, rather than agree and die. If it is not yet open to you to be great rather than be small, be yourselves; genuine, with the ring of manhood about you.

Let no false shames of consistency or outer pressures of great ideas coerce you into compasses and moulds that are not those of your own shapes and souls.

To ape great men with a vain wish to be as they were is a curse, if by false courtesies and ceremonies you are constrained to grow under pressure. Be animals, be men, if you are not yet to be gods !

The roots of a tree unerringly find their way to moisture in the soil; no blade of grass ever makes a mistake, no pigeon, no sparrow is seen going the wrong way. Every fledgeling knows with certainty the time of the break of dawn more than man in his little wisdom. No bee but finds its way to the flower, no child that fails to grip his mother's breast for milk. No true lover but finds at last his way to the woman he loves. How could man not reach his God ?

I was just by Him actching Him by the arm, when he thought I was far away from Him. And I was with Him. One was what they call a handsome, vicious man and the other a plain-looking man of goodness. The surprises of God's blessing, unawares, upon both the vicious and the virtuous are so infinite in kind and colour that no calculations can find Him.

Therefore, obey nature and deliver yourselves up to the instincts of pleasure and the dumb suffering of pain, as the birds do.

I put no restraint on your pleasures, save that you should thereby grow more and more beautiful to yourselves. Beauty is all the revelation of that Truth here in you.

Mind not what others say; nothing outside you can put real value into your inner modes of living. The lotus rises out of the

mud in such great surprise of beauty, the flower spreads its glory amid thorns; the dull grey ass is so beautiful in his little frisking colt stage, the canary emerges straight from the egg as a song; so, O man ! come out of your mud and slime and clay like a song, a hymn of beauty, a flower of friendship, a glory of feeling.

Prisons of thought, of pleasure, of superstition, of habits of cruelty and murder and plunder are as dark as prisons of brick and mortar.

The tyrant's tortures do not travel beyond the death of his victims, but the tyrants who inflict sorrow and injury on the weaker writhe with agony yonder, for they have violated the beauty and holiness of their own humanity and are in distress for it for centuries. There is no release from the subtler prisons of thought and the violence of one's own memory, and for centuries men who have wounded their humanity move in the same grooves. You need not go to see this in other worlds; here before you, are races that have not moved from the four walls of the mind in which they were born centuries ago. And yet they feel contented in their bondage ! This joy is their misery; how great is the distress of this moral death which makes them so insensible to sorrow ! Rise and break the prison walls ! The healthiest thought becomes a torture when it moves not like the birds flying out of their nest. Create ever a new past and a new future for yourself. Even such despised things as the pleasures of the senses, when they are first-born, are as prayers. Youth, new and just hit out of its bud is like a holy revelation. Your association with such nascent pleasures should make you as angels, you they forge new chains for you and shut you in worse prisons than ghosts and sprites. How your eyes prowl like those of thieves ! You grow ugly like the gamblers who lose their all and pass in stark naked brutality of

temper to the hells in which souls are on fire and cry in wretchedness.

Therefore, to be beautiful is the reward of all pleasure and pain, and the value of freedom consists in how much kindness, love and sympathy travels from you to all sentient things.

Worship is formal and tedious, but what about your worship of yourself? Is it not the greatest superstition to eat, drink and be merry—for nothing?

The futility of pleasures such as yours, in its reaction, is more sickening than the tragedy of human woe. The one ends in utter exhaustion and death of the soul, the other in its possible escape as a prayer, as a hope, as a man remade and recast.

Indifference and neglect, snapping of fingers at all but yourself, is fatal. The victims have compensations after death, but what have you? Complete loss of your soul.

Truths that anyone else would declare to you would not be so acceptable to you; therefore you, declare the truth of your own beauty to yourself and be free from the dungeons both of pleasures and pains that you have made for yourself.

No one else has made these prisons for you, and even if I, your creator, come and shatter them for you, unless you know the joys of open-air freedom, you would, like the worm, again make your own dungeons. Therefore, choose to be free. And toil to gathering the goodness of the Guru.

As I desire not that pleasure that makes you a slave, so am I not for pain that tends not to make you free.

I am dualistic. Monism and all such things are mental cant if, inspite of them, you have not yet been able to wash yourself clean of your passions, your selfishness and your intolerance of the will of God, the Creator; if you have not felt in your very blood and bone your kinship with man, bird and beast.

There are forces that make for man, for God, for freedom; and there are forces of inertia that damn the soul and both are

contending for supremacy, one to form and the other to annihilate the soul. One is for life, the other for death; one is for harmony in the diversity of beauty, the other for ugliness or shapelessness. I am for the physics of the soul which is the physics of the beauty of the body too. I love the myriad forms divine.

Rise against the forces that damn, you disciples, and be armed as soldiers and fight for God, for freedom, for beauty. I will sell my idealism for a word, if the child God could be saved. I sell my realism for a dream if the cadence of a dream can pour into the soul of a people the simple humanity of feeling of the pain and pleasure of it all. If the picture of the ideal God, the beautiful man, cannot be complete without the manifest dualism of light and shade, of virtue and vice, then away with the apparatus of self-realization of a philosophic oneness of it all. Let that oneness be : I am concerned with making things here more beautiful. My attitude is not one of pure philosophy, but are you sure that life is governed by your philosophy ?

Nothing by itself is good or bad for me; it is the orientation, configuration of the lines and colours and contents and conditions that determine the inner beauty of both good and bad. I would bless the sword at one time, and curse is the next. All is virtue which makes me move towards God, Beauty, Humanity, and all is vice which makes me move away from them. I tell you, the gods pine for the simple humanity of man. This simple humanity is most to be coveted; its pleasures and pains are precious in the treasure-house of God. Only feeling is beautiful; it makes the plastic clay alive; the dead stone ripples with living peace.

But remember what need the stray leaf has to impose its little will on a Himalayan blizzard, that rushes on as it lists; and I tell you the storm is moving with haste to carry the little leaf to the door of the Beloved.

Who can really discern the great direction, right or wrong, when a hundred storms of soul rage ? Enough, it we see more beauty gathers in ourselves or not. Have we justified our day by an untarnished memory ? Have we in no way violated its holiness or its simple humanity ? Have we defended God on earth ? Are we nearer Him ? Have our thoughts and actions made configuration of our acts creative or recollective of beauty, or have we merely added to the noise of brute chaos ? Have we seen more of Him ? Has the night ended ? Is the dawn come closer ? Every step, every breath, in war, in peace, in storm, or in calm is a bead of the great rosary. Have we told it ? Have we really prayed for light ?

VII

God lives in the voice of the man of God. He lives in His world as light in the lamp, as the perfume in the petals of the rose. It is as the touch of the dawn on the wings of birds that burst into song and know not what has happened.

The Word—*Shabda*, *Logos*—has a form; it is not merely sound, or voice; it has hands and feet and is a living man. The living man moves all over. The word as God is enough for you here, and greater things about Him you will know there. Know His Name, therefore, and fill your memory with it and wait. All shall be opened unto you after a little while, and you will know much greater loves than yet you know of or even shall know here.

Did I tell you—“Repeat His name and the tongue that sings not His name, better be cut into little shreds.” And yōu obeyed me and began “*Hari ! Hari !*” by a river bank, wrapt in a lonely calmness and dressed in yellow silk. You did wrong, you did not understand Me. For behold, another man there unknown to Me, killed an aggressive brute with his sword and saved a woman from being dishonoured, and now himself also lies dead. I tell you, he has found God in death as you have

not, in all your life of repeating “*Hari ! Hari !*” on the river bank.¹

I tell you, God’s is a strange dispensation. Thieves are acquitted there for noble sins, and saints are bound for their apparently dead pieties.

Repeat God’s name, but it is no use repeating it unless you have learnt from the Guru His love, which alone is God’s name on this earth. Love is God’s name, it will light all your actions, you need carry no dead codes with you. If it were a matter for the physical tongue or speech, how do the little birds name Him ? For the whole creation sings of Him. Man is but a fraction of the created world. *Nām* is dumb feeling : its outbursts are lyrics of love and devotion.

Simrin is the aching attraction for Him, just as you have the aching memory of your kith and kin and of those you lose on this earth. All your loves are miserable compared with that madness of His joy.

Simrin is a planetary system of life. The footsteps of the pilgrims are counted by the Guru and He protects the man of *Simrin* from all harm. No hot winds dare touch him when his lips open to name Him, the lips of a host of angels sing His *Nām*. It is the universal song of Glory ! Glory !² to Him. All sing and through His great love, you, too, are admitted to the Presence. It is the company of emancipated souls in the background of your holy remembrance.

Wherever the hosts of God are, they congregate when you repeat the *Nām*, that universal melody of His glory. And it is the angels in your voice that give the true meaning to your *simrin*, and the true sweetness of yourself to yourself. The meaning of the ultimate you—the spiritual you—is outside you.

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1. This voices the Sikh ideal of the dedicated man of action, the saint-soldier. – Editor.
 2. Such wonder is integral to Sikh mysticism. – Editor.

Soar, O Bird, with your shining silver wings into the infinite blue, flapping these with the joy of that great light.

Simrin, thus, is the spiritual song whose melody starts in the higher unseen worlds and whose echoes ring in our soul here. As the attraction of planets for each other, so of souls. There are grand constellations of souls; It is the possession of your human frame by the gods who come and sing, "Glory", "Glory" with You made into their harp.

God is both the congregation and the central figure lighting the whole congregation. It is the heavens in you, above desire; it is living here drawn up to *there*; or is it drawn inwards, with your eyes half closed with that bliss of love that fills all heavenly spaces ?

He alone has seen God and truly known Him, who has met the Guru and has joined the holy choir of the songsters of his name. Do not desire any higher God than the Guru, who makes your breath burn with love, who quickens your steps with the imagination of the truly beautiful, truly good and truly true. I call you to no flights beyond your wings; I come and attach the skies to your wings, and in your own flapping there is the whole Heaven of delight for you.

Be full of peace, and gladness. All is well, and there is God whose heart beats in you. He is like a little child that comes again and again to you and he knows not that you bear hate in your heart.

For the little violet a single drop of dew is enough. For the bird the nest of straw is all : for man the Word of God. And you touch Him, the Guru, God, when you touch the Word-in-the-flesh,¹ the Man of God, the Guru.

Remember, you cast your soul into cast-iron shapes by

1. The touch redolent of Christian mysticism as also of the Sikh doctrine of Shabda, embodying Divine Reality. — Editor.

identifying yourself too engrossingly with your pursuits of the evil of the day.

A lawyer carries his law-cases everywhere he goes; a judge reproduces everywhere the atmosphere of the court and law; the shopkeeper carries his shop everywhere. So does the ordinary religious man carry his theology and religious routine concepts. Each man carries thus foreign matter and sheer heaviness; he thus pollutes the atmosphere, radiant with sunshine and fragrant with the odour of flowers and dream and silent joy. But what is worse, each casts his own soul into those shapes which impress him and he cannot break them open. I call you therefore, to the inner non-attachment which is of the bird that goes everywhere picking grain, that responds to the gross appetites as much as is absolutely necessary, but remembers nothing—only his song, his uprushing on his wings in the Golden Dawn.

VIII

As an infant you thought not who would clothe you and feed you; as a young man you need not think of many things. After centuries now you, woman-born, are the same old man and the same child. You really know nothing more than your ancestors and you feel nothing more than your ancestors.

He who brought you here will take you away from here. He who looked after you so long, will also look after you now.

As birth did not concern you, death too need be of no concern to you. Things come and go, as decreed by Him. He knows more. We are vouchsafed but a fraction of His purposes, as the insects and the birds, too, share that divine knowledge. All this creation is beautiful and true, made by Him whose name is Truth.¹ His touch makes the form eternal—the beauty of features immortal. As it is here, so it is there, the rock has a

1. Echo of Gurubani.

birth and a setting as well as bird or man. There are trees in the Kingdom of God here as well as there. You cannot know objects as they are in Truth and in God, and you as man, are but an object.

To a man in union with Him what is this discussion of coming and going and birth and death ? All, as it happens, is glorious, all is beautiful; this Creation, the whole of it, is perfect. Why such thoughts of here and the hereafter ?

When one is truly glad of creation, i.e. vain are the discussion of karma and the differences due to karma, and of "how", "when", and "why". Only open your eyes and see it is all His manifestation. This creation is His mansion.¹ He lives in it. If the door opens to you and you see Him, then you will forget all your questionings, for who ever can question Beauty ? One only surrenders to it, and dies with the sheer death-joy of it. When all is so joyous because of Him why are you so thoughtful ? To a man of knowledge, what higher knowledge is there beyond union ?² Union is the highest wisdom. In union, all is reconciled, all is vindicated.

O disciples, rise up, therefore, take your ploughs and lead your team of bullocks to the fields, and forget metaphysics and theology. Forget all else and look to the sun and the moon and the rain-clouds, and talk with birds. Behold angels flying over your fields, filling the ears of your barley and maize with grain. There they are hanging the bunches of grapes on your vines. All Heaven and earth are at work in creating beauty, in making love, in making you.

And starve not, fast not, nor covet for more. Rise, O disciples, and be natural, simple men of delicate, fine appetites

1. This is an echo of Gurubani.

— Editor.

2. Union with the Infinite is meant.

— Editor.

and beautiful tendencies. And forget not your direction; forget not Him. His Name is the whole entity.

And rejoice that He is. The woods rise green with Him, and in my ear the streams sing His Name. Why do you not yet hear? The leaves of the forest ring with His glory. Rise, O disciples, and sing with the whole of creation His glory.

The whole creation is one paen of praise. The sky has all the stars as tiny lamps of worship. The sun sings Him and the winds and waters sing Him. The myraid beautiful dancers of mid-air sing His name. Have you not heard that dance of silence?¹

If you think I am Hindu, I am; if you think I am Muslim, Jew or Christian, I am; for all knowledge, all culture, all riches and all poverties of the spirit of man, are but to awaken man to be ready for Me. Much is needed by way of self-equipment, by way of toil and travel, before He can reach Me. The Guru is near but very far yet. I have the apparel of light for all in my hands, and they are getting ready for a new day. Those who turn away from Me imagine they die great deaths, but those who labour, looking up to Me, live great lives and have but very small burials.

I am by my disciples; I love to watch them labouring as farmers, as masons, as architects, as carpenters; but know, labour without faith is as stupid and wearisome as vain telling of beads in churches where no more burn the tapers of His love. I therefore am for lighting all paths, illuminating all spaces.

And I go out of sheer joy, bestowing sovereignties on the toilers on land and sea, who plough, who row, and conquer the sea and the sky with their little hands and great hearts; for in them, deep faith is as spontaneous as is the desire of plants to seek the sunlight.

1. This is inspired by the hymn of cosmic laudation in Japuji, entitled *So Daru*.
– Editor.

Who has told men there is more purity in the cave than in the arms of the beloved ? Who has said there is holiness in besmearing the limbs with ashes ? Purity lies in joy of Him. In either case without Him, Human love is as impure as counting the beads in solitude.

Man, you have not yet found real love after all that longing, labour and thought. I stand and see the carpenter making pegs and I find the raising of his arms up and down are prayers, those beads that flow from the brow of the old farmer's rugged forehead are the thoughts of man that germinate and grow. Those tears are thoughts. But what carpenter ? One whose soul is sweet with God.

And the mason's building a roof is verily, verily a religion. How many heads lie under it safe from storm and rain and mud ! But what mason ? He whose soul is in sympathy with man, and who has the inner glow of the beautiful sustaining him. This labourer is mine whose work is worship; whose labour is love's service. Each stroke of the hammer fills him with ecstasy, each straining enriches him with the reserved joy of His fall. My art is not what pleases the onlookers and drains the soul of the artist empty. My art fills the artist with God and the whole world is blessed when the beauty of his soul overflows and imparts joy to others. Labour becomes artistic and moral only when the labourer's eyes glow with Me. I am not with those who perform the mechanical theological routine of the priest-life admire the spontaneous humanity of the toilers on land and sea.

IX

This world is as the world of clouds, and the life of those within it as making ropes of wet sand on the sea-shore. All is perishable in this illusory transience of bodies of clay and fragile glass. Are they not the toys of porcelain, that fall from our hands and break into pieces ?

In such melting away of all things, rise, O disciples, and name Him who has no such body.

Men and women are full of their own distress. They come together and vow to be each other's to draw some comfort for themselves, and when they find it not, they seek other places of rest. No one is faithful to another, but all are faithful to one who lightens the burden of their souls. Man is true to his source, his longing is for union with Him. Put not your faith in men and things, for what can they do for you, when they themselves need what you want to do for them ?

Rise, O disciple ! Name Him and pass from here with a bright face aglow with the song of His glory. Renounce the self, not by going to the forests, for the renunciation of space and time that you attempt is impossible while living still in space and time, and God is in your soul. The outer world is a shadow of what is within you. Find Him and all else worth renouncing is renounced without renouncing so much as you wish to.

Rise, O disciple, and name Him and pass from here with a bright face, singing Glory ! Glory !

Believe not that there is nothing behind this world of bodies. All life continues from illusion to illusion, from death to death, from reality to reality. Behind, there is one on whose hand rests the sun, and in whose mouth shine all the stars.

Let us, for all our common human helplessness, be kind to one another; let us love and serve to make by helpful work our memory holy, and fill it with Glory. Rise, O disciple, and name Him and pass singing, Glory ! Glory ! Salute the beginningless beginning, salute death, cosmic death,¹ salute life and rise and wake, O disciple, and name Him, and pass singing Glory ! Glory !

1. An attribute of the Eternal. Cf. Guru Gobind Singh's Akal Ustati.

Laugh not at ignorance, boast not of knowledge; what indeed to you know of that mystery ? Remember, if you be a king you are clothed in the same body that a poor man has, just one little clay-cover; the same one shroud have the learned that the ignorant have, except perhaps the self-given exalted names of the former. The latter go naked and wild and nameless, but none of us is nearer that greatest of profundities.

Salute the great mystery in the rich and the poor, the educated and the refined and the rustic folk alike. And remember, your life is oozing out like water from a broken pitcher of clay.¹

Pleasure is your distress, for it induces forgetfulness. And pain is your cure of the distress of pleasure, for it, revives your holy memory of God.

Rise, O disciple, and address yourself to the service of saints to get rid of the selfishness that makes you blind. Awake and see; the sun is rising in the heart of the truly great 'namers' of God, and in their company, with your eyes lit with love, and your face bathed in the holiness of man; rise and name Him, and pass from here singing His Glory ! Glory ! Glory ! Holiness of man is the greatest truth and the rarest. Find the Man² and leave all else.

Maya of the senses, its illusions, impose upon you at every step; the glimmering shadows hold you captive. Seek His grace now and for the hereafter.

Night shall pass and dawn break and you will see those golden mansions of God, which unlike all other things, stand forever.

Rise, O disciple, and Name Him, and singing Glory ! Glory ! Glory ! pass on to the yonder golden land of truth, the land of

1. Echo of Guru Tegh Bahadur's hymn.

— Editor.

2. The man of God, the *Jana* of Gurubani.

— Editor.

beauty and God.

The evening falls, the night descends and the soft sadness of the passing away of the day afflicts so much the heart of time and space, the city and the town, the man, the woman and the child.

Laugh not when the day is dying, for such is everybody's fate. Be calm, and contemplate. The birds are flying back to their nests, the cattle are slowly wending their way to their stalls, the stars are shining above, high up, as hopes of love; all is calm; the streams halt at the solemn event. O disciple, rise and name Him and say softly, quietly, Glory ! Glory ! Glory ! The evening's eye is red with thought; sing quietly, Glory ! Glory !

Tragic is the fate of the pilgrims of life. They are glad when they meet their loved ones and sad when they part. The joy of birth and the sorrow of death, the rapture of union and the pang of separation are the acts of a strange tragedy of human life which afflicts king and peasant alike.

Give balm to the heart of those afflicted Such are surely nearer God than those who are circumscribed by the mad raiillery of their five senses, and are dead in their indifference to all else besides. This selfish happiness is mad futility, frivolity in which men and women seem as a forest uprooted and withering on the roadside of sickness and selfishness.

Remember, if you live, live to lighten someone's sorrow, lift some weight off someone's head, help those whose destiny in life is to lose. Be man of sorrow¹ first; lest indifference degrade your beauty of being a man; be an angel of God's cheerfulness after being first kind and sweet and mild to all sentient things. Such renunciation in kindness is of the truly beautiful, the truly cultured.

1. A Christian touch :

Sustain yourself for this God-like work by filling yourself with God; rise and Name Him and pass on to every human door singing Glory ! Glory ! Glory !

O disciple, the emptiness in the passionate embraces of lovers cannot be filled, and poison-cups are but small relief for those with mighty pains; mere words of wisdom do not fill those terrible love-torn spaces. Rise, therefore, and name Him and sing Glory ! Glory ! For this song will rain beauties and loves from Heaven on all those who of love are bereft. King and peasant are in need of it and if you have the substance *Simrin*—the holy memory of love of Him, of *Nām*, animals and men will flock to you and find comfort.

But before you go to meet others, be sure you have met Him, be sure Heaven is at your back. Till then, all true culture is nurture of soul towards it in privacy, in silence. He who spends his energy according to his capacity, can recoup himself spontaneously to that extent : imparting the spark of life is not so much of one's own wish as of His will, true preaching is always done by angels, with men as mere vehicles.

When your touch bestows whole kingdoms for a song, when your word blesses and cools self-tossed men when meeting you, souls heave a sigh of relief; when hearts fill up with thankfulness on seeing you—it is then that your song of *Nām* has been struck, you have found your God, and God has found you. There is solace in your eye not so much for yourself, as for others; there is comfort in your touch, not so much for you, but for others. So, rise and name Him *Nām* is doing good to all sentient beings as the mere vehicles of God : its inspiration fills all empty spaces of the mind and heart and makes men alive with love. You must pass by all doors singing Glory ! Glory ! Glory ! It was not I who did. He did it all for me. I do not know. I cannot say how things happen. They happen as He wills.

X

Do not be impatient with ignorant sinners. For the Guru saves millions by a small shining particle of *Nām*. He puts His hands on the forehead of ignorant sinners and in a moment washes their souls clean of the filth gathered in ages. In his favour all their sins are washed. And the sinner shines like the first-born man, first-born in God, in Nature, in the light of that great mercy.

Sin is but heaviness that petrifies the soul—no advice of the moralist or his codes avails; the Saviour's glance alone makes life pulsate in the stone and the very stones rise and sing. The metal is changed and the *brute* creation is made into men.

Man, after this favour of the Saviour, knows what makes him "heavy" again, and on a slight loss of that brimming happiness of faith, he weeps and cries; whenever again the pores of his body close and breathe not that joy and the pleasure of that touch of His mercy, he weeps and cries; he no more can live without that virtue which he obtained from the Guru as His Gift.

As the opium-eater cannot live without the dope, as a drunkard needs wine and the amorous one needs dalliance, so the sinner saved by the Guru cannot live without the intoxication of *Nām*.

IX

There is no greater distress than to be cast by our own choice away from Him. There is no greater pain than to be thrown away from the temple of love.

Beware therefore, lest for any reason, however clever and convincing, you desert the presence of God, or violate your memory of Him. This is what I call *Simrin*.

The human body is sacred for this great remembrance; it must be fed, clothe and decorated, it must be worshipped and loved. Behold, it is the workmanship of the great Craftsman

and the song resounds in its domes of exquisite beauty. The Songster lives in his own song. And if you desert His presence and violate the memory of love, you are but a corpse.

The body of disciples is holy. The milkmaids¹ cleanse their pots to treasure the milk therein; you O disciples, keep your bodies inviolate for filling with the song of the Guru.

If you love the Maker of the Temple, you have His handicraft also. All other temples are of brick and mortar, but this Temple is of God is made of His song and joy, and in touching man, you touch God Himself.

But make no fetish of it; men are rare : whenever you see a man, how down to Him.

Better severed be the head of him that bows not to the Guru.² The gods all pine to adore the temple of the human body blessed by the Guru. The heavens are at the Guru's beck and call. His mercy is the highest friendship in this dark loneliness of space which knows not itself.

Therefore, I tell you, O disciples, that in your passionate love of God, the Guru, you shall not commit violence of His holy memory of love against yourselves or against others.

As liberated men feel kingly over all things, you may so feel in your spiritual glory over fowls of the forest and fishes of the sea; for as liberated souls you are verily, verily, each one of you, a king of the whole universe. But your kingship is in the light of a little lamp, that must forever burn in the shrine of your heart day and night and all objects shall melt and come and be the oil of that little lamp of love. Your kingship is of the divine lustre of love and compassion for God in all things, and your majesty of kindly sympathy.

