



Gathas
Series III
of
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Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
the Only Being, United with All the Illuminated Souls
Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

Etekad, Rasm U Ravaj: Superstitions, Customs, And Beliefs

Number 1: Toasts

There is a custom prevalent everywhere in the Western world of proposing toasts, which is significant of a psychological truth behind it, which is to wish for a certain thing to happen at a time when one's own wish is being granted, in a smaller or greater form. This shows that the moment when one's wish is granted is that moment when one is satisfied. We should not, therefore, wonder why people go to spiritual souls for their blessing. Those who are spiritually blessed, their innermost wish has been satisfied, and a wish made by them acts as a quick blessing in the life of everyone.

But this also teaches one to catch the opportunity of getting the good wish of every person at the moment when his wish is being granted. Having known this psychological law, the people in the East look for such an opportunity of offering food to the hungry or a gift to the one who needed it, for the wish that naturally rises from the heart of a person while accepting it will certainly be granted.

Very few in the world know what great power is hidden in the wish of a person whose heart is in the state of dancing, so to speak—full of joy. We read in the legends of old of sages calling upon their friends, pupils or followers at a certain time and asking them to make a wish, for they knew the moment when the wish could be granted.

There is a story of Hafiz, that near the home of the Sheikh there were eleven pupils whose name was Hafiz, but among them there was only one who used to engage himself in his night vigils, and the others used to rest all night. One evening the Sheikh called, "Hafiz!" There was only one Hafiz awake, all others asleep. The Sheikh was holding the bowl with the thought of the wish to be granted. With his eyes closed he gave it to Hafiz. But then as he knew there were ten more, he again called "Hafiz!" and as all others were asleep, the same Hafiz came again and received the bowl. Eleven times the teacher called, and the same Hafiz went again and again. In the morning ten were disappointed and that one Hafiz was found blessed with eleven-fold blessings.

It would not be an exaggeration if one said that even God has a time when He grants wishes. And if one knows that time one certainly becomes benefited and blessed. Since Sufism teaches, look for God in the heart of man, the wise mureeds therefore see the pleasure and displeasure of God in everyone they meet, and they carefully regard the pleasure and displeasure of those they come in contact with, knowing that in doing so they regard the pleasure and displeasure of God.

Besides having one's wish granted, the joy of giving another happiness, that itself is greater than a wish granted, if one has risen to that plane of human evolution when one can enjoy pleasure with the pleasure of another, when one can feel satisfaction in the satisfaction of another, when one can be happy in bringing happiness to another. No one will give another happiness and will not have the same come to him a thousand-fold. There comes a stage of evolution in the life of man when he feels more satisfied by seeing another person satisfied with food than by his having eaten it himself, when he feels comfortable in seeing another person comfortable, when he feels richly

adorned by seeing another person clothed nicely; for this stage is a stepping-stone to the realization of God.

Questions and Answers (August 10, 1923)

Q: Would we receive the curses of people as well as the blessings?

A: Yes. One should always think that life is an opportunity. Every moment is an opportunity. Sometimes one can do good by not troubling much oneself; it is just by seizing the opportunity. If one is attentive and brings some pleasure and happiness, it is not always that it costs. What it costs is attention. If one keeps one's attention fixed upon that idea, and is constantly seeking where one can do some little good to another. By giving one's place in a bus or tram-car; by just having a little consideration for the aged, a little consideration for someone who is perhaps not honoured or respected, if one can offer what a person is lacking in his life without him knowing, that is always a great To do good is the work of the sage. Sometimes people become over-enthusiastic, which does harm. It is a spell, a fit of goodness. That does no good. The real goodness is that which comes spontaneously. A thief is always on the look-out to rob something; so a good person is always looking for an opportunity to do good; he will always find it.

Q: Can you tell something more of the time that God grants wishes?

A: God grants wishes at two times. One time is when your heart is free from every thought, or feeling, or emotion; in the most peaceful and tranquil condition; at that time every wish that is sown is just like a seed sown in fertile soil. If one had the patience to wait in the great power of God, whatever be the wish, it will certainly be granted. The other time when the wish is granted is when somebody is satisfied, has been made happy by you, and naturally, out of his heart, springs a kind of fountain which pours upon you a kind of blessing. It will be just like rain from above, which in time will bring its fruits and flowers.

Q: Has one the right to wish for oneself?

A: Yes, as long as the conscience says that the wish is right. But there is another stage, when a person has so advanced spiritually that he thinks, "God's wish is my wish. God knows better than me. I may wish something wrong." The one who gives his life in that way in the hands of God is greater still.

Q: When a man is poor, but can just live with the means he has, is it then good when he gives away material things, and so makes himself dependent upon others?

A: You see, the question what is good is a very difficult question to decide. Good is peculiar to a person. It all depends upon what that person thinks. When he thinks it is right, it is good. That is the only question.

The story of Saint Elias, he was an ascetic, and for his food only a loaf of bread was enough every day. He would not keep anything for tomorrow. If he was given four people's food in one day he would distribute it. If he had still more, he shared it all. Next day he was without. If one said, why did he make himself dependent upon people for the next day? he would say that, "We live in this life interdependent. As long as I do not go to anybody, do not force upon anybody—only people brought it—what does it matter? It is from Him. It is not depending upon others. It all comes from God. It all goes to the creatures of God. What does it matter?" It all depends upon the person and how the person looks at it.

Q: The great creative spirits, which at this moment are so necessary for working in the world, if they have in their soul a longing for spirituality, how can they keep balance between their busy life and the concentration which is a necessity for the spiritual path? What must they sacrifice?

A: In the first place I should say that if one object is the seeking of one's soul, and the other object is life's necessity, and if one object is to be sacrificed, it is better the one which is necessary, but keep to the soul's seeking.

There is another point of view; in order to become spiritual, we should not become unworldly. We can just as well be in the world and yet not be of the world. We can be active in our every-day life, and yet be concentrative. A person who can concentrate well can manage the affairs of the world better. Those who have attained success in business, in worldly affairs, they had their concentration better. Therefore concentration is in no way a hindrance. A success gained through the power of spirituality is more secure and has a stronger foundation. Furthermore, there is one rule of life, which must be understood. That the success is gained by two ways; by the right way and by the wrong way. Wrong way means that which is against the spiritual idea. And when a person has started by one path, he must keep to that path, in order to be successful. And if he finds that perhaps the other path will be better for the success, he will lose. A person who is going the wrong way, if he thinks that the right way will be better, he will lose. The person who is going the right way, he will not lose. His success will perhaps be slow, but it is secure, and he will all through be successful. The other had no danger, but his greatest danger is going into the right path; this is his loss.

Etekad, Rasm U Ravaj: Superstitions, Customs, And Beliefs
Number 2: Wedding Customs

There are superstitions and customs connected with the wedding observed in Europe, such as throwing an old shoe after the newly married couple as they go away, and throwing rice. The rice signifies flourishing, multiplication, prosperity, and Providence, whereas old shoes are the old times passed in life and a new life begun. The rings that bridegroom and bride put on each other's finger is the sign of bond, which is the real meaning of marriage. The hands of the two joined by the priest is the possession of one another, suggesting that each holds the other.

The custom of the Greek church, where wreaths are put on the head of the bride and bridegroom, is the exchange of thoughts and feelings, and walking three times round the altar is suggestive of God between them, uniting them both in a divine link, the link which is everlasting as God Himself. And the custom of the bride's kissing the hand of the bridegroom, which is still continued at the time when the rhythm of the world is quite changed, only explains the response from the side of the bride, in which is the secret of nature's harmony, although what generally happens later is just the opposite, but that brings about the happy medium.

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Number 3: Funeral Customs

The human body represents the five elements, and nature's law is that every element returns to its own origin. Naturally therefore the being which is the air part turns into air, the heat is absorbed by the heat—the fire-element has left already. The body belongs either to earth or to water. But the

body, which is born on earth, not in the water, and has sought its comfort on earth, not in water, and has also been afraid of the water, an element foreign to it, had better be saved from it and had better be buried.

Another point of view is that every living being, whether man or animal, has a fear of fire. A powerful animal like the lion is afraid of the fire; the elephant with all its large body and strength runs away from fire. If that is the nature of all living beings, to be afraid of fire, then imagine for a person who is not yet dead to know that as soon as he is dead his body will be put in the fire. Although his mind is separate from the body, yet his mind will have a shock just the same.

The reason of mummies is to suggest that if the body which is dead can be kept along, then the life, which is real life, is eternal. Besides among the ancient Egyptians there was a custom (the same tendency exists in the East) that at every banquet or feast a mummy was brought in. It was brought for a moment and taken away, in order to waken man in the midst of his great joy and enthusiasm and pleasure to the consciousness that there is such a thing as death, that there is something awaiting him and that he must not keep ignorance of that truth, absorbed in all the pleasures of the world. But at the same time they put the mummies also in the grave.

Etekad, Rasm U Ravaj: Superstitions, Customs, And Beliefs
Number 4: The Swansong

They say the swan sings once, just before it dies. The meaning of this is that a fuller expression given to one's joy puts an end to life, for in the fullest expression lies life's purpose. In the life of an artist one finished work of art, and in the life of a musician his best piece of music, brings to him the warning of his departure. Saadi says, "Every soul is born with a purpose, and the light of that purpose is kindled in his heart." It applies not only to the soul of every person but to every living creature, however small and insignificant; even to every object this rule can be applied.

There is a saying in the East that the elephant dies at the sight of fever. This explains that death robs one of that which one has made oneself. If this be explained in other words, one makes one's death while making oneself. The heavy flesh that the elephant gathers around itself naturally gives power to the fever that becomes the cause of its death. The same is to be seen in the life of man. Every difficulty, even death, man makes with the making of himself. It is to suggest this idea that Christ has said, "The spirit quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing."

The soul was born to be immortal, but mortality it usually earns for itself. There is nothing that man would have been afraid of if he did not possess something which he is afraid of being robbed of.

When the hermit Machandra said to Gaurikha on their journey through the wilderness, "Gaurikha, I feel afraid," Gaurikha answered, "Throw away the fear." Machandra answered, "How can fear be thrown away?" Gaurikha said, "Throw away that which causes you fear." Machandra took out from his wallet two bricks of gold and said, "These bricks of gold, must I throw them away?" "Yes," said Gaurikha, "What are they?" Machandra threw them away, and as he went on his face turned pale. Gaurikha looked at him and said, "Why are you sad?" Machan-

dra said, "Now we have nothing." Gaurikha said, "We have everything. Look before you, what do you behold?" And he beheld mountains of gold. Gaurikha said, "Take as much as you can, if that is your soul's striving." Machandra's soul awoke, and he said, "Nothing will I take for I know the riches of possessing nothing."

Etekad, Rasm U Ravaj: Superstitions, Customs, And Beliefs
Number 5: Customs at the Birth of a Child in India

For three days from the time that the child is born, and sometimes for six days, no friends are allowed to enter the room where the child is, only some relations who are most esteemed in the family. The meaning in this custom is that the mind of the newborn child is like a photographic plate and the first impression that it receives goes deeper in it and other impressions have less effect. Therefore the impressions of early childhood make the foundation for the whole life.

The mother does not appear before friends for the first six days, even some relations are kept away. The meaning of this custom is that in the negative state in which a mother is at that time, she is too sensitive to be exposed to inharmonious and coarse vibrations. In the case of the child it is not only that his mind is affected, but the first impression even influences the construction of his face and form.

At the birth of a son the occasion is celebrated by the beating of drums and gunfire. This custom no doubt comes from the ancient Rajputs, whose Dharma, or sacred duty, was warfare. This first noise of drums and gunfire was meant as the child's first experience, or as a first lesson in warfare. An entertainment is given in celebration of the birth of a child, at which there is singing, playing and dancing. It is meant by this that a joyous atmosphere works as a push given to a swing in the life of a child on earth at its commencement.

Etekad, Rasm U Ravaj: Superstitions, Customs, And Beliefs
Number 6: The Superstitions of the Days Existing in the East

In the East the influence of the days of the week is considered by all, learned or illiterate. Every time has its peculiar influence and particular purpose. The mechanism of the cosmos has a certain action and again its reaction on the part of the planets, producing a certain effect in every hour of the day, in every day of the week, in every week of the month, in every month of the year, and in every year of a cycle.

The characteristic of Sunday is Godliness. Anything spiritual can alone be successful. Anything else, besides a spiritual thing, something of a worldly nature, begun on Sunday, or continued on that day, must come to naught.

Monday is a negative day, a day for things of a passive character. To receive teaching, to obtain information, to search for anything, this is the auspicious day.

Tuesday is a day of enjoyment, for amusement, joy and pleasure. For picnic, feast and wedding, for music and dancing, and for sports, this is a fitting day.

Wednesday is a day for business. It is a day for taking an initiative, and undertaking. All that is done on this day must bear fruit.

Thursday is a central day, to make a determination, to decide things, to settle in a new place. It is a day of inspiration, of revelation, because the influence of this day touches the summit. Friday is a day of power and a day of aspiration. On this day prayer is granted and wishes are fulfilled, thoughts are materialized, and dreams become realized. However, this is not the day of sowing, it is the day of reaping. Friday is a day of exaltation.

Saturday is a winding day. If loss is wound it continues for days and days, if the mechanism of gain is wound it continues for weeks. It is a day of upliftment to those who raise their soul to a higher pitch, so that the machinery of the spirit may be wound and continued for a long, long time. Every planetary influence that begins on Saturday must always continue its effect upon one's life. The influence of the day is unavoidable upon every mortal, except upon souls to whom day and night is the same, those who are beyond the laws of this mortal world.

Etekad, Rasm U Ravaj: Superstitions, Customs, And Beliefs
Number 7: Unlucky Numbers

According to the Orientals, 3, 13, 9, and 18 are numbers which must be avoided in beginning some profitable act. There are some psychological reasons which prove these numbers to be best avoided.

Three denotes all. All means everything, and everything means nothing in particular. Things of the world, which are profitable, are something in particular. Three therefore annuls the distinction, for 3 resolves into 1. One is 3, and 3 is 1.

Thirteen destroys balance by unbalancing the rhythm, as it cannot be evenly divided. Besides, 12 hours of the day and 12 hours of the night complete the day and night. So the thirteenth has no place either in the day or in the night. Besides, after 12 o'clock comes 1, and it marks 13. Thirteen is a number which has no accommodation. Among Western people there is a superstition that the thirteenth person at table must die within the year. This also explains that the number 13 has no accommodation. That a person dies, means that the earth accommodates him no longer.

Nine falls short of perfection. Besides it is 3 times 3.

And so is 18, for 8 and 1 are 9. It has the same effect as 3.

All numbers besides 3, 13, 9, and 18 are considered in the East fit to be used.

Etekad, Rasm U Ravaj: Superstitions, Customs, And Beliefs
Number 8: The Mysteries of Omen

The secret of what we call omen is to be found in the law of impressions. For instance there is a belief that if you are going to do something, if a cat crosses your way you meet with ill-luck. It is easy to understand. In the first place the swift action of the cat makes a great impression upon a

person; it forms a line before you, a line of action, and that line impressed upon you gives you the thought of a cross. You are intending to go straight, and your line is crossed by a horizontal action against your vertical action, which means in action one's hands nailed and feet tied. It gives the picture of the idea.

The whole mystery of omens, which used to be believed by the ancient people and are now considered to be superstitions, has behind it this mystery of impression. Naturally when a person is starting to accomplish a certain work and he happens to see beautiful flowers or fruits, that gives a promise of his desire being fulfilled, of its bearing flowers for him—the sign of success. A person going forward with this impression will certainly meet with success. Whereas if a person sees burning wood, or a sack of coal, which all shows destruction—fire which burns up—a person going to do something impressed by this certainly loses.

There used to be a custom that when someone in a family was going out to accomplish something, no one must say any word that would hinder his success. They did not even ask the person, "Where are you going?," because even asking raises a question. The question stands before one, Why? Where? A person would become discouraged even in answering. The strength of will with which he is going may be exhausted in answering Why and Where, and then he may not find the energy and power to accomplish what he is going to accomplish.

This is the inner psychology of mind, the knowledge of which makes things easy. One must not become impressed by holding different beliefs, but one must know the science, the mystery which is hidden behind all such things, which may seem small and little, but their result sometimes is most important.

Etekad, Rasm U Ravaj: Superstitions, Customs, And Beliefs
Number 9: The Influence of Time

It has been a custom among the people in the East to start every enterprise with the waxing of the moon, in order to follow the course of nature and to join forces with the increasing power and light of the moon. The sun represents divine light, the moon represents the human heart. To join forces with the waxing of the moon is like drawing divine light and power in one's own heart to accomplish a certain thing. It is also considered lucky to rise with the sunrise, and better still to begin an enterprise with the rising of the sun. This is again an indication to follow nature's tides. The sun represents divine power; therefore any spiritual action, a prayer-offering or a meditation, a devotional worship, it is more desirable to perform with the sunrise.

However, the night vigils are performed by the seers and the knowers of truth in the midst of the night, when the old day ends and the new day begins; for that is a time of Kemal which offers to the soul a perfect stillness. When the sun is at the zenith, that is Kemal also, but it has not the quiet of midnight; and therefore it is considered by those who know things inauspicious for taking up any enterprise. As time has influence upon weather, upon the sea, upon the trees and plants, so it has a subtle influence upon living creatures. Man appears to be most independent of the influences and yet man is most under the influence of time; not only his body and mind, but with all affairs of life. Verily the one who knows the influence of time knows the secret of life.

Etekad, Rasm U Ravaj: Superstitions, Customs, And Beliefs
Number 10: Planetary Influences

Belief in planetary influences has been maintained in all ages by man. However many times a person may have been disappointed in finding truth in the horoscope, yet no one can be thoughtful and deny the fact of the influence that the planets have upon people's lives. It is possible that every method is not a correct method of making a horoscope, every book on astrology is not the right book, and every astrologer is not a prophet; nevertheless there is as much truth in the influence of planets upon the lives of men as there is truth in the effects of drugs upon one's physical body. The whole cosmic system is based upon a certain rhythm, a rhythm which relates planets, multitudes, and individuals, and manifests as a hidden law governing the action of the whole creation and yet silent and covered.

There are two aspects that constitute an individual: Spiritual and material.

The spiritual aspect remains untouched, while the material aspect is moved and turned by conditions brought about by planetary influences. The spiritual aspect, which remains untouched in every man, is as a witness of his life, a soul from within who knows not what it itself is, who identifies itself with this other aspect and therefore takes as a reality that which it witnesses, that which goes on before it as a course of life. When once this real aspect of man's being is awakened then it begins to see that it has a voice in the matter too, and then it sees that it must fight for its rights, in order to gain liberty. It therefore fights with its own kingdom, which is the other aspect of man's being which it so long witnessed; and so it gains that strength which enables it in the long run to battle with outer conditions caused by planetary influences. It might take one a lifetime to combat, and yet it would be short to gain the mastery which belongs to the soul.

Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
the Only Being, United with All the Illuminated Souls
Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

Kashf: Insight
Number 1: Reason Is Earth-Born

Mind is most capable of expressing itself in a fitting form. Very often man expresses his thought in any conversation that may be going on, which perhaps has nothing to do with his thought; and as his nature is, man looks for a scope for expression of his thought, and he easily gets it. In a serious conversation one can find scope for a joke, even in tragedy one can find comedy; and in comedy one can find tragedy, if one's mind happens to dwell on sad thoughts. This shows that the mind always seeks for a scope for expression, and situations outside generously offer the scope.

The same thing one finds with the mind; in every situation, every condition, man easily finds out a reason for it from the mind. The one who does right and the one who does wrong both find the reason for their action. Two people disputing against each other both have reason at the back of their discussion. This shows that the mind provides reason, as the sun shines and the rain falls, for the sinner as well as for the virtuous. Not knowing this fact, man always reasons with another; but it is not a dispute between reason and no reason, it is a dispute between two reasons contrary to one another. This shows that reason has not sprung on the soil of heaven, reason is earth-born, upon which man so confidently fixes his argument.

Therefore every conversation is not always on a pre-designed plan; most often it is an outcome of instantaneously arising impulses. It is most interesting when one can get to the back of a conversation and find out what it is founded upon; and it is still more interesting to find what a very obedient servant reason is, which is ready to respond to the call of its master, although the truth is coined by itself. It is when the seer begins to look behind reason that he begins to get glimpses of truth upon which he can depend. Insight makes life interesting. One who drifts along with the waves of insight will not enjoy life so much as one who has insight into life and yet stands firm on his own feet.

Kashf: Insight
Number 2: The Word and the Idea

The word is a body of the idea and the idea is the soul of the word. As the body represents the soul so the word represents the idea. The idea can only be expressed in the word, so the soul can only be seen in the body; and those who deny the existence of the soul must also deny the existence of the idea. They must say that only the word exists, without an idea, which in reality is impossible. Behind every word there is an idea veiled in one or a thousand veils, or clearly represented by the word. However, the word is a key to the idea, but only an expression of it. The ears hear the word, the mind perceives the idea.

If the idea were not there the word would not convey anything to the listener. If one said to a child, "Sarcasm is an abuse of the intellect," what will the innocent child understand by it? The word "sarcasm" will be known by the one who is capable of being sarcastic. This opens up another idea, that those who accuse others with authority of some fault must necessarily know the fault themselves. Man, however evolved, will now and then show childishness in expressing his opinion about

another, proving thereby guilty of the same fault in some proportion. No one can tell another, "You told a lie," who did not tell a lie himself once at least in his life. No doubt the idea is vaster than the word, as the soul is wider than the body. Every idea has its breadth, length, height, and depth. Therefore, as a world is hidden in a planet, so a world of idea is hidden in a word. Think, therefore, how interesting life must become for the one who can see behind every word that is spoken to him its length, breadth, height, and depth. He is an engineer of the human mind. He then does not know only what is spoken to him, but he knows what is meant by it. By knowing words you do not know the language; what you know is the outside language, the inner language is known by knowing the language of ideas.

So the language of ideas cannot be heard by the ears alone, the hearing of the heart must be open for it. The seer must understand from a word spoken to him what even the one who speaks does not know, for every human being thinks, speaks, and acts mechanically, subject to the condition of his body, mind, and situation in life. Therefore as a physician finds out more about a complaint than the patient himself, so the mystic must comprehend the idea behind every word that is spoken to him. One might think with the continual growth of such perception the life of a Sufi must become very much troubled, for when the average person would be seeing a yard's distance a Sufi may be seeing the distance of a mile. Yet, there is no doubt it could be troublesome if the mystic did not develop all around. The elephant's strength is required to carry the load of an elephant. It is not enough to become a seer alone, but what is needed is to develop that strength which takes all things easily, the power that endures all things, and the might which enables one to surmount all difficulties in life.

Kashf: Insight

Number 3: The Expression and the Idea

Actions such as a smile, or staring, or frowning, or nodding, or moving the eyes or the head, have ideas behind them. Externally it is a slight movement; behind it there is a mountain of thought. No movement is possible without a thought at the back of it. Sometimes it is known to the person and sometimes the person himself does not know why he smiled. The eyes express more than anything else, by their movements, the idea behind them. Very often intuitive people say, "I perceived from that person's look, pleasure," (or "displeasure") or "his favorable" (or "unfavorable") "attitude." And yet many do not know what movement, what expression, suggested to them what they perceived. Every expression of the eyes, the eyes which change their expression so many times in one minute, suggests the idea behind. This shows that the mind is an engineer and the body is a mechanism which it works. If the engineer becomes conscious of his working he brings about desirable results, but by unconscious working the engineer also becomes a mechanism.

There used to be courtiers in the ancient times in India who at every moment would know the state of mind and the attitude of the king, even to such an extent that very often everything was arranged as the king liked without him having uttered one word about it. There were nine courtiers attached to the court of Akbar; every one of them knew the state of mind of the Emperor at every moment. The Sufi, whose duty in the world is to live in the presence of God and who recognizes His presence in all His creatures, His personality especially in man, he fulfils his duty of a courtier with every man. A person who lives as dead as a stone among his surroundings does not know whom he has pleased, whom he has displeased, who expects of him thought, consideration, who asks of him sympathy or service, who needs him in his trouble or difficulty.

People think insight comes by psychic development. Yes, it does come, but it comes most by the development of the heart quality. A loving person is a living person. No doubt the more living one is, the more difficult it is to live, and yet no difficulty is too great a price for living a real life.

The method which a mystic takes to perceive the mentality of another is that he takes the movement of the person and his expression as a guide to arrive at his thought, and he takes his thought as a guide to his nature. By realizing the nature of man he comes to know about the very depth of his being, and instead of having a part of the knowledge about a person he gets to know all about him. To know that one has done right or wrong, to know that one is wise or foolish is not sufficient.

To have a complete knowledge of a person one must know if he does right why he does right, and if he does wrong why he does wrong, if he is wise what makes him wise, if he is foolish what is the reason of his being foolish; not only this, but also if there were a possibility of making the best of what the person is and trying to improve the person without him knowing it. A foolish person cannot get along with his own friend whereas a wise person can get on even with his enemy. The difference is that the one knows life, understands human nature and acts according to it, whereas the other, even if he wanted to act rightly, always fails and becomes disappointed in the end.

Kashf: Insight
Number 4: The Power of Words

There are two kinds of men, one who speaks subject to his impulse, the other who speaks just like hitting a target. This first one may often strike a wrong note, and may work against his own interest, but the other one will become the master of his destiny. The one who knows while speaking to whom he is speaking, the capacity of the mind of his hearer, the lines on the mind of his hearer, he will speak the words which will pierce through the mind of the listener. It is just like looking for a track before running the cart in a given direction.

Many, content with their honesty, speak just as they like at the moment; they do not mind what effect it will produce as long as they are sure that what they say is true. The truth that strikes like a hammer on the head of the listener is not desirable, one would be better off without it. This shows that it is not only the thing to consider that what one says is true, there is another consideration which is most necessary, and that is what effect it will make on the other. The seer sees the lines made on the mind of the one to whom he speaks and makes his words suitable to run over that line. If he likes to make another road in the mind of his listener he first takes the road which is already made there, and when once he has entered the mind of his listener then he will make another road, not before. It is just like one person going to buy something in a shop and saying before entering, "I have not got more than fourpence," instead of going into the shop and finding out what he can buy with his four pennies. Action is one thing, and prudence is another thing. Even the animals are active, even they work for what they need in life. What one expects in man is prudence. Man must have forethought, before he utters one word, about its effect upon another.

Some say spiritually wise is not worldly-wise, some think that these two worlds are different. But it is not so. The worldly-wise is capable of being spiritually wise, but spiritually wise is already worldly-wise. He may not care for worldly things, therefore he may be lacking in experience in worldly affairs; yet for him worldly wisdom is not a foreign thing, he has only to open his eyes

and see. Those who know nothing of the world and those who are called spiritual, are known more for their goodness than for their balance. The complete spiritual life is not a dreamy one, but wide awake, full of thought and consideration.

The word has a magic in it; it can turn friends into your enemies, and it can make your enemies your friends. The mystery of all success in every direction of life is in the word. The word has power to turn the mind of the listener warm or cold. The word can produce the effect of earth, water, fire, air, or ether. The word can produce depression or joy. The one who knows the chemistry of the word does not need drugs or herbs. He has medicine for every disease in the world, not only for bodily disease, but for the disorders of the mind, which still remain unexplored by science. By a constant study of life, by special thought given to one's word, by careful watching of the effects of one's speech upon others, one arrives at a state of realization where one can heal hearts.

Kashf: Insight

Number 5: The Re-Echo of the Past

One can easily trace the past of man from what he says and from how he expresses it. The past is ringing in the heart of man like a bell. The heart of man is a talking-machine record which goes on by itself, or, if it has stopped, one has only to wind the machine, then it goes on again. Man's present is the re-echo of his past. If he has been through suffering, even if he is better, he will vibrate the same; outer conditions will not change his inner being. If he has been happy, even in a troubled time his heart will vibrate the past. People who have been against one another, if by chance they become friends, will still feel in themselves the beating of the pulse of hostility of the past. Great kings who have been dethroned, imprisoned—still one can feel their past vibrating in their atmosphere.

The past lives and one cannot easily destroy it, however greatly one may wish to close it. It gets hold of the human tongue to express itself. As every heart is eager to tell its story so the past is most eager to sing its legend. It only seeks the way how it shall express itself. A Sufi, therefore, does not need spirit communication to learn the past, or astrological science to discover what has happened. To him every person explains his past without even one word spoken. But by the speech of a person about his past the Sufi can see what is hidden behind, what is being said and what remains unsaid. He need not trace the past in history or in traditions. He who can read has but to open his eyes and all is written before him.

Kashf: Insight

Number 6: Interest in All Things

As there is a shadow of every form and as there is a re-echo of every sound and as there is a reflection of every light so there is a re-impression of everything one sees, hears, or perceives. But as it wants the musician's ears to sense the overtone of a sound and an artist's eyes to recognize the form from its shadow, and as it requires a keen sight to distinguish the degree of the reflection of light, so it wants the soul of a seer to see through all things in life. The seer's eye is in the heart of every soul, but it is the attitude that keeps every man looking down to the earth instead of raising his eyes upwards. The average tendency is to see on the surface.

It is not true that the average person cannot see any further. But the average man does not think that there is anything further, so he does not give himself the trouble to see any further. There are many who are intelligent enough to perceive all that is behind things, but the first thing that makes their view limited is the narrow range of their interest. They are not enough interested to take trouble about things they neither know or believe. They would be glad to have intuition if it came without their taking any trouble. There are many who can think, but they do not wish to take the trouble of thinking.

There are two things necessary in order to perceive: One thing is openness, the other thing is effort made in that direction. When contemplating upon anything the mind must be free from all else that stands in the way; that is called openness. Also one must arrive, by the help of concentration, at focusing one's mind on a certain object. The next thing is to be interested enough in all things that one comes in contact with and one cares to know about, that one may penetrate below the surface and find out what is hidden in all things.

Kashf: Insight
Number 7: *Vairagya*

The presence of man speaks of his past, present and future. When a visitor comes to your house he brings to you either his joy or his sorrow; he brings you the effect of his good or bad deeds; he brings you the influence of his high or low mind; he tunes the vibration of the sphere of your home to his pitch; he charges the sphere with his own vibrations. If you can only perceive—he need not tell you one word about himself—you can know if he is experiencing heaven or hell. For one need not wait for heaven or hell in the hereafter; it is here also, only after death it will be more felt. Therefore the contact of a heavenly person can bring to you the air of heaven and the contact of the other can give you the taste of the other place.