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1. Echoes the Krishna-legend, as also an affirmation in Gurubani (Suhi Mahalla I. 1., page 728). – Editor.
 2. Echo of a Sloka of Farid from the holy Granth. – Editor.

And gather the twigs of the forest to keep your hearth-fire burning for the hatred-bitten pilgrims that will come and be comforted. Eat and drink, for food and drink is sanctified for you, for the light of *Nām* burns in you and the whole creation feels comforted when you pass. The tree needs its food for giving of fruits, you for comforting those who are in distress.

No food is holy, no food unholy by itself; only watch your feelings day and night. Physical life, when it tends to overpower the soul, becomes a poison and all things you have, become poisoned. Beware then ! shame on that eating by which the mind wanders away from love¹ and the cup of the heart-lamp is shattered on the rocks and all is dark. Shame on that wearing and decorating by which the mind wanders away from love and the cup of the heart's lamp is shattered on the rocks and all is dark.

Be as free as a blossom, here; be as a bird in the sky raining down hymns, be as a living fountain. The universe shall adjust itself in perfect righteousness to you, when with your face towards the sun of love, the Guru, you are marching on. Do not be over-fastidious here, for much of the clogging is only incidental; it stains the skin in the passage, it cannot hurt you.

XII

While you make attempts to found a home, a country, a state, and a society for yourself and exhaust all your energy in securing the comfort of friendship of fellowship here, you wish to destroy others to secure it for yourself exclusively. But remember, life does not end here; there is as much loveliness of country and fellowship beyond the grave. And as loneliness is hell, here, so liness will be hell there. You must devote some intention to striking friendships there, where you have to

1. Echo of Guru Nanak's affirmation in Sri Raga.

pass more time than here, so that little you do here for others, will there be magnified a thousand times to your advantage, and there will be welcome for you in those Shining Realms of Love.

And therefore, I say, while making countries here and friends, think of your journey from here also and make provision that shall be of use to you after death there. Nothing of this world will go with you, but your mind full of His *Nām*, and if you fill it not with that great glory, you will, alas ! fill it with the wounds of violence done here. So stop and ponder and be self-restrained and calm and serene. Judge not. Revenge not. Kill not. Injure not. Bless all and love all. You can do all this if you fill your memory with the Guru's *Nām* and leave all ends to Him, and also leave all thinking to Him.

Many are the bye-lanes of distress, the homes of darkness beyond death. The squalor and wretchedness of hatred and passion, there too, in those dark regions, are like the festering sores of space and time; those dark regions are peopled with spirits of desire and vengeance.

Be sure, therefore, that your path beyond the grave is lighted by the lamp of *Nām*; and guided by it you shall go straight where the Guru waits for you.

Rejoice, O man, that the choice of making friends is eternally yours. You are not the slave even of gods if you so choose. Rise therefore, invoke the Guru and choose aright. Seek the company of great liberated souls. No one is freed from his desire; no one in great that is not full of the nectar of His love, *Nām*. I, therefore, call you away from the path of vice. Come up to the Guru and see that darkness of hatred is but emptiness, the lowness of mere physical space. Freedom is there, on the heights that could never be dreamt of in those dark dungeons of desire and dirt.

Nām like the advent of new youth in you, shall make the world new for you; *Nām* will purify the atmosphere. *Nām* purifies whole regions; *Nām* sends forth emanations that will sanctify all you touch, that will make the spaces you occupy, full of holy influences. Your presence will carry blessing and peace for all. *Nām* will make you fearless; *Nām* will make your body entirely of that light which is more effulgent than the sun. Remember, you are a soul, all creation is a soul. All is of the soul and not of the body—though the body, too, is beautiful when lighted by the soul.

Fear not, enter the path whoever you be, stand and rise and look up to the Sun.

And in all attitudes and postures of your soul-consciousness. He will support your soul and lead it on. Hesitate not, delay not; rise and call upon Him.

Say not you are impure, say not you are pure. All these appellations are of vain pride. Rise and simply name Him, glorify the Guru and say, Glory !¹ and again Glory !¹ So full of joy be you thereby, that this world become a vision of His glory.

In sleep, in waking, be you a sinner or saint, rich or poor, rise and behold the Guru and say, “Glory to Him ! Glory to Him !”¹

If the stones wake up and utter Glory to the Guru,¹ how wonderful would be the miracle thereof ! And if man or woman, whether ugly or beautiful, narrow-minded or liberal, selfish or unselfish, utter “Glory to the Guru”, why do you not stand wonder-bound at this miracle ? The stone is not an angel yet, the man is not truly religious yet, not as generous as the sun—all that will come by the miracle of naming Him. *Nām* will transmute all in their slow growth. This slow growth is as miraculous as

1. This is Wah, Wah-Guru, the Sikh name for God.

— Editor.

the flash of a new star. Wait, therefore, with patience and wonder. O Man ! Behold the wonder of creation, the great Creator, *Kartar*.

The road is clear, follow the Guru. Every breath filled with His name will light your way. Choose Him for friend.

Assembly your present and future in the Guru. There is no distance between you and the Guru.

I am nearer to you than you are to yourself; I am the soul, the ear of your ear.

O disciple, be not afraid of death.

Live as long as you can, for your breaths are as purses and His *Nām* the gems.

Fill your purses with these as much as you can, for they are the provisions of the way and provisions of love for the bourne from where no traveller returns.

And when you die, there will be welcome from the celestials waiting on the other side.

Rise and choose the Guru as your Friend.

XIII

I call you to become greatest, noblest, broad-hearted individuals; be perfect as gods and as full of love and light and song as the angels. And first of all, be individuals strong and powerful, free and beautiful like the pole-star, that you may shine with the name of the Guru, and make your memory holy with His Name.

Let your lips utter the songs of His glory, your feet be creative of the beauty of journeying to the Guru, your hands be of service of Him, your heart full of love for Him, and may your city, country and world be filled with the glory of *Nām*.

And be you song-strung, name-strung, passion-strung as the harps of God, striking the music that may awaken the memory of the Beautiful.

And then I call you to form the *Sangat*, the whole humanity of the saints of *Simrin*, of the Guru's *Nām*.

May the galaxy of the saints of God on this earth, from among you, shine as soul-stars in the inner firmament of the soul-consciousness of man for ever, pulling him upward, Guru-ward, God-ward.

I call you to form the Saviour-people, the Khalsa, the Guru's own, the fragrant companionship of the Knights of Heaven.

One disciple thus may become armies, multitudes, shining and burning with *Nām*, brimming over with love : this is my Khalsa. This is my *Akali* armies, the host of my Knights of Heaven.

And let the Heavens march you in firm step with the whole infinite system of the Guru's great cosmic love.

And all shall stand on the roadside and with parted lips look up to you and say, this is the Guru's *Khalsa* !

Rise then, you disciples, one in the multitude, and the multitude in one, as the hope of all humanity. Rise as a host of *messiahs* and overwhelm the hosts of darkness, hatred and revenge; and free man from the misery of his little self both here and the hereafter.

I love groups of lights. Burn you disciples, as the million torches of the night. Go gathering men, in processions of brothers.

I announce *Nām*, *Dān*, *Snān*.¹

I announce *Deg*, *Teg*, *Fateh*.

I announce *Wah-Guru*, *Glory ! Glory ! Glory !* to Him.

Nām is the Guru. *Dān* is loving all and giving all in His love, for His Love, and as gladness of His Love. *Snān* is the holiness of memory, lightness of soul, and brightness of body.

1. *Nām*=holy Name; *Dān*=charity; *Snān*=holy bathing. *Deg*=cauldron, symbol of sharing food with one's fellow-men; *Teg*=the sword; *Fateh*=victory.
— Editor.

Nām, Dān, Snān, together is soul, is *man* unpolluted by desire, lust, anger, greed and selfishness.

Deg (Pot), your bread shall be inexhaustible, the more you give in My Name, the more it shall be. A loaf of bread and a piece of salt shall be as many loaves as your guests and one more.

Teg (Sword) : And you shall be fully armed men. And your sword shall be kind. Your sword is knowledge. Your Sword is the mind, your sword is the soul, your sword is light of life, for if the sword flashes not, all grows dark and eyes grow blind.¹ The Sword is the cleaving light that puts all the ghosts to flight. The Sword flashes for the good of humanity. The Sword is God.² The Sword is the Guru, the Saviour. The Sword is the death of death. The sword is life-conferring.

Fateh (Victory) : Victory is of God,³ and yet are of God and victory be forever yours. There is no joy anywhere but in victory, and victory is always of the hosts of God, and the ghosts of darkness shall take flight. Victory is of Truth and the lie forever is routed. In victory, the angles flap their wings and rejoice. All rejoicings of groups is in victory. All creation is a battle-field, and many a time God seems to lose. Truth is defeated they say, and the Guru has no chance, so it seems.

But remember, the Lie ends, Truth alone continues forever,⁴ and the Victory is always of Truth and yet are of Truth. This is what I call Fateh.

The *Khalsa* waits for His will to manifest itself through his body and mind; the *Khalsa* burns day and night with His Love.

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1. Herein is philosophy of militancy in the way of God, as expressed by Guru Gobind Singh. – Editor.
 2. Bhagauti, in the Sikh tradition. – Editor.
 3. The Sikh's salutation to each other, is inspiration in a call to the Guru.
 4. Cf. Guru Nanak's affirmation, *Kur nikhuttei Nanakā orak sach rahi* (*Vār Ramkali, Mahalla III. 13*). – Editor.

The *Khalsa* on this earth is only a vehicle of the *Khalsa* in Heaven.

Sat Sri Akal : Victorious always is God, He who transcends time and space.

All shall pass away, but not the word of God. I may seem defeated, but Truth is forever victorious : and if you are ever for Truth, victory is yours. The *Khalsa*, the galaxy of my saints of *Simrin*.¹ On earth, the vehicles of the galaxy of the liberated souls in the higher unseen worlds, are and shall be always of God, of Truth. Such is my *Khalsa*.

I do not believe in priests. I believe in soldiers. In this world, the self-sacrifice of the soldier who knows God is the highest. Unless the greatest saint of God turn soldier in the War of life, like a King sharing the death of the commons, he is not quite pure.

Peace of the soul, unless it respond to my call, as the sea swells before the moon, and rises in great typhoons and tempests, is only stupor.

In the name of the rarest, the highest, the noblest. One descending on earth, as the Saviour of man, I do not allow anyone of my disciples to pretend as if anyone of them is He.

Rise, you nation of disciples, with a sword in your mind to strike at selfishness; and to cleave the darkness that surrounds the inane ages of futile human history. Make new history, forget the past, start afresh as gods with human limbs.

XIV

So be not bewildered by the desire to be extraordinary. Love to be simple human beings, unsophisticated and unadulterated.

Be as the shining angels God made you, living in the white tents on the roadsides of life and entertaining guests. And

1. Remembrance, contemplation of God.

looking up whenever there is a tear in your eyes to the stars and filling your souls with that beautiful mystery and the wonder thereof.

Great and infinite are the small sweet humanities that nestle in the heart, that make you the very kith and kin of all.

The dog wags his tail when you fondle and caress him; it is a miracle that suggests the Infinite both in you and him.

Where are you seeking God when He calls you in your own offspring to Himself? The laughing faces of your children that feed on your flesh and blood—are they not sweeter than your own souls as if portions of them have been thrown apart in space out of you? Hear in them the call of God to His Love. It is His mercy that you love your children more than yourself. How God has civilised the brute in you and has made you an incarnation of love and self-sacrifice!

And His process, the cosmic process of making you the very image of Himself is in operation in the domain of bird and beast and man, in this world. And He is making you unselfish and divine, free of carnality, in your very assertion of selfishness and carnality. This humanity in you is sweet and in it God manifests Himself to you—me and him and her.

Is not this the occasion, therefore, of thanks giving, that the highest religion is fulfilled in your love of children, trees, animals and birds?

When you know each other intellectually, know that you but find each other's limits and in the puerile finalities thus found in each other, you find naught but disgust. You light on bodies only; the souls became invisible to your eyes, blinded by too much knowing. Our intellect is not all interested in the finite: it is seeking in you and me and her and him the Infinite. The very prophets as men, mere men, are objects of not much interest to the intellectual man; so you can be of not much interest to

each other in such aspects of your nature as can be analysed and classified.

What is that in you, then, that transcends knowledge of this kind ? It is your small sweet humanities which are as the silver points in this intellectual black space, and which suggest even in their littleness the unfathomable depths and unattainable heights in you.

Man is spontaneously great in his little deep feelings. Feelings overwhelm intellect and will. A flood of soul comes and sweeps away the visible humanity in you, which enshrines the innate pride of Godhood.

King and peasant are equal in their tears and smiles. For joy man need have no thrones; the grief of man finds no comfort in pearls and bejewelled diadems. Sentiments of the ever-dying humanity are the only verities of life that command your homage if you be a man. How great is the moral value of the words and wishes of your dying mother and sister ! It seems then, sentiments have the greatest value; life is made worth living as we give the highest respect of sentiments.

Graves contain only naked men and women, all reduced to the same little heap of dust. Kings die on the same earth and eat the same dust that the poor worms eat. The blood and bone of everyone is of the same materials. There is no cure for hunger except a handful of grain. This great democracy of man on this earth where intrinsically and essentially there is no difference between high and low, between the clever and the stupid, between the powerful and the weak, between the vicious and the virtuous—gives man the true longing for the unknown aristocracy and its richness of the Infinite.

True Aristocracy is of the soul, Democracy of the body. Aristocracy is of the fashioning spirit and democracy is of mere materials. The greatest thing in you is something hidden, over which you can have no control, that overwhelms you and your

systems of thought, and works and asserts itself inspite of you.

Bread and clothes and the comforts of physical difficulties and distresses must be equally provided for all and there the highest ideals of democracy of equal feeling and sympathy for all are satisfied. But aristocracy of the creative mind is wholly subjective.

The driest and coldest logic of men like John Stuart Mill is as kitchen rubbish compared to his ill-conceived passion for Mrs. Taylor.

Poor man ! you are at your greatest in your weakness.¹ Your logic is for others, not for yourself. There is the well-dressed, formal, awe-inspiring individual in you that keeps everybody else at arm's length and sneers and turns its stately nose in disgust at others, and reasons and argues most abstrusely and learnedly, and is so vehement in announcing abstract principles; but this disgust is all for those who live outside your own clothes. Under you own clothes, the monkey is as jolly with its follies as if the follies were all the truths. So it is. The greatest soldier and statesman and the hardest, cruellest, politician, the very Napoleon is a small pigeon when cooing for love to a Josephine. When Napoleon meets Mary of Luxemburg in the midst of pomp, the crude, poor human lust lurks in those glances from under the corners of the eyes of poor human animal, the great Napoleon ! How all greatness resolves into its elements !

This poor, naked, slum child, lust, is the master of man. This only shows that on this earth, man is, in his feelings and passion, just as other animals; neither a Lenin nor a Shakespeare can resist the charm of God when so manifested.

Such is man's instinct. Know ye men, in this passion of yours is concealed by God, *Kartar*, His own presence and

1. Reference of Mill's passion for Mrs. Taylor above.

down this way is the lane to His mansion, the Infinite. This iridescent beauty of the vanishing cheeks of a transient phantom of a woman, a passing woman, that will-of-the-wispish woman who, do what you will, will not stay with you for every in that supreme first moment of her love and charm, is assuredly of God. In this sense, all temptation is tempting because of His presence, the Truth that so entices and bewilders. God alone is the prime attraction in everything. In all beautiful fascinations He it is who calls. Therefore, men of real understanding seek Him in man, aye in all these vanishing shows, these entrancing passions and those everlasting feelings of man that make the history of the world so sweet and painful.

All our pleasure-seeking is His worship, if our memory is made alive with naming Him. God like an intrepid lover and with the seductive beauty of the beloved calls out our souls to Himself.

The events giving you pain and pleasure, union and separation, hope and despair, are the finger-touches of that hidden musician on the strings of your being; and when you laugh or weep, it is He striking His infinite symphonies out of these frail instruments.

Great is the mystery and meaning of human pain and pleasure and great the tragic details of our loves and hatreds of each other. A cosmic process is in operation to make gods out of dead rocks and selfish ferocious beasts. And all is a part of this operation, our wars and our vices. But when man is made God, there shines in him the world of God, quite another world, surely not the world as we find it in our bitter experiences.

I, therefore, justify all your pleasures as no one before me has so done, because you have so many pains to feel and to undergo so much of self-purification. I only say, be cognisant of all this yourself, and in the realization of the ever-vanishing

transience of ourselves, of both the seen and the unseen, let your pleasures be pregnant with the great tragedy of it all, and let your pleasure be light and evanescent and innocent.

Be you ever a freedom-giver, never a curtailer of freedom. Be friendly, humane, simple and kind, and this for your own sake; for realizing the pure beauty of things and that mysterious God in you is your highest destiny and the noblest goal of life.

Forget those with whom you might seem to come in mental clash. Leave them and go away from what might oppress you. Wide is the world here and also hereafter; there is an infinitude of things to choose for your self-perfection.

And therefore, I say, choose your own companions and if you please, let such choice be a flying one, for often you die in your attempts to be consistent. Choose your own company and be at peace with all, and happy within yourself. Avoid friendships that cause irritation. Irritation is a disease both of the individual and society. Avoid familiarity that breeds contempt, for contempt is but the reduction of the infinite of truth and God to our personal little misery of a vanishing, meaningless experience. Contempt is the disgust of your soul in not finding God where you went out to seek Him. And the soul, when thus once thrown out of balance, throws both mind and body out of the centre. Disease results, death follows. Death of the mere body were indeed negligible, but here follows death of the soul sometimes. The created soul disintegrates and turns into matter; the cosmic labour of making a soul or fashioning beauty out of matter is thus lost.

Great wars are caused by these microscopic irritations, contempts and teeth-clenchings of ours against men and things. Peace of nations is disturbed in the soul-disturbance of a few. The more responsible a man is to God and society, the more peaceful he needs to be by his very nature. And there are happily all kinds of mechanical and spiritual means to maintain one's

balance. When God is in us, we shall be happy within ourselves and at peace with all, and when we are fully happy within ourselves we can have no ill-will, no jealousy. Let your happiness like the sap of the tree flow within, flow inward. To clutch at men and things and embrace all in mad abundance of one's happiness and in that flowing virtue of the soul, except when one is so created and so authorized as an inexhaustible fountain or a river to flow, will surely exhaust your happiness, your virtue, your goodness.

Get all physical aids by all means that you might need to maintain your virtue at the requisite level, and in the requisite balance, not wholly unspent like the wealth of a miser, not wholly squandered as the youth of the Prodigal Son; but so spent, as shall flow perennially from you to all, as sweet goodwill for all and yourself. It would grow as a veritable God by being so maintained and conserved. This is the great economics of the soul and its substance of joy.

Your pleasures and pains are mere mechanical aids. Both are as poison and nectar in one; poison when they exhaust your virtue, your goodwill, and nectar when they add to it and make it perennial.

Friendships, relations, loves and hatreds, social and civic calls to duty and service, scholarship, pursuit of wealth and renunciation thereof, aesthetics and ascetic choices, religions and worships and the denial thereof, all are but as mechanical aids to the maintenance of your virtue at its high overflowing level.

And in the very nature of things, all pursuit of life here is both poison and nectar—poison when it drains your virtue to the bleeding point and nectar when it nourishes your roots to grow into perennial fountains of life.

Know therefore, you disciples, how to preserve your lyrical balance.

The prophet Mohammad wept on the grave of his slave Sayeed¹ and the daughter of Sayeed, the disciple of the Prophet, is astonished to see the Prophet weeping like a man, a mere man; and the Prophet wipes his own tears and says to her, it is a matter of no astonishment, for a friend weeps over the grave of his friend.

Here in this little act is the infinity of God in the Prophet so manifested; here is God more revealed to us than all the other revelations of Al-Quran; for poor as we are, these revelations have fallen flat on us, their miracle exhausted by a reverent repetition; and few amongst us are true Muslims, but all are men, if like the Prophet, we can weep.

The ignorant people crucify their best soul in Jesus of Nazareth. How sweetly he talked to the woman at the well, how he forgave sinners—this human touch of his is surely more to us than his raising the dead, and healing the sick which latter miracles he undoubtedly performed, for he was created extraordinary and all such things were ordinary effects of his spiritual radiations, but all this latter excites neither our intellect nor our soul. It is in the nature of the intellect that unless it can be continuously fed on ever-increasing excitement, and thus kept red hot, it cannot glow of itself in appreciation for truth for long. So, O you disciples, you need not seek the vain excitements of the mere intellect for the sake of appraising Truth. For all the intellectual values are like the fireworks even of most intricate designs that but burn in flares and drop dead as ashes.

And you, O disciples, know that when you are in the midst of pleasure, or in the intensest act of love or passion or self-sacrifice, in the noblest volition of patriotism, or religious martyrdom, or any deep feeling, your intellect does not keep

1. His name is said to be Saad ben Maaz.

pace with you. Either you ignore it and leave it behind yourself or it suspends its breath like a Hindu Yogi and lies drying on the outskirts of the soul. Or as hidden by you, it stands at the outer gates like an armed sentinel in your livery and dares not intrude on the secret sacred privacy of your pains and pleasures. It is not, therefore, strange that in such deep vital concerns as the destiny of your soul and love and life—the act of that wondrous, dumb gazing at your God, and in your humble and poor approaches to Him who provides you with all this plenty of pleasures and pain—this impertinent servant of yours should forthwith come upon you with the authority of a tyrant and make you a victim.

Seek to be a sweet, good, common, rustic man of genuine humanity. I do not say intellect is to be suppressed, I say intellect should form its columns and drill its cohorts and it should be your trained military force, but you in your divine right should be the king of your own castle. The armies are trained to maintain an empire, not to destroy it. The intellect should be the minister of the soul, as other faculties of the imagination should be.

Know, therefore, you can only find God in your own sweet humanity, the very infinite goodness of God in each other's human touches. In human pleasures and pains, in hopes and despairs, the tragic beginnings and tragic ends, you shall find all that is worth finding and knowing. God is behind these little straw screens and not above those high stone-walls of intellect and its gathered knowledge. Or look up and see, God shines in the Ideal men, the stars of your imagination, or the great moral heights.

Let therefore, the empire of the intellect be illumined by radiations from your throne of the heart, which is the throne of the creator of the starry worlds also.

Let the Guru be your King; the vistas of whose infinite humanity should be like the infinite expanse of that small sweet sympathy in your own soul. The kings of the world enslave you, kill your pride, destroy your soul, and shower their favours only on slaves, on souls reduced to dust. For others, they have swords and scaffolds But the Guru frees you, pouring infinite pride into you, elevates your soul-consciousness, and when you are rich with self-esteem and joy and love in yourself. He showers His favours only then—when you are the highest, the noblest, the freest, the purest you.

XV

So you have met Him. You are different, having been reborn of the Spirit.

You know Him now, without much of the so-called knowledge. Knowledge? The babe in the womb knows all about the mother; behold; a little life-string unites their souls. So the whole knowledge of God for you, the pure you, is just being united with Him by a little life-string, and the whole of you, your very soul tending for ever upwards! This state of living in rich elevation of soul, in sweet exhilaration, is your knowledge of Him.

Impossible, unknown to you, you grown up men and women, is your mother-soul, God. It encompasseth you. You live in it in spite of your so-called ignorance, in spite of your so-called knowledge. That feeding of your soul by Him through the fine life-string is what the Guru calls Remembrance or Simria.

Your consciousness is, then, spun into fine threads! These hair¹ you have, the long fine threads coming out of your head, indicate how you are being drawn into fine threads which flow out of you and unite you with Him, who is your beloved and

1. Reference is to *keshas*, one of the five sacred symbols of a believing Sikh (Khalsa).

lover in one. They ask you, what is God ? You do not know : What does a bird know but flying upwards, rushing upwards ? Your sweet diffusion into the infinite and the diffusion of the infinite into you is all. No one else, therefore, knows so much about God as you know.

The spinning wheel is revolving, the breath of man is full of His Name. "Glory ! Glory !" rises of itself from your very flesh. Vital emanations of joy flow out of you. You radiate. They say you are an entity, but you feel at last, you are but a reed-pipe in which His breath flows.

When the rain falls and the trees are washed, you feel you have been washed. No crevices scar your soul. No plots, no plans, no thoughts divide your mind. There no more remain any mounds or depression, any caverns or holes in your consciousness. The sun shines in full splendour over all equally. All space is fully illuminated. You have grown transparent and God shines in you.