This shows that every individual is a tone, a rhythm; and a tone which draws the tone of every other person to its own pitch, a rhythm which compels every other person to follow the same rhythm. That is where one feels the pull in life; that is what scares the sage from the life of the world and makes him feel inclined to run away from this world and take refuge in a forest or in a desert. Why the average person does not feel it is because, just like children absorbed in play, the people in the world are pulling each other's rope.

Therefore they do not feel much; for they are pulled, but they also pull the rope of another. But the one who is tuned to a different pitch altogether from the average person and whose rhythm in life is quite different from the other's naturally must feel the pull too much. And the only way how the sages manage to protect themselves from this is by the practice of *Vairagya* (the word *Vairagya* means independence and indifference both in one), which cannot be learned or taught, it comes by itself. It is not lack of love, or bitterness, it is only rising above love and hate both.

Kashf: Insight
Number 8: *A Silent Music*

Every soul radiates an influence which charges the atmosphere all around. The more powerful the influence the wider it spreads, forcing its way even through walls. There is no barrier of water or space which can keep that influence from spreading. The stronger the influence the longer it lasts. It

is not difficult for a sensitive person to perceive on coming to a room or in a house what influence it has, or to perceive, on sitting on a chair, who was sitting there before him.

The character of this influence is just like light or heat, which silently spreads its warmth according to its power of radiance. It is not that man's influence is felt in his presence only, but even after he has left the place his influence remains. The influence of some persons can remain for hours, of some for days, of some for weeks or months or even years. Atmosphere is a silent music. It has its effect upon the listener, exciting or peaceful, whatever it may be. The atmosphere remains not only in the place but also in objects, such as a chair, or a sofa, or a cushion, or a carpet, or a mat. An influence can remain with the clothes that one has worn in one's life. It is something real, not tangible but perceptible. Music comes through the ears to the heart, but atmosphere comes direct. A walking-stick can have the atmosphere of the person who held it; a rosary, necklace, brooch, or a ring can have atmosphere; a pen or an inkstand can have an atmosphere of the person who has used it. Everybody perceives it, consciously or unconsciously, but the more sensitive a person, the more he can realize it.

It is not easy for everybody to break anybody's influence, although it is possible to rise above it. A person who is fine of nature and sensitive, pure and good, for him the influence from all around in this world can become so troublesome that he would always find himself in the midst of the battle going on constantly around him. Therefore it will not do for a person to become fine and sensitive, and yet not learn how to combat all influences around him. The more one studies this question the more one comes to realize that life is not only a battle outwardly but also inwardly. And there are two things that can be done for self-defense, either to become a most well-equipped fighter, to fight out all influences attacking one with the power of one's own influences, or to rise above all influences; which means, to live and not live, to be and not be, to come down to act and to rise up to keep in security.

Kashf: Insight

Number 9: Three Ways To Develop Insight

There are three important things to be considered in the development of insight. One is the steady gaze of the eyes and of the mind, which helps one in penetration. Another thing is losing everything else from one's sight except the object through which one wishes to penetrate; and that comes by sufficient interest in the object of penetration. But the third thing, which helps most, is losing for the moment the thought of one's self. When one's body and mind are not before one, it is then that one has the proper insight into things one wishes to know and understand.

Sufis therefore have different concentrations by which they are helped not only in keeping their gaze steady, but standing firm upon one thought. When a person cannot take interest in any object or being, then his mind is not steady, for there is nothing that it takes interest in; it is the interest which makes the mind steady. A certain thought which is inspiring or helpful in some way, or a certain form which is inspiring, when once one has concentrated upon it then the mind becomes steady also, then it can easily hold an object before it without wavering.

The character of the mind is as the character of the eyes, the eyes which take in all that comes under their horizon; so the mind jumps from one thing to another, upon all thoughts which may be standing within its horizon. And as it is not always easy to keep the gaze steady so it is with the

mind; to keep the mind firm upon one thought, form or image is not easy. But the third thing is the most difficult, and that is to lose oneself in the thought of the object that is before one. In this way the self, which stands in the way between the soul and its object of penetration, is lost from view for the time being. Thus the person is able to penetrate through all things, knowing thereby the nature, character and secret of all things.

There is no other cause of all depression and despair than the inability of seeing through life. There may be many reasons apparently seeming to be the different causes of unhappiness, but this one is the greatest reason, the reason of all reasons. Even animals in whose nature the tendency of fighting is pronounced become friends when they come to know one another by association. Many troubles in the life of individuals and of the multitude might be avoided if keen insight were developed, for all confusion is caused by misunderstanding. Not only human beings, but all things of this world which seem of use or of no use, which seem to be easy or difficult to obtain, all are for the use of man. Therefore penetration into things is the secret of the success of science, art, philosophy and religion, all.

Questions and Answers

Q: Suppose a person has had for years some interest very near to his heart, which has developed his power of concentration. And that interest ceases. Is that person more capable of strong concentration on a new interest, because of his previous experience?

A: Yes, certainly. All our experiences are nothing but preparation for something else. Nothing that belongs to this world, however precious, must hinder one's path of progress. For every step in the direction to that spiritual gain must be the aim of every soul. And the concentration upon the object is just a step.

Q: A feeling of deadness seems to come ...?

A: Here is the question of concentration, and not of its effect. The question of effect is quite a different subject again. Then the question comes, "Of what object?" Something to steady the mind, it may be a tree, a flower, the sun or a star. Of course, according to the object a reaction is produced. And according to the reaction an object is produced. Every belief and every experience for a wise person is a step of a staircase; he has taken this step, there is another step for him to take. The steps of the staircase are not made for one to stand there. They are just made for one to pass, to go further. Because life is progress. Where there is no progress there is no life. One should go on. Death and disappointment; two things are one. And if there is a hereafter, then the death was a passing stage; and so is disappointment. It only has made one more steady, more wise, more

Q: Does the staircase never end?

A: The end is not very desirable. The interest is in the staircase, in going on.

Q: ... when a soul has reached perfection?

A: After perfection there is no interest. If there is no self, there is no interest, there is perfection.

Kashf: Insight
Number 10: Tranquility

The most important thing in life is the opening of that clear vision which is opened by the help of insight. The effect of every emotion covers the insight, just as clouds cover the sun. It is therefore that most clever and qualified people often do things, especially at the moment of passion or anger, which they would not have done otherwise. The reason is that the mind loses its rhythm under the strain of a passion or emotion, and so it upsets the rhythm of the body, it makes man perplexed and unable to see any condition or situation clearly.

It is therefore that the seers, the sages, try to keep their tranquility at every cost, for life in the world brings up many things every day and hour to disturb that tranquility which is the secret of insight. Every little noise or disturbance in oneself and outside can upset a person who keeps the rhythm of his whole being in the proper order. It is therefore that the sages have chosen solitude and a life away from the world. But the best way of keeping one's tranquility is to keep this rhythm under the control of one's own will. By doing this one preserves one's tranquility in the midst of life's greatest turmoil.

In the terms of Vedanta life is likened to the sea, where there is a continual rising and falling of the waves. Every man by nature seeks peace and in peace alone is his satisfaction. But often he seeks it wrongly, therefore instead of producing peace he creates more struggle in life. The secret of peace is in the will-power. Instead of resisting the forces which jar and disturb one's life, if one would only stand firm against them, then one can attain to that tranquility which is most necessary to have a greater insight into life.

Man is made of atoms gathered together around the intelligence, physical atoms and mental atoms which make his body and mind. The power which has gathered them and which controls them and which uses them for their best purpose is the will-power. When this power is absent the body and mind both go to pieces, broken by every jarring effect coming from whatever direction. This is the reason hidden under most of the illnesses and weaknesses; every mistake, failure, and every disappointment in life has this reason behind it: The lack of control, the lack of steadiness and strength against the disturbing influences which come from within and without.

The great lesson which one learns, which helps most in keeping that tranquility in life which helps insight, is to be able to become like ebb and flow. When the first is needed then to become ebb, when the next thing is needed then to make oneself in that way; when it is necessary to express then to express, when it is necessary to respond, then to respond, at will. In this manner one will always manage to preserve tranquility in life.

Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
the Only Being, United with All the Illuminated Souls
Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

Naqshibandi: Symbology
Number 1: Layla and Majnun (1)

The legend of Layla and Majnun is a story which is known throughout the East, and the Sufi poets have used the characters of Layla and Majnun to express, in this symbolical legend, the philosophy of love.

Layla and Majnun, when young, were schoolmates, devoted to one another. Whenever the teacher looked at Majnun's slate there was the picture of Layla drawn upon it. And when the teacher asked Layla to read from the book she repeated the name of Majnun. So, disappointed with the school, the parents had to take them back home. When difficulties arose owing to the caste differences, so that they could not be married to one another according to the caste ideas, in order to make either forget the other, by changing the direction of their minds, someone asked Majnun, "What is there especial in Layla that you love her so much? There are many other maidens in the world." Majnun answered, "In order to see Layla you must borrow Majnun's eyes."

With great difficulty Layla's people consented, on condition that Majnun did not show himself odd in his love, but would behave sensibly. On the day for which the visit had been arranged, for Layla's people to meet Majnun, Majnun entered the room with his parents, who had told him to behave sensibly. It happened that Layla's dog, which Majnun had known for years, came into the room. Majnun could not for one moment hold to his dignity; he bowed at the feet of the dog and kissed its paws, and the visit became a failure.

Disappointed at Majnun's action, his parents took him to the Ka`aba, and told him to pray as they would pray; he said yes. The multitude followed, to see what prayer was going to take place. On hearing the name of Majnun, Majnun's parents first prayed, "God, take away the love of Layla from the heart of Majnun." All the others listened. Then they asked Majnun to come and pray as they did. He said, "Then shall I have Layla if I pray?" They urged him to come and pray. He said, "God, give me Layla." And all present said, "Amen."

When the parents became hopeless, then they let Majnun roam about as he wished. Majnun in the end arrived near Layla's town and stayed outside the town in an old ruin where nobody lived. Being tired he was taking shelter there, under that worn-out roof. Layla, hearing that Majnun was near the town, sent some of her portion of food by a confidential maid, who was to carry it to Majnun. When the maid came and looked in that place for the beloved of Layla there were two persons there, one a person thin and drowsy, the other person rather good looking. The maid thought certainly this person must be the beloved of Layla.

With the basket of food in her hand, she asked this man, "Are you Majnun?" "What is it you have brought?," he asked. She said, "Some food for Majnun." He said, "I am Majnun, give it to me. He was glad to partake of it, and said, "I shall be glad to have it every day." So Layla starved for days, sending her food, and that food was given to this man, who for the time became Majnun. One day Layla asked, "How is my Majnun?" The maid said, "He is looking better every day." Layla said, "It cannot be." The maid said, "Certainly, be sure of it. He is looking better every day." Layla said,

"Today you need not take the food; take a knife and a saucer, and tell my Majnun that I need a drop of his blood."

When she came the man came with anxiety, with eagerness to have the dish, but there was a knife. He said, "What is this?" She said, "Layla wants a drop of your blood." He first looked perplexed, then he said, "I am not Majnun; that may be Majnun, he who is sitting in that corner." By that time Majnun had grown so thin; yet when she asked for a drop of blood Majnun tried by striking the knife on different parts of his body, if he could get out a drop of blood to be sent to Layla. "Ah," he said, "there cannot be anything more delightful for Majnun than to give a drop of his blood when it is asked for by Layla."

Naqshibandi: Symbology
Number 2: Layla and Majnun (2)

The end of the story of Majnun is that he sat a long time under the shade of a tree and he grew in time like the tree; being near the tree his body and the tree became one. And when a woodcutter came and instead of cutting the wood his axe struck Majnun, Majnun said "Layla," for that was the only thought there. Layla, on hearing this, when she had freedom for a moment, was drawn by some way to Majnun at his last moment on the earth, and called him, "Majnun!" He answered, "Layla." She said, "I am Layla." But he said "I am Layla." And so Majnun fell and died, and Layla followed him instantly.

The path of the Sufi is the path of devotion, and therefore Layla and Majnun is the symbol that a Sufi takes for God and man. The soul who journeys in the path of God does not need much learning. What he writes on his slate is the name of God, what he reads in his book is His name. That is the only learning which is most essential in the path of God. And no one can distract the mind of the godly toward anything, however attractive; though he may find not one reason to give for his devotion to God, he can only say, "In order to become the lover of God you must borrow my eyes."

While people think of the differences of their religions and creeds the godly bows before the humblest person, as Majnun to Layla's dog. And when the prayers of different people will be for themselves, the prayer of the godly is only to attain to the presence of God; and therefore, whatever be his religion, his prayer will be followed by every sincere soul. Besides, the path of God and of love both, if sincerely trodden, need sacrifice from beginning to end; and the one who is not ready for sacrifice is like that pretended love of Layla who was ready for the food but was not willing to suffer. Verily who pursueth the world will inherit the world, but the soul that pursueth God will attain in the end to the presence of God.

But to what does the love of God lead? It leads to that peace and stillness which can be seen in the life of the tree, which bears fruit and flowers for others and expects no returns, not even thanks in return. It serves, and cares for nothing else, not even for appreciation. That is the attribute of the godly. And the godly in the end of his attainment of God forgets himself, as Majnun said even to Layla, "I am Layla." And what happens then? Instead of man pursuing God, God follows man.

Naqshibandi: Symbology
Number 3: Christ Walking on the Water

The phenomenon of Christ's walking on the water, from a mystical point of view, is suggestive of a much greater philosophy than only a phenomenon. The whole universe in all its forms is one single vision of a continual activity. From beginning to end every aspect of life represents motion, and it is the perpetual motion of the whole universe which is called life. Therefore the universe is, so to speak, an ocean of vibrations, and every movement represents a wave.

Therefore the wise have called it, in Sanskrit, Bhava Sagara, the "Ocean of Life," and the great devotees have constantly prayed to be liberated, that they may not sink in this ocean but that they may be able to swim in it, which is called Tarana. And it is the master-spirit that can rise above these waves of the enormous ocean of life, in which generally the souls are drowned. To be in it and to be able to stand above it and to walk on it is the phenomenon of Christ's walking upon the water.

Naqshibandi: Symbology
Number 4: *Shaqq us-Sadr*, the Opening of the Breast of the Prophet

There exists a legend in the world of Islam, and some believe that it really did occur—some say once, and some say it happened more than once—that the angels from heaven descended on earth and cut open the breast of the Prophet; they took away something that was to be removed from there, and then the breast was made as before. According to the Sufi point of view this is a symbolical legend. It explains what is necessary in the life of man, to allow the plant of divine love to grow in his heart. It is to remove that element which gives the bitter feeling.

Just as there is a poison in the sting of the scorpion, and as there is a poison in the teeth of the snake, so there is poison in the heart of man which is made to be the shrine of God. But God cannot arise in the shrine which is as dead by its own poison; it must be purified first and made real for God to arise. The soul who had to sympathize with the whole world was thus prepared, that the drop of that poison which always produces contempt, resentment and ill-feeling against another, was destroyed first. So many talk about the purification of the heart, and so few really know what it is.

Some say to be pure means to be free from all evil thought, but there is no evil thought. Call it evil or call it devil, if there is any such thought it is the thought of bitterness against another. No one with sense and understanding would like to keep a drop of poison in his body, and how ignorant it is on the part of man when he keeps and cherishes a bitter thought against another in his heart. If a drop of poison can cause the death of the body, it is equal to a thousand deaths when the heart retains the smallest thought of bitterness.

In this legend cutting open of the breast is the cutting open of the ego, which is as a shell over the heart. And taking away that element is that every kind of thought or feeling against anyone in the world was taken away, and the breast, which means the heart, was filled with love alone, which is the real life of God.

Naqshibandi: Symbology
Number 5: *Miraj*, the Dream of the Prophet

A story exists in Islam about the dream of the Prophet, a dream which was as an initiation in the higher spheres. Many take it literally and discuss it, and afterwards go out by the same door by which they came in. It is by the point of view of a mystic that one can find out the mystery. It is said that the Prophet was taken from Jerusalem to the Temple of Peace, which means from the outer temple of peace to the inner temple of peace. A Burrak was brought for the Prophet to ride on. Jibrail accompanied the Prophet on the journey to guide him. Burrak is said to be an animal of heaven which has wings, the body of a horse and the face of a human being. It signifies the body together with the mind. The wings represent the mind, and the body of the Burrak represents the human body; the head represents perfection. Also this is the picture of the breath. Breath is the Burrak which reaches from the outer world to the inner world in a moment's time. Jibrail in this story represents reason.

It is said that the Prophet saw on his way Adam, who smiled looking to one side and shed tears looking to the other side. This shows that the human soul when it develops in itself real human sentiment rejoices at the progress of humanity and sorrows over the degeneration of humanity. The Burrak could not go beyond a certain point, which means that breath takes one a certain distance in the mystical realization, but there comes a stage when the breath cannot accompany one. When they arrived near the destination Jibrail also retired, which means that reason cannot go any further than its limit. Then the Prophet arrived near that curtain which stands between the human and the divine, and called aloud the name of God, saying, "None exists save Thou," and the answer came, "True, true." That was the final initiation, from which dated the blooming of Mohamed's prophetic message.

Naqshibandi: Symbology
Number 6: The Flute of Krishna

Krishna is pictured in Hindu symbology with a crown of peacock's feathers, playing the flute. Krishna is the idea of divine love, the god of love. And the divine love expresses itself by entering in man and filling his whole being. Therefore the flute is the human heart, and a heart which is made hollow, which becomes a flute for the god of love to play. When the heart is not empty, in other words when there is no scope in the heart, there is no place for love. Rumi, the great poet of Persia, explains the idea more clearly. He says the pains and sorrows the soul experiences through life are holes made in a reed flute, and it is by making these holes that the player makes out of a reed a flute.

Which means, the heart of man is first a reed, and the suffering and pain it goes through make it a flute, which can then be used by God as the instrument to produce the music that He constantly wishes to produce. But every reed is not a flute, and so every heart is not His instrument. As the reeds need to be made into flutes, so the human heart can be turned into an instrument and can be offered to the God of love. It is the human heart which becomes the harp of the angels, it is the human heart which is the lute of Orpheus. It is on the model of the heart of man that the first instrument of music was made, and no earthly instrument can produce that music which the heart produces, raising the mortal soul to immortality.

The crown of peacock's feathers leads to a further revelation, that it is the music of the heart which can be expressed through the head; it is the knowledge of the head and the love of the heart

that express the divine message fully. Peacock's feathers have in all ages been considered as a sign of beauty, as a sign of knowledge; beauty because they are beautiful, knowledge because they are in the form of an eye. It is by keen observation that man acquires knowledge. Knowledge without love is lifeless. So with the flute the crown of peacock's feathers makes the symbol complete.

Questions and Answers (July 20, 1923)

Q: What is the meaning of the peacock feathers?

A: The peacock feathers are considered by the poets and mystics as a symbol (sign) of beauty, and a sign of vanity. And they are included in all the kingly grandeurs. And the peacock is the bird upon which rode the goddess of music and literature, Saraswati. Also the peacock feathers are used at the tombs of the Sufis, by the guardians of the tomb. Also by the healers, that by the pass of the peacock feathers, which is the pass of harmony and beauty, the bad influences may be taken away. Also in India they use peacock feathers in the necklace of a child, and that is a little psychological trick. A child who is susceptible to evil eye is saved from its severe influence, because it is natural that the first glance of a person, instead of falling upon the child, will fall upon the peacock feathers, because it attracts the curiosity of everyone. In that way the first severe glance is, so to speak, shielded by the peacock feathers. And the same thing is done by the lion's nails which are put in the necklace of a little child.

Q: Why can we only have knowledge of God through the heart? What part of the mind does the heart represent?

A: The heart is the principle center, not the heart in the body, but the heart which is the depth of the mind, for the mind is the surface of the heart. The heart and mind are as one tree: The root is the heart and the branches, fruits, flowers, and leaves represent the mind. The heart is at the bottom of thought, imagination, and all. Feelings always belong to the heart, thought to the mind; so what belongs to the mind can be expressed in words, what to the heart cannot. Everything in the mind is intelligible, but what is intelligible but not expressible, or beyond what is intelligible, that is the heart. Deeper feelings, mirth, kindness, sympathy, all fine feelings which cannot be expressed in words are all activities of the heart. The heart is like the sea, and the waves are its emotions. The brain is all over the body, this fact is admitted by modern science; brain is that susceptibility which is sensitive, such as nerves which are the sensitive feelers of the brain.

Naqshibandi: Symbology **Number 7: Tongues of Fire**

The symbolic meaning of the legend—of the myth—is that there is a period when the soul of the earnest seeker is seeking; which means that it has not yet found the object it is seeking after. In the lifetime of Jesus Christ the beauty of the Master's wonderful personality and the great intoxication of His presence and the constant outpouring of the Message that He had to give was so much for his disciples that it was beyond what may be called a joy or a happiness or something which is explainable, and all the blessing that they received and experienced during His presence was covered by the Master's personality. And the time of realization of that which they had constantly gained came in their lives after that great change when the external person of the Master ascended and the capacity of realization became open.

But after the resurrection, when they had sufficient time to recover from the feeling that had overtaken their hearts, the seeming separation from their beloved Lord prepared them, so to speak, in time and opened the doors of the heart, giving capacity for that illumination which was constantly pouring out from the Spirit of Guidance, the Alpha and Omega, Who always was and is and will be.

The symbolic interpretation of the tongues of flame rising from their foreheads is the light of the Message, the rays of the Christ-spirit in the form of thoughts, which were expressed in words. There is a stage in the life of the seer when the tongue of flame becomes not only an interpretation of the reality but a reality, his own experience. The head is the center of knowledge and when the center opens, the light, which was covered, becomes manifest, not only in idea, but even in form.

And the phenomenon that was shown the next day, when the apostles spoke all different languages, can be rightly interpreted in this sense, that every soul hears its own language. For every soul has its own word, as every soul has its peculiar illusion. And it is therefore that one person cannot understand another person in this world, and it becomes more than a miracle when one friend, perhaps one person in the world, can understand one fully. Which means, in this world the language of each one is not understood by another, and if someone understands a little one feels at-one-ment with that one. It was the illumination of the Christ-spirit which brought exaltation in their lives, so that they began to see in every soul the Master and they became at one with every soul, inspired by sympathy and love of Christ. And they understood the souls as they saw them, and so they spoke with souls whose language was never understood. Plainly speaking, they heard the cry of every soul and they answered every soul's cry.

The Message means the answer to the cry of every soul. Every great prophet or teacher had in his life many followers attracted to his personality, to his kindness and love; but those who became as the instrument of his Message, whose hearts became as a flute for the Master to play his music, have always been some chosen few, as the twelve apostles of Christ.

Naqshibandi: Symbology
Number 8: The Story of Lot's Wife

The ancient method of giving the mystery of life was to give it in the form of a legend. The legend of Lot's wife is that it was to Abraham that Lot was related, and it was by the love and help of Abraham that the two angels were sent to Lot, to warn him of the coming destruction of two cities and to advise him to go to the mountains. And Lot was not willing to leave the cities, but in the end he agreed to. His sons-in-law failed him by not accompanying him, but his wife and his two daughters accompanied him on the journey to the mountains. And they were told that his wife must not look back; and when she did, she was turned into a pillar of salt. Lot and his two daughters remained, and they reached the cave of the mountain, which was Lot's destination.

The two towns that were to be destroyed represent the North Pole and the South Pole, the two poles of the world. For all the treasures of the earth, all possessions and power and fame that belong to the earth are subject to destruction. And that was taught to Lot, the human soul, who was the relation of Abraham—the human soul which is from Brahma, the Creator. The relationship of Lot with Abraham represents the relation of the human soul to the Creator. The two angels were the angels of light and of reason. When the light comes to man its first teaching is to warn the soul of the disaster

that awaits all that is subject to death and destruction. It is this lesson that is called in Sanskrit the lesson of Vairagya—when man’s eyes open to see all that he loves and likes and wishes to hold and possess is subject to destruction and death.

There are five bodies considered by the mystics of old to be the vehicles of the soul, which are called:

Anandamayakosh, body of Joy,

Vignanamayakosh, body of Wisdom,

Manamayakosh, body of Mind,

Pranamayakosh, body of Ether,

Annamayakosh, body of Earth.

This last is the receptacle of food. It lives on earthly food; and if it is starved of that it dies, for it is made of earth, it lives on earth. Another is the receptacle of ether. That part of man’s being lives by breath and by taking in the air. If it is starved of air it cannot live. These two bodies form the material part, the physical part, of man’s being. And it is these two receptacles which are termed in the legend the sons-in-law.

Then there is Manamayakosh, which is mind, the mental body. And this body has its action and reaction on both sides; it acts and reacts on the earthly bodies, and it acts and reacts upon the soul. Therefore when Lot left the two cities, which represent the physical plane, to journey toward the goal of immortality, his wife was still with him. For it is not necessary that the mental body should stay behind when the journey towards illumination is begun. It is capable of going with the soul towards eternity. And yet its attachment to earth and the physical plane is great, because it is made, it is built, of physical impressions, of all impressions that come from the physical world; and of necessity it wants to turn to see if the physical being or the spiritual being is leading it aright.

The principal nature of mind is doubt, whether one is doing right or wrong. And doubt and faith are enemies. While faith leads to the destination, doubt pulls back. When the mind was so pulled back, attracted by all the impressions of earthly life, it could neither take hold of the earth nor journey with the spirit, and remained, neither earth nor water, but salt. The only two bodies which are close to the soul followed the soul. Naturally they would follow, for they are closely related to the soul, Vignanamayakosh, the body of Wisdom, and Anandamayakosh, the body of Joy.

The soul bound towards the eternal goal—as it is called, the top of the mountains—then proceeded towards the mountains. And before they reached the top of the mountains there was the cave, which is called heaven (in metaphysics, “capacity;” in Sanskrit, Akasha) which has the power of holding the soul from going to the top and using the soul for some purpose. And the soul which was bound for the eternal goal remained, so intoxicated by the ecstasy that it received from the plane of joy and the plane of wisdom. And as it ever happens that ecstasy produces purpose, so this joy resulted in a great purpose, in the birth of the Messenger, which in Sanskrit is called Bodhisattva. The Messenger was born of the soul’s experience, the knowledge and the happiness, to bring good tidings to the world.

A question may arise, why Manamayakosh should be the mother, and Anandamayakosh and Vignamayakosh should be the daughters. And the answer is that they are born of mind, born of mind and soul. If there were only the soul there would be neither joy nor wisdom. Mind and soul both produce joy and wisdom. Therefore the latter are the daughters, because mind is the mother. The two lower planes are represented by the sons-in-law because they were not directly born of mind and soul; it was a separate substance mind and soul have taken into their life.

By this story the process is taught how the soul can journey from mortality to immortality and what experiences the soul has to have on its way. But when the Messenger is so created then the father, the soul, rests in peace. It is therefore that the Messenger was called the Son and the original soul the Father.

Naqshibandi: Symbology
Number 9: The Symbology of Religious Ideas

The idea that is meant in the Bible by the words of Christ, "Eat my flesh and drink my blood," is suggestive of the inner being of the Master. It is the eternal life which he meant by his blood, and it is the omnipresent existence which he meant by his flesh. The idea of the Master was to make his disciples know that his physical form that they were attracted to was not his being, his true being was the all-pervading, everlasting life of God; and it is in this meaning that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one.

Christ said to the fishermen, "I will make you fishers of men," which meant, "As you spread the net and the fishes come into it, so by spirituality your personality will spread in the atmosphere, and the hearts of men hungering for love will be attracted to you as fishes." The love of Christ for the lamb symbolically expresses that to the Master that soul made a greater appeal which was simple and harmless as a lamb. And the crown of thorns represents tolerance of the thorn-like personalities of which there are so many in the world, constantly pricking their thorns, consciously or unconsciously, and it is this which makes the sensitive annoyed with life in the world. But the teacher, whose heart represents the divine mother and father both, cannot but be tolerant, and can take willingly all the thorns that would come to him, for that is his crown, the sign of his sovereignty in the kingdom of soul.

Christ said to Peter, "Thou wilt deny me three times before the cock crows." It explains human nature. The faith of man is generally dependent upon the faith of the multitude; if the multitude calls the pebble a diamond, then man calls the pebble a diamond, everyone will begin to consider it and say it. And if the multitude thought that the diamond was a pebble then everyone would follow the belief of the multitude. The soul of the Messenger, that comes from above (which the dove represents), which is not made by the world nor known by the world, remains unrecognized till the cock crows and the sun rises.

His words shine and spread the light to the world; and the souls privileged with some little recognition, but with a great deal of doubt, may believe for a moment, impressed by the power and grace of the Master's personality, and yet may deny a thousand times, and doubt and suspect, being impressed by the influence of the multitude. How true it is, the saying in Hindustani that, "Generally a soul follows the multitude." There are rare souls who believe in their conviction, and remain

steady even if it were that the whole world was against their own inner conviction. Verily to the faithful belongs every blessing.

Naqshibandi: Symbology
Number 10: The Ten Virgins

There is a story in the Bible about ten virgins, the five wise virgins and the five foolish. It was said that the bridegroom was to come and they were to light their lamps; and five were in time and brought the oil and lighted their lamps, and the other five waited until the bridegroom came, and when the bridegroom came then they went to the five who had lighted their lamps and asked of them oil and were refused. This story is a symbol of receiving the Message of God. By virgin is meant the soul which is awaiting illumination, innocent and responsive to the light; and by five is meant the multitude. And there are two classes of people; one class are those who have prepared themselves and made ready to receive the Message of God, which is pictured as the bridegroom; and the five foolish are that class in mankind who wait and wait until the Message has come and gone. In all ages there have been these two kinds of souls, one kind who are called in the scriptures believers, the others who are known as unbelievers.

In every age the prophecy has been by the Messenger of the time as to the next advent. Sometimes it is said, "I will come," and sometimes, "He will come." "I will come," has been told to those who would recognize the same Spirit of Guidance in every coming of the Messenger; "He will come," has been told to those to whom name and form make a difference, and who cannot recognize the same Spirit in another name and another form. For example, the coming of Jesus Christ was the coming of that Spirit, which was expressed in this myth as the bridegroom, and how few at that time recognized Him and how few received illumination. Only those whose lamps were ready to be lighted. Oil in this parable is love and the light is wisdom. And when their lamps were lighted then so many came afterwards; but that blessing and privilege which had come with the personality of the Master had then gone. They had to take the benefit of the light that came from the lamps of those whose lamps were lighted, but the chance of lighting their own lamps was lost.