Now the flowing streams flow through you as much as they flow through the land. They wash the valleys as much as they wash your mind. The winds pass through the forests and they pass equally through you.

The outer and the inner spaces have become one and the sky spreads itself in you. The stars shine in you. You are so overwhelmed with the largeness of yourself that your gladness knows no end. Your happiness clothes the universe with the glory of the vision of love.

So you have been thus informed.

XVI

To such as you then, naming Him, repeating His Name, singing Him, is no task. And yet it is that noble work which you have come by, which never leaves you any leisure. You cannot do enough "I was an utter fool, the Guru has put me to

work. I have found my work.”¹

Guru Amardas,² an old man of eighty years and more, passed night after night, day after day, saying “Glory to Him! Glory to Him.” This naming Him had to him become a person, it was His dearest companion; it had grown both human and divine. It was the presence of God to him. He could not live without Him. Guru Amardas had a peg drive into the wall; he caught hold of it and stood listening to His voice, His name, in wonderful delight of love. The wood of the peg he held in his hands was half worn through. It can still be seen at Goindwal.³

I tell you now, for you have travelled much, this incessant practice of *Nam*, this endless infinite repetition of His name, this sublime immensity of the vigil of love, this grandeur of the soul’s deep concentration in faith, this vibrant inspiration of calling upon God and the Guru, is the whole of spirituality. There is no spirituality other than this. The *living* God is this intense love which knows no sleep, no rest, no self-excusing, no justification for going away from this presence.

Taking dinner or sipping a cup of tea with heavy souls will burn you. These shall deplete you and this depletion will be as poisonous as the exhaustion of the soul caused by an immoral act. For some time, you may suffer to be courteous, but you cannot suffer for all time. Renunciation must follow eventually. People who are not in tune with your inner rhythm cannot be your companions for long any more.

You will also find, at times preaching a sermon to heavy souls will be like purchasing a disease of the soul. You will of yourself learn to be silent. When speech will cause pain as if your bones are being broken and your flesh it being torn asunder, know you have been blessed. This supreme

1. An echo of Gurubani.

– Editor.

2. The third Apostle in Guru Nanak’s holy line.

– Editor.

3. Centre of Guru Amardas’s mission in the district of Amritsar. – Editor.

sensitiveness is in the nature of what they vaguely call omniscience.

When suddenly your best moments of soul will be thus robbed of you by a chance meeting with some man or woman, you will know that it is not safe spiritually to exchange your intimacies with anyone. Men and women are not men and women; you will be afraid of them. And yet when you will be so inspired, you will flow like a river and all shall bathe in you and feel blessed.

Spiritual isolation is to be sought from all in your incessant labour, both physical and mental.

You have entered the world of the soul. You have gone beyond and above your body. To them who are still confined to the body, as it is an endless struggle to win bodily pleasures, to win sustenance, so to you, who are in the soul, it will also be clear that the very shining of the soul, like the sun, is, in the nature of things, an infinite struggle.

You are journeying to the Infinite, in the Infinite, and, in the nature of things, there cannot but be journeying on and on. There can be no rest for you anywhere; there can be no slackness, neglect for you. Want of watchfulness, want of omiscient care of maintaining your beauty is of death, constant wakefulness is of life, of the spirit. It is verily, verily incessant work; it is endless marching on and on.

I do not point to the grace, I point to the living soul. The grave has to be discarded, the struggle for life has to be made endless and by its endlessness a veritable ecstasy.

Therefore, you cannot but keep on a constant war to maintain your spiritual breath.

Love is the greatest state of spiritual wakefulness and to keep that state in its attitude of ever scaling new heights, you have to work and to toil.

The days' dust is to be brushed off your shoes, the day's dirt is to be washed off your mind, that the heaviness of soul may be burnt up by intensity of feeling. You have to wash your soul with the physical labour of chanting. In its chant, in its sound are hidden great worlds of wonder.

You must allow no decay of fervour. Mechanical repetition is meaningless. Yes, I said so and I say again. But for you, I tell you, you who are informed of Him, mechanical repetition is the greatest wheel of flint that in its sheer revolutions will create sparks of life for you and a chance spark will burn up all your heaviness and will make you light as if you had no body.

Therefore, I call you to ever-awakefulness, ever-watchfulness. I call you to a jump in cold water, I call you to take a ride, I call you to the battlefield to die as a soldier, only to get rid of your stupor, your inertia.

Chant the Guru's Word. You say it is like the old priests who told beads, and these I have condemned. I condemn them still, but to you I say, to tell beads is all, for you will find that while naming Him, your lips will kiss themselves and your arms will vibrate and gather in their embrace what they see not. As you will gather up your knot of tresses¹ on the crown of your head, you will find you will be binding the sun and moon in your knot.

And in mechanical chanting of the Guru's Word, you will feel you are a king of the spiritual realms. You will feel as if you have bathed in a thousand rivers. I will condemn the priests and you will defend them in your soul. The time when this will happen, you will truly understand me that what I condemn in religion is not religion, but its false forms.

Live therefore, in the pure sound of the Guru's Word. It is immortality in flesh. It is the concourse of angels in your soul.

1. To wear the hair unshorn is enjoined upon a Sikh.

— Editor.

If you know Him, how can you forget Him ? Keep the flame alive. I leave it to you what shall be the needs of the moment—within you. You alone shall know how to keep the light of *Nām* burning your heart is the shrine; the lamp of *Nām* is lit and it burns therein. And in the background He stands. You are the priest of that sacred shrine. There is silence lit by Nam. There is the song lit by silence. You have to pour oil, you have to trim the wick and you have to keep it burning.

Now you shall see that where the lamp has not been lit, how idle is the effort to trim the wick, to pour the oil. What is the meaning of idle professions of keeping the lamp of the shrine burning ? What is the meaning of the shrine, when God who lights the lamp is not standing by, forming the background.

And for you when the Lamp is lit, is it not equally foolish not to be in incessant watchfulness to keep it burning ?

PART II
EDITOR'S NOTE ON READINGS FROM
GURU GRANTH SAHIB

In the renderings that follow, it may be pointed out that as usual with Puran Singh in his presentation of the Sikh sacred texts, these do not maintain a close literal affinity with the original. The author, in his ecstasy of devotion throws out appealing parallels to the original, without however, the scrupulous care for a near-reproduction. His are 'transcreations' in a very wide sense, and have to be accepted as such. The spirit, devotional fervour and insight of the original are quite often there, along with a good deal of embellishment of imagery from the poet's inspiration of the moment.

In these excerpts the context has been indicated, though the identification of passages would present difficulties because of the prevalence of the characteristic just mentioned. Furthermore, Puran Singh did not take whole hymns, but often selected verses out of these, and that too not in a running sequence. All this adds to the difficulty of identification.

In Gurubani, in the compositions of all the Gurus, it is one single vision and an identical philosophy, along with recurring imagery that is reiterated. So, unless some structure in the original be carefully reproduced in the rendering, it is possible to mix up passages and make fumbling identifications.

Nevertheless, Puran Singh's renderings are soulful, as by one who is deeply imbued with the spirit of devotion. They amply serve to convey to the reader the fervour that belongs to the texts of the sacred scripture.

READINGS FROM THE GURU GRANTH

I

RAG PARBHATI

The sound of winds, of fires, of waters are the instruments for the music of *Nām*.

All the voices of creation Name Him.

And those who are not of this Great Adoration are sprites, ghosts of darkness, mere apparitions.

He who hath no limbs meets (me) in the Word.

Those who have risen up to this soul-union, for them all struggle is ended; for them there are no duties to be done, no religious rites to be performed, no "clean" rosaries, no beads to be told, no vows, no laws, no disciplines.

In the union, the soul has met the pure Spirit.¹

That Pure Spirit shines resplendent and perfect in all imperfections.

The darkness of "pride", "self" and "I" vanishes before His light as black night flees before the dawn.

The *Sat-Guru* has bestowed (upon me) the Immortality of "Being with Him"—his *Nān*.

They who are inspired by the Higher Realms of the Immortals (*Durgah*) are the accepted offerings.

They pass on (after this physical death) to that home which naught that we can say can even describe.

Nanak ! burnt be all this describing and speaking about those, the forever indescribable.²

The teachings of the Guru are beautiful be as crystals, diamonds and rubies,

O disciples, dig, seek, and find the precious gems.

The Guru is like a flowing river;

1. This has some echoes of Parbhati M. I. 4. (page 1328).

2. Based on Parbhati I.6 (Page 1329).

Meeting with Him washes away the soil gathered by life in its upward march.

Know ye in the being of the *Sat-Guru* is true cleansing; by plunging into its flowing waters of life, the materiality encasing the soul is washed away and animals and sublimated into angels and gods.

We should seek His feet by whose breath the plant-life breathes gladness.

By the touch of the "*Gurmukh*"—"Whose Face is towards God"—the soul of life revives bird and beast and man are glad,

And in his company, there is a passage to the world of souls beyond.

And there is in him the inspiration to love-death in that gladness of God.

In the favour of the *Gurmukh* is the pilgrim's eternal home.¹

O Pure Spirit, Thou art my *Yajman*² I ask of Thee but One *Dakshina*.—Give me the Gladness of "Naming Thee."

The wandering five thieves have come home, the flaming pride of "I". "I" is over now (for me.) Beholding "others" than Thyself is ended.

The desire of following the footsteps of any but Thee is extinguished.

Such is *Brahmagnan*. The nectar of Thy beauty flows in limpid crystals though my being and I need not any more knowing.

The love and its satiation be mine, O Lord; this be the rice of me, Thy forgiveness for all may come to me, this be the wheat for me.

1. Based on Parbhati 1.6 (Page 1329)

1. The *Yajna* performer. He is to feed the Brahmins and give some gold or silver or estate as offering to the Brahmins thus fed; these offerings are called *Dakshina*.

Thy mercy—this be the milk for me,
 And the simple gladness of Thee—no more needing aught—
 this be the *ghee* for me.

O *Yajman*, I seek these gifts (the talents of the spirit) from thee.

And more :

The kindness of Thy great love for all sentient beings,
 together with an eternal waiting for Thy coming, such be the
 milch-cow for me.

That my mind may slowly and sweetly, and langorously,
 and leisurely keep drinking thy milk.

Ah gently, sweetly, lightly, softly, playfully may the calf drink
 of the cow.

The music of Thy Name be my new vestures.

Thou art my *Yajman*.¹

None could hold back the coming of man on this earth.

Who could hold him back when departing ?

He who sends him here, takes him there,

And on His direct protection subsists all life.

Glory be to Thee. O Spirit.

It is all of Thy inscrutable consent.

It is as thou wishest;

All cometh about as thou biddest;

None, none can alter Thy decrees.

As the garland of pitchers bound with hemp-strings on
 the revolving water-life of the Persian wheel comes up and
 goes down (into the well), so do the filled ones come up to be
 emptied, and the emptied ones filled.

Such is the great coming and going of life in the
 universe.

1. Based on Parbhathi M.I.7.

Rise and sing of Him whose name is verity.

At once, O soul do Thy fetters fall by naming Him.¹

Guidance only is needed if anyone has lost his way.

All go the way on which He has put them.²

Singing like birds His Name at the break of Dawn,

And filling our being with pure glory of gladness.

As birds shed water from their wings, let us shed the blind pursuits of the matter-bound world.

Nanak, I salute the glad ones,

The defeated ones here are the victorious there-*Maya* is the wandering broken mind of man.

When the Guru pours into it, mind becomes whole (*maya* vanishes).

I pray such be my reason and that I may seek again and yet again His shining Feet and their great shelter and still greater solace.

In every heart-beat is the self-same throb of the pure spirit.

And yet nowhere can it be seen as such.

Men talk of the base and the noble together, the talkers lose their self-respect.

Only when Thou so pleasest does struggling life shed its material things.

Union with thee is in Thy love of us.

In Thy mansions of truth,

No one asketh the caste or colour,

Liberation is through Thy Grace.

He lives in Truth as Truth who aches with thirst for the delight of His Presence.

O men, brothers, repeat the delights of Naming Him,

1. Based on Parbhathi M.I.8 (Page 1329).

– Editor.

2. Based on Parbhathi M.I.9 (Page 1329-30).

– Editor.

“Glory”! “Glory”! “Glory”!¹

This wandering, desiring self finds its rest in the rapture of *Nām*.

O brothers, the profit of life is the gathering of the inner silent aches of “feeling”.

The Guru has given me the eternal comfort of His beauty.

“Glory”! “Glory”! is the very Remembrance of Him. O Brothers, His treasures are inexhaustible, the fountains of His Bounty flow;

Serve Him with the gladness of His inspiration.

O Lord, come and meet me,

Live with me in my imperfections.

I cannot find Thee, find Thou me !

Live in me as the River of Remembrance, come !

In joy of Thy gracious beauty, I die of sheer gladness.

I am a sacrifice forever and ever; my mind, my body, all at Thy feet.

Take me unto Thy shelter from all fears.

O Master, of Thy will may my will-impulse be,

And may I have the gift of the greatness of the song of Thy Name,

And seeing whatever happeneth is of Thy consent understandable, let me struggle towards Thee till my service is acceptable to Thee.

My God ! bless me by Thy large forgiveness and come and live with me in my imperfections.

The Guru has extinguished the fire of vain desire in me.

And in Thy commands, I have found the peace of action.

What thou biddest me, so I do,

1. Based on Parbhathi M.I.10. (Page 1330).

And I can do nothing else,
The Perfect One told me,
There is no other like Thee,

who gives without asking, who forgives the imperfections of
all our efforts.

Only they know His Name,¹

who have learnt it from the *Gurmukh* (those who have obtained
the leaven of the life of the spirit from an emancipated man).

The "other"—the "Matter"—has vanished for them, they
through the favour of *Gurmukh*, see the spirit so manifest.

If thought, like a bee is immersed in the fragrance of the
Guru-presence, it knows how sweet is love—never brackish,
never insipid.

I know no other who is so great as Thee.

Thou sustainest all,

Those who have known Thy mercy, death dare not
touch them,

In Thee there is never a dimness, nor decadence of
Thy love.

Only those who have found Thy presence, and live in
Thy sunshine, have really transcended both the human hunger
and distress.

Saith Nanak : O disciple ! leave others severely alone,
what they think and what they do; thou shouldst rise and
appreciate this shining Presence of the pure spirit in this
overwhelming darkness,

As long as the breath lasts in thy lungs,

"Name Him" "Name Him; ache in love of Him as
revealed to Thee by the Guru.

1. From this point on, the renderings are based on hymns from Parbhati M.
III and M.V.

By this aching for Him and by “Naming Him”, my mind is cleansed, my soul is washed of impurity and ended is the blind pride of the little “I”.

O disciple ; drink this Ambrosia of His glory with the spontaneous ease of the soul in love, slowly, sweetly langorously, joyfully, calmly—and wait.

By the genial warmth of the Mother-bosom of the Guru, the lotus of the life of the spirit shall bloom in thy being;

And in the glory of this great scenting of Him in thee, the ugly, material, mental, illusion of “I” is lost.

Beauty is Truth, few have this super-sense of beauty.

The union with beauty is ravishing.

I fain would die of sheer gladness of this knowledge.

I am at His feet, who kindly came and of his own accord made my soul his own mansion.

Nanak ! In Nām is the union with the Guru,

True genius if of this union, and in this union;

But such lucky event of being a genius is so inscrutably immediate and so inscrutably remote.

The Ambrosia of naming Him is the sustenance of gods on high.

And it is God’s grace that bestows this great inspiration of love on thee, O disciple;

But in a hundred millions, and a hundred millions more, some rare one rises up to the reception of this spiritual sustenance of the soul.

Feeling fountaining up in thee is the sign of His Mercy.

O disciple : kiss the vision of the Guru’s feet with thy eyes, bathe it with the tears of love, enthrone the vision in the Temple of thy heart ;

II

FROM PHUNEHAS' BY GURU ARJAN DEV,
MAJH AND OTHER BANIS

Thy Hand holds the pen that writes these destinies of souls.

Thy beauty still more beautiful grows, in its disentangled
entanglement with the shapes of these souls.

I cannot utter adequate praise of Thy glory;

I offer all my decorations, my body, my mind,

I offer my soul, offer wholly to Thee, O most Beautiful
Person,

I am dead with the gladness of this vision of Thee.

May I be eternally singing Thy Name in the assembly
of saints; repeating the holy sound of "You !" "You !" "You !".

I thirst with desire for Thee,

I fondly prepare the bed of union,

And wiat if I may but meet Thee, O beautiful Beloved !

O sister of my soul !²

The tracing of blackness³ in my eyes,

The decoration of flower-garlands hanging around my neck,

And making my lips passion-red with the beteldye.

And putting on musk anointing, and the sixteen other
known decorations of powers and paints,

All do set off my loveliness, and I love to decorate
myself, if that Beautiful One were to come home and meet me.

And if He come not, all this preparation to meet Him is but
a sad despair.

-
1. Phunahe (Verse with Reiteration) is a Bani recorded towards the close of the holy Granth Sahib (page 1361-1368). It follows after the last raga, Jaijaiwant and Slokas Sahaskriti and Gatha. — Editor.
 2. Sakhi is a female friend, confidante, traditionally the interlocutor with the heroine (nayaka) in Indian romantic poetry. — Editor.
 3. Collyrium to impart beauty and depth to the eyes. — Editor.

Blessed is her self-decoration, for she is the wedded woman;

Her waiting has been accepted and she sleeps fearless and unanxious in His Arms.

The wedded woman has found everything else, when she has found Him.

I have this much desire,

That the lover's thirst for union with the Beloved be quenched,

If the Sat-Guru be kind, he can put my hand on the hands of the Perfect Ones,

I have strayed away from Him, my strayings have created a gulf of darkness between Him and me,

But one ray-spear from the Guru, piercing the heart of this Darkness would strike it dead.

Nanak saith—My love shines beyond, there yonder.

This sea of darkness is between, these surging gulfs impossible.

The Guru has now brought me across,

I have met the perfect ones,

My revolvings in birth and death are over;

Nectar is His Nam, it gushes now within my soul, it flows, flows.

I have found that Charmed Gem (Padam)—

It is in my hands, there.

It is the comfort of my soul,

There is the peerless song that sits in my throat, it dispels sorrow and sadness,

I live for Him in whose hands are all gifts,

The sky spreads above,

The Earth glows with the Highest,

And in the clouds His lightning plays.
 And I wander out in all the alien lands in search of Him.
 How can I find Him and where ?
 It is but my merest chance that He is found.

The lover need be
 as the *Chatrik*¹ that longs for the raindrop.

Seeking Him, like the bird whose breath burns for the
 raindrop,

Roaming as the *Chatrik*¹ wanders, sad for all waters
 around, seeking but the raindrops,

Nanak, like the *Chatrik*¹, pants for the Nam.

The caprice of that Beautiful One is so infinite,

The poor seeker cannot rise to the infinite charm of the
 beauteous variance of His caprice;

The seeker must be patient; a moment of perfection comes,

When the Disciple and the Guru in deep union create an
 infinite rapture.

In a dream, I saw Him.

He vanished, the fatal beauteous One.

I fain would have caught the edge of His garment.

But he was gone.²

Ah my very bones now ache with the vision of His beauty.

Oh, where to find Him ?

O sister of my soul !

Find Him for me that I might lay my head at His Feet.

Why talk of anything else pray ?

O the union with Him—to find Him whom I have seen in my
 dream and who has gone.

-
1. A tiny bird, thirsting for a particular drop of rain symbol of yearning in love. — Editor.
 2. An echo of Guru Nanak's hymn in Wadhans, Morin run jhun laiya. — Editor.

Eyes that turn not from all other eights to gaze at the *Sadh*
(the Guru, the inspirer of Nam).

Better that such eyes were blind.

Ears that turn not from all other sounds to listen to the
lyrics of Nam,

Better that such ears were deaf.

Tongues that repeat not "Glory to Him ! Glory to Him !"

Better such tongues were cut, bit by bit.

O sister !

If the *Gobind*¹ is forgotten, there comes acute despair to
the lover of Nam, which reduces his very body.²

III

Where I can tell you about it all, and make it clear, there
you cannot accompany me.

Without Him, all is impure,

All this wearing of clothes and this dressing up of festive
boards.

If I forget Him for a little distance, short as the breadth of
the sesame seed,

I feel a malady come over me; the remembrance of Him is
gone (leaving me blank and void and dead);

How shall such face the Great Ones, in the realms beyond,
in whose voice the sweetness of God's Name dwelleth not.

Nanak, cultivate the friendship of the Sat-Guru.

He shall acquaint with perfection that is in the *Durgah*³
(the realms beyond).

The light that is He, the Beautiful, flashes into a thousand
beauteous shapes, the splendour of the Spirit manifests itself in
a myriad different objects.

1. Lord of the universe.

— Editor.

2. Here end free renderings of extracts from Phunahe (up to that numbered 14)

— Editor.

3. The Divine Portal.

— Editor.

The lustre of beauty is His, the shape a vehicle,
 Love is He, the thousand names of it a passing glory, objects
 are the names of the One Great Love God).

And so saith Guru Nanak :

The fisherman and his net,

The fish and the water all are radiant figures of Him,

The book and the bait are transfigured shapes of Light that
 is He.

O comrade mine, that light of my heart has a myriad colours
 and shapes.

There is no death, I am the ever-wedded woman; how can
 one die in this supremely effulgent spirit ?

Nanak's salutations to the pure spirit whose radiance
 impinging on an object makes it Himself.

Thou art the Lake,

And thou the swan,

The lotus in the waters of Creation Thou,

Thou the Lily, Thou the sun.

He is the Lord,

who has made this whole cosmos alive with his light, by whose
 gracious touch, all is green with life.

He is *ghani*,¹ (the Seer, the Knower)

Who has the authority of the *Durgah*² (the Realm of Perfect
 Ones).

Which of us should be proud of our supposed gifts when
 all gifts are in His Hands—the only Giver.

Whether He gives or He gives not

it is His.

Which of us should be proud of our givings to others then ?

1. Ghani (Ar)—One above need.

— Editor.

2. Portal, Divine Portal.

— Editor.

Life is the kindling of the lamp of the soul;
 Without oil (love) how can the lamp burn ?
 The learning of books is just for setting up the lamp.
 the Body, in hard labour, is turned into a wick,

(Love is the oil)

And the kindling flame is the sympathy with Truth.
 Then this lamp of mind burns.
 And in this taper-light burning within, man meets his master.
 O trader,
 If love burns the soul,
 And aching love finds it solace in service of Him who thus
 giveth life and light and love.

Worldly, things are ever-passing pageant.

In these affairs, to labour for Him, seeing the Lord with
 eyes bent down and fixed on that one task, is all. Through
 service of Him are given seats of honour to the devotees at the
*Durgah*¹ (the Realms beyond Death) Nanak, rejoice then and
 pass yonder full of abiding cheer:

(from *Sri Rag*).

IV

Sooner than the trumpeting of elephants, He hears the cries
 of little ants.

As the fragrance of the flowers of *Malti* goes forth, Thy
 praise emanates from this Creation.

They of France and England and of Persia sing the hymns
 of Thy praise.

(From *Akal Ustati* by Guru Gobind Singh)

This spirit beautiful is honey in everything—the forest leaves
 of grass are all with it overflowing. The luckless partake not of
 this means;

1. Divine Portal (already explicated).

Without the *Sat-Guru*, it cometh not to their share, the Manmukhas scramble for it in vain (in pursuits and struggles, when it is all in His Grace).

O Brother, my friend, my comrade is my *Sat-Guru*,

The relationships of friends and sons of this earth generate poison by preying on each other; none strikes his roots into the verity that decays not; they have not in them the companions in beyond death.

(*Sri Rag*, Guru Ram Das)

You have forgotten Him who made you and me : Without His Name in our shrines of clay, all is impure.

(Mahalla V, Guru Arjan Dev)

Be ever awake, my soul; be ever awake and watching thy growing crops; or the birds of passage will alight and peck at the ears thereof.

(*Sri Rag*)

In every direction, the *anmukhs* (those who are with their backs to the Pure Spirit and face turned outward) go wandering, searching love,

But they cannot find Him;

Those who find the Guru find Him, they are truly lost in the Living Word.

I made many friendships, expecting thus to cool my burning, but in vain,

Only when I met Him, the Guru, was I cooled, (my soul was comforted).

In His Word, I met my God.

Those who have met the Guru have met Him forever, there is no more pain of separation from Him.

(Mahalla III, Guru Amar Das)

How can a fish know what the River is ?

For the fish, the River is everywhere, all time;

Only, taken out of the river, the fish dies.