The same is with all things in life. Every moment in our lives is an opportunity which brings a benefit and blessing. And the one who knows how to be benefited by it and how to be blessed by it receives the benefit and the blessing. Everyone seems living and awake, but few souls really are living and awake. There are opportunities of benefit and blessing on every plane of one's life, on the physical plane, on the mental plane, on the spiritual plane, and every opportunity is invaluable. But often one realizes the truth when it is too late. There is no greater and better opportunity than the moment that can give a spiritual illumination, a moment when one can receive the blessing of God. It is a priceless moment. Who knows it and understands it and tries to be benefited by it, is blessed.

Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
the Only Being, United with All the Illuminated Souls
Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

Pasi Anfas: Breath

Number 1: The Length and Breadth of Breath

Mind is creative and thought is living, but out of what does mind create a thought? Out of the atoms of the mental sphere. But the current which attracts the desired atoms to complete a thought is the breath, not that breath which is outwardly manifest, but that part of breath the action of which is not felt by every man. The more length and breadth the breath has the more scope it gives for the creation of thought. It is therefore that the thoughts of the sages and mystics, who have gained mastery over breath, are more substantial and complete in themselves, and besides they prove to be more expressive and impressive.

The breadth of the breath is in its volume. This comes by the facility one has of breathing through wide nostrils and open lungs. The secret of the power of voice is also to be found in this. The voice of a commander of an army which carries through the army and impresses the soldiers, thus encouraging them to fight, has breath as its secret behind it. `Alī, by his invocation of the sacred word which he sometimes used to cry aloud on the battlefield, used to cause the enemies to tremble.

The length of the breath shows the length of life; lengthy breath is the sign of long life. This comes not only by wide nostrils and open lungs, but also by the accommodation that the body has for the breath, not only the nose and the chest but also the head and the abdomen.

There are some whose breath has volume, or breadth, but not much length, and there are others who have length and no breadth. But it is the balance of the length and breadth of the breath which gives balance to the mind.

Pasi Anfas: Breath

Number 2: Inspiration

Inspiration comes from the light thrown upon a certain idea. This comes from the radiance of the breath falling upon the mind. There are two shadows, one that is projected upon the sky, and another which falls upon the ground; the former known to the mystic and the latter to everyone. When the breath which is developed is thrown outward its radiance produces light, and it is the different shades and grades of this light which manifest in various colors, suggesting to the mystic the different elements which the particular colors denote. The same breath has a different action when it is thrown within. It falls upon the mind like a searchlight and shows to the intelligence the object of its search as things seen in daylight. Thus man knows without any effort on the part of the brain all he wishes to know and expresses in the way each individual is qualified to express.

Inspiration, therefore, is one thing, qualification another thing. The inspiration is perfect when expressed by the qualified soul. Nevertheless inspiration is independent of qualification. The light that the breath throws upon the mind is in every case different in its radiance. When far-reaching it illuminates the deepest corners of the heart, where the light has never reached, and if breath reaches further the light is thrown upon the mind of God, the store of all the knowledge there is.

Pasi Anfas: Breath
Number 3: Thought Reading

It is the vibrations caused by the breath which become thought-waves which carry the thought from one mind to the other. It is therefore that thought-reading depends so much upon the position in which two people sit with regard to each other, for a certain position makes it easier for the breath to reach than another, although it is not always necessary that a person must be facing one in order to receive thought-waves through breath. If the thought power is strong and the breath is sound enough to carry the thought-waves, a person, whether facing or having his back turned, must receive thought.

The mystics do not only project their own breath and see the condition of their being manifest before themselves, but they can also make themselves responsive to receive the thought-waves of another carried by his breath. This receptivity does not only enable an adept to read other's thoughts, but also to a mystic the condition of another becomes revealed by the projection of another person's breath upon his heart.

Plainly speaking, souls are likened to mirrors, and two mirrors facing one another become projected on one another, one manifesting the reflection of the other. The mirror which has not already a reflection is capable of manifesting the reflection of the other mirror. In this way breath enables a Sufi not only to know and see his own condition of life but also to know and understand the condition of those he comes in contact with.

Pasi Anfas: Breath
Number 4: *Nufs-i-Garm*

The breath of one person may, so to speak, overpower the breath of another. It is as a little stream can be washed away by a large stream of water. In this is the secret of knowing the condition of another person. A Sufi whose breath is lively, which is called in the Sufic terms *Nufs-i-Garm*, has the influence of scattering the thoughts, feelings, and the vibrations of the atmosphere of another. In this way he is able to convey his thought or feeling, and create his vibrations as the atmosphere for another who needs it for his own betterment. In this way a Sufi brings a life and health to another person, and he can have an influence on the character of another person.

There is a great difference between a developed breath and an undeveloped one. There is as vast a difference, or even a vaster, between the breath of two persons as in two voices. A specially produced singing voice is quite different from the uncultivated speaking voice. It is a psychological fact that the voice and word of a person whose voice is cultivated makes a greater impression than the voice and word of an ordinary person. How much more then must the influence of breath work silently. It is in this that the mystery of the mystic's magnetism lies, which is healing, harmonizing, exalting, at the same time invigorating.

Pasi Anfas: Breath

Number 5: The Unknown Dimension

Breath is a light in itself, and it becomes projected like the beam from a searchlight thrown upon an object. When the breath is coarse, undeveloped, it is full of material atoms which dim its light, but a developed breath is sometimes not different from the light of the sun but even brighter than that. Breath being a light from another dimension, which is unknown to science today, it cannot be visible to the ordinary physical eyes. The glands of the physical eyes must be cleansed and purified first by Pasi Anfas before the eyes can see the light of breath.

What people call the aura is the light of breath, but it is not everyone one sees it. A radiant countenance is a proof of an aura which lightens it, and the lack of it is the lack of light in the breath. A seer sees the sign of a death more clearly and longer beforehand than a physician can. The reason is that the seer sees in the aura of a person whereas the physician sees only the condition of the body.

There is a belief in India that there are some cobras that have light in their head, the light by which they find their way through the dark. They make a hole in the earth miles long, and illuminate the hole by their own light which is centered in their head. As two wires, positive and negative, cause the electric light to manifest, so the two currents of breath, Jelal and Jemal, when connected in the head in the way they ought to be, cause the light to manifest.

Many experience the phenomena of the light of breath, and yet doubt if it can be true, for they think it is perhaps an imagination. Others, who are incapable of seeing that light, confirm their doubt. The Sufi, by the development of breath, experiences this light, which becomes for him a proof of the existence of that dimension which is unknown to the ordinary world.

Pasi Anfas: Breath

Number 6: Breathing and Meditation

Why is breath called Prana by the Hindus? It is because it brings on the surface the essence from within. It is a current which is running from the outer spheres to the inner spirit. What it brings from the outer spheres to the inner spirit is not nearly so great as that which it brings from the inner spheres of life.

This being the condition, breath is vitalizing. Naturally, therefore, the breath of a man in sound health must give health to another in his presence; the breath of a mastermind must vitalize the thought of another; and the breath of a spiritual person must illuminate those in his presence. By breath a spiritually-developed person can impart his physical energy, his thought-power and his spiritual influence to the others with whom he may come in contact. It is natural, no doubt, that if the one who wishes to impart has not sufficient power to impart he becomes broken if there is a greater demand on his power and if there is little left with him. Sufis, therefore, consider breathing connected with meditation much more important than anything else in the world, their food, sleep, or comfort.

Pasi Anfas: Breath

Number 7: Breath Is Likened to Water

Breath is likened to water. The flowing of the breath is like the flowing of a stream. Inhalation and exhalation show ebb and flow. Parts of the earth which water does not touch remain barren; so the centers in the body, with all their intuitive, innate capacities, remain unproductive if the breath does not reach them. Besides various diseases, in spite of all their apparent causes, often have one principal cause, and that is the lack of free flow of the breath. Many operations could be avoided and several diseases could be cured by the knowledge of the phenomena of breath.

The Hindu sacred rivers, Ganga and Jumna, are outward symbols of Jelal and Jemal, the two directions of the flow of the breath. And the place where they meet is called Sangam, the meeting or unity, which is considered most sacred by the Hindus. That Sangam is the meeting of these two opposite flows. It is like the meeting of the two directions in the center, which is called Kemal by the Sufis.

The water rises, passes, falls, and runs zigzag, and stands if held. So is breath. Every above-said action of breath has a meaning and has a peculiar effect, as even water varies in its power and magnetism while going through the above-said directions. Water is a tonic, and breath is life itself. No tonic can be greater and better than breath. A spiritually evolved person's presence, therefore, brings about a cure in cases where all remedies fail. Water is the necessity of life, and breath the only condition for living. Without it life is impossible. Water falls as a rain from above; so breath is from above also, though from another dimension. Water rises as vapors; so breath rises with gases, also with joys or depressions. Pure water is health-giving, pure breath gives life. Water partakes of all things mixing with it; so does breath.

Pasi Anfas: Breath

Number 8: Breath and Magnetism

The mechanism of the human body shows the nervous system as its principal battery, in which magnetism is prepared by the action of breath. It is when the nervous system cannot function that this battery gets out of order and does not work properly. Many in order to make this battery of the nervous system work properly take drugs and other medicines which stimulate the nervous system. But instead of giving power to it they take away power from it, and in the end the nervous system becomes accustomed to all such medicines one takes.

The nourishment of the nervous system is what breath attracts from the space. As far as science goes, it says one gets into one's system oxygen. The mystic goes further in saying, not only oxygen, but that life and intelligence, that power and radiance which makes the nervous system in perfect order, the result of which is not only good health but ever-increasing magnetism, which comes forth from the person in his thought, speech, movement and action, charging his atmosphere with magnetism which surrounds him as a fortification and protection against all influences, physical and mental; thus making man live a fuller life.

Pasi Anfas: Breath

Number 9: The Subtle Waves of Breath

Inhaling shows the power of absorption which is manifest in all living beings and in all objects. Little germs, worms, trees and plants all absorb, and in that way they breathe. Also in all living beings and in all things there is a tendency to put out an element which does not belong to them, in other words an element which their system will not assimilate. It is not only the inhaling and exhaling by the nostrils which accomplishes these two functions, absorption and rejection, but there are minute waves of the breath working in different directions of the body, which perform the above-said two acts in their own way and in their own rhythm of speed; for instance the tendency of stretching and contracting, the tendency of blinking the eyes, of expelling water and refuse from the body. When any of these subtle waves of the breath working in any direction of the body get out of order, than an illness originates in that particular part of the body, spreading its influence gradually to other parts.

Balance in man's life and being is maintained by the evenness of inhaling and exhaling. The compass of man's being is as large as the reaching point of his breath. One lives a fuller life, another does not live a fuller life; because the former breathes fuller, the latter does not breathe fuller. Very often the reason why a child is a dwarf is that his breathing capacity does not allow him to breathe fully; and often the reason why a youth does not develop fully is that he does not breathe properly. A person ages sooner, also because his breathing is not right. Very often people who have no particular illness feel tired and lifeless, because their breathing is not as it ought to be.

The spirit produces this physical body out of itself; so the body in spite of all the physical nourishment, entirely depends upon the spirit to live. One can live for some time without food and water, but one cannot live without breathing. The reason is that as the physical body is made of the spirit, it needs to breathe spirit in, in order to exist. Breath therefore does not only nourish the physical body but it gives subsistence to all planes of man's existence.

Pasi Anfas: Breath

Number 10: The Mystery of Breath

Breath penetrates, breath permeates, breath strikes, breath absorbs, breath invigorates, and breath heals. It is therefore that souls with great powers make their thought and feeling penetrate into the mind and the hearts of others. As breath creates an atmosphere it permeates the bodies of others, also the sphere, charging the whole atmosphere with its particular magnetism.

The hearts of men are likened to gongs in the temple. Every spoken word strikes them, but by the power of breath one strikes them without a word. It is by the breath that one contracts illnesses, but also one absorbs defects and the depression of others, as well as joy and happiness. The breath of personalities healthy in mind and body is vitalizing. The breath of the spiritual beings, whose love and sympathy goes out to others, is naturally healing.

It is no exaggeration that the whole phenomenon of life has breath as its mystery, and once the knowledge of breath is attained and breath is mastered by practice, one beholds a most wonderful phenomenon within and without. There are many who remain skeptical till they have fathomed the mystery of breath. Once they know it, they call it, as Hindus have called it for ages, Breath-Life.

Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
the Only Being, United with All the Illuminated Souls
Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

Saluk: Morals

Number 1: The Manner of Friendliness

The manner of friendliness is considered as the main part in the study of Sufism, for the Sufi in all ages has given great importance to the art of personality. As Sufism is the religious philosophy of love, harmony and beauty, it is most necessary for a Sufi to express the same through his personality. No doubt in the East, manner is given great prominence in life. The courts in the East were schools of good manners, though a great deal of artificiality was combined with it, but in the path of Sufism the same manners which are used at court were learned with sincerity. According to the Sufi idea all beauty comes from God, so a beautiful manner is a divine expression. In these modern times people seem to be against manners because of their agitation against aristocracy, as there are many who are against religion because they are cross with the priests. When man agitates against beauty he cannot be on the right path, and the movement of today against all beauty that exists in the form of culture and manner is a battle with civilization.

The Sufi calls the manner that comes from the knowledge of unity, from the realization of truth, from the love of God, Akhlak Allah, meaning the "Manner of God;" in other words, God expressed in man shows in the action of that man the manner of God.

The following are the different aspects of the manner known by the Sufis as 'Ilm-i Adab:

Adab = Respect

Khatir = Consideration

Tawazeh = Hospitality, or welcome

Inkisar = Humility, or selflessness

Khulq = Graciousness

Matanat = Seriousness

Halim = Tenderness of feeling

Salim = Harmoniousness

Wafah = Fidelity, loyalty, constancy

Dilazari = Sympathy

Kotah Kalam = Moderation in speech

Kam Sukhun = Sparing of words

Mutabar = Self-respect, keeping one's word, proving trustworthy in dealings.

Buzurgj = Venerability

Ghairat = Honor, or pride

Hay = Modesty

Also bravery; experience; generosity; forgiveness; large-mindedness; tolerance; to take the side of the weak; to hide the faults of others, as one would one's own, out of sympathy and respect for another.

Saluk: Morals
Number 2: *Adab* (Respect) (1)

There is no one in the world who does not deserve some respect, and he who respects another, by doing so respects himself, for respect creates respect, disrespect re-echoes in disrespect. The greatest education that can be given to a child is that of respect, not only for his friends, parents and relatives, but also for the servants in the house. Once the Prophet, hearing his grandson call a slave by his name, told him, "Call him uncle, for he is advanced in years." If one wishes to respect someone, one can surely find something to respect in him, and if there were nothing at all to be found, then the very fact that he is a human being quite entitles him to respect.

One form of respect is to consider another person better than oneself; even if one did not think him so. Or to regard another person as better than oneself, by reason of humility, or out of graciousness. No person is respected who has no respect for another. There is another form of respect, which is to recognize another person's superiority in age, experience, learning, goodness, birth, rank, position, personality, morality, or spirituality. And if one was mistaken in recognizing another person's superiority it is no loss, for respect given to man in reality is respect given to God. He who deserves respect is entitled to it, but when one does not deserve it and yet you respect him it shows your graciousness.

To a fine person it is a great disappointment to lose the opportunity of paying respect when there was an occasion; an unrefined person does not mind. There are many who, out of cleverness, cover their disrespectful attitude in an ironic form of speech and make sarcastic but polite remarks, in order to insult someone. In that way, seemingly they have not shown any disrespect and yet they have satisfied their desire of being disrespectful. In some people there is a spirit of injury, which is fed by hurting another with a disrespectful attitude shown in thought, word or action. If man only knew that, in life, what he gives he receives, only sometimes the return does not come immediately, it takes time.