I, a mere fish in Thy great waters of life, know Thee and Thee alone, my Beloved, I know not the fisherman fishing, nor his net, nor the angler's bait, nor his hook.

When pain comes upon me, I know Thee still more, I seek thy shelter, O Beloved.

(Guru Nanak, *Sri Rag*)

That is true Naming Thee which is of Thy pleasure and Thy acceptance O Beloved.

That is the true *Gnan* and *Dhyan* which delights Thy Heart, And that alone is True *Jap*¹ which comes from Thee.

In submission to Thy will is the perfection of knowledge.

And he whom thou favourest so, inspirest so can sing Thy Name.

Thou art of the saints

And the saints are Thine, O Lord,

And they are Thy saints who thrill Thy Heart with joy;

Thou nourishest Thy saints;

And the saints are as Thy little children playing with Thee (Thou their indulgent Father watching over them)

Thou truly lovest Thy saints;

Thou art the very life-breath of Thy saints.

I fain be a sacrifice at the feet of those saints of Thine, who know Thee and are the delight of Thy Life.

Nanak, with them my soul has always been truly comforted;

1. In the Hindu religion *Jap* means a muttering of God's names which is more in the nature of discipline. But Guru Nanak says : By the Guru's grace sing the Name as in *Japuji* and in *Guru Granth* and it is in the nature of love's rapture. *Japa*, without the inspiration of God's love, is dead muttering. In the system of the Guru's culture, *Japa* is continuous remembrance of the Beloved and is the effect of the inspiration of His Grace, while in Yoga system, *Japa* is an exercise by which and abstraction into the Infinite is greedily sought.

I drink with them of the beauty of God and I feel forever satiated and nourished.

(*Majh*, Guru Arjan Dev)

Thou art the sea Beloved !
 And I the sea-fish;
 Thy love is the holy drop of Heaven,
 And I the *Chatrik* thirst for it.
 I feel desire for Thee,
 I am athirst for Thee,
 My very being is because of Thee;
 As the infant is satisfied by its mother's milk,
 As the poor man is cooled by drinking from the fountain;
 So am I comforted by losing myself in love of Thee,
 Beloved,

As the lamp lights up the dark rooms.

As the woman thinks of her man and as she meets him, she becomes a figure of ecstasy.

So I am tinged in the colours of Thy Life, O Beloved.

The saints have put me on this Path of Love,

And the Guru Being kind to me, I am a friend with God,
 He is now mine,

I am His.

Nanak, my Guru has bestowed upon me the Live Word,
 the "Truth as Logos". (Logos embodied is Truth).

(*Majh*, Mahalla 2)

Thou art the tree.

All this is Thy branching, Thy blossoming.

Thou art the subtle Spirit Pure,

and Thou hast become this gross matter.

Thou art the sea,

The wave, the foam, and the bubble;

I know none other than Thee.

Thou art these beads (the objects)
Thou the in-running thread thereof.
Thou art the beginning, Thou the middle,
Thou the End.
Thou the bodiless pure, thou the embodied soul,
Thou the true comforter.
Thou art Nirvana,
Thou the joy-coloured One;
Thou knowest what happeneth here,
Thou seest the end thereof.
Thou art the Master,
And the Servant Thou;
Both manifest and unmanifest Thou,
Nanak, Thy servant forever sings of The glory.
Bestow upon me the small shining particle of Thy love.
This mind Thine,
This body Thine,
This wealth Thine.
Thou art my Lord, my God.
The soul and the body,
The strength of muscles
All is Thine.
Thou art my comforter forever and ever,
Fain would fall again and again at Thy Feet.
To serve Thee with what thou givest me,
As thou biddest me, and when thou art kind.
O Lord, Thou art my creditor,
Thou art my ornament,
Whatever Thou givest me,
I am driven to bear with joy.
Wherever thou keepst me, that is my Paradise,
Thou nourishest my life,

I have found comfort in *Simrin*, in continuous “singing Thy Nam”, in continuous aching for Thee.

I get forever more than I need or wish for, can think of; I never weary of life or grow sorry over it.

I bless the time when I met my *Sat-Guru*,
Seeing Him with these eyes, my whole life has borne its full fruit.

I am liberated in the vision of Him,
Blessed be that Figure !

Blessed be the hour, the moment, the second I behold Him,
Blessed, blessed be this happy meeting with Him. My mind has mounted to that great transparency, I know now that pressing, struggling on was good, climbing upwards was to some purpose.

And by going along the Path of God, all doubts and delusion are now gone.

The *Sat Guru* has told me of that great cure, *Nam*, and all my sickness is healed by its touch.

I hear Thy Word within the temple of my heart ;
I hear Thy Word ringing in the sky and on the earth.

The word thou didst tell me about the word Thou didst speak unto me.

The Guru told me, there is but One, but
One—Thou.

Thou, me Beloved.

Naught else is, nor ever shall be.

I have drunk this cup of ambrosia from the hands of my *Sat-Guru*.

*Hari ! Hari*¹ ! is my vesture now.

Nanak, for me all the colour of love is Nām, in Nām all my

1. The Lord.

sport and gaiety;

In Nām all the mirth of life.

In Nām the passionate indulgence of my quickened senses.

Of all the saints, I beg one gift,

And I pray for it, forgoing all pride.

May I be sacrifice a million times, a hundred million times,
in the gladness of Thy Beauty, O God.

And in that gladness, I beg from Thee the dust from the
feet of those saints who are Thine; I crave for such Love-
anointings.

Thou art the Giver,

Thou art the *Purusha* (Supreme Being);

Thou art the *Samrath* (one who can) forever comforting
my soul. All gifts fall in showers from Thee.

Pray give me this gladness of those who give news of Thee.
By one glimpse of Thee, each whole becomes holy. And by
one glimpse of Thee men win the Kingdom of the soul (self).

Thou art the Being Supreme, none other is heroic as Thou,

My mouth is touched with the dust from the feet of Thy
saints, (my lips are kindled with the flame of *Nām*)

The darkness of pettiness and little understanding is over;

The lie has ended,

I am settled comfortable in my home of Truth,

And I sing of Thee, *O Hari* !

(*Majh Mahalla V, Guru Arjan Dev*)

Nanak ! Blind of soul is "love" of the *Man-mukh*, (he who
has turned his back on the Guru and God, and lives in his own
little reason).

As a child he blindly clutched at the breasts of his mother
for milk, (he desired milk);

Then he loved his father and mother and brothers and sister,

Then he "loved" his own sport more than he "loved" aught
else.

Then he loved "the substance", good food and good apparel.

Then he "loved" the woman and clung to her, without determining her caste.

And then he lived in a home so made by him and her,
 And he then became so worn and exhausted and irritable
 that anger devoured his very bones, his black hair turned grey,
 And then was he dead and gone and lost, his name also
 dead and gone.

And the survivors made feasts and beckoned the crows to
 come and eat of their charity.

Without the light of the Guru,
 The self-dissipated man is thus drowned in the sea of
 darkness.

Seeing without eyes,
 Hearing without ears,
 Moving without feet,
 Working without hands,
 Speaking without the tongue,—

Such is the death into life of the spirit, or resurrection into
 the desired life.

Nanak learning of the pleasure of the husband, by subtle
 gesture, and abiding by it, is the way to union.

(*Sloka Mahalla II, Guru Angad Dev*)¹

He who has *Nām*—Truth in his soul, bathes his mouth and
 lips with it as it flows out of Him, in a stream of nobleness;

Such a one goes the way of God and puts others on that
 way,

If the leader is like a fountain, a holy river, a *Tīrath*, only
 then is the follower cleansed; if he is but a filthy pond, dirt will

1. From Var Majh. Most of the pieces following are also from this Var.

cling to the bather therein.

The *Tirath* is the perfect One, the Guru who flows like a singing stream, who chants continuously the "Glory, the Glory" of Him, the most Beautiful.

The Sat-Guru alone is the true *Tirath* (the holy place of pilgrimage).

He Himself is sublimated out of all material relationships and he makes others sublime.

Nanak, may I be a sacrifice to him who recites His Glory, Loves God and makes others love Him.

There are those who pick roots and bulbs and are satisfied,
They live in forests and are content.

Others wear ochre-coloured robes and roam about as Yogis and Sanyasis, but within them is hunger and thirst and desire, and they long inwardly that bread should come of itself from somewhere; they have wasted themselves, neither are they good house-holders, nor good forest-dwellers.

And such are ever afraid of death.

But if they seek the Guru and find love in His service and in the service of his servants, no death can touch them. They shall cross the darkness of fear.

(Pauri or Stanza 5)

They who have obtained the Word, live in Truth; their homes to them are as forests. The love of Him isolates them from all the squalor and filth of a blind world.

Nanak, in the dedicated service to the Guru, they are sad amid the world's so-called happiness and happy with the Word-Song amid the so-called sorrow of the world.

(*Mahalla IV*, Guru Ram Das).

If blood stains a piece of cloth, they say the cloth has become impure (for rendering prayers to God);

But how can their consciousness be pure and transparent (for prayer) who drink human blood ?

Nanak, only if thy heart be good, if thy face be bright,
name Him. The men of the world only pretend to have faith,
and false are their doings.

To speak about the Infinite

When I am not there,

What can I say :

What is my being, and my not being;

What am I to relate of the Infinite to others;

And what can I say of what have I done and what am I to
do ?

I am busy in cleansing myself, I am soiled,

I bathe again; get soiled and I bathe yet again,

When I do not understand aught

Why go I to I make others understand ?

Why sould I be such a leader ?

Thou art as months and seasons,

Our thoughts concerning Thee are but fragments, as
seconds and minutes are of Time,

By thought no one could find Thee,

O incomprehensible, shoreless Being !

Of the learned, he is a fool who has lust, greed and
selfishness still in Him.

What learning is that which does not carry with it an infinite
reverence and infinite self-denial in the Presence of that awful
Truth that it can comprehend not ?

True culture is *Nām*, let us learn of it;

True knowledge is *Nām*.

Let us know about it :

And let us be guided by the soul-guidance of the Guru.

I have won the lyrical wealth of *Nām* by making the mind
of the Guru my own,

And my treasures now are full of His Love;

I have believed in His *Nām* the pure transparency.
 I have found His door,
 I have met Him in the live Word,
 Teeming creation moves in that self-effulgent Spirit and that
 Spirit sheds its pure light in my soul.
 O Lord, Thou art the True lender,
 All the world is the borrower.

(Guru Nanak)

Let mercy be the true mosque (for a true Moslem), and
 faith his mat of prayer;

His Quran is his right share (of meat and drink) earned by
 labouring for it;

His circumcision is his manly honour,

And continence the Fast of Ramzan.

Only such a one is a true Moslem.

His own deeds be His *Kaaba*,

Truth his *Pir* and *Kalima*,

Charity his *Namaz*,

His rosary be what moments may be counted of

His Pleasant Consent,

Nanak, only may God help such a Moslem (to remain true
 to his faith)

Saith Nanak ! "Covet not another's property, (live by your
 own labour, drawing your own right share here). To the Hindus,
 let the share robbed from others be as cow-killing,

To the Moslems, let it be unclean as pig's flesh;

The saints of each would only then have followers who do
 not rob others of their rightful shares,

None go to Paradise by empty words and vain professions;

Liberation is in the practice of Truth.

(Guru Nanak)

On the banks of the river, on the green swards,

The herds of milch-cows are grazing;
 If they be mine,
 And if the earth itself were sweet to sweeten that abundance
 of milk,

And all sweetness of life were thus to surround me;
 If mountains of gold begemmed with jewels,
 And all such happiness of beauty be mine,
 Nothing can quench my thirst for Thee;
 Nothing could allay my aching for Thee.
 Nothing can dim my passion for Thee, O Beloved !
 O Beloved (singing of Thee alone cures forever, forever,
 my pang of Love).

If Fire be my garment against all cold,
 If air be my sustenance,
 And round me be the Nymphs of Paradise—
 All this is futile.

Nothing can quench my thirst for Thee, nothing can allay
 my aching for Thee.

Nothing such can dim my passion for Thee, O Beloved, O
 Beloved.

(Singing of Thee alone cures forever, forever my pang of
 Love).

Such be the place that may not pass away, the position of
 permanence be mine.

Where the wandering sun and moon may come and stay;
 Where camels laden with fruits are arriving from all lands,
 And all-shimmering be the festive colour of life :
 Nothing can quench my thirst for Thee, nothing can allay
 my aching for Thee.

Nothing such can dim my passion for Thee,
 O Beloved, O Beloved !

(Singing of Thee alone cures my pang of Love).

And if ills come to my flesh,
 And if Sin come on both sides and obstruct my path,
 And over me be ravenous kings;

In such surroundings, if ever it might appear to be Thy
 wish to keep me, (ill, sin-besmeared, subjected to cruel kings)

Naught of this can quench my thirst for Thee, nothing can
 allay my aching for Thee.

Nothing such can dim my passion for Thee, O Beloved, O
 Beloved !

(Singing of Thee alone cures forever my pang of Love).

(Guru Nanak¹)

The Evil-doer knows not the all-vanished Master (that
 surprises by His sudden coming out from everywhere).

(*Pauri*—Stanza)

The world is lost in empty discussions,

Without Naming Him, all is this way worthless,

He would come by it who would know the ways that lead
 to Truth.

Those who call other *Kafirs* shall be counted as *Kafirs*
 and burn in that very difference.

Subhan (God be praised !) this whole creation is worth
 our thanksgiving to Him.

To live is to be lost in this Glory of Truth (in this wonderous
 beauty).

On the door of Him, in those Realms of the sovereign, one
 who has already lost himself in His Beauty shall be bathed in
 molten glory.

He lives whose mind is His Palace;

No one else, no one else is alive.

Others exist, they exist without the honour of the Beyond.

1. Almost all extracts are from Vār Majh.

All is *Harām*¹—whatever they eat, drink and consume here on earth,

The pleasures of sense-indulgence, wealth, property, infatuation, glow of the life of wine and of woman, are pleasant, but the soul is rendered bankrupt thereby.

The ignorant man is thus cheated of his reserves,
Without contact with His Glory, without the relish of His Beauty, without *Nām* he goes to the realms of falsehood.

Sloka

What availeth it after all to devour and to dress—(there is no real pleasure, only restlessness and blind excitement).

When the soul is not inhabited by God, the True Beauteous One,

What availeth it after all,

To consume fruits ?

What are butter and bread ?

What sugar and starch and meat ?

What avail after all clothes and their colours ?

What after all the luxuriant beds of love between men and women ?

What avail after all the armies, the liveried servants and officers, and what the luxurious living in gay palaces ?

Nanak !

Without filling Thyself with the Gladness of His Beauty

All this substance of mere pleasure is perdition.

Iron and gold break

But the smith binds them again in the fire :

Beautiful man and woman break,

1. *Harām* (forbidden) is of Moslem origin, The Prophet forbade certain things as *Harām* to his followers. If they eat or consume or use things that are *Harām*, they cease to be faithful. *Harām*, therefore, means in popular parlance, a deed by doing of which one gets excommunicated.

And are united in their offspring.
 Kings beg, the subjects give,
 And the begging and giving bind them together.
 The hungry ones get bound to those who feed them,
 The rivers and the douds are bound by rain,
 Man to man is bound by speech and sympathy,
 And in the *Vedas* they congregate (after death) who are of
 moral vows, who speak no lies.

The dead are bound with the living by their goodness, and
 by the name and fame thus won by self-restraint, (and mental
 eminence).

All these are ties that bind men to the wheel of *Samsara*,
 (Thought-worlds and Action;-worlds)

And the fool is bound (in vows of mental renunciations in
 having given up all these ties and attachments to the *Samsara*.)
 Nanak declareth to all :

By filling oneself with the gladness of His glory,

By praising, by wondering and worshipping His beauty, in
 men who are in union with the Perfect Ones of the Celestial
 Realms of soul.

Without love's highest culture of feeling, all are
 prisoners of their own virtue and vice (beyond death).

He makes and He judges :

Some are counterfeit, some genuine;

The genuine He treasures up in His Treasury,

The counterfeit are thrown away.

The sovereign Truth¹ and His court supreme has thrown
 them away, to whom should they tell their tale of woe ?

Ah, they should run and seek the shelter of the Sat-Guru,
 the only refuge for the cast-off.

1. An expression implying the Supreme Being, God.

The Sat-Guru transmutes the counterfeit into the genuine,
 the great transmuter is the Word of the Guru,
 Their love they give to the Sat-Guru.

Their adorations and devotions to the Sat-Guru are
 accepted in the Beyond.

They thus pass beyond their own imperfections through
 the Grace of the Perfect ones.

(*Pauri—Stanza*)

We are here below,
 We live on this earth, in this lower world,
 Thou art our Prophet, our sovereign of love,
 Thou goest above us, Our King,
 Thou art our God,
 The One Thou, O Beloved,
 The One Thou, the One Thou !
 Neither the moon,
 Nor the sun or the stars,
 Nor the seven Continents nor the Seven Seas.
 Nor shall winds be,
 Nor shall the mind be
 Where Thou art,
 The One Thou, the One Thou,
 O Beloved, O Beloved.

(*Var Majh, Guru Nanak*)

My Guru has told me,
 The Love of Him is the True Bread of Man,
 The Perfect One has convinced me, in a glance,
 The perfect one has delighted that I understand it.
 All cities and towns and huts have become truth, when He
 dwells therein.

The Sat-Guru has overwhelmed me with His Favour.
 He has revealed to me the secret of Naming Him, Nothing

but this song of *Nām* can have access to His inaccessible mansions,

And by falling first within, that very instant, they fall from the windows of His high mansions down, down to the depth.

And the Word Love is the passage to these heights again.

Those who know Love,

Those who imbibe the word, the Song of His Praise, are called to those Divine Palaces.

Women in love adorned with their own passion of Love are beautiful.

Day and night they are devoted to their Beloved—they are all sacrifice.

Those dwelling in His mansions are beautiful; they have been nurtured on the continuous Hymns of Love.

They attain to His Presence and shine there with rare beauty, so bidden they find Him at last,

And whatever they wish, those of Him—it cometh to pass; for these beautiful Brides Divine are beloved of Him.

Shame on those who live without a hidden aching for His Beauty.

Cursed is their existence,

Those who are refined by the practice of His Love, they, the Word-cultured women, truly drink Ambrosia of a great joy, of that Infinite Beauty.

(Guru Arjan Dev)

Speaking about such things is merely empty frothing;

Let us give up the misery of all this discussing and seek the delight of His Love,

Pain and pleasure are the transient garments of man, he wears them, and passes,

Where one is to be defeated in the end, better is silence there.

Having looked for Him above and below,
 I found Him within the temple of my heart;
 The true One has given me the sign of the signless,
 I had lost my way, the Guru pointed it out to me,
 Glory be to the True Guru,
 The Guru that has confirmed me in this Beauteous Truth,
 There is no sadness any more.

(*Stanza 24, Sloka*)

If the Guru be kind,
 There is no pain and misery and distress,
 If the Guru be kind, one is wedded to God,
 If the Guru be kind, meaningless is the fear of death.
 If the Guru be kind,
 Everlasting is the joy, the body of man itself is all-joy;
 If the Guru be kind,
 All prosperity of body and mind and soul waits for him;
 If the Guru be kind,
 Man is lost in Truth and Truth in man;
 If the Guru be kind,
 I have found the Gem within the four walls of my own home.
 And in my home burns the little lamp that He has lighted;
 I am happy and contented in the aura of that luminous comet
 tract of his singing Glory, and

I am happy that "I own Him, the True Being."

Guru Nanak¹

The sensation of cold vanishes by going near the fire.
 Night vanishes in the sun,
 The shades of darkness in the bright moon light,
 And the winds and waters have no caste;
 So the true self-respect of man is found at last in Love of

Him,

1. Var Majh, 25.

(The Guru says, all honours won outside those spiritual Realms are false, mere chimeras).

Stanza 26, Sloka

Be telling the teachings of Him one simply speaks of them.

The disciple truly understands when he is lost in Truth (nothing in the disciple remains outside Him).

What use is even speaking of these teachings to those whose Guru is Guru Nanak, Divinely inspired.

Guru Angad, Stanza 27, Sloka

He alone understands, whom he Himself tells.

He alone sees, to whom He himself make all manifest.

By vain discussion

We get entangled in still greater illusions.

Bidden by Him, all appearances come forth.

He Himself knows all-thought.

Nanak, He is the Word Immortal;

Only those fill their bags whom He giveth. (*Sloka*)

I am His bard appointed now,

I am one who had no work allotted to him,

He has put me to work (singing His Nām)

I have no leisure from love of Him, neither day nor night.

I am the bard of His palace.

I am appointed by Him, the true Being.

He has covered me by the gift of His song,

The Naming Him is my vesture,

And from His palace descend to me my daily bread, of the ambrosia of His glory—His Beauty.

His *Nām*,

All who have partaken of this dish have attained true happiness of soul.

The bard finds his expansion in the expanse of his song.

I strike the music of the Word, *Nām*, on all my instruments.

(*Pauri Stanza*)

In my song of Him I meet Him, the Perfect One—

(*Guru Nanak*)

The Pandit, after cramming himself with learning, cries aloud, but *maya* of lust, greed, and selfishness clutches firm the silence of his soul;

He has not thought of Brahman in those inmost recesses;

He is a clown and a fool within, though Pandit outside,
Nanak.

He alone is the hero, the mighty one who has killed his own ego.

He has truly appreciated the gift of *Nām* from the *Gurmukh*.

He has won the war of life and death.

He is liberated thereby and he liberates his clan.

Now all such emancipated souls shine in rare splendour at the door of God.

*Var Sri Rag, Sloka Mahalla 3,
(Guru Amar Das)*

INTRODUCTORY NOTE ON ASA-KI-VĀR

This Vār or disuisitional composition is inscribed in Guru Granth Sahib under the measure Asa. Its Pauris (Stanzas) and the majority of SLOKAS (couplets) are of the authorship of Guru Nanak Dev, with a few of Guru Angad Dev's composition. Its theme, to put it briefly, is Truth and Falsehood—truth and falsehood in worship, in society and in the ideas of purity and impurity. It takes up false beliefs in these various spheres of human experience, and with a vision that penetrates to the core of Truth, tears asunder the veils of falsehood. It has thus the effect of removing from the human understanding the

cobwebs of false faith, hypocrisy and superstition. With this negating approach, it affirms, as all over Gurubani, belief in the supremacy of the sole formless Supreme Being (Nirankar), for devotion and seeking grace. From the level of relentless logic it rises time and again to the beautiful lyricism of devotion.

In Puran Singh's rendering, as is usual with him, the author has assumed wide freedom of treatment. While all the vital matter from the original is incorporated, he at the same time adds theme-headings, and elucidatory notes. While the general reader will find it a somewhat painstaking task to unravel the original matter from these additions, he should find no difficulty in entering into the ecstasy with which the whole has been presented.

ASA-KI-VĀR

(by the author)

THE MORNING CHANT OF THE SIKH

This music is struck in all Sikh temples and in all Sikh hearts every morning. It is, as it were, the sacred bequest of Guru Nanak to his disciples. All the Gurus listened to it; Guru Gobind Singh was so enamoured of it, he listened to it every morning. Once when, chased by the Moghul hordes, he had quit the fortress of Anandpur, and the enemy was coming on him in hot pursuit, he made his Sikhs settle down to sing it. The enemy fell upon them during the singing of the Song; all was lost but the Song still remains. *Asa-ki-Var* is the victor of a thousand battle-fields of death. This Song is a holy chant. Its tremendous vibration reduces Time to a point; and it rings in the Sikh heart like a hundred bells. Its sound scares the appartitions and ghosts of darkness from the pasture lands, and the Sikh spirit rises supreme and lofty, imbued with the glory of the dawn.

I have seen Sikh soldiers in British Cantonments singing the Guru's Song. Their faces glow, their eyes sparkle, the blue veins of their foreheads swell with fervent joy and spontaneous concentration in the soul, and all-abstracted and all-flying, they strike cymbals and *dholkis*¹ and sing in chorus, adding their rustic odes, extemporised by themselves to the divine chant of *Asa-ki-Var*. For example, rustic snatches such as these :

“There comes Baba ! the great
 Guru Nanak !
 The physician that heals the sick.
 Baba Nanak ! Baba Nanak !
 Oh the lion-hearted Guru comes
 to heal us all.”

And thus inspired they sing, and uttering his Name, they go out to fight and die. Such is the simple life of the Sikh peasantry of the Punjab. It is the Guru's song that has made them so light and so affectionate, so soft and yet so brave.