He is really respectful who gives respect, but he who looks for respect from another is greedy, he will always be disappointed. Even to give respect in order to get respect in return is a kind of business. Those who reach a spiritual realization will only give respect generously, without thinking for one moment of getting it in return. When one sincerely gives respect to anyone, not for show but from the feeling of one's heart, a happiness rises from it, which is the product only of the respectful attitude and which nothing else can give. There are many to whom one is indebted for their help, kindness, protection, support, for their service or assistance, and there is nothing material in the world, neither gold nor silver, which can express the gratitude so fully as a real respect can. Remember, therefore, that for something that you cannot pay back in silver or gold you can only make return in one way, and that is by humbly offering respect.

Saluk: Morals

Number 3: Adab (Respect) (2)

A respectful attitude is the first and principal thing in the development of personality, not only respect toward someone whom one considers superior but respect for everyone one meets in life, in proportion to what is due to him. It is through conceit that man gives less honor where more honor is due, and it is by ignorance that man gives more respect than what is due. Respecting someone does not only require a desire to respect but an art of respecting. One ignorant of this art may express respect wrongly. It is self-respect which makes one inclined to respect another.

The one who has no respect for himself cares little if he respects another or if respect is at all necessary in life. To respect means to honor. It is not only bowing and bending, or external action, which expresses respect. A disrespectful person may bow his head before another and strike him on the face by his word. True respect is from the attitude which comes from the sincere feeling of respect. The outward expression of respect has no value without inner feeling. Inspired by a respectful attitude, man expresses his feeling in thought, speech, or action, which is the true expression of respect. A sincere feeling of respect needs no words, even the silence can speak of one's respectful attitude.

There are three different expressions of respect. One is when the position or rank of a person commands one to respect, whether one be willing or unwilling, and under the situation one cannot help having respect, which is nothing but an outer expression of respect. The second expression of respect is when a person wishes to please another by his respectful manner, to let him feel how respectful he is and what a good manner he has. By this expression one has two objects in view: One, to please another, and the other to please oneself by one's way of pleasing. The third way is the true feeling of respect which rises from one's heart, and if one tried to express it one could not express it enough. If one were not able to express it fully it can always be felt, because it is a living spirit of respect.

The mark of people having tradition behind them, by birth, nation or race, shows in their respectful tendency. To them disrespect either on their part or on the part of another means absence of beauty. Life has many beautiful things—flowers, jewels, beauty of nature, of form, of line, of color—but beauty of manner excels all, and all good manner is rooted in a respectful tendency. It is a great pity that this subject is not regarded as the most important one to be considered and to be developed, specially today, when the stream of the whole world is running in the direction of commercialism, which tends to the beauty of matter in gold and silver instead of beauty of character and personality.

Saluk: Morals

Number 4: Respect

The highest expression of love is respect. Respect is not only due to one's superior or elder, but even to a child; one should only know to what extent it should be given and in what form it should be expressed. In loving one's mate, one's friend or relative, one's parents, one's teacher, one's priest, the best expression of love that can be shown is a sincere respectful attitude. No love-offering can be more precious than a word or an act of respect.

Very often conflicts between religions have arisen because people who respected their own religion looked with contempt at the religion of another. If one did not respect one's friend's religion, one could at least respect one's friend, and out of respect for the friend, regard his religion respectfully. Very often, with all love and devotion and sincerity, friendship breaks only owing to disregard on the part of the one or the other of the law of respect.

What is worship? Worship is not dancing before God, worship is an act of respect offered to God, to Whom all respect is due. The man who worships God and disrespects man worships in vain, his piety is his mania. A true worshipper of God sees His presence in all forms, and thus in respecting others he respects God. It may even develop to such an extent that the true worshipper of God, the Omnipresent, walks gently on the earth, bowing in his heart even to every tree and plant, and it is then that the worshipper forms a communion with the Divine Beloved at all times, when he is awake and when he is asleep.

Saluk: Morals

Number 5: *Khatir* (Consideration)

Khatir means consideration for someone, which is shown in the form of respect, help or service. Very often it wants a sacrifice, it may even need self-denial. However, consideration is the highest quality that can be found in human nature. Consideration of age, of experience, of knowledge, of position, consideration of some good done by a person, also consideration of somebody's feebleness, weakness, it is all included in the word Khatir. This spirit of consideration, when developed, extends not only to the person for whom one has consideration, but also, for that person's sake, to another who is related or connected with that person in some way or other. When a king is respected and not his ambassador, that means lack of consideration to the king.

For a Sufi this quality becomes his moral. The Sufi learns consideration beginning with his Murshid, but this culminates in consideration for God. When one arrives at that tenderness of feeling one considers every person in the world. To the Sufi the missing of an opportunity of considering another is a great disappointment, for he does not consider it to be a fault toward a human being but to God. Verily, he is pious, who considers human feeling. No doubt it needs no end of endurance to consider everybody and to be considerate always, it wants no end of patience. However, by being considerate nothing is lost, if seemingly nothing is gained. The reward of this virtue is always in store. Consideration is the sign of the wise.

Saluk: Morals

Number 6: *Tawazeh* (Sharing with Others)

Tawazeh in Sufic terms means something more than hospitality. It is laying before one's friend willingly what one has, in other words sharing with one's friend all the good one has in life, and with it, enjoying life better. When this tendency to Tawazeh is developed, things that give one joy and pleasure become more enjoyable by sharing with another. This tendency comes from the aristocracy of the heart. It is generosity and even more than generosity. For the limit of generosity is to see another pleased in his pleasure, but to share one's own pleasure with another is greater than generosity. It is a quality which is foreign to a selfish person, and the one who shows this quality is on the path of saintliness.

Tawazeh does not cost, it is the attitude of mind. If by nature man is not hospitable the hospitality he gives is of no use. The one who has experienced the joy of this quality feels a greater satisfaction in sharing his only piece of bread than in eating it by himself. Duality in nature keeps all such beautiful qualities of the soul away from man. The thought of unity is productive of all good qualities in man. It is not only in giving or sharing pleasures that one shows hospitality to another; even in word, manner or action one can show this feeling. A desire to welcome someone, to greet someone, to respect someone, to offer a seat to someone, to treat someone with courtesy, to see someone off with respect, all these show the sign of Tawazeh.

Saluk: Morals
Number 7: Hay (Modesty)

Hay is the finest feeling in human nature, which is called modesty. Modesty is not necessarily meekness, or humility, or selflessness, or pride. Modesty is a beauty in itself, and its action is to veil itself; in that veiling it shows the vanity of its nature, and yet that vanity is a beauty itself. Modesty is the life of the artist, the theme of the poet, and the soul of the musician. In thought, speech, action, in one's manner, in one's movement, modesty stands as the central theme of grace. Without modesty beauty is dead, for modesty is the spirit of beauty. Silence in modesty speaks louder than bold words. The lack of modesty can destroy art, poetry, music, and all that is beautiful.

And if one asked, "What is modesty?," it is difficult to explain in words. It is a feeling which rises from a living heart; a heart which is dead has not got the taste of it. The modest person compared to the immodest one is like a plant standing by the side of a rock. If the heart of the immodest is like the earth, the heart of the modest one is like the water. Modesty is life itself; a life which is conscious of its beauty yet inclined to veil it in all its forms is modesty. At the same time modesty is the proof of sincerity and of prudence. The cracker cries aloud, "I am the light," and is finished in a moment. The diamond, shining in its light constantly, never says a word about its light.

Saluk: Morals
Number 8: Modesty

Modesty is not necessarily timidity or cowardice. The bravest can be modest, and it is modesty which completes bravery. Modesty is the veil over the face of the great; for the most modest is God Himself, Who is not seen by anyone except those intimate with Him. Beauty in all its forms and colors, in all its phases and spheres, doubles itself, enriches itself by modesty. Modesty is not something that is learnt. It is in nature, for it is natural. Modesty does not only cover what is beautiful but amplifies the beauty and covers all that is void of beauty, in this manner fitting it into all that which is beautiful.

A noble heart can even rise to such a degree of modesty that he would plead for another person's fault, trying to make out of it no fault, even knowing that it is a fault. Yes, a modest person very often will not raise his voice, out of dignity; or say things, out of consideration and respect; will not argue and pull his own way when dealing with someone who has no thought of modesty. In this case he may often lose his battle. However, one cannot hope always to ascend and descend at the same time. One should ascend, sacrificing all that those who descend will get, or else one must descend, sacrificing all that those who ascend will achieve. Life always demands sacrifices. In every

walk of life there is a battle to be fought; and in that case the one who loves to ascend may just as well ascend rather than wanting to descend. The Prophet has said, "Al Hay wal Iman," "Verily, modesty is a great piety."

Saluk: Morals
Number 9: Ghairat (Honor)

Ghairat, protection, or defense of honor, is considered by the wise a great quality, a chivalry which is found as a rule in rare souls. Man regardless of this sense is no better than a domestic animal, a dog or a cat. When their master does not want them he can scold them, drive them away, and they can come again, wagging their tails, for there is no sense of pride to be hurt in them. They only feel the discomfort of having to move from a comfortable place and they could also feel their master's displeasure, but there is no soreness about it. In man the sense of honor is developed; with his evolution it develops more. It is not only necessary that man should be humble, but it is also necessary that man must be proud. Pride is the sign of evolution, honor comes out of pride. If there were no pride nor honor, virtue would not exist.

Very often people confuse Ghairat, this sense of honor, with conceit, sometimes with jealousy; but even the spirit of jealousy, which stands to defend one's honor, can be no other than virtue. People call it conceit, but they do not know the meaning of honor, that in the sense of honor there is a divine spark hidden; for it is the perfection of honor which is the Logos, the Ego, Whom the Sufis call Kibriyy .

No doubt when this sense of honor is developed without wisdom a person might become foolishly sensitive, and not only defend his honor but die for nothing, in illusion, just as the story of Othello suggests. For a man whose sense is developed in Ghairat, his honor is not only in his person, but in his friend, in his beloved, in his mother, sister, or wife, in someone whom he respects, or whom he loves, or with whom he connects himself. This sense of Ghairat has its lights and shades in dealing with friends, in give and take, and very often people prefer death to dishonor, and from a finer point of view they have reason on their side. Those who are trying to their surroundings in life, who are a burden to their relatives, a trouble to their friends, an annoyance to their acquaintances, a disgust to strangers, are the ones who are lacking in this sense. This shows that the sense of Ghairat when developed makes one's life more harmonious, for an honourable man minds his own business and keeps himself out of the way, troubles others less, even if he has to suffer more trouble for it.

There is a story which tells that four persons were arrested for the same crime and were taken before a wise king to be judged. He saw the first person and said, "Hang him." He saw the next person and sentenced him for the whole life. He saw the third person and said, "He must be sent out of the country." He saw the fourth person and said, "I could never have expected you to do such a crime." The first three underwent their punishments, but this last one went home and the next morning he was found dead; that one word of the king was worse than death to him.

Ghairat is a sign of noble birth, whatever condition man may be in. He may be in rags, yet this spirit of Ghairat will shine out through all conditions, proving him to be noble. Humility has its place, pride has its place in life. In the place of pride, humility cannot be fitted. Once the Nizam of Hyderabad was walking in the country, and a knight happened to see a thorn stuck in his shoe. He rushed, before the attendant had seen it, and took out that thorn from the king's shoe. The king

looked back and said, "Were there no attendants present? It was for them, not for you," said the king, "and since you have taken this work, you can no longer continue to be my knight. Please retire." It is the sense of honor expected by his surroundings that makes a king a true king.

For a Sufi the sense of honor is not for his personality, he does not give his person a greater place than dust and the central theme of his life is simplicity and his moral is humility. Yet remember that the Sufi breathes the breath of God, so he is conscious of the honor of God. His pride is greater, therefore, than the pride of every man. It is in the intoxication of this pride that he proves to be God-conscious.

Saluk: Morals
Number 10: *Inkisar* (Selflessness)

Inkisar, in the terms of the Sufis, means selflessness. The psychology of human nature is such that man feels inclined to hit every head that is raised. Not only man, but all living creatures have that tendency. To protect themselves from that, many intelligent creatures in the lower creation make holes in the earth, to live there, hiding themselves from the beasts and birds of prey. No sooner do they raise their heads from their holes than they are caught by their enemies, who thirst for their blood. As humankind is evolved, man does not immediately hit the raised head, but he cannot keep from being agitated at the sight of it.

Understanding this mystery of human nature and studying the secret of the whole life, the Sufi has traced that spirit in its essence, belonging to the Source of all things. He calls that spirit Kabir, or Kibriyy, the Ego, or Egoistic. It has taught the Sufi a moral, that not only man but even God is displeased by self-assertion. And the manner that he adopts in order not to arouse that agitating spirit he calls Inkisar, meaning selflessness.

In theory it is a small thing, in practice it is a great art. It is an art which wants a great deal of study of human nature, it requires careful observation and constant practice. This art teaches to take precautions before every activity in speech or in actions so as to cause least disturbance to human feeling. It is the thorough study of human susceptibility and practice of delicate manner which teaches man Inkisar. The further he progresses the more his sense becomes keen; therefore he finds more and more mistakes in his own life as he goes forward in this path. This subject is so delicate that one does not only commit a fault by showing pride or conceit but even in expressing modesty or humility. Inkisar wants a great delicacy of sense. One must be able to see the lights and shades produced by every action and word one does or says. And once a person has mastered this art he has mastered the same art which Christ promised to the fishermen, saying "Come hither, I will make you Fishers of Men."

The Sufi gives more importance to this subject than a yogi, for the way of the yogi is asceticism. The way of the Sufi is the development of humanity in nature. But according to the prophetic point of view the only way of pleasing God is Inkisar, which is greater than so-called goodness. A good person proud of his goodness turns his pearls into pebbles. A bad person, full of remorse for his faults, may turn his pebbles into jewels. Selflessness is not only pleasing to man but it is pleasing to God.

Gathas Series III

There is not one moment in life when God is unaware of man's word or action; and beyond his word or action God is aware of man's attitude, which very often man hides in his words or actions. Nothing is hidden before God, Who is a perfect Judge and Forgiver, and upon Whose pleasure or displeasure depends the happiness or unhappiness of man's life. Therefore man has not only the task of considering the pleasure or displeasure of his fellow-man, but also a duty to God, of considering what is pleasant to God and what is unpleasant. To Him to Whom all the beauty and riches, glory and greatness belong, man can make no offering which is worth anything, except one thing and that is selflessness.

Life may be pictured as a building in which there are several doors that one has to go through and every door is smaller than one's size. And as man's natural inclination is to rise straight, at every attempt he makes to rise, his head is knocked against the frame of the door. And the only thing that can save him from knocking his head against the doors is to bend. It is this logical lesson which the wise turn into a good manner. Verily, all that leads to happiness is good.

Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
the Only Being, United with All the Illuminated Souls
Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

Takua Taharat: Everyday Life
Number 1: Purity of the Heart

The real purity is experienced not by means of the outer ablutions nor by keeping away evil thoughts, but by keeping the heart pure from feelings which disturb the rhythm of the mind and thus upset the whole spirit. Feelings have a greater power than thoughts. If evil thoughts are monsters evil feelings are as demons. Such feelings as the desire of robbing someone of his rights or his belongings have a very disturbing effect upon the spirit. Before such a feeling is put into action the effect is more, while it is being put into action it is less, but afterwards the effect is most. Life rightly and honestly lived has inner struggles, but by adding to it feelings that disturb life's tranquility one only adds to one's troubles in life, which then become endless.