In *Asa-ki-Var*, Guru Nanak is seen busy destroying the strongholds of Brahmanical superstition, with a persistent determination. And lo ! he has cleared the ruins away, and has built on their site a towered and thousand-pillared temple of song for all peoples and nations of the earth to gather in and worship. Guru Nanak offers to the simple folk the cup of nectar to taste. He puts a live song in the throats of those who sing it to the wild lilt of prairie and jungle, gathered in great congregations.

THE MORNING CHANT OF A SONG FOR DAY-BREAK
 BY GURU NANAK

It is sung as the rays of the dawn stir the hearts of men with the holiness of the celestial.

1. Small drums.

The symbol of Eternal Unity is *Om-kar*, (the-*Om-in-form*, the Om that has assumed the Creation-Body).

“The Name” is Song-in-flesh.¹ It is the symbol and sign of the Being of Truth.

It is a creative Divine *Personality*, (*Karta Purusha*) who hath no sense of the other, (no hatred), who hath no fear (there is none mightier than He).

He is beyond time and space, self-born, (Spirit-born, the Spirit-Being.)

His shape is Akal (Timeless, Deathless.)

And His personality is Unborn (or Spirit-Born).

This Being of Truth,

This Word-in-flesh,¹

This Great Person,

This Transcendental Cosmic Spirit-Personality is made manifest by Favour of the Guru.²

THE MIRACLE OF HIS TOUCH

A hundred times a day I fain would be as acrifice to the “Guru”,

1. A Christian touch, not Sikh-based.

— Editor.

2. This is one way of understanding this root-aphorism of the Guru. The other which to me is more truthful and so more beautiful is :

The Guru Says : “It start with creation. I define God as the highest human personality become divine. The Name of that Personality is truth, He is logos-embodied—The Guru. The Guru is creative Personality or *Karta Purusha*. The Guru is Fearless, with no hatred for anyone and the shape of the Guru is Deathless. The Guru is unborn or spirit-born and the Guru has the might to bestow life of the spirit. When that inner reaction *Guru Parshad* has taken place, the man is put on the road to realization.

Editor’s Note : The above is the author’s presentation of Mul Mantra, the Sikh fundamental creed.

Who changes men into angels¹ with the miracle of his Touch.

ALL IS DARK WITHOUT HIM

If a hundred moons come up in the sky,
If a thousand suns rise,
With all that light, it is dark, very dark, without the "Guru".

THE MAN WHO HATH NO LOVE IS LIKE
A BELIGHTED PLANT

When the harvest of Sesame is gathered the *buar*² plant is left in the fields ungathered; it dies unowned in the field, as it hath no grain, only black rust within the ears.

Like the deserted *buar*² are men, clever withal, who do not open themselves to be informed by the Guru.

THE COLOUR OF THE SUPREME MELODY
OF INEER RAPTURE

He created Himself,
And he is the Author of Love (*Nām*).
He made this all, the created worlds,
And seated in His Soul,
He drinks the beauty of his own creation.

HIS BREATH IS LIFE

O Lord, Thou art the giver of life,
And the life expandeth as Thou lendest it Thy breath.

THE UNIVERSE IS REAL NOT AN ILLUSION
(Vedanta philosophy calls this universe an illusion. The Guru

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- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Original, gods (devote). | — Editor. |
| 2. Burnt-out plants without the grain. | — Editor. |

calls it "Truth in-body.")¹

1. This note is added by the author. So are the theme-headings.

— Editor.

Footnote by the Author

Compare Carlyle's writings, about three hundred years after the Guru, on this theme, for example the following from *Sartor Resartus*. "Not only all common speech, but Science, poetry, itself, is no other, if thou consider it, than a right Naming..."

We speak of the volume of Nature and truly a volume it is—whose author and writer is God. To read it dost thou, does man, so much as well know the alphabet thereof? With its words, sentences, and grand descriptive pages, poetical and philosophical, spread out through solar systems and thousands of years, we shall not try thee. It is a volume written in celestial hierolyphs in the true, sacred writing of which even prophets are happy that they can read here a line and there a line—

Sweep away the Illusion of Time—glance if thou hast eyes, from the near moving cause of its far-distance mover. The stroke that came transmitted through a whole galaxy of elastic balls, was it less a stroke than if the last ball only had been struck and sent flying? O, could I (with the Time-annihilating Hat) transport thee direct from the Beginnings to the Endings, how were the eyesight unsealed, thy heart set flaming in the Light-Sea of celestial wonder. Then sawest thou that this fair Universe, were it in the meanest Province thereof, is in very deed the star-domed City of God; and though every star, through every blade and most through every living soul, the Glory of a Present God still beams. But Nature which is the Time-Vesture of God and reveals Him to the wise, hides him from the foolish. So it has been from the beginning, so will it be to the end. Generation after generation takes to itself the Form of a Body; and forth issuing from Cimmerian Night, on Heaven's mission appears. What Force and Fire is in each he expands, one grinding in the mill of industry, one hunter like climbing the giddy Alpine heights of Science, one madly dashed in pieces on the rocks of strife, in war with his fellow; and then the Heaven-sent is recalled; his earthly Vesture falls away and soon even to sense becomes a Shadow. Thus, like some wild-flaming, wild-thundering train of Heaven's artillery, does this mysterious manhood thunder and flame in long-drawn, quick-succeeding grandeur, through the Un-known Deep. Thus like a God-created, fire-breathing Spirit-Host, we emerge from the inane, haste stormfully across the astonished earth; then plunge into the inane. Earth's mountains are levelled and her seas filled up in our passage; can the earth which is but dead and a vision, resist Spirits which have reality and are alive? On the hardest adamant some foot print of us is stamped-in, the last Rear of the host will read traces of the Earliest Van. But whence? Heaven, whither? Sense knows not. Faith knows not; only that it is through mystery to mystery, from God to God.

Real are these continents,
 Real is this rolling globe,
 Real are these forms and these material objects.
 Thy doings are real, O Lord;
 Thy thoughts are real,
 Thy law eternal is real,
 And Thy court Royal.
 Thy Biddings are true and real,
 And Thy speech is all-truth;
 Thy actions are Truth,
 And Thy signs are eternal.
 Millions know Thee as the One Reality,
 And Thy Power is real.
 Truth is Thy adoration,
 Truth is Thy song, Thy word.
 O True King ! the dispositions of Thy will (*Qudrat,*)
 the mysterious Creations) are all Truths.
 Immortal Truths are they—who are lost in Thee.

MATERIAL FORMS CHANGE AND BREAK

The material forms that change, that came and go, that are
 “born” and are “dead” are the fragile glass, breakable, transient.
 (Truth takes bodies eternally).

Great is His Glory;
 Great is Thy Glory;
 The whole song of Creation is *Naming Thee*.
 Great is Thy Glory;
 There Truth reigns.
 Great is Thy Glory,
 Thou bestowest *there* Thy abundance and Thou consultest
 no one else.
 Great is Thy Glory,

There are comprehended all feelings,
 Great is Thy Glory.
 There are Thou the Pure by Thyself, in Thyself,
 Indescribable in the news of *there*.
 All things and deeds must be comprehended as of Thy
 inscrutable will, O Lord of life.

THE UNIVERSE IS HIS MANSION

This moving universe is the Divine Mansion of the Being of
 Truth,

And the Lord Truth lives therein.

Inscrutable is His Power; in His bidding some are ordained
 to live with Him, and some are thrown away and destroyed;
 He sublimates some out of things material into His Pure Being,
 and some are made to wallow in the mire of things material.

And this too, none can say—how and when and whom He
 chooses and saves.

He of all men is the *Gurmukh*, whom He Himself doth
 illuminate with His Being of Light.

HIGHER WORLDS OF SOULS LIFT UP MAN AND HELP HIM IN
 HIS SPIRITUAL STRUGGLE

The soul has to struggle to the kingdom of righteousness.

There is the lifting up by the Powerful ones from the Wheel
 of birth and death;

Those informed of Truth find the way out and are lifted up,
 and those not informed never rise to grace.

There is no place in the shining worlds of light for those
 bound in dark desire, and the dark hells created by them are
 the regions where they pass after physical death.

O Lord Truth ! Those who have dyed their souls with the
 colour of Thy glory, Thy love, Thy Name, have won the struggle

of life and have passed above it, beyond it.

And the Lovers of darkness are in struggle forever.

ALL THINGS ARE MADE OF WONDER

Author's Note

The beauty of the following poem can be realised only when the mind of man is in a particular attitude towards the mystery of creation. Carlyle emphatically reminds us that when men were ignorant and primitive, they had unconsciously a right attitude towards this forever inexplicable, forever indescribable, forever unknowable mystery, even though their wonder was so ignorant. With the increase of knowledge of natural objects there must come a proportionately increased wonder in the human mind in its attitude towards the Mystery of Being, which is beyond all knowledge. He reminds the modern world, in his own characteristic way, of the great merit of wonder, when he says, "The man who cannot wonder, who does not habitually wonder (and worship), were he President of Innumerable Royal Societies and carried the whole *Mecanique Celeste*, and Hegel's philosophy and the Epitome of all laboratories and observatories with their results in a single head—is but a pair of spectacles behind which there is no eye."—Guru Nanak impresses the ancient wonder on the modern mind in the following exquisite Hymn whose true rhythm lies in the eyes of vision.

Sound is Vismād¹

The essential mystery of sound in this universe—fills me with worshipful wonder.

The love-creative wonder, wonder that makes me superconscious, the wonder that makes me infinite, wonder that is at once Absolute knowledge and Absolute ignorance.

1. Vismad (Skt) Wonder.

Knowledge is Vismād

When I contemplate what man knows, my mind rises into the state of ecstatic wonder.

The Soul is Vismād

The Soul is wonder.

Beauty is Vismād

When I gaze at the inner secret of life intently, the only description that can be given of it is wonder—that it is not passive; wonder that is all-love, all-attraction, wonder that rings passionately in the music of being.

The colour (of life) is inebriating wonder, it is *Vismād*.

The Spirit World is Vismād

When I contemplate the naked souls that roam, I am filled with His Mystery, it is *Vismād*.

The winds—they fill me with *Vismād*.

The waters—They fill me with *Vismād*.

The Fires playing and their sports—they fill me with *Vismād*.

The round earth is *Vismād*.

All the teeming created life, fills me with transports of wonder.

Sensuous Pleasures, too, are *Vismād*.

When I contemplate these pleasures, how the world of man and animal seeks them, the thrills of soul they experience through them, they fill me with the unending intoxication of the same mystery of life; nothing is common, all such are extraordinary.

Love-union—they are Vismād.

Love-separations—they are Vismād.

The essential nature of that natural process fills me with wonder.

The satisfying of all hungers is *Vismād*.

Man singing His praise fills me with *Vismād*.

Man adoring Beauty fills me with *Vismād*.

The road is *Vismād* (the open road and how it takes

travellers to their destinations without a mistake).

And the pathless wilderness (those who are benighted and go to no destination by following the pathless wilderness, however tragic their struggle, too fills me with *Vismād*.)

The Near is Vismād

How beings comes close to God—their being near—how wondrously wonderful.

The Far is Vismād

And this Eternal Presence—this ever-present Appearance of His, this feeling—He is here—is *Vismād*.

And the embodied *Vismād* sees both the disembodied and embodied *Vismād*.

And this wonder is full of the secrets of self.

It is a chance if a man cross the border and attain to this Region of live feeling of *Vismād*.

Nature's mystery is all worshipful

Creation is Truth embodied before us :

We see it, touch it, hear it,

Creation has in it the meaning of pain and pleasure.

In the neither regions, the meaning of creation pervades.

In the higher skies the essential nature of creation dominates.

All forms (*Akār*, the Embodiment of Mystery) is *Qudrat* (Creation)¹

Vedas and *Puranas* are an aspect of Creation,¹

Human thought and history is of the mystery of creation,

What we eat and drink is a miracle of creation.

We wear clothes, it is the choice of creation.

All love, all affections are of its miracle.

All teeming life and its colours are of creation's wonder,

Editor's Note : In the passage on *Vismad*, the author has added much elucidatory matter.

1. Qudrat (Ar) is correctly might, Divine might.

— Editor.

The soul, the Cosmos, all manifestations are in the self-effulgence of creation.

Vices and virtues, pride and vanities are comprehended in the miracle of creation.

The winds share the eternal mystery and the nature of Being.

The waters, the fires, the earth, the dust are enclosed along with its functions.

All is, O Lord, of Thy creation, of Thy mystery.

Thou art the Creator, Thou art Absolute Purity—free of the inherent functions and properties of creation.

And Nanak says, when Thy Law is viewed, there is no plurality in Thee; it is but One forever, forever.

(The “many” are in Creation when we see it from our position, but if we were to look at the created, objective worlds from the position of the Creator’s self, the “Many” vanish).

THE CONDITION OF MAN AFTER PHYSICAL DEATH

Have they realised what happens after death ?

The man who gives himself to physical pleasures, finally drops down dead, his body is burnt to ashes.

But the soul, as it emerges out of his body, is found fettered in heavy chains;

Beyond death lies the grace and disgrace of one’s own mind, self-inflicted; bondage and freedom is of the mind and it is meted out to man by the violence inflicted by himself on himself.

The inner man finds no protection anywhere, no one in his later affliction comes to his help,

And the soul weeps and cries;

The blind of heart thus lose the opportunity of physical life that comes for attaining freedom.

THE AWFUL UNNAMEABLE

Afraid of Him, the Winds blow,
 Afraid of Him a million rivers flow,
 The fires serve His errands,
 The earth is weighted down firm.

The clouds revolve with burden on their heads in awe of Him.

And the Judge of Actions¹ in the awe of Him.

The sky arches under His compulsion,

And all the warriors of supreme power are under the same terrible law.

And they come and go under the impress of His supremacy.

The adepts, Buddhas, and the hosts of Gods and Yogis are in the same Supreme submission to Him.

Sun and moon revolve in the same submission, and they go on millions upon millions of miles unending.

On the forehead of all moving objects is written, "In Awe of Him".

And He, the Being of Verity, is beyond Awe.

Fearless, His magnetic effulgence is above all confines of colour and line.

Nanak declares :

Unawed of aught is but One, the Supreme Being of Verity.

All others are objects, of the objective Creation, even the highest gods.

A thousand men like Ram Chandras² are as dust;

Untold are the empty fables that are poured in man's ears.

1. Dharmaraja, the celestial judge.

– Editor.

2. The Supreme Indian God, hero of the epic Ramayana.

– Editor.

LIGHT COMES FROM THE HIGHER SPIRITUAL WORLDS AS
INSPIRATION

The beggars dance foolishly and think they are perfecting measures of music;

These professional actors come and display their dramatic shows, and the “kings” and “queens” come on the stage and sing to the audience; and they indulge in empty-hearted laughter and sensual gaiety;

They wear earrings worth thousands, and garlands worth hundred of thousands,

But the bodies over which they wear these jewels are empty and one day will be mere dust.

The knowledge of God cometh not to man by these fables, and this theatrical mummery that begins and ends, is empty talk.

When the Higher Ones favour, then is man illumined; all other intellectual plans and processes to get those rays of light within his soul end in dismal failure.

If He bends upon man His look of Favour, then one finds his *Sat-Guru*.

Through a thousand revolvings in matter cometh the soul of man up, made capable of hearing the Word of the Guru.

THE GURU IS GIVER OF THE LIFE-SPARK

Listen, all ye people, all nations of earth !

Peerless is the Guru, the Giver of life.

It is only by meeting the *Sat-Guru*¹ that one meets with the being of verity, and is washed clean of selfishness and finds the glory-self of Truth, truly understands.

The pageant of Time passes by in vain,

1. The holy Precept.

The hours, like *Gopikas*, dance with the day as *Krishna*.
 Winds, waters and fires decorate the dancers of Time,
 Suns and moons are the *Avtaras* of God,
 And the whole earth scatters gems and pearls.
 But all pageants pass by in vain.

The realms of the mind of man are engrossed in darkness
 and are enveloped in death without the light of the realms of
 souls.

Krishna-worshippers and their gurus go about dancing,
 moving their feet and tossing their heads,
 And the dust settles on their hair.

The people who come to see the spectacle of Krishna-
 sport go home amused.

All this pageantry fulfils a routine for the provision of bread
 to the actors, (all their compositions of music rhyme merely
 with Bread.)

And how they strike their bodies against the floor;
 Here are their *Gopikas* and Krishna, singing to them, and
 they pretend they are their *Ramas* and *Sitas*.

And they come and sing to the crowds,
 (By such follies freedom beyond fear is not obtained).
 Fearless is alone the Supreme Being, formless, the supreme
 verity.

He created all these worlds,
 His servants serve Him and obey Him,
 And on them descends the streaming light of His favour.

The night of His lovers is full of honeyed union, in their
 breasts is the intoxicating sweetness of an aching longing for
 Him.

Enough if the disciple has learnt the practice of His presence
 from the *Simrin*-Inspirer.

The ferrying across is done only by the ferry-man¹ if He be kind,

Not by dancing and singing in these shows of religion can one attain to freedom (from the duality of matter).

(Guru Nanak says :) That way many things revolve and dance :

The spinning wheel revolves in round measures,
The mills, the potter's-wheel turn briskly;
And the oil-man's bullock goes round the oil mill.

In the deserts, the whirlwinds dance madely in a circle with dust particles.

On the fields of the farmers, the bullocks tread the corn, separate grain from chaff, by going round and round.

Love is soundless and calm; it hath no theatricality or show with it.

The spindles revolve,
And the women churn butter.
And the trained birds perched upon a rod whirl round.

And as these actors giddily wheel around, countless things wheel like them breathlessly.

Men enchained to these revolving wheels of opportunity go round and round.

All things revolve endlessly,
They dance and laugh, but when the time comes to depart, they wail.

By these theatricalities, they attain to kind of perfection or *Siddhi*—spiritual success.

All this theatrical capering and dancing is perturbation of mind,
The minds of those who cherish that spark of love are balanced, trembling in the self-restraint of reverence due to

1. Symbol for the Guru, the Saviour.

the immensity of truth.

O Lord, the sense of Thy presence is Thy Name.

And in Thy *Nām*, one is safe from hell.

And is His, body, soul is His,

Give thyself away, thy labour and thy bread,

O Disciple, for go thyself,

And if, O Disciple, Thou longest for the good, let thy deeds be silent and shining, and count thyself amongst the lowly and the poor.

And if thou, O Disciple, shouldst wish to escape the terror of Death.

Ponder on the self: thy youth has gone, old age is still with thee,

Not a grain of corn will be left in the measure when the measurer has filled it up.

All Moslems have their Book of Divine laudation and the Law of Conduct, they read them and contemplate their contents,

But not so the servants of the Lord.

The servants of the Lord would fain bear the bondage of life and its pain to have the rare pleasure of a glimpse of Him.

In vain do Hindus admire the Most Admirable Creator and long vainly for the vision of the Unseeable Beauty; they bathe in sacred rivers to attain it; they worship idols with flowers and burn incense and do many such acts of worship.

Yogis meditate on the dead silence of the Impersonal Infinite.

But the Name of the Creator is beyond all such efforts at mere comprehension.

His figure is a vision of the universe of life;

His Name is without hands and feet,

And yet all-form is His body.

The devotees wedded to God are full of modest peace, they say naught, but they think always of silent self-sacrifice.

And as they give themselves away, a thousandfold is added unto them,

And the soul of humanity, receiving from them the gifts of the soul, adores them.

Thieves and lechers longing for other people's riches and beauty, liars and hypocrites, wrong themselves by the filth that thus comes and clings to their souls; such virtue as they have gathered for themselves in bygone ages they squander in wanton neglect, and think they have had pleasure here.

THE WHOLE CREATION HAS A SENSE OF HIS SPIRITUAL BEINGS

The teeming life-in-form that is on land and water, that forms and unforms in countless spheres and countries and climes, speaks to Thee and Thou dost understand its innermost prayers, and they too, Beloved, have a sense of Thy Being.

They devotees, O Lord, have an insatiable hunger for praising Thee;

And they are satiated by the sense of Thy Presence (*Nām*) alone.

And thus they are ever full of bliss unbroken throughout day and night, and they love to roll in the dust of those who are imbued with the Spirit of Thy Glory, O Love.

CREMATION AND BURIAL ARE VAIN DISCUSSIONS

In vain do the Moslems think of burial to save their soul.

The clay of the Mussalman's body falls into the potter's lump like other earth, and is fashioned into pots; and as are the pots baked, the Mussalman's clay is in fire; and while burning, bemoans its fate. It burns and weeps; its tears are the sparks

that fly all about.

Vain and foolish are these discussions of burial and cremation.

Who knows the secret of such things ? The Creator who made all this, alone knows about it.

FREEDOM OF SOUL LIES IN GRACE

No one has attained to the realisation of the Pure Spirit without the inspiration of the *Sat-Guru*.

In the *Sat-Guru*,¹ God has enshrined Himself, and in the speech of the *Sat-Guru* He speaks to all.

Those who have met the *Sat-Guru* have found everlasting freedom, for by meeting Him they have cut the fetters of desire.

This is the supreme conclusion, for it creates in the being of man an everlasting love for the soul of verity.

And by meeting the *Sat-Guru* has man found Him, who gives breath to the Universe—that Great Bounteous Giver.

*The "I" identified with material forms is the disease and the "I" identified with the Pure Spirit in its cure.*²

In the sense of "I", "I am", "I am",

The wheel of creation and Karma revolves.

They come and go on a wheel of birth and death;

They give charity in the sense of "I";

The take charity in the sense of "I";

They earn and lose wealth in the sense of "I";

They understand both virtue and vice in this little "I".

In this little "I" revolve all their thoughts;

Their ideas of Hell, and Heaven and God are from the view-point of this little "I".

1. The holy Preceptor.

— Editor.

2. Another rendering would be : Egoism is a malignant disease, but is not without cure.

— Editor.

They weep and laugh in "I";

They think they are soiled and they think they are washed
in the self-delusion of "I".

They gain caste and lose caste under the same delusion.

They consider themselves both foolish and wise under the
spell of the illusion of the little "I".

Truly have they no sense of true liberty or beatitude.

The idea of *Maya* and the Darkness of life are born of the
"I".

And yet is life a multitude of these little "I's".

Life clings to the nuclei of "I's".

One who understands this riddle of "I", both its reality and
its illusion, finds the Portal of God. Without inner illumination
Pandits talk and foam at the mouth in the snare of words which
needs disentanglement.

Nanak thus declares :

Inscrutable is the will of Him who has written these letters
of objects and their destinies;

It is as it is, it is as it seems, as one sees.

"I" is both a disease and a cure.

The Essence of life is "I";

Round this "I" man acts,

"I" is a mere nucleus.

And this "I" is what binds the soul to itself.

How revolves the wheel of birth and death in this nucleus
of life, "I" ?

How is its illusion-knot destroyed ?

Why ? This "I" is the eternal individuality of man round
which it asserts and denies itself;

It is of the Will of God;

1. This line is also interpreted as suggested in footnote to the thematic
heading above.

It is a deep-seated disease and the cure of this disease lies in itself, when life sheds matter and is pure spirit.

And if He favours the man, he practises the Word of the Guru to perfection,

Saith Nanak : "Listen, O men,

By such self-culture, freedom from the pain of conflict is won.¹

SIMPLE LIFE-PLEASURES FEEL THOSE WHO HAVE RECEIVED
HIS LOVE

They have truly seen Him who throb with Truth, breathe Truth, think Truth, who do not go astray in self-indulgence,

Who stand fast by the ordained function of their existence, forever struggling upwards towards the light of righteousness.

They break their links with mammon and live simple lives, with just enough provision to live.

O Lord, to such earnest ones Thou forgivest all, and thou bestowest a great future on them, and givest them more and more of Thy grace everyday, and everyday they rise higher and higher and their greatness is that they have found Thee.

HE WHO MADE ALL THIS LOOKS AFTER WHAT CONCERNS
HIS

He who creates it, cares for all life. The countless living ones He counts as His-men, trees, rivers and their banks; clouds, birds, countries, cities, spheres, solar systems and their satellites.

O Disciple ! Why trouble concerning plans of living ? the Creator who made all these wondrous worlds must take the burden of its upon Himself.

Saluation to Him !

Without losing one's life in His life, are all religions vanity.

The King whose court is Eternal, the Court of mercy that passeth not.

Saith Nanak : Without filling yourself with glory of "Naming Him" both the *tilaks* and sacred threads are *vanities*.

Your myriad goodnesses and virtues are false superstitions,
And your actions of merit as defined by the holy scriptures
of the world.

Vain are your hundred penances performed on the holy
rivers and waters,

And vain the slow and gradual fulfilment of yogas in the
loneliness of the deserts.