Purity of heart must not be considered a virtue but a necessity, a necessity not only to be considered for the good of others, but for one's own life. The feelings which produce that weakness in the heart take away strength from the eyelids, the glance drops instead of the eyes firmly gazing straight. Nothing in the world, however valuable or rare, can make up for this loss. The main thing that must be remembered is that the soul is pure and the lack of purity it cannot bear without feeling restless. The spirit has a tune and a rhythm. When it is out of tune and out of rhythm, if the riches of the whole world be given to it, it is worth nothing. It is purity and peace which is the soul's constant seeking.

Takua Taharat: Everyday Life
Number 2: Keeping the Heart Pure

As the rust is natural to the iron, and as the milk turns sour, so the heart can become rusted, and its feeling, which by nature is as pure as milk, turns sour. Then nothing in the world is tasteful to that person, and life with all its beauty becomes worthless. It is this condition which must be avoided. An adept must keep his mind pure from rust.

The rust comes from allowing the heart to bear malice and spite against anyone, by having hatred and prejudice against anyone, by wanting to take revenge, by looking down upon another with contempt, and by the feeling of jealousy, rivalry, or envy. The heart wants a constant care to keep it from getting rusted, for the nature of this life of illusion is such that some little unimportant things, which are not of the least value, coming from the outer life, the heart may be affected by, and the rust may be produced as the mere touch of water can produce rust upon the iron. Once the feeling has become soured it is as difficult, if not impossible, to turn it sweet again as to make sour milk sweet.

A soul has brought from heaven its love for sweet. It may after coming on earth develop a taste for salt, sour, or bitter, but its innate longing is always for the sweet, and what its life needs most is not sugar, which is required in some degree for physical health, but the sweet which is the original property of this heart and which is needed most for his true happiness and real well-being.

Takua Taharat: Everyday Life
Number 3: The Radiance of the Face

As the cleansing of a metal object produces a shine in it so is the cleansing of the heart, especially from any feeling that produces humiliation. When a person thinks, "I have been wrong by acting in a certain way," "By saying a certain thing," or "By having thought something which should not have crossed my mind," he loses, so to speak, a radiance which even beams out through his countenance and which is called in Persian Ab-i-Ru, meaning "The Radiance of the Face." Every person shows from his expression his condition of heart. Therefore the innocence of the expression is the sign of the purity of heart. Man may be clever, learned, qualified, most able, he may be strong physically or even mentally, he may be wealthy, of high rank, but none of these outside things help him to retain that glow of the countenance which depends only upon the purity of heart.

Many know and some say that the eyes can tell everything that is in the heart of man, but fewer there are who know the cause behind it. The eyes are like the thermometer of the center in the head, which is focussed to the center of the heart. Every impression that the heart bears, beautiful or ugly, is mirrored upon the center of the head, and so it is reflected accordingly in man's visage, specially in his eyes, which express the most.

There are many clever people but so few there are who may be called wise. The clever ones plot and plan one against the other and exchange evil thoughts between themselves. So those deceitful and treacherous, intoxicated by their interest in life, cover their eyes with the cover of selfishness, thus keeping the heart from showing out its light, which alone illuminates the path of every achievement in life.

It might seem hard work to empty one's heart of all bad impressions and ill feelings, of all bitterness and evil thoughts, and yet it is not nearly so hard as the task of earning one's daily bread. The work in one's everyday life takes most part of the day, the emptying the heart of all undesirable things takes but a few moments silence. It is the desire of erasing from the heart every undesirable impression that enables one in time to purify one's heart.

Takua Taharat: Everyday Life
Number 4: Innocence

Innocence is the real purity according to the mystic, for innocence is the sign of purity of heart. The intuitive faculties play a greater part in the life of the innocent. People call them simple ones, nevertheless innocence proves often more beneficial in life than worldly cleverness. The innocent are oftener blessed by Providence than those worldly-wise, always trying to get the best of everyone and to seize every opportunity that may seem to be advantageous in any way.

It is not easy for a clever person to try and become innocent; it is something natural and manifests with the blooming of the heart. Innocence is the sign of the thriving of a spiritual personality. If one can develop anything it is only this, that one may abstain from trying to be clever, and know that a selfish and clever person, with all his qualification of getting the best of another, comes across, sooner or later, a person cleverer than he. Often a clever person finds his own chain tied around his legs.

No one has arrived at a higher degree of spirituality without innocence. Innocence does not mean not knowing; it only means knowing and yet not knowing. A stupid person must not be confused with an innocent person, for the former is blind, whereas the latter only closes his eyes when he wants to. It is the wise, really, who becomes innocent on arriving at a stage of perfection in wisdom. It is two kinds of persons who show childlike simplicity in their lives: The silly one who shows childish traits, and the wise one who shows innocence.

Takua Taharat: Everyday Life
Number 5: Reject the Impression of Errors and Shortcomings

There is generally a tendency seen in those treading the spiritual path to feel discouraged at having bad impressions upon their heart of their own faults and shortcomings. And they begin to feel that they are too unworthy to have anything to do with things of a sacred nature. But it is a great error, in spite of all the virtue humility has in it. When one acknowledges something wrong in oneself one gives that wrong a soul out of one's own spirit, and by withdrawing from all that is good and beautiful, spiritual and sacred, instead of developing the spirit of rejecting all errors, in time one becomes a receptacle of what is wrong. He goes on disapproving and yet collecting errors, so producing within himself a perpetual conflict that never ends. When man becomes helpless before his infirmities he becomes a slave to his errors, he feels within himself an obedient servant to his adversary.

The greater the purity developed in the heart the greater becomes the power of man. As great the power of man within himself so great becomes his power on others. A hair's breadth can divide power from weakness, which appear to have as wide a gulf between them as between land and sky.

Takua Taharat: Everyday Life
Number 6: Purity of the Heart

He alone is capable of removing from the heart of another doubt, deceit, fear, or malice whose heart is already pure from these things or who, at least, can empty his heart of these things. There is a weakness of the heart and there is a strength of the heart. The heart's weakness is caused by things it contains which enfeeble it, such as doubt, deceit, fear and malice. The absence of these things produces that purity of heart which in itself is a power. This power could be increased by faith, hope and righteousness.

Purity of the heart causes its expansion, and the lack of purity makes it narrow. The mystic poet of Hyderabad, Asif, says, "If the heart is large, it can be largest of all things." Besides it is purity alone which opens the doors of the heart. All that hinders that purity stands as a closed door of the heart.

The pure-hearted may seem to be thinking, saying or doing simple things. And yet there is a beauty and charm in all they do, for there is nothing more attractive than light itself. All that is besides light depends upon the light to show out its beauty; light is beauty in itself. Purity of the heart is the only condition that allows the inner stream to rise. The pure-hearted see deeper, though they say little. There is no pretense about them. What they know they know; what they don't know they don't know. The pure ones make all pure, for to them all is pure. Their presence makes every-

thing pure. As the pure water is the best tonic so is the contact of the pure-hearted person. In the spiritual path when one is able to accomplish this thing there is not much then that remains to be accomplished.

Takua Taharat: Everyday Life
Number 7: Exaltation

Exaltation depends upon purity. The body cleansed gives an exaltation which is experienced by all living beings on the physical plane. The heart cleansed of all impurities gives a much greater exaltation, which is experienced in the inner plane and is reflected on the outer plane.

Most people little realize the meaning of exaltation. In point of fact all things man seeks for and becomes occupied with are most often methods adopted to obtain an exaltation, through food, perfume, music, or through the beauty of color and line. No method, however, succeeds in giving the experience of a fuller exaltation in the absence of purity of heart. In plain words it is the pure-hearted who enjoy the beauty of music, color or perfume more fully than those without purity of heart; although the pure-hearted seem to need these things which bring about exaltation less, sometimes for the very reason that the very purity of the heart gives them that exaltation which others strive to achieve by different methods.

Amir, the mystic poet, says, "Their eyes refused the wine, her generous offer, saying, 'We do not need thee, we are intoxicated perpetually.'" The reason behind the refusal of the pious, at times, of music, art, gaiety, or merriment was that they already had the exaltation which others try to gain by these things. It does not at all mean that the pious are always against things of beauty and pleasure. It only means that they are rich by the feeling of exaltation which comes from within, without adopting for it any other methods. Nevertheless the pious are the ones who are capable of enjoying beauty in all its aspects fully. As Hafiz says, "If the pious ones would hear the song I sing they would get up and dance unrestrainedly."

Takua Taharat: Everyday Life
Number 8: Purify the Mind from Fear

To purify the mind from fear is of great importance, and this can be best done by analyzing what causes one fear. Fear is an outcome of long-collected problems unsolved. When once a person looks his own problem in the face he gets an insight into the cause of fear, and as in the sun many germs are destroyed so the germs of fear are destroyed by the light of intelligence. Fear comes from weakness to face the consequences of one's condition, attitude and deeds. Once a person has solved the problem how he will meet the consequences the fear is done with. The best way of getting over the fear of swallowing a bitter pill is to swallow the bitter pill and to experience by it that it is not more bitter than it is.

Fear comes also by being too cautious for one's health, morals and reputation; also by being too considerate of the feelings of those one loves, and too regardful of those under whose influence one is; also by taking too much to heart what others say. Fear very often remains in the heart of man in the guise of virtues, and very often a timid one is taken for a righteous one. But the timorous well-doer is worse than a fearless sinner.

The best practice one can make is to speak with oneself, with one's own fear; to dispute with it, and to root out the reasons on whose foundations it rests. What generally happens is that all things one fears, one fears even to think of them. But the solution of getting above fear lies in analyzing the cause of the fear and so making it non-existent. Man by nature possesses a tremendous power hidden in his heart, the power which waits constantly to become manifest. This power is hidden by fear. The day when fear disappears this latent power manifests to view.

Takua Taharat: Everyday Life
Number 9: Keep the Heart Free from Poison

Antipathy turns into malice, and malice culminates in bitterness. To possess it in one's heart is like possessing in one's heart a poison, a poison that clouds wit and produces obscurity. If one keeps one's heart free from malice one has accomplished a great deal, for it is in the clear heart that the light from above is reflected. Often without an intention on one's part malice enters, of which man is unconscious. Often the man who possesses malice is quite innocent, for his heart is reflecting the malice which is projected from another heart. It is therefore that care must be taken to keep one's heart free from the impressions and influences coming from others. The question how can one avoid this is answered thus, that the heart will focus itself to a person or to an influence which is akin to its own quality; that is the nature of the heart.

Therefore even if the impression came from another, for the influence of another the man who reflects it is responsible. To make the heart reflect good qualities one must prepare it, one must train it; for it is the good quality of heart that will keep away undesirable impressions and thoughts, and will only reflect good impressions and desirable influences. As a practice of purifying one's heart is to repeat every morning and every evening, "My thoughtful self! Reproach no one, hold a grudge against no one, bear malice against no one; be wise, tolerate, considerate, polite and kind to all!"

Takua Taharat: Everyday Life
Number 10: The Real Purification of Mind

The real purification of mind is in purifying it from thoughts and impressions which live in it as a germ of disease. The best way of cleansing the mind from all this is to be able to empty the mind of any thought, feeling or impression. To be pure means to be natural. The spirit in man in its natural condition is not a thought but mind, not love but heart. For as the thought is the outcome of mind so is love the outcome of the heart. To attain to the purity which is the seeking of the mystic one must be able to purify one's spirit from every thought and feeling, however deeply impressed or engraved in one's heart. The mystic goes as far as purifying himself from his identity, by removing it for a certain time and by putting something else in its place. From beginning to end the whole process of spiritual development depends upon this.

Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
the Only Being, United with All the Illuminated Souls
Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

Tasawwuf: Metaphysics
Number 1: Attitude

Attitude is the principal thing in life. It is not the conditions in life which change life for us, but mostly it is our attitude toward life and its conditions upon which depends our happiness or unhappiness. With a sympathetic attitude one is able to sympathize with those who deserve sympathy and even with those who do not deserve sympathy; it is not the deserving or undeserving persons, but mostly it is the attitude with which they are seen. A person who is impressed by wrong, to him there is much wrong in the world and less right. The more he looks at life with this attitude the more wrong he sees; in the end to him everything becomes wrong.

It is a kind of mental agitation against one thing a person met with in life which was wrong, which makes him see wrong in everything. A person who has once burnt his lips drinking hot milk blows the buttermilk to cool it before he drinks. The human mind is like a compass; if it is once made to point out wrong, whatever way you may take it, it will seek its own point all the time. So it is with the doubting person. A person who begins to doubt his enemy next doubts his friend, then he comes to doubt his nearest and dearest friends in life, he cannot make his mind trust anybody in the world. With the best motive one may approach him, in every way one may show him sympathy, he will still think, "perhaps in this sympathy there is hidden an enmity." It is generally the case with human beings that their attitude becomes fixed; it is not a rare thing, seldom met with. But the one who trusts will trust everyone and under all conditions, and who idealizes and sees good will see good in, and will idealize, even undeserving ones.

No doubt a better attitude fixed is preferable to the bad one, but the most desirable thing is to have the attitude unfixed, moveable. One must be free to form an opinion about a person and to adopt a method of working under certain conditions, without having to subject one's attitude to some preconceived ideas one has in the subconscious mind; to be able to approve or disapprove, to be able to like or dislike, to be able to choose or give up. Goodness is better than wickedness, but freedom is higher than goodness. By freedom is meant not only freedom from outer influences but freedom from certain inner influences which obsess one's life, often making it wretched and miserable through all conditions.

The attitude becomes high and broad when one looks at life from a higher point of view. When the point of view is not high the range of man's sight becomes limited; man becomes narrow in his outlook on life, and in his feelings, thought, speech and action the same is expressed. Why is God pointed out on high, toward the sky? Why not toward the earth, for God is everywhere? The reason is that within the range of God's sight the whole universe stands as a little grain of corn, as to one who flies in the balloon and looks down from high the whole city comes within the range of his sight, when he stands on earth he sees no further than the four walls which keep the whole world covered from his sight.

What does it mean to become spiritual, or godly? It means to have a higher view of life, to look at life from a higher point of view. It is the high point of view in life which ennobles the soul, it is by a broad outlook on life that spiritual aristocracy is realized.

Tasawwuf: Metaphysics
Number 2: Sympathy

Sympathy is an awakening of the love element which comes on seeing another in the same situation in which one has been at some time in one's life. A person who has never experienced pain cannot sympathize with those suffering pain. In the same way a person sympathizes with someone whose honor or reputation has been harmed. The one who has no honor or reputation himself would not mind for he does not know what it is and what it is to lose it. A rich person who has lost his money may be laughed at by someone who has never had it. He can sympathize with him who has wealth, and still more can he sympathize with him who had wealth and lost it. Very often the young imagine they love their mother and think they sympathize with their parents, but they cannot come to the full realization of their love until they reach that situation. Very often people think it cruel and unkind of their friends when they do not receive sympathy from them, but they do not know that to have sympathy does not mean having a warm heart only, but it means having that experience which reminds them of it, making them sympathetic. Sympathy is something more than love and affection, for it is the knowledge of a certain suffering which moves the living heart to sympathy.