And vain a myriad deeds of heroism in war and on the
battle-fields and in vain the glory of death if thou art killed in
the forefront of such action and if thou expirest on thy sword.

Mere self-deceptions are the gathering-in of intentions and
the intensification of memories and the awakening of self-
consciousness. Self-delusions are the *Gnana* (divine knowledge
or Brahma jnana), *Dhayana* (Yogis' fixing of mind on empty
space and silence), recitals of scriptures, (the most popular
methods of being religious.

Vain, vain are such creeds and religious.

He who created us all has ordained the struggle for life, life
must pass through the mills he has set in motion.

Birth and death is by His will; in vain the desire of man to
escape the wheel.

Nanak declares—all mental conventions and formalities fixed
for himself by man, all final suppositions about such things are
false.

Emancipation comes when He so favours him,

And His favour is the flag of eternity under which we should
gather.

MAN FINDS GOD IN THE GURU

Only Thou art Truth, the supreme, the whole Truth,
And Thou dispensest Truth.

Those attain to the Realisation of Thy Truth on whom Thou
art pleased to bestow it Thyself.

Only then they find Truth of life, only then they find it—there
is no other way.

And they practise Thy Presence to perfection, whom Thou
of Thy will thus inspirest.

Man finds God when he meets the Guru, in whose heart is
encompassed the incomprehensible; in him lives the Truth-in-
flesh.¹

Fools not realising Him, lose their lives by turning their souls
away from the Guru to the guidance of their own unilluminated,
blind minds.

One thing is truly needful, all else by way of learning is
fretting;

If we read as many books as might make huge loads for
creaking carts, as might burden the camels of whole caravans,

If we read ship-loads of them, and make still more libraries
of books;

If we read everyday of every month of the year, and every
year of every cycle,

If we read as long as life itself, as long as we breathe—

Only one thing is truly needful, all else is the fretting and
foaming and blowing of empty winds of the little "I".

One who writes and writes and reads and reads only
scorches his soul;

The more such a one wanders to holy places, the more he
pattles of piety;

1. A Christian touch.

And the more he resorts to these ascetic garbs and orders of "holiness", the more he "denies" himself ignorantly,

The more suffering he gives to himself in vain. And he must needs endure much suffering of his own ignorant choice of it.

PENANCES LEAD BUT TO SELF-TORTURE

If a man abstains from bread,

He only denies himself the joy of it.

Man undergoes much suffering, for he runs after Not-Truth, or some glittering show of it.

If he denies decent wear to himself, he must needs suffer the inconvenience day and night.

And when he takes to silence, he rots within.

WITHOUT THE INSPIRATION FROM ON HIGH ALL IS IN VAIN

How can the soul be awakened without the Guru's inspiration ?

He who hangs himself upside down must suffer as he inflicts the pain of it on himself;

And if he takes to eating dust, he himself pours dirt on his head.

The fool, purblind, has lost all self-respect,

And nothing that he does is of avail when inspiration from on high is denied to him;

If he takes his residence in burial grounds, sepulchres, and tombs,

The blind one knows not what he does and he at last feels the despair of it all.

Man finds true joy when he meets the Guru, and when he chooses to enshrine the word of the Guru in the Temple of his heart.

Saith Nanak: He alone finds it, on whom God casts His

favour, and who then transcends the mortal group of hopes, worries, fears and anxieties, and burns away his "I" in the pure flame of an ever-surgng Word-flow.

THE ADORATION OF HIS DEVOTEES

Glorious, glorious is the sight of Thy devotees singing at Thy door;

They are truly the devotees whom thou Thyself lovest first,
Without Thy forgiveness, none can even reach Thy door of love.

Some turn their back on their own source, and are vainly proud of the petty views of their "I", which is full of ignorance.

Lord ! I am Thy lowly minstrel; others count themselves of high caste, with them have I no concern.

ALL HUMAN AFFAIRS ARE OF DARKNESS WITHOUT HIS LOVE CHERISHED IN THE HEART

Without Thee, O Lord,
Without Thy Love burning in human hearts,
Without the spark of Thy inspiration,
Without the glow of Thy Eternal verity,
Without the threads of human consciousness joined to the sources of Thy light and love,

Without the lyrics of Thy Name, ringing in the human blood,
Without the self-gathering-in of men in Thee, O Lord, I find

The king is a lie;
His subjects a lie,
The whole world of affairs a lie.
Gay tents a lie,
Palaces a lie,
The dwellers therein all lies,

Their gold a lie,
 The wearers thereof all lies,
 The body a lie,
 The clothes a lie,
 And Beauty itself a lie;
 The husband a lie,
 The wife a lie,
 They, the loving husband and wife burn and mingle with
 dust.

Lies are tied to lies in an illusory attachment.

And they have forgotten their Creator.

What are the friendships of this world ? When none has immortal feeling for God in him, all these shows and pageants shall pass away,

All the sweetness and honey here is a lie,

And all these lies the Ferryman, Death takes and sinks in mid-sea.

O Lord, Saith Nanak, without Thee, all else is a lie.

TRUTH IS WHERE HIS LOVE IS

Truth is where the hearts are pure,

Where sincerity washes a man, his body too becomes pure,

Truth is in men who fix their souls in love of the Being of Truth,

Having "heard"¹ His *Nam*, man's consciousness gets imbued with the *Nam*'s life-giving secrets, and men find the door to freedom.

Truth is where the soul finds it balance, neither patient nor impatient, and avoiding all extremes, attains naturally to its blossom of life.

1. This is a mystical phrase, meaning, 'being inspired by'. (Based on author's parenthesis).
 - Editor.

Truth is when this human body is cultivated as soil and in it is sown the Name and mystery of the Creator.

Truth is where the disciples learn from the Guru,

Where the man imbued with the limitless forgiveness of the Creator learns to sympathize with all that lives and shares his labour and love with them; ◊

Truth is where man lives in his own soul-centres, the holy of holies, and having learnt of his Guru the secret of life, plants himself there in God and makes God his dwelling-place on earth.

Truth so realized is the cure of all sin, a stream of life flows and all sin is washed away naturally in the flow of song and inspiration.

Such is the self-washed daily life and spiritual condition of those who have truth in their coffers.¹

LET THE DUST FROM UNDER THY FEET BE MY ANOINTING

What gift do I desire ?

Just the dust from under Thy Feet, with which blessing I might anoint my forehead.

To let go of the hold of false desires, that gathered in myself, I might gaze at Thee, the Incomprehensible.

The final fruit of freedom of Thy love falls to who fits himself for it.

The gift of the dust from under Thy feet is the share of those who have this great destiny written on their foreheads.

WITHOUT THE IMMENSITY OF SYMPATHY SELF-SACRIFICE IS
A VANITY

Without largeness of understanding, men toil fruitlessly

1. The original implies 'Have tied truth to their sash in a knot'. — *Editor.*

through hundreds of self-sacrifices in the service of man and God, and all is in vain.

REFLECTIONS OF GURU NANAK ON HIS OWN TIMES.

There is little Truth at present in the world,
The lie is spread everywhere,
And the darkness of this black age is roaming (as an apparition) like a broken tune,

Of the times gone by, those who tilled and sowed have gone, having harvested all they had sown.

How can the burnt seeds now germinate ?

It needs a whole seed, and the season, and the climate before virtue can grow and harvests come up again.

None can have the colours of a fast dye unless the cloth is soaked.

Saith Nanak : The garment of this body and mind needs to be washed snow-white with the spirit of reverence for the ever-inscrutable awe-inspiring mystery of life (the spirit of a solemn attitude towards life and death and love and God), and it must be laboured for to attain. Thus Nanak declares :

If man is thus imbued with the spirit of love, he is freed from the entanglement of the Lie of this age.

In this age,

Greed is the Ruler.

Sin of chief Counselor.

The Lie is the great Baron,

And they call their Executive Officer (naib) Lust to confer together on the dark deeds to be committed in the realms of sinful administration entrusted to them.

The fact, however, is that the subjects are blind, ignorant, (they know not what cruelties their rulers are perpetrating.)

And those who are *jnanis* (the knowers of Brahm) dance

only ritually, tune their musical instruments and sing, and decorate themselves and wear robes and ornaments.

They sing aloud the ballads of past heroes.

These Pandits of the nation are stupid, they wish to win the fruits of life and struggle by mere argumentation and clever talk, and think they defeat others by their clever logic, while inwardly they set their heart upon the gathering of lucre.

And there are others who follow silently the path of righteousness, but all their efforts go in vain, because their spirituality is a traffic with gods; so much love for so much paradise, their virtue is for show, their ideas of liberty false.

And others who count themselves celibate and self-controlled, only label themselves with a high sounding name; they are ignorant of the subtle ways of balancing one's personality in Truth of things, and in vain they give up their hearths and homes to seek virtue.

And all consider themselves, by themselves, as Perfect Ones; none thinks He does not know the whole truth.

The Supreme Truth is searching the hearts of men; in His acceptance lies the whole worth.

Each and all have striven to excel,

But what the Creator wills comes to pass.

Beyond death, the assumed powers of high caste, and positions and colours shall not avail, nor shall the powers of material self-aggrandizement be of any use, there one will meet with aliens strange and new; there are unknown souls, those who are accepted there and welcomed, are truly good and great—no others, no others, O Lord, than those on whom thou has bestowed the genius of love and vision can think of Thee as their husband and Master. These creatures that move about on this earth are helpless even in their blind struggle. This variety is the function of the creation. I blame no one, it is Thy Creation, Thou Thyself takest some to Thy bosom, and thou Thyself

forsakest others,

And the favour of Thy inspiration has taken me where I understand all this,

And I am living in Thee, O Truth, effortlessly, with the natural ease of my being.

SUFFERING IS THE CURE WHEN PLEASURE BECOMES A
MALADY FOR MAN

Suffering is the cure of spiritual ailments of the soul when too much pleasure of sense-indulgence causes sickness of the soul.

Sunk in sense-indulgence, man has left in him no Higher Longings, (he comes blind of soul).

The pure spirit is the Transcendent God.

Thou art the Creator, transcending Thy creation;

And if I identify Thee with the Creation, it cannot be.

I am a glad-hearted sacrifice to Thee, O Indweller of all created nature.

Thou canst not be in the confines of the human kind.

In the essence of Thy being is the Light of life,

And in the Light of life is Thy Being.

Indescribable is how Thou, in Thy transcendental art, dost invest all Thy creation with Thyself.

Thou art the true master,

And they have attained the freedom of song who have sung of Thee.

Saith Nanak,

What could one say of the truth of the Creator's mind. (Indescribable is all, only feeling comprehends the incomprehensible.)

It goes on as He does,

All that happens is of His consent inscrutable.

THE WORD IS BREATHING THE VERY BREATH OF GOD

Yogis also say a *Shabad*-word (i.e. say that the Word is to be repeated).

Jnanis (the Knowers of Brahman as they call themselves) too, talk of the Word.

Brahmans think *Vedas* is the Word;

Kshatriyas too think they harbour the Word,

The Sudras, too, have been taught some Word of their own.

But all these words are in vain,

For the truth of it all is the Guru-inspired Word, the All-Word.

Only He who knows the Word from the Bosom of God, the Guru, truly knows;

The *Gurmukh's* word—the attitude of the inspired soul breathes the breath of God.

And that all is comprehended in the inspiration of His *Nam*.

Saith Nanak : One that is so imbued with *Nām* is the embodiment of God.

FORM IS INSEPARABLE FROM THE BEAUTY SHINING
THROUGH IT

The *Kumbha*¹

The water stays in the *Kumbha*.

But without water in it the pitcher is not the *Kumbha*,

So the mind of man stays confined in the light of self-illumination.

But without the Guru, the light of self-illumination is not there.

You are what you do, not what you think;

Why curse the illiterate, uninformed ascetics,

When the learned go and sin so much in this world ?

1. *Kumbha* connotes not an empty earthen pitcher, a pitcher full of water.

We should count men by their deeds and practice, not by their professions.

O men, beware !

We should not indulge in self-deception,

Which would defeat us at the *Durgah*¹ (the Higher Realms of Shining Souls of emancipated Beings.)

It behoves both the illiterate and the learned to ponder over their fates beyond death.

One thing is plain—

Those whose tongues wag (discussing learnedly here and hereafter) shall be defeated in the yonder realms.

THE LIFE-CHARIOT

Saith Nanak :

The human body is like a chariot,

And there is a charioteer that drives it.

Both the chariot and the charioteer come driving through the cycles of time, constantly changing their covering. In the Time-Realm of Innocence (Infancy)² the chariot is made of satisfaction of all desires, and the charioteer is the Justice of God, (His Righteousness).

In the time-Realm of self-restraint, (Youth)³ the chariot is made of power-conserved, and the charioteer is the power of the well-husbanded will at work.

In the time-Realm of austerity⁴ the chariot is made of austerity (endurance) and the charioteer is charity.

In the time cycle of ignorance⁵, the chariot is made of

1. The Portal.

— Editor.

2. Sati-Yuga.

— Editor.

3. Treta.

— Editor.

4. Dwapar.

— Editor.

5. Kali Yuga.

— Editor.

restless life, and the charioteer is the Lie. Saith Guru Nanak :

(Recounting in a condensed snatch of a thought, the History of Religion in India and finding that the essence is not the "dead deed" of history but the true feeling that ever informed Humanity.)

*Sam Veda*¹ says, the Lord wears the white robe of light, and He is self-sustained, self-existent, nothing "other" can enter His Being. All things come out of Him and return into Him.

Rig Veda speaks of His immanence in nature. And in another Time-cycle of gods, Rama is the name which is most powerful.²

And liberation is attained by utterance of the Name of God.

In another cycle the *Yajur Veda* becomes a lyric, Kahn-Krishna of the Jadvas came and eloped with Chadraval, a milkmaid;

The wish-fulfilling tree he brought to Vrindavana and played with Gopikas, in the colours of youth and song;

And in the Dark Age,

Atharva is the Veda;

The name of God is now Allah,

And instead of the white, the blue apparel is dooned by the Muslims and the rule of Turks and Pathans is established.

And let us say that all the four Vedas were fulfilled (in the religious history of man)—

But it is not by recounting the glories of the *past*,

But by being, that one attains to Truth,

Those who in humility counted themselves with those of the lowest caste find true liberation in deep sincerity of their soul,

1. Vedas to all Eastern thought are the symbol of religious knowledge as Eddas are to the Norse people.

2. May also imply 'Sun among the gods'.

— Editor.

I FEEL BLESSED I HAVE MET HIM

I would be glad-hearted sacrifice at His Feet, at the feet of my *Sat-Guru*, meeting with whom has inspired me with His Love.

He who has granted to my eyes the light of knowledge and vision,

I am happy I have seen Him and His Glory with these mortal eyes.

They who go away from their divine Lord and are absorbed in pursuing others are as merchants who have lost their fully-laden ship at sea.

There are few who can decide that *Sat-Guru* is the ship that would take them safe across.

By His favour they cross the sea of blind struggle.

WITHOUT SYMPATHY A LOFTY STATURE IS IN VAIN

The *simbul* tree !

How fine, straight, high and large-bodied,

Its fruitlessness belies the fond hopes of birds that seeing it come thither to its spreading branches,

And they fly back with all their expectations disappointed;

For the fruits of the *Simbul* are tasteless and the flowers insipid.

Better to be a low shrub bearing sweet berries, than such a tall tree,

And in a lowly stature may be concentrated all goodness, all worth.

BEING POOR AND LOW WITHOUT SYMPATHY AND

SUBMISSION IS ALSO A CURSE

And if we take the balance, and weigh, the pan with more in it that falls low.

But this spirit of submission and being lowly is in itself no virtue.

All bend before their own self, none bends his knee to another.

All the hunter bows in pursuit of the game; he kills the deer by crouching low.

What use bending the body when the soul is not cleansed of impurity ?

THE GURU'S CRITICISM OF HYPOCRISY, AS A UNIVERSAL
SYMBOL

The Brahmans recite scriptures,

And mutter *Sandhyas*¹

And sit with eyes closed as the Kingfisher watches the fish.

Lies are on their tongues, they eloquently prove that iron itself is gold and gems.

Thrice a day to they meditate on *Veda Mantras*.

They wear beads round their necks,

And on their foreheads bear the holy *Tilak*².

They have a pair of *Dhotis* (to have clean cloth to touch their holy limbs)

And veil themselves with a cloth when praying.

If they but knew what the illumination of a Brahman is, what true culture is,

They themselves would call their *Karma* and their faith worthless empty shells.

Saith Nanak,

Man lives if he but breathe the spirit of God; but he cannot find the way to that blessed state of life without the inspiration

1. The Hindu Evening Service.

— Editor.

2. The paste-mark.

— Editor.

of the Sat-Guru.

The body of man is a fine garment,
Its beauty of form entrancing,
But the soul shall pass out of it,

And with it shall pass its own choice (of thoughts) and things and persons and habits and oppressions and obsessions and plights and delights.

Man forgets while in the body that he had the pleasures of life and also commanded the services of men according to his sweet but ignorant will, and took no cognisance of the self-enthralment that followed the supposed freedom of "doing what the liked".

And the uninformed man knows not the path beyond death is narrow and sharp.

And those who could see the naked soul (weighed down with the darkness of its blind choice) going alone to hell, would see how dreadful is the effect of blindness on the soul.

And it is only then, beyond death, that man trembles with acute repentance.

THE SACRED THREAD

Oh the sacred thread ! There is no need for conventional lies, the Guru says :

Let forgiveness be the cotton,
Let restfulness from desire be the thread spun out of it.
Let restraint on one's own liberty be the knots given to it,
Let sincerity be the twist to it—

O Pandit, if such a sacred thread you can bestow, them come and bestow one on me.

Such a thread shall neither break, nor be soiled, No fire can burn it, nor can it be lost,

Blessed are those who wear this sacred thread. Saith Nanak :

And as to the thread, the Brahmans invest ment with, they buy it from the market,

And they sit formally in a sacred square.

Into the ears of those whom they initiate they whisper some secret rigmarole of formula,

And the Brahman, by whispering it into their ears and investing them with sacred thread, becomes the guru-Brahman.

The guru who gives it¹ dies,

The thread falls away and drops,

And the poor wretch passes threadless to realms beyond death.

A thousand thefts cling to man, despite this sacred thread;

A thousand stolen indulgences on unbridled passions stain the mind,

A thousand lies and a thousand abuses cling to him as dirt,

A thousand treacheries waylay his soul.

As the Brahman comes twisting a thread out of cotton,

Sometimes the followers of the Brahman kill a goat and feast themselves in joy of the ceremony of the sacred thread (celebrating the spiritual second birth of a Hindu).

And all invite the Brahman and say, "Invest us with the sacred thread."

And they change it for a new one when it is worn out.

Saith Nanak :

The thread would break not, if it had any substance in it.

If the word we honour and acclaim as our sovereign be the word of the *Gurmukh*.

The feelings of self-sovereignty flow naturally from within,

And such spin the thread of songs to the Grēat Verity. (But this initiation is different.)

1. The original would imply, The wearer dies.

Those of the spiritual Realms of emancipated beings
(*Durgah*) invest one with this sacred thread,

And so initiated, O son, the thread of devotion breaks not.

(And if they justify it by offering an explanation that their
sacred thread is a symbol of self-control, what a self-deception
is this.)

They put no thread on their sensual desires,

Regenerate weaklings, who wallow in the mire !

No thread on their hands and feet,

No thread on their tongues, nor eyes,

And the Brahman-Guru himself passes his life threadless,
and yet pretends to bestow the thread on others.

He takes his fee and reads scriptures at weddings.

And he takes scrolls from under his arm and shows the
astrological ways out of an imagined difficulty.

Behold O people—such novel tricks of these Brahmans !
Ignorant themselves, they call themselves knowers of Brahma.

TAKING THE RIGHT PATH ALSO IS BY HEAVEN'S FAVOUR

If the Lord be pleased,

And bestow on us His Favour,

Then only can we do what is true and right;

We can only render true service when He enables us to
understand His rule.

Those who submit to His incrutable bidding are saved and
the saved ones enter the glorious mansion of the Lord.

If they do what shall delight Him, whatever they wish and
desire shall be fulfilled.

Only then, only then, the pilgrim dressed in glory shall find
entrance into the hidden Realms clesstial (*Durgah*).

They tax the "Cow" and the "Brahman".

Surely cow-dung cannot liberate them here nor beyond.

Shame on the sacred *Dhoti*, *Tilak*¹ and the rosaries when they serve the malchhas² and earn their bread by abject slavery.

In hidden privacy, they read Hindu scriptures, but in public they read the Mohammedan books and do as their Muslims rulers do.

O Brothers ! Purify your lives and shed these abject hypocrisies :

Only those attain freedom, who praise the Lord.

(In this *Sloka*, Guru Nanak reflects on the Hindus who as servants of the Muslim state taxed both cow and Brahman and yet plastered the floor with cow-dung to make their cooking squares holy. They flattered their employers by adopting their modes of life and worship and read their books to show loyalty).

SOCIAL HYPOCRISY IN GURU NANAK'S TIMES

These man-eaters, Muslim rulers and their *Quazis*³ pretend to render *Namaz* to God,

And their tools, the Hindus, who stab the people with daggers to please their rulers, still wear the sacred thread;

And at the doors of these Hindu dignitaries, the degraded priests go and chant their *Vedas*, and blow their conchs,

And the Brahman priests relish the laies of it all.

Lies are their stock-in-trade, lies their commerce,

Lies they speak, lies they eat; lies they love;

Far from them are the abodes of Righteousness, of purity and modesty.

Saith Nanak,

Falsity of life pervades public affairs.

Fie on the *Tilaks*, on the forehead,

And the orchre-coloured *Dhotis* over the knees.

1. Paste-mark.

— Editor.

2. Term of disparagement for the Muslims in those times.

— Editor.

3. Judges.

— Editor.

When they hold the dagger in their hands to bleed the people like butchers,

And curry favour with the Muslims by wearing indigo-coloured garments as the Muslims wear (in making mean imitation and sycophancy.

And living on the contaminated wages from the hands of the *Melechhas*¹, they pretend to worship the *Puranas*².

They eat meat which the Muslims have killed to propitiate their God by means of their Arabic *Mantras*,

And yet they scare away human beings from their "sacred" cooking square. "Come not, come not this way, enter not here; my food will be contaminated by your touch", which he protects by drawing partitioning lines on the floor.

The cooking square is held sacred, on which sit these hypocrites, crying, "Touch me not, touch me not, I shall be defiled!"

Yet their own bodies are festering and rotting with vice and corruption :

Their minds are defiled, degraded already.

They rinse their mouths with water.

Saith Nanak,

O man, Think of the Awful, the Immense, the Verity,

If man fathers truth, in himself, only then can be attain to the Truth.

THE ALL-MOVER OF THINGS AND MEN, IS THE COSMIC PERSON

In the cosmic Person, in the Conscious self of the Universe is guidance for these objects,

And the creation moves at His beck and call.

1. Already explicated.

— Editor.

2. Hindu mythological scriptures.

— Editor.

He bestows greatness,
 And He moves men to noble and heroic action,
 The greatest of the great is He,
 And great is His creation.
 And He puts all things into motion,
 And a little change in His look makes crowned kings eat
 grass.

And so poor He makes them, that as they go begging for
 bread from door to door, not a morsel falls to their hands.

THOU GETTEST WHAT THOU GIVEST OF THY OWN LABOUR

It thieves break into a house and bring wealth, and if with
 this stolen wealth they propitiate their dead ancestors—

In the realms of spirits, this wealth will surely be known as
 stolen property,

And thus these thieves make their dead ancestors also
 thieves, and the middle men too, and all are disgraced.

Saith Nanak :

This is a false way of propitiating ancestors.

In the world beyond all get the fruit of their own labour
 and sweat.

PURITY AND IMPURITY

*Referring to the custom of calling women impure, the
 Guru says :*

They call the women impure, but the so-called Impurity
 visits them periodically.

But these men with their mouths for ever full of lies and dirt
 and the filth of their hypocritical lives are degraded and impure
 everyday of every month.

Wrong notions have they of impurity of Spirit. Purity doth
 not come by rubbing the body with water everyday.

The truly pure are those in the temples of whose hearts
ring the music of the love of God.

AFTER DEATH

The fleet-footed mares caprisoned with golden trappings,
The harems full of beautiful women, decked with colours
of joy and desire,

Palaces gay, high-towered mansions—

Having all these, those who spread themselves at ease,
fully pleased with this abundance of pleasure and property,

The pleasure-seeking tyrants, take the fill of pleasures by
way of a thousand caprices of theirs,

And in their vain glory realize not God.