That person is living whose heart is living, and that heart is living which has wakened to sympathy. The heart void of sympathy is worse than rock, for the rock is useful, but the heart void of sympathy produces antipathy. Man is most active physically and mentally, and when his heart is not tuned to sympathy his mental and physical activity takes quite a contrary direction, which leads to inharmony and destruction. No doubt love, affection, or sympathy without wisdom may seem profitless, as for instance, if a person was crying with pain and his sympathetic friend, on hearing his cry, began to weep with him, doubling his pain.

Sympathy can only be useful when man does not make the condition of the person with whom he sympathizes worse, but makes things better. The feeling of sympathy must be within, it need not manifest purely as sympathy but as an action to better the condition of the one with whom one has sympathy. There are many attributes found in the human heart which are called divine, but among them there is no greater and better attribute than sympathy, by which man shows in human form God manifested.

Tasawwuf: Metaphysics
Number 3: The Word "Sin"

Many wonder if sin is an attitude or an action or a situation or a result, and the answer is that all these combined together make either a virtue or a sin. The absence of one from it makes it incomplete, but all these together make it a complete virtue or sin. Now, the question is where it is originated, what is the source of it, and the answer is that its origin is in wrong thinking. Wrong doing comes from wrong thinking and wrong thinking comes from wrong feeling.

And yet it is difficult to distinguish between feeling right and wrong. In short, as a definition of the word I would give this: Every attitude, word, or action that deprives one of the expected result, the result which is expected not only by the mind but by the soul, may be called sin. That which deprives one of peace, freedom, happiness, tranquility of mind, and ever-increasing power of will may be called sin, whatever be the action. It may be an action which all the orthodox call virtue, and yet it cannot be a virtue.

Why is a virtue called a virtue? Because it brings happiness. It is not because it is a particular kind of action, it is because it brings to one what one's whole being is desiring. It brings freedom, it brings the air of happiness; it gives by its pressure upon one's mind an increase of will-power, that is why it is called virtue. It is therefore that no person in the world can judge another person, whether superior to him in evolution or inferior; the person himself is the best judge of his action.

In the Messages of the past it was necessary that a kind of standard of virtue should be given to the world as a law given from the Prophets of God, but at this period it is not necessary. The Sufi Message does not bring to the world a law made so plain as to say which is which, but the principle of the Message is to waken in the spirit of those who receive this what is wrong, that they may become masters of their destiny, and by their realization of this their progress on the spiritual path may become much higher as compared to those who during the period of the Prophets depended to be directed in their lives by the law made by the Prophets and carried out by the priests. The Sufi Message does not bring this. It brings the spirit of freedom, the air of happiness; that which gives happiness with increased will-power, which opens up freedom for those who can recognize for themselves the difference between right and wrong, and in that the evolution of humanity is brought a step forward from what it was before.

After a certain time the same principle that the Sufi Message has brought to the world will culminate and will appear as a law among nations, because the Message is the throwing of the seed. Just now you do not see the fruits and leaves, just now you see the seed which is hidden under the dust and on the ground. But time will show the tree with its fruit and its leaves. When the nations will recognize the divine law and the law of the time then humanity will no longer be ruled by the laws made by a few intellectual people for their convenience and as they think right, but the law will recognize the divine indication which is constantly working through every soul, guiding it on the path, showing it the way of its destiny. And when such a time will come there will not be a necessity for so many laws, and as many laws so many lawyers, and probably as many lawyers so many law courts, and no end of prisons and no limit to the prisoners! This will cease to exist. There will not be the necessity of strict laws and severe punishments for nothing.

If one could only see that among one hundred people who are sentenced by the courts there is hardly one to be blamed, to be held responsible for his fault. And if there is anyone to be held responsible, it is all we human beings. Why do we not all work, why do we not all help them to kindle the light in their soul that would show them their path plainly? It is not necessary that the clergyman, the priest only should be responsible for the evolution of each individual. We must work in the capacity of brother and sister to everyone. In the realization of the brotherhood in the Fatherhood of God we must hold it as our duty, our sacred task, to waken in our brother, with love, with respect, with modesty, with humility, that power of understanding what is really for his best, what can really benefit him. It is not the mission of one person, it is the mission of every person. And if we each considered our share of work in the Message and showed it by our own example in the world we should be doing a great duty toward God and humanity.

Tasawwuf: Metaphysics
Number 4: *Qaza and Qadr*—The Will, Human and Divine

The question of the will, human and divine, may be seen from two points of view, from the wisdom point of view and from the point of view of the ultimate truth. If words can explain some-

thing, it is from the former point of view; the latter point of view allows no word to be spoken in the matter, for in the absolute truth two do not exist, there is no such a thing as two, there is one alone. From the wisdom point of view one sees one weaker, one stronger, and one has to give in to the power of the other. This one sees in all aspects of the creation. The little fish is eaten by the larger fish, but the little fish lives upon smaller fishes.

So there is no one in this world so strong that there is not another person stronger still. And there is no one in this world so weak that there is not another that is weaker still. The other thing one can think about is the opposing conditions and situations which stand before a willing mind and a striving person like a stone wall, so that with every wish of doing and accomplishing one does not find one's way. It is this experience which has made man say, "Man proposes, God disposes." The Hindu philosophers have called these two great powers, one of which is as an intention and the other the power of destruction, by the names Brahma, the Creator, and Shiva, the Destroyer.

And the most wonderful part in this creation and destruction is that what Brahma creates in a thousand years, Shiva destroys in one moment. Since God is almighty, the wise see the hand of God in the greater power, manifesting either through an individual or by a certain condition or situation, and instead of struggling too much against the difficulties in life and instead of moaning over the losses which cannot be helped, they are resigned to the will of God.

In short, every plan that a person makes and his desire to accomplish that plan are often an outcome of his personal will, and when his will is helped by every other will that he comes in contact with in the path of the attainment of a certain object, then he is helped by God, as every will goes in the direction of his will and so his will becomes strengthened, and often a person accomplishes something which perhaps a thousand people would not have been able to accomplish. Then there is another person who has a plan or a desire, and finds opposition from every side; everything seems to go wrong, and yet he has the inner urge which prompts him to go on in the path of attainment. There also is the hand of God behind his back, pushing him on, forward in his path, even though there might seem oppositions in the beginning of his strife—but all's well that ends well.

The saintly souls, who consider it as their religion to seek the pleasure of God and to be resigned to His will, are really blessed, for their manner is pleasing to everyone, for they are conscientious lest they should hurt the feeling of anyone, and if by mistake they happen to hurt someone's feelings they feel they have hurt God Whose pleasure they must constantly seek, for the happiness of their life is only in seeking the pleasure of God. They watch every person and every situation and condition, and their heart becomes so trained by constantly observing life keenly, as a lover of music whose ears become trained in time, who distinguishes between the correct and the false note. So they begin to see in every desire that springs in their heart, if it is in accordance with the will of God. Sometimes they know the moment the desire has sprung; sometimes they know when they have gone halfway in the path of its pursuit; and sometimes they know at the end of strife. But even then, at the end of it, their willingness to resign to the will of God becomes their consolation, even in the face of disappointment. The secret of seeking the will of God is in cultivating the faculty of sensing harmony, for harmony is beauty and beauty is harmony. The lover of beauty in his further progress becomes the seeker of harmony, and by trying always to maintain harmony man will tune his heart to the will of God.

Questions and Answers (July 18, 1923)

Q: Is there, in relation to Qaza and Qadr, a difference in the path of the saint and the master?
A: Certainly. The saint is resigned to Qaza, and the master has regard for Qadr. Qaza is the will of God, and Qadr free will of an individual.

Q: What is free will? Can man in reality do a thing contrary to the will of God?
A: The answer is expressed in the first part of my lecture. From the point of view of the absolute truth all is the will of God. There is no such thing as free will. But from the wisdom point of view there is a greater will, a mightier will, and a smaller will. That shows one side perfection—of God; the other side limitation—the fate of man.

Questions and Answers (July 19, 1923)

Q: Will you please explain what you said yesterday about the two paths, the one which leads to saintliness, and the one which leads to mastership?
A: There are two paths which lead to the goal, one of the saint and the other of the master. In one path the will is used in outward things, in the other path the will is mostly used to control oneself, in other words for the time being against oneself. This is the saintly path. It is wise, before one knows of the will of God, first to handle one's own will, and to use it knowing that it is given for some great purpose in life. The one is the path of renunciation, abnegation, resignation, self-denial, from the beginning to the end. And by doing this one arrives to that meeting ground where one touches that divine perfection. And then there is the path of the master. The path of firmness and obstinacy, breaking and penetrating through every difficult situation that comes before him. And so fighting all along from the beginning to the end. In this he has to fight with himself and with the life outside. Therefore the struggle is both sides. And there is all the time the work of the will-power, and all through there is a battle; and in this battle all the conditions that one has to go through are of the same character and nature as of the warfare. To be wounded and to cause wounds, and to be hurt and to hurt another also. And in this way it is a constant struggle. But still for the higher aim, and for the greater gain. In the end he strikes the same note which the saint has struck. Neither the path of the saint is easy, nor of the master. The place where they meet both become one. For the resignation brings the saint to the same realization of the harmony with the Infinite, as the struggle brings the master to the same conviction in the end.

There is a third temperament, and that is the middle temperament, in which temperament there is the saintly temperament and the temperament of the master; that is the prophetic temperament, because the prophet begins his life with both, struggle and resignation. One moment struggle, and another moment resignation; gain and resignation, continually going on. And therefore in the prophet one sees the saint and the master, both in one.

Tasawwuf: Metaphysics
Number 5: Opinion

Opinion is an outcome of mind. It is an outburst of its reasoning and judging faculty. And so, according to the evolution of a particular mind, its opinion is. Opinions clash when two people of different stages of evolution express themselves. Therefore the wise are more reluctant to express their

opinion, whereas for the unwise it is easy. A simpleton is only too glad to express his opinion uninvited. In the ancient education of children that was the one thing that was taught from childhood in good families, that the child must not be too ready to express his opinion.

Very often in expressing one's opinion—rather in giving one's idea about another—one places himself before others for examination. As soon as a person has expressed his opinion all others know what note of life he strikes—that is, those who have the knowledge to know it. This does not mean that one must not have an opinion. It would be like saying one must not have a mind. Where there is a mind there will be an opinion. Does it not very often happen to an intelligent person that immediately after having expressed his opinion he finds out how foolish he has been in expressing his opinion? Often through nervousness, through lack of control over oneself, or through lack of patience one expresses one's opinion. That opinion is valuable which comes by invitation.

When someone has asked, "Please tell me, what do you think of it?" then the opinion becomes the answer to a demand. Sometimes the opinion is nothing but the voice of pride, and sometimes one's opinion is colored by one's favor or disfavor. Sometimes opinion lacks knowledge of the object on which it is formed. The wise therefore asks himself the question whether he has thorough knowledge on the subject upon which he expresses his opinion. If one took into consideration that very often one does not know what effect the expression of opinion may produce in the mind of the hearer, what reaction it will have, desirable or undesirable, one would certainly think much before expressing an opinion.

In the terms of the Sufis there is a phrase, *dakhl dar maqulat*, "interference with the expert." For a nurse to attempt to direct the surgeon who is busy doing his work, for the clerk to advise the judge while he is taking a case, for a student of the violin to tell the composer what he must do in a certain composition, all these things are meant by that phrase. If one considered, in order to acquire a thorough knowledge in any line of work, what study, what practice, and what experience is required, and if one would consider, by the time a person has reached a certain age, what he has had to pass through and what he has had to learn, one would certainly have consideration for the expert and for age before expressing an opinion.

No doubt there are minds which show from childhood that brilliance which another person may not acquire in the whole life, and there is a genius who might show from youth a capability which can hardly be found among the experts. But even such gifted souls need consideration just the same. I have seen those who promised to be really something in life, who promised to accomplish something worthwhile in their lives, in spite of all their energy, enthusiasm and knowledge taking gentle steps in the path of life and halting at every other step lest they should do a wrong thing instead of the right. What is Sufism? It is wisdom; to learn wisdom at every step in the path of life is the only work of the Sufi.

Tasawwuf: Metaphysics
Number 6: Conscience

Conscience is not only a record of one's experiences and impressions gained in life, but it is a living voice of the heart which makes all that is in the heart, so to speak, dance in the light of justice. Therefore conscience is a world in man, a world as living as the world in which we live; and even more living than this, for the world of conscience is durable, whereas the outer world is subject to

destruction. The word "hiding" or "covering" of a certain thing is for our limited understanding. In point of fact nothing can be covered, nothing can be hidden, since the nature of life is action and reaction. Every outer experience has a reaction within, every inner experience has its reaction in the outside of the life. In the Qur'an it is said, "Their hands and feet will give evidence of their action." The idea, from the point of view of metaphysics, may be thus explained, that there is no action which has not a reaction; every outer action has a reaction inwardly and every inner action has a reaction outwardly.

The finer the person the finer his conscience, and grossness makes the conscience gross. It is therefore that one person is more conscientious about his doings than the other person, one person repents more for his mistakes and failures than another person. But the most interesting thing in the law of life which one might watch is that the scheme of nature is so made that a conscientious person is taken to task more seriously by the scheme of nature for his evil-doing than an ordinary person who never thinks what he says or does. It might seem as if even God did not take notice of his wrong-doing. According to the metaphysical point of view in the soul of the conscientious God is more awake; in the soul of the other person God slumbers, He does not take serious notice of things. If one were to watch one's own conscience one would no longer have a thirst for phenomena, for there is no greater phenomenon than what is going on within oneself and the action and reaction of every experience in life which materializes and manifests to one's view in various ways and forms. A clear conscience gives the strength of a lion, but the guilty conscience might turn a lion into a rabbit. But who is it in the conscience who judges? In the spheres of conscience the soul of man and the spirit of God both meet and become one. Therefore to a soul wide-awakened Judgment Day does not come after death, for him every day is Judgment Day.

No doubt the sense of right and wrong is different in every mind. The right of one may be wrong to another, and for another the wrong of one may be right. The law of action is too complex to be put in words. For every step advanced gives a certain amount of freedom of action, and as one goes along further and further in the path of truth his freedom is greater and greater at every step. And yet no individual lives a life between the four walls of his individual self, every person is related and connected with a thousand ties with the others, known and unknown even to himself. Therefore the souls do not need regard for themselves only, but for the whole being, since every soul is a part in the whole scheme of nature. And conscience is the test which can voice that inner harmony in everything one thinks, says or does, thus keeping the soul tuned to its proper note.

Questions and Answers:

Q: Is not the disapproval of conscience due to the soul's knowledge of certain consequences in the past?

A: The whole life of the world is built on conventionality and accepted ideas, and conscience is made on this edifice; conscience is not necessarily truth. Of absolute Truth there is no word to be said; all else is Maya, illusion, and when one looks from that point of view there is nothing wrong, nothing right. If we accept right we must accept wrong. The modern German scientist Einstein's theory is what the Hindus have called Maya, illusion; illusion caused by relativity. The existence of everything is by our acceptance of it; we accept a certain thing to be right, good, beautiful, and once accepted that becomes part of our life, we have accepted it to be, so it becomes. A mistake cannot be a mistake unless we accept it as such. Our conscience tells us, but we have first told our conscience, and our conscience has accepted. Dervishes prove this by saying that fire will not burn us. Hell-fire is created in the conscience, and if in the objective world we

can prove there is no such thing