They issue orders and bid the slaves hurry to serve them.

But they have forgotten death and what beyond death is
coming fast, so close on their heels; they have already gambled
away and lost their youth, and old age already has got them in
its grip.

SUPERSTITION PETRIFIES FEELING

*The Hindus, superstitiously observe Sutak or impurity
of woman during confinement.*

They have petrified all feeling into a barren doctrine of “Do
not eat this, and eat that” and so on, and all is reduced to a
kitchen religion. The Guru refers to these lies in the following
passages :

If the *Sutak* (Impurity) on occasions like this and in eating
and drinking, be considered a principle of human practice,

Then human life cannot be without *Sutak* :

In fuel and cow-dung are there worms and insects,

All grain is full of living seeds;

Water itself is full of life.

How can *Sutak* be observed,
 When to provide one mean to you there are so many deaths
 in your kitchen ?

Sutak impurity cannot then be washed out of human life.

It is cleansed by the light of realization, when the mind of
 man is illumined with God's own wisdom.

The *Sutak* of the mind is greed,

Of the tongue false speech,

Of the eyes lust for another's wife, wealth and beauty.

The impurity of the ears is to lend them to another's back-
 biting.

Saith Nanak :

Those who have not purified their minds, tongues, eyes
 and ears of these impurities are the real offenders against the
 doctrine of *Sutak* impurity, and they go straight to the realm of
 death.

In all affairs of man and everywhere, *Sutak* is but a
 superstition of one's mind.

And the Darkness-enveloped minds desire not Truth ;

They understand not.

Birth and death are at the will of Divine Command.

They come and go at He will.

Eating and drinking (as functions of life) are pure.

He has bestowed on life not only the power to eat, but all
 that is to be eaten.

The sustainer thus sustains life;

All are provided by Him,

Saith Nanak.

Those who have understood that one Truth of the
Gurmukh, and have gained a God-facing attitude, and have
 turned their soul's expectancy in the direction whence comes
 His mercy, have no need to take need of these formal

conventions of purity and impurity.

FILL YOURSELF WITH THE GLORY OF THE HOLY GURU

Fill yourself, O disciple, with the glory of *Sat-Guru* and let the peans of His Praise rise from your soul :

The *Sat-Guru* who is All-Glorious, All-Great, All-High.

This vision of Beauty bursts on your view when He so favours,

When He loves you, His love fills your being deep with song and comes out of it gushing like a fountain.

And know, O Disciple !

That when He so wishes, He lays His Hand on thy forehead and with one touch drives out the evil ones that infested your being for long. Your rise in His love out of the grossness and filth that you gathered in your arduous journey through matter.

Thus, when the Lord is pleased with you, you attain the glories of life.

BRAHMANICAL DUALISM

The Guru returns again to the Brahmanical false dualism of life and the constant attempts to live in an unnatural or sub-natural way in the empty name of the supernatural way.

These thoughtless people, says the Guru,

They just bathe and think they are quite pure.

And they come and squat in as acred cooking square declared "pure".

And the purified cook brings their food and places it before these "holy" ones,

And the diners cry, "Let no one touch it, lest it be made impure".

So the "pure" eat "pure" food, and read the *Slokas* of Gita to complete the ceremony of the "pure" eating the "pure".

But who amongst these would endure the pain of having defiled the food “so pure” by gulping it down into surely not a very pure place ? For the food was also a Brahman God, water was also a Brahman God, Fire was also a Brahman God, and Butter was also a Brahman God, and the combination of all the gods was certainly a divine article, and this divine article was swallowed down with human saliva !

Saith Nanak,

The mouth that utters (not the Hymns of Glory of God, the soul of a man that throbs (not with His Love) and without Naming Him devours food so provided, is already defiled and impure.

WOMAN IS NOBLE

Referring to the general hypocritical condemnation in theory, of woman in Indian thinking, the Guru says :

Of woman, is man born.

In her womb the child of man is nourished and cast,

And man seeks woman for his marriage which he celebrates with so much joy.

Woman is the nucleus of society, from her the network of relationships spreads,

And all codes of society revolve round woman as centre.

If the woman dies, man seeks another woman,

And the human social system depends wholly upon woman.

Why then blame woman, out of whom comes the sovereign genius of man ?

Out of woman come women from whom the future generations take their start again.

No one is born without woman;

(Woman is the highest and noblest substance of human imagination and feeling)

Saith Nanak : There is but One, the Infinite, the Self-existent, who is truly above woman.

Nanak thus declares :

Those lips are the Rubies of Fortune that pipe like birds forever the song of Truth,

And the faces of such songsters shall forever be bright in the Court of the Shining Ones.

Man and woman are equal in this Song of *Nām*.

HUMAN ASPIRATIONS

(There is no one here that does not call upon God and call him the One. Go, seek and find any that has not in his soul some trust in Him and dependence upon Him. (Call it by any name and yet it is there, as an eternal human longing for him.)

Yet despite this longing, each of us has but measured out of Him what he deserves.

When this world is but a passing one, why be so stupid as to be selfish, and vain and proud (instead of being in sympathy with the seeming tragedy of passing on and the sorrow of man.)

Learn the Word, and enter in it to see the fulfilment of this eternal longing of humanity in thy soul. Say naught, good or ill, to anyone and avoid discussion with these learned fools who have no spark of inspiration.

EMPTY TALKERS AND HYPOCRITES

Idle speculative discussions, empty and tasteless (without the live feeling for beauty, for God, for love, for life) bleed the living mind white, and their body and mind lose all inner relish that they had gathered (by being thus drained by contact with the dry logicians).

And thus, self-exhausted man drives himself out of his residence into the inner Paradise of feeling, out of touch with

the Realms of Spirits (Durgah)¹.

Know, O Disciple ! idle talkers are fools, who deserve the disgrace they get in this world.

If such bathe at the sixty-eight *Tirthas*, the impurity still shall cleave to them; they cannot be cleansed by such rites and rituals.

In this world, the truly good are those who wear silk in their hearts (within) and cover their silken interior with tattered rags.

THE ELEVATED SPIRITS

The truly good have fallen in love with God, and thier souls have been lifted up to Him.

If they laugh, it is in joy of God;

And if they become silent, this too is in the same divine poignancy.

And they are independent, they reck not of kings and men and things; they have put their reliance once for all in their Beloved and they seek no "other".

They stand at His Portal.

And beg of him provisions for the passage out of this earth to the Divine Realms of Shining Souls,

And when he gives, they partake of His gifts.

To them there is no other King, no other Court but that of their Sovereign.

They see but one, they see His pen that writes all this.

But in that Court of the Great Judge, those who live in duality, crying, "this is mine", "this is thine", shall feel a crushing pain, as the oil-seeds suffer when they are milled for oil. (There would be suffocation of the dualist in those Regions of Pure Love.)

1. As already explicated this stands for the Divine Portal.

— Editor.

THE CONSCIOUS SPIRIT OF ALL THINGS

O Lord, Thou hast made all this,
 And Thou art the Conscious Spirit in all material things.
 Thou seest both the unfulfilled and the fulfilled.

All that is here is passing on, turn by turn; as they come, so
 they pass on.

O Disciples !

Why forget Him, who is the Soul of our soul and the breath
 of our breath ?

Rise and make your destiny bright by toiling with your own
 hands.

LOVERS TURN NOT THEIR BACK

How could the lover turn away from the Beloved ?

What love is that which turns its back ?

The lover forever lives in the Being of the Beloved.

He thinks not if the beloved has dealt well or ill with him—
 all that the Beloved does is truly sweet.

Lovers do not traffic with God;

They live at one with Him.

They calculate not, they love and desire no reward.

BONDSLAVES OF LOVE HAVE NO CHOICE; THEY HAVE CHOSEN

LOVE

It is taking a wrong direction at the very start,

If we accept His Sovereignty, and then rebel against it :

Neither in this world nor in the next can such find shelter.

WATCH HOW EVENTS, MEN AND THINGS AND ARTS ACT ON
 YOUR OWN SOUL

We should forever keep our memory alive with the sense
 of the presence of that Master in whose service our soul is
 comforted.

Why should man do a thing as would rebound to the harm of his soul ?

Abstain from wrong, though it be pleasant, we should see the effects of all our actions on the soul by stretching our sight to its utmost distance, and we should throw the dice of opportunity in such a way that we may not lose in our love-game with the Lord.

We should toil on in pursuits which would yield us the merit of that eternal union with Him.

THE DEVOTEE IS HE WHO HAS PARTED WITH HIS
OWN EGO

The bond-slaves of Love,
His devotees must love, they cannot do else.
Loving Him as well as vain boasting is unbecoming,
The boastful talk; they do not enjoy the sweet fragrance of
His pleasure.

If man should drop his puny self
And love Him selflessly, then does he attain to the delight
of divine intimacy.

He who has submitted himself must persevere till his
submission is accepted by Him; Love needs infinite patience.

Do not boast ! Action is the end of life !

The soul can put forth its best, and it does put forth what it
has within,

To say "I will be this", "I will be that," is all vain.

He who sows seeds of poison cannot reap a harvest of
nectar.

The soul is made as much of justice as of forgiveness.

THE RESTLESS MIND OFFERS NO TRUE FRIENDSHIP TO MAN
Friendship with the ignorant never proves of any avail.

Nor does following up the wanderings of a restless mind end in anything of worth.

When man's mind is not at peace, how can he receive the inspiration of knowledge ?

Unless the space occupied by the substance of wondering desires be vacated, how can the substance of God enter ?

THE SONG OF ADORATION MAKES MAN

Rise and pray to the Master for His Favour.

It is but by an all-quivering, all-passionate, yet receptive attitude that the disciple finds inspiration from the Guru.

Those who practice falsehood, get falsehood meted out to them.

Saith Nanak :

The Adoration of the Master expands the flowers of one's soul to full blossom.

To worship with this wandering child (restless mind) is like loving a bird of passage, like drawing a line on running waters, and as fruitless as the love of an immature person.

If perchance these friendships work,

They work perhaps once,

And the next time all goes wrong,

So all alliances with the world of matter end in disaster.

If we be but His bond-slaves,

And bury ourselves in His Love and feel delight in His pleasure and sorrow in his indifference,

Such bond-slaves—His devoted—get honour in yonder shining realms of the soul,

And all is added unto them, nothing lacking.

But the slaves that rebel in the sense of cutting themselves away from His pleasure,

Are worsted in spite of their labours.

Saith Nanak :

We must submit,
 And we must glorify Him who gives us our daily bread.¹
 Submission (self-denial) is the only relation proper between
 Him and us.

TRUE MIRACLE IS HIS FAVOUR, TRUE ACCOMPLISHMENT IS HIS
 GIFT

(Referring to the Yogis' efforts to attain to something and
 to become something.

How puerile is the accomplishment of what one attains by
 one's own efforts.

All that man gains by his *Karma*, is but the natural fulfilment
 of cause and effect, however extra-ordinay be the effects; they
 are simple earnings of man's own *Karma*).

Saith Nanak :

The true miracle is what the Husband (God) out of the
 goodness of His heart bestoweth on his slave (man).

(Here is a suggestion that there is a state of human life and
 some point therein, where so to say, actual intervention takes place
 and this intervention partakes of the nature of a true miracle).

That service is not genuine by which one does not attain to
 the elevation of the spirit, and freedom from fear (born of dualism).

The devotee is he who is lost in the Master.

There is no difference between the True Servant and the Lord.

Saith Nanak :

None can judge Him, for He transcends our measures of
 judgement. He creates these and those He guides to dust.

Some carry chains round their necks, others ever ride steeds.

It is He who does all this :

To whom shall I take my lament against the misery of man ?

1. A Christian touch.

Saith Nanak :

He who has created all this, it is He alone who cares for his Creation.

THE GREAT POTTER

He is the Potter.

He makes the shapes of clay and perfects the figures.

Some pots are always for cooking on the fire and others hold milk in them.

These men are all pots of the Potter.

Some sleep on couches wrapped in warm quilts;

And other stand by, to serve their pleasure.

He selects those for higher things whom he so favours.

He moulds and forms,

(He holds the earth hung in air.

Out of the earth springs life.)

And the Creator casts His gaze upon his own creation,

To whom is one to turn for an answer to the riddle of the Creator and the Creation,

When as He sees it, all is naught but Himself?

Beyond all our description are the glories of that All-Glorious, the greatness of that All-highest.

That Creator is all creative, and is a Bounteous Giver of the whole of Himself to His Creatures.

He provides for life to subsist on.

We do as He bids us.

Saith *Nanak* :

There is no other place of shelter

But Him.

Whatever He does must be of His great will inscrutable (Reza)¹

1. Will (Ar.)

INTRODUCTORY NOTE ON READINGS FROM SIDDHA-GOSHTI

In this composition Puran Singh, in his usual mode, takes the original text as his starting-point, developing his own exposition on lines which are creative, though largely in consonance with it. One who has studied the Siddha-Goshti in Guru Granth Sahib will be able to recognize the fact of this being a reported dialogue between the Siddha-Yogis and Guru Nanak, on esoteric issues concerning Hatha-Yoga, sponsored by the Yogis and Guru Nanak's resolution of the spiritual life around the practice of Nām and entering into the stage of enlightenment called Sahj. As a matter of fact. Puran Singh's piece reflects with imagination and fervour the themes of the original. In every line we are in touch with the characteristic ecstatic expression of the poet who is, in his own phrase, inebriated with Divine love. Along with Guru Nanak, in Siddha Goshti are introduced touches of the associated memory of Bhai Gurudas's. First Vār wherein the dialogue between the holy Guru and the Yogis is narrated.

Puran Singh's piece scintillates with flashes of spiritual insight and frequently rises to sublimity of expression and vision. From this it would appear that in adumbrating the themes of the ecstasy of spiritual experience, of devotion to the Guru and the miracle of Nām he was on a subject to which his mind was especially attuned. In studying this piece the reader will not only be in touch with something that will draw him on by its sheer magic, but will also get insights into the meaning of

Siddha-Goshti which not all commentators on that text may be able to furnish with Puran Singh's vision.—Editor.

READINGS FROM THE SIDDHA-GHOSHTI¹

(THE DISCOURSE WITH THE SIDDHAS BY GURU NANAK)

(The Word, the Live Word, the Name of God, One without a second, whose written symbol is *Onkar* Om-in-form, the Word-in-flesh²—the One unique man² who becomes the vehicle of God on earth.

The Spirit of God descends on the disciple through the favour of the Guru. The Word-in-flesh,² God comes into man.

Guru Nanak with his disciple was at Batala, when the *Siddhas* came to him and saluted him, saying, “Glory be to the Saintly Assembly”, (*Sant Sabha*).

And they asked Guru Nanak : Whom do you salute, Sir ?

Said Guru Nanak, “I salute the Spirit of Life, the Being of Truth, that transcends all speech and thought.

“I would fain offer to my Beloved, my very life for a glimpse of Him. And if I meet a servant of His I meet my God in him.”

“And by a sight of such a man, I realise the pure Spirit, the Truth, and divine feelings arise in me so that in their natural music I find the song of His Glory.”

BATHING IN SACRED RIVERS AVAILETH NOT

The Siddhas : Have you purified yourself by bathing at the Tirthas?³

Guru Nanak : What avails it to go about wandering ? Truth of being is alone pure and realised Truth alone purifies, No

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1. This composition is in the measure Ramkali in the holy Granth Sahib. — Editor.
 2. Touches from the Christian theology. — Editor.
 3. Holy bathing spots. — Editor.

one can attain to freedom of soul without the spirit of God (the Word) filling Him.

LOVE IS MY RELIGION

The Siddhas : Who are you ? What is your name ?

What is your Path (creed) ? And on what object do you meditate ?

Guru Nanak : All this for me is comprehended in my love of His Saints.

The Siddhas : Where is your seat ? Where your dwelling ?

Whence are you ? Whither ? What is your way ?

Guru Nanak—*In every heart He dwells, and I go the way of the Will of the Lord. I came hither as I had to. And I go from here as called by Him. I live as bidden by His will. My seat is fixed in the being of God. Such is my understanding inspired by my teacher, And this is the way. This secret is in the bosom of the Guru. And with this light received from there, man may find himself and live in joy of union of this life with the life beyond.*

NO ANSWER TO METAPHYSICAL “WHYS”

Charpat Yogi : Tell, Nanak, whose mind is fixed on the Eternal Truth. They say this world of illusion is like a dark ocean; how is one to swim across this sea of ignorance ?

Guru Nanak : What answer can there be to such questions when there, in the Realm of Real knowledge, one who questions is also the one who answers and the soul feels.

LIFE IS LIKE A RIVER FLOWING

He knows both this and that, what reply can I give ?

But the life of man is as that of the Lotus on the lake and as of the duck on the river, living in them and still unstained by their waters.

The mind subliminal or *Consciousness of man* is filled with the live Word, filled with it, and life is flowing like a river of feeling.

And so Naming Him, intoxicated, all-gathered-within, man crosses this sea of effort.

He should seek the true inner solitude, attained by making the mind the mansion of that One Beloved. Those that are such, live desireless amid the struggles of desire; they comprehend the incomprehensible; they realize Him and by their realization make others also realize Him. Fain would I be the servant of such Informed Ones.

THE GURU IS MET WHEN HE SO WILLS

The Siddhas : Master ! pray, be not offended at our inquiry; how shall we get to the door of the Guru ?

Guru Nanak : The mind of man is restless, but when it begins to breathe and live on the living Word, it finds its peace. But man finds the Guru or the living Word when the Lord so wills.

(We do not attain the Guru by our seeking after Him).

And Man thenceforward, after meeting the Guru, loves the Truth in spite of himself.

CITY AND DESERT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE TO ONE WHO LIVES IN SIMRIN

Loharipa Siddha (disciple of Gorakhnath Yogi) :

Is not the true way to Truth and Self-Realisation, the one that we know ? To live under trees in deep solitude away from cities and populations. An Avadhut¹ Yogi says—live on roots and fruits, bathe in sacred rivers to be pure, and the washed ones will find peace. And no impurity shall ever again defile

1. One who has renounced the world.

them. Such is the way of Yoga.

Guru Nanak : It is true, one should not fall into the death-trap of neglect and indifference; one should not covet.

But without incessant occupation of "Naming Him" the mind finds no peace, its hunger is not satisfied.

When the mind is deeply imbued with His inspiration,
It matters not if one is in the city or in the wilderness.

The Guru showeth the Mansion of God everywhere,
And man lives the divine life effortlessly, in the Pure Spirit
of Being, in the new spiritual vistas that are opened before
Him.

He sleeps while waking and wakes while asleep.
His eating light, he is light and buoyant.
Such is the Truth as to the conduct of man.

I HAVE MET MY GOD, I NEED NO YOGA

One of the Siddha Yogis proposed that Guru Nanak join their cult, as he would be an illustrious leader of the Yoga fraternity. So he said :

"O Guru Nanak !

Pray, adopt the garb of Yoga, the earrings and the wallet.

Thou shalt be crowned King of Yogis,

Of all the six *Shastras*, Yoga is supreme :

Follow Yoga, and be strong to avoid the blow of death.

I am the one inspired by the Guru,

And such is our teaching learnt from the Guru."

Said Guru Nanak : The Live Word in me resounds; the
Song Divine is my earrings,

And I am freed of "mine" and "thine"

I live in the Word that washes away lust and anger.

I have learnt the living Word direct from His lips.

I meet Him everywhere.

This meeting with Him is my Robe and Wallet,

His Love is my liberation.

My Master is the pure spirit that shines everywhere;

I have experimented with the Living Word,

And the Word, the Guru, has stood my test.

I say, treasure up the word Divine in thy consciousness, O man.

Turn the direction of thy desires inward;

Open the bud of thy heart to receive the inspiration of God.

The awakening of the mind to Truth is my kingly crown,

And my spontaneous self-control is my absorption in the thought of Him.

ALL CREATION IS A SONG¹

The Siddhas : who is hidden ? What is behind the veil ?
 Who is freed of this Illusion-Bondage ? Who is within and
 who without ? Who comes into life and who passes away ?
 Who subsists sustaining all the three worlds ?

Guru Nanak : That One is hidden in every heart, The
Gurmukh (the man who is the vehicle of God) is freed from
 the illusion-bondage,

And within is His Word singing,

And without is His Word singing.

All creation is His Song.

The one fettered in Illusion of Desire is chained forever to
 the whirling wheel of birth and death.

And the *Gurmukh* finds his freedom in the Truth of
 Realisation of the Pure Spirit of God.

Bondage is self-imposed,

Freedom is through His Grace.

1. The image of the Song is not in the original, but is otherwise in harmony with the mystical thought of Sikhism. -- Editor.

The Yogis : How does the self get bound ? And what snakes bite it ?

How is it lost ?

And how regained ?

How does darkness envelope it ?

And how does the light shine on it ?

He who has this knowledge,

He shall be our Guru.

Guru Nanak : Bondage is self-imposed, due to the ill-lighted consciousness,

The snake of desire bites it when it is bound in the little self.

The egoists¹ have lost the self.

When the Guru meets the Disciple, darkness is dispelled; his mind is lighted and he no more utters "I".

And the soul is gathered in the infinite silence of feeling.

No more the bird of the self flies;

No more it enters the prison of flesh,

The self finds its home and lives at peace with itself,

He finds Him, who seeks Him.

The Siddhas : Why hast thou left thy home ?

And why this garb of poverty and renunciation ?

What substance is that of which thou art the dealer ?

And how dost thou think of saving thy following ?

Guru Nanak : I am aching with love for Him; I am seeking the *Gurmukh*.²

And I dwell in this guise to catch but a glimpse of Him, while hiding myself in this cover.

I deal in the substance truth, the substance of feeling,

And all shall be ferried across by the *Gurmukh*.

1. "I-sayers" in the author's ms.

— Editor.

2. In the mystical sense, the Supreme Being, or the holy Lord. — Editor.

THE LIVE WORD IS IN ME

The Siddhas : By whose touch has thou thus risen from man to God; how hast thou transmuted thy soul ?

And why lovest thou this supreme search ?

How hast thou eschewed thy desire for worldly objects and thy ambitions of self ?

How hast thou found the Light within ?

How can one eat 'iron' without teeth ?¹

Guru Nanak : I am born of the True Guru, coloured with the Infinite, imbued with it, my mind is fixed on Him and in Him.

The Living Word singing in me has burnt all desires and the ego by its superb glow;

And I have found the light of the *Gurmukh* within myself.

Risen above the material nature of my Being, I crush iron in my teeth.

He who ferries everyone across shall also ferry me across this sea of Ignorance.

THE GURU MAKES NO REPLY TO METAPHYSICAL
QUESTIONS

The Siddhas : What argument has thou as to the origin of this world ?

When there was nought, where dwelt all this ?

What are the rings² of knowledge ?

Who dwells in every heart ?

How can one burn the bolt of death ?

How can one attain to that house where there is no more fear ?

How know of that holy state of unforced patience, unforced

1. That is, evils that are hard as iron.

— Editor.

2. Earrings that Yogis wear.

— Editor.

peace, effortless effort, disciplineless discipline that thou speakest of ?

How conquer the self ?

Guru Nanak : If by lucky chance one meets the Guru, and if, through that strange and unique cosmic process of inspiration, one receives luckily the Live Word that burns and lives in His bosom,

And by this action of grace, his self is transmuted, his "I" is destroyed, then one enters the mansion of pure Spirit-Realisation.

I am the servant of him who thus inspired by God, realizes God in the Live Word.

IT COMETH AS BIDDEN AND IT GOETH AS COMMANDED
The Siddhas :

Whence comes it ?

Whither goes it ?

Where doth it subsist ?

He who knows this is the Guru above Desire ?

How can the manifested know of the unmanifested ?

How can one love the *Gurmukh* ?

For it is said, He is the Creator and He is the knower, no one else knows of Him.

Guru Nanak : It comes as bidden,

It goes as commanded.

It lives in his Supreme will (*Hukam*)

When the perfect Guru touches the clay-bound soul, it attains to freedom with spontaneous ease into the Being of Eternal Truth.

With the Word received from the Guru comes the Infinite, as a little spark.

O Yogis, only the wonder of the human mind can contemplate the beginning of creation.

Only human consciousness imbued with the worshipful spirit of wonder can approach the Realms of the Spirit;

There is no other form of speculation that can address itself rightly to it,

And the human mind is lost in the music of the Eternal Silence.

The knowledge of the Earrings¹ pertains to the Glory of Infinite Spirit.

It is of the Guru, not of the Disciple.

TRUTH THROBS EVERYWHERE

Truth throbs everywhere; it pulsates in rocks, it beats in birds and beasts;

The manifested passes through the Word-in-flesh², on to the pure Spirit who, despite all this manifestation, it still all unmanifested.

The World of objects is only a suggestion of Him.

And the blessed man realizes the Unborn Infinite in a natural supernaturalness.

There is no other way, the disciple that seeks, finds.

That incomprehensible *Hukam*³ is known in the Trance of wonder, that is itself a wonder.

SYMPATHY WITH THE UNIVERSAL WILL IS LOVE OF GOD

He who realizes this *Hukam*, gets into sympathy with the secret of life, and of the soul.

He who erases his "I" mingles with the Infinite.

He has the whole Truth in him;

He is the True Yogi.

From the Unmanifested comes the manifested,

1. Worn by Yogis. Here implies esoteric knowledge.

2. A Christian turn of phrase.

3. The Cosmic Order.

– Editor.

– Editor.

– Editor.

From the Absolute comes the Relative,
 If the Guru so wills, man attains the blessed spiritual
 condition of a Yogi and lives in the Song of the Word—*Nam*;
 he truly feels merged in the One and he has destroyed the
 apparatus of duality. Such a Yogi has learned the Word of the
 Guru, and the Lotus of the Heart has truly blossomed in him.

But only if he die to matter and rise to the spirit—life of the
 Realms of souls,¹ only then can he comprehend the
 incomprehensible, and see God.

He is of the Great Truth;
 Out of the Truth he comes;
 Unto the Truth he returns,
 He and God are One.

The matter-clogged prisoners of this illusion come and go
 endlessly on the wheel of birth and death.

Their own desires are their undoing.

This “coming and going” on the wheel ends when the self is
 kindled by the life-spark of the Word received from the Guru,
 the life of the Spirit starts, one realizes Him as Self. Such ones
 are so blessed by God.

SELFISHNESS DISEASE

There is but one disease, the only source of suffering, the
 thought that “He is other than” and in this delusion one loses
 the virtue of Naming Him.”

But only that blessed one can comprehend this Truth whom
 He so informs through the Word of the Guru.

Such an informed one has truly become free; the sense
 that “this is I and this is he” is transcended; the saviour of man
 comes and saves him.

1. Spirit and ‘soul’ are drawn from the background of Hellenized
 Christianity.

Those who turn their back on the sun of truth, who shut themselves against the light of inspiration, suffer death;

Those who seek Him in outer objects, not in the soul, suffer defeat and disappointment;

Those who are seeking Him in forests and deserts have lost the way; they are deluding themselves.

Those who follow *Tantra* and *Mantra*¹ in graveyards to control sprites and ghosts have lost their way. They shall be robbed by those who infest the highways beyond death.

Those who seek not the spirit of God in the Word of God, are but chattering like magpies.

Only such as are imbued with the colour. Divine, have found the eternal peace²—none else, none else.

THE GURMUKH

The *Gurmukh* lives in the spirit of earnest yearning, in the Awe of the Majesty of the True One³, (so eternally sublime and great beyond measure is the True One).

The *Gurmukh*⁴ chisels his flesh into the image of God by the unceasing practice of the Word of God.

Thus made transparent and pure, he sings the hymns of His praise.

He attains to the immaculate Divinity of God.

Every hair of the *Gurmukh* thinks of Him.

The *Gurmukh* sinks into the Being of Truth,

The *Gurmukh* finds joy in pondering over the inspired Word.

1. 'Tantra', are magical rites (lit. thread) and 'mantra' are incantations.

— Editor.

2. For this in Sikh philosophy the term is Sahj.

— Editor.

3. An attributive reference to God.

— Editor.

4. The God-directed one.

— Editor.

The *Gurmukh* finds joy in swimming across the sea of ignorance and making at the same time, others swim through his help.

He who seeks the pleasure of the *Gurmukh*, finds in his favour, the knowledge absolute of the Word.

He who seeks pleasure of the *Gurmukh*, finds in his favour the inner secret of soul-consciousness.

The presence of the *Gurmukh* is the presence of the Infinite, the shoreless, unfathomable Being of God.

The *Gurmukh* is the door to beatitude.

The *Gurmukh* soars to the throne of God will all his friends borne on his sturdy wings (he is not one who seeks peace of the soul for himself alone).

By favour of the *Gurmukh*, the fountains of love spring forth within, and one can sing the word of God in the dream-tunes of such liquid love.

By favour of the *Gurmukh* one understands the personality that is created by the practice of the Word of God.

He knows the subtle ways of the Divine Path, for he has burnt away his little "I".

The Being of Truth has set this earth revolving—I know it from the *Gurmukh*.

Birth and death are just His play.

The man who imbues his soul with the colour of His glory that is spread everywhere, returns to his home in the other worlds with laurels on his brows.

But there is no welcome there for those who have not opened their soul to the Glory of Love (because they are incapable of receiving it.)

Prisoners of the "I" cannot find a way out to the freedom of the Being of Truth.

The *Gurmukh* is owner of eight great powers of the mind. He is the owner of All-Mind.

By his favour, having learnt of the Being of Truth, one crosses the dark ocean of fear.

The *Gurmukh* truly knows the spirit of difference between vice and virtue, between self-denial and self-affirmation.

He ferries the pilgrims across.

He gives liberation from the bondage of ignorance when he initiates man into the Word of God.

The Word dyes¹ the soul.

The animal selfishness of man leaves him only when he is inebriated with the lyrics of the Word of God.

The Word-dyed man shines in the Being of Truth,

The Word-dyed disciple knows the right Yoga, right thought, and right conduct.

The Word-dyed pilgrim reaches the door beyond which is the Freedom of soul.

He is informed by the descent of the spirit of God in the Word unto him; he is illuminated and reads clear the messages of the Cosmos.

Immersed in *Nām*, one is ever at peace with the Being of Truth.

Imbued with the True culture of love for the Being of Truth, the culture of "Naming Him," "Praising Him,"² I am enabled to utter this discourse to you, O Siddhas.

Let me tell you, to seek the glory of this culture is everlasting *Tapa* (penance).

In this culture is all the Truth of the right deed.

And in the culture of "Naming" Him, "Praising Him" is the right virtue, the right contemplation, the right thought,

All other utterance outside this illumined sphere of mind and all other activities that are devoid of this great sympathy

1. The image of dyeing occurs frequently in Sikh sacred writings.

– Editor.

2. 'Naming' is *Simrin*, *jap*, 'praising' is *kirtan*.

– Editor.

are entirely vicious.

I salute those who are inebriated with the love of the Being of Truth.

NAM IS INSPIRATION

This "Naming Him",¹ this love of the Being of Truth is inspired in man by the Perfect One, the Guru.

And those who are thus informed know the True Yoga.

They truly live and have their Being in Truth.

The so-called Yogis are wandering aimlessly in their hundreds of sects and their formalities.

And the Sannyasis are losing their soul in their ten sects.²

But only he who loses his life in the Word of the Guru gains everlasting emancipation from the grossness of this matter's great travail.

Without the culture of *Nām*,

Without personal contact with the perfect one, the Guru, all go the way of dual differences.

Seek your own heart and see, without divine illumination what is life but selfishness struggling to be free of itself?

Those are lucky, fortune smiles on their foreheads, who have enthroned the Song within the temple of their hearts.

This precious jewel of *Nām* is the intense aching, poignant longing for Him.

One knows its value by contact with the *Gurmukh*,

One practises the Truth, breathes the Truth inspired by the Guru, by the *Gurmukh's* favour.

The *Gurmukh's* very presence convinces others of the Being of Truth.

1. 'Naming' is Simrin, Jap, 'praising' is Kirtan.

— Editor.

2. These touches are from Bhai Gurudas, Var I.

— Editor.

These favoured by the *Gurmukh* are safe under his protection from injury here and hereafter.

THE EFFECTS OF THE LOVE OF GURMUKH

By the love of the *Gurmukh*, man is effortlessly¹ in the unceasing effort of singing His Name,

Man is effortlessly¹ in the unceasing effort of giving himself away, wholly to those who need him.

Man is effortlessly in the unceasing effort of bathing clean of all impurity—mental, moral, spiritual.

Man realizes his spiritual genius, and what is supernatural to others, is to him but natural.

Under the protecting shade of the *Gurmukh*, man is effortlessly in the unceasing effort of maintaining his joyful state of life in perfect concord with the Being of Truth.

By favour of the *Gurmukh*, the disciple is honoured in the higher spiritual worlds of emancipated Beings.

The *Gurmukh* is the destroyer of Fear,
And he is the presiding deity of the Disciple's thought.
He inspires truth in the action, thought and speech of man,
And he unites him to God.

THE GURMUKH

The *Gurmukh* is all the *Shastras*, *Smritis*, and *Vedas*; in him are all scriptures and *Vedas* present in essence.

The *Gurmukh* knows the inmost state of all hearts.

The *Gurmukh* cleanses the hatred and enmity out of human consciousness by his touch and by his blessing.

The *Gurmukh* obliterates the habit of calculation of this and that, of me and thee, from human nature:

The *Gurmukh* has the colour of God,

1. This state is Sahj.

He knows "The Husband",¹

I tell you, without the inspired contact of the Guru, one comes and goes revolving on the wheel.²

I tell you,³ without the favour of the Guru, all our struggles for the divine, all our longings for the Divine, all our search for the Being of Truth, all our virtues and sacrifices are void.

There is no satisfaction without the Guru's feeding man with his own flesh and blood,⁴ and devoid of His inspiration one eats poison, the, snake of ignorance bites and brings on death.

Without the initiation of the Guru, life is loss upon loss,
He who has found his Guru has forthwith found a way to the yonder shores.

The Guru turns the imperfections of man into perfections.

Man finds deliverance in the Word inspired of the Guru.

Anyone favoured by the Guru never loses his life.

The body thenceforward is as a shop,

And the mind is the Trader, imbued with the verity and peace of the Eternal.

He deals in the "goodness" of God which no relative dealer's measures can measure out for our understanding.

Bibhikan⁵ a, Disciple of Shri Ramchandra, is an Illustration of *Gurmukh*

Ramchandra was a *Gurmukh*;

He bridged the sea with stones.

He destroyed the fort of the evil-doers,

He succoured God's saints.

1. A turn of expression referring to God.

— Editor.

2. The wheel of transmigration is meant.

— Editor.

3. A Biblical touch.

— Editor.

4. A Christian touch.

— Editor.

5. A brother of the demon-king Ravana.

— Editor.

Ramchandra destroyed Ravana, and saved the secret of discipleship that burnt in the bosom of Bibhikhan.

The *Gurmukh* made the very stones swim on the waters.
And saved thirty-three crores.

Ended is all birth and death for the *Gurmukh*.

He is honoured of the gods of the higher worlds of emancipated beings.

He is free, nothing can hold him back.

In the world of these shining gods he is suffused with divine glory.

The *Gurmukh* receives the immaculate word.

The *Gurmukh* burns the sense of the little I and you by the glow of his song of love.

The *Gurmukh* sings hymns to the glory of the Being of Truth.

The *Gurmukh* lives in Him.

The *Gurmukh* is the Name of the Being of Truth; his glory is ever more and more immaculate.

The *Gurmukh* has cognisance of the whole Cosmos.

He is of Cosmic Consciousness.

THE SIDDHAS ASK GURU NANAK WHO IS HIS GURU AND

HIS REPLY

The Siddhas : What is the beginning of this world ?
 What religion is for these days ?
 Who is your Guru ?
 Of whom are you the disciple ?

Why do you live outside the sects ? What has made you untainted by maya ?

Guru Nanak : Just a breath is the beginning. The religion of to-day is the True Guru. (The True Guru is the new religion henceforward).

The Word is the Guru, the inspired Name of God is the Guru, and concentrated contemplation¹ the disciple.

I am maya-emancipated because in me is the unique description of Him who is beyond all descriptions. (I am the Word).

Throughout the ages, the Guru has been as now; the Word of the Guru is but one large letter written on the Face of Creation in which man is destined to think of Him.

The Gurmukh has extinguished all fires in this singing Peace.

How can one crush iron with one's teeth ?²

Then spoke the leader Gorakhnath : How can one crush iron with the teeth ?

Pray tell, which food destroys the little "I" and the differences created by it ?

How can one receive the guest made of Fire in a house of snow ?³

Where is the cave in which one could live immaculate ?

What is the knowledge of here and hereafter, by which man finds God ?

Guru Nanak : Drop utterly "I am", "I am", "I", "I".

Rise above dual differences and attain the harmony of the completed whole.

This social world is "Iron" that the God-bereft wish to devour by crushing it with their teeth.

A man can crush iron by these teeth, if he makes himself powerful by the practice of Nām.

What is within, the very same is outside man, only if he realize it.

1. Original, Surati-dhun.

2. That is, subdue the passions.

— Editor.

3. Esoteric query—How can passion lodge in a being characterized by poise ?

— Editor.

The fire of desire dies if the True Guru so favours.

In reverence to Truth, man is to forego the ego.

With the sense of Unity, one should seek Truth in Song-union with the word.

If the word glows in one's heart, the Truth is manifested in man.

Both the mind and body of such a great man are at peace with the creation.

All passion and poisons generated within are destroyed.

And this happens only when one's eyes are caught in the eyes of grace of the Beloved.

(When life thus becomes one continuous lyric by love of the personal God, the Guru, the Word-is-flesh in surely *not man*, yet always he is met within the simple shape of Man.)

THE GURU'S ONE REPLY REPEATED TO ALL QUESTIONS

Gorakhnath : How does the Moon¹ come to shine in one's heart ?

How doth Peace Eternal light the heart ?

How does the Sun come to illumine the soul ?

How is one to avoid perpetual death.

What is the thought that leads the way to the discipleship of the Gurmukh ?

Which is the hero who conquers death ?

O Nanak, Tell us about all these.

Guru Nanak : The moon of Peace shines in the heart where throbs the lyrics of *Nām*.

The darkness of Ignorance passes off when the sun of Divine Presence shines over all the mansions of the self.

Passing both through pain and pleasure, the peace of the

1. Moon and Sun are esoteric Yogic terms, symbolizing respectively, yogic bliss and passion.

Disciple under all conditions emanates from the Spirit of God manifest in him as word-in-flesh.

He thus lives a charmed life, but his liberation lies in the hands of His Saviour.

He who loves the Guru, absorbs the Truth.

Such a one has no fear of death.

Another Yogi : What is the Absolute ?

Guru Nanak : The essence of the Song of Love, the process of "Naming Him", "Singing Him" that I see pervades all life.

And those who are broken away from it, suffer and burn in diverse pains.

When the inner music of being mingles with the music of the Universe (a vision of God by itself) one experiences the Truth of Unity.

The winds find their speech, the skies their thunder.

And this concord is the very nature of Being; it comes about by itself.

The music¹ of active silence within,

The music¹ of active silence without—

All music¹ is silence of all this manifested creation,

And he who through this music of active silence attains to "the fourth"² and there, freed both from the relative sins and virtues, gets to a suggestion of the Absolute,

He grows with God there.

Those who are immersed in the Being of Truth are themselves Truth. Man is God when he becomes but His *Nām*, a song, a glory.

The Gurmukh does not make empty boasts, he continuously trains his mind to the Divine.

1. As stated earlier, the image of music is not in the original, but is in accord with the spirit of Gurubani. — *Editor*.

2. Turiya or Samadhi, the state of absorption in the Infinite. — *Editor*.

THE NINE POOLS WITHIN

On the Nine Pools of senses, man seeks to satisfy himself,
But there is no fullness here.

He is filled when he reaches the Tenth Pool¹ on whose
edge he hears the inner music of being.

There he sees the Being of Truth face to face; he
experiences the unity through Trance and rapture.

To him inspiration makes manifest the Word of God that
was no far hidden.

It is there the disciple says from direct sight.

THIS IS TRUTH

And this is reached through an effortless effort,² otherwise
there is no real peace.

The *Gurmukh* has been awakened to Divine Love, he no
more sleeps, (in sleep too his soul sings.)

He "hears" the Word, the Infinite Spirit informs him and he
enshrines the Spirit in himself.

His speech intoxicates, His Word saves.

Initiated by the Guru, man realizes Truth, forgoes self and
all doubts are dispelled.

CONSTANT FRICTION GENERATES LIGHT AN LIFE

The Yogis : In what realm can this difficult thing become
natural to man's mind ?

How is it man here does not understand it and consequently
suffers from ignorance ?

No one can save him from death without this inspiration;
there seems no worth in him, no friends who could bear witness
to him.

1. This is again a symbolization of Turiya, explicated earlier. — Editor.

2. Sahj. — Editor.

How is one to get access to this Truth ?

How are common men to get this information ?

Guru Nanak : The dim intellects are lighted by a constant friction with the Word received from the Guru. The Liberation from ignorance lies in meeting with the Guru.

Those who have turned their faces away from this Truth burn themselves to death; the ill-informed ones thus fall away from God (Truth) and suffer on account of their perverse ignorance.

Those who bow down to *Hukam*, the Divine will inscrutable, are the recipients of all virtue, all knowledge, all light.

They are honoured in the Divine Courts of the Higher world of souls.

Those who have this true wealth of inspiration soul in contact with soul of the Realms of Liberated Ones have the true power to illumine others.

They who commune with the inspired ones, become as the natural fountains of out-gushing love.

They understand life and they are the truly honoured ones (They are the saviours of man.)

Whenever I see, I see Him in glory.

Union with Him is in this simple feeling.

Yogis : Where is the dwelling of that Word-in-flesh, union with whom is to cross this sea of illusion ?

The wind of breath of which it is said, is in length as short as ten fingers put breadth-wise together:

Pray, who is the sustainer of this wind of breadth ?

It speaks, it plays, it thinks, it stirs, and stirs not.

How can we know its secret ?

O true Swami Nanak ! I am not curious, I only wish my inner self to learn of all this from you.

Guru Nanak : True feeling is born of the Word inspired in one's bosom by the Guru.

And it is the singing glance of the Guru that unfetters the self and one meets God (Truth).

It is the fulfilment of destiny if the disciple meets His Master.

The Guru-inspired man knows, knows; he sees, sees.

By the merest chance he has melted away into the Being of Truth.

The word is God,

And God is the word.

It lives within Unseen, Untaught, Unreached, Unsought.

I see it, I feel it.

The Wind of breath rests in it, the Ever-silent.¹

And the Glance of the Silent meets me in my soul.

If He casts his eye of kindness, these visions rise before every eye.

The darkness of delusion is lost.

Both the body and mind grow translucent, pure, bright.

Speech flows sweet and clear,

And the joy of "Naming Him" becomes the simple habit of the illumined heart (flesh grows to be a hymn, a song, a feeling)

It is thus that the great ones cross the Sea of Fear,

And know this and that as one in the superb sweet richness of the Song of their heart.

O Yogi, that ten-finger breadth of life is a knot in the Being of Truth.

The Word of the *Gurmukh* cleaves the darkness and makes the Truth manifest.

He washes all grossness of matter,

And plants the Word in the disciple's Being.

And only after that, does man forget the ego.

1. Sunya (Shunya), the Cosmic silence.

And when man experiences the sweet presence, he loves His *Nām*, and of himself, he knows all Yoga of Sukhmana, Ida, Pingala¹ and he sees what was so long the Unseeable.

*Above all Yogas, Sadhana of Pingala is the spontaneous living in Being of Truth,*² in pure Union with Him, the Beloved.

And upon these great heights when once scaled, man absorbs the Word into his being, and becomes the Word of God.

The Yogis : O Nanak ! how is this suffering world born ?
And why does it suffer ?

Guru Nanak : It is born of the little "I" and it suffers in forgetting His Name.

No True Yoga (Union) between man and God can be without the Name.

Few are those who receive the inspiration of the Word from the *Gurmukh* and realize it.

And the Song Divine descends on those who are in spiritual assonance with the *Gurmukh*.

No Yoga can be without service of the Guru.

Without serving the True Guru there is no Yoga; without Him no fullness is there.

Without Him, the spirit of *Nām* forever remains a sealed book.

Without him, one has to undergo great tribulations. Without Him, the dust-storms of "I" and this "doing"³ keeps the self ego-bound.

Without guidance of the *Gurmukh*; man dies in utter defeat (life and its substance is spilled in vain).

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1. These are respectively the middle, left and right vital passages, through which spiritual vitality rises to give the height of Yogic illumination and joy. – Editor.
 2. Sahj. – Editor.
 3. That is, action (Karma). – Editor.

Without the soul-touch of the Guru devotion to Nām cannot be.

All think of Nām and the Word,

But know that the Word Divine, the symbol of the Being of Truth is revealed to man by the *Gurmukh* not otherwise, not otherwise.

Few understand that it is the inspiration of the *Gurmukh* that kindles the self.

Through Him, man attains to the kingdom within :

Through Him, true Yoga is learnt;

Through Him, the Disciple realizes the great Unity of the Spirit of God.

Without serving the Sat-Guru, there can be no Union, no -Yoga.

No one attains to liberation without the soul-touch of the Sat-Guru.

Nām is not received in the soul without contact with the Sat-Guru.

All distress of man is till such time as he has not discovered his Sat-Guru.

Till then, all are being swung in the storms and tempests of vain glorious pride; till then all is vanity, vanity.

Without inspiration of the Sat-Guru, man dissipates his life to utter inconsequence.

WITHOUT THE GURMUKH THERE CAN BE NO KNOWLEDGE
OF REALITY FOR MAN

Blessed is this earth on which the unborn¹ spirit moves,
whose promise is ever fulfilled.

1. 'Unborn' may imply one that does not take birth (ajñi). This term is the author's own coinage here.

The will of that spiritual Being is known either to himself or to the Guru.

He truly understands, he truly feels,
And all knowledge gathered by man truly teaches him what is in his soul.

The *Gurmukh* sees, and bears witness to the Being of Truth.

And without Him, there can be no true knowledge of reality for man,

Inform your mind of the Being of Truth, and be as God.

The restful freedom of mind is conducive to Truth-Realization.

If the dust of the feet of His saints anoints the disciple's forehead and face, verily the blackness of very death on it will shine forth with the golden sparkle of life.

THERE IS NO FREEDOM FROM THE ILLUSION OF THE FALSE
WITHOUT INSPIRATION FROM HIM

In conclusion, I reveal to you the secret of the doctrine of the Word of God.

O Audhoo¹ ! without the inspiration of the Word of God, all Yogas are futile.

Imbued with the spirit of the Word, one lives inebriated in the Being of Truth.

And there is peace in this inspiration of *Nām*.

All is illumined by *Nām*.

Through *Nām* is one informed of the mystery of life.

Without it, there is much wearing of garbs and much endeavouring by man, but all is spilling, spilling, of life on the sands.

Audhoo¹ ! The true way of Yoga is learnt from the True Guru.

1. Popular form of Avadhūt, an anchorite.

There is no freedom from illusion of the False without the Love of *Nām*.

THE SIDDHAS SEE THE LIGHT

All the Siddhas, the Yogis, finally realized that they were talking to the Guru, to the *Gurmukh*. The history of this discourse is given in one song at the end of *Siddha-Ghosti*, in which it is pointed out how they all begged for the secret of the Word from the Guru.¹

Thou, O Lord, art forever more than our knowledge and our description.

Thou knowest Thyself, none else can know Thee.

Thou art both the manifested and the unmanifested,

And all colours of life and death are Thine.

Thy habit is Thy creation and in thy creation art thou so manifest.

THE SIDDHAS BEG THE GIFT OF NĀM FROM GURU NANAK

The struggling men and those who had supposed themselves to be men of perfection, these siddha-gurus and their countless disciples are wandering everywhere, as bidden by Thee, seeking Thee.

They now ask for the inspiration of Thy Word and ask for the alms of Thy *Nam*.

And they rejoice and say they are a sacrifice to the vision of his Beauty.²

They now seek the Bread of Thy Love.³

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1. This is an 'addition' from the writer's imagination of the scene as it may have occurred. - Editor.
 2. It is also interpreted : "They rejoice and they say they are a sacrifice to the new Darshan (philosophy) of *Nām*."
 3. Guru Nanak thus registers himself how the siddhas given to Yoga practices found in Guru Nanak the new Gospel of *Nām* as the source of beatitude.

The Creation stirs with beauty in the Creator's mind,
And the soul of man is illumined from on High, through the
Gurmukh.

The Creator is in His Creation,
And there is no one else, no one else. Verily, verily, it is the
One—He above.

*(THE REMAINING PORTION OF THIS VOLUME HAS ALREADY
BEEN PUBLISHED AS PART I OF SPIRIT OF THE SIKH.)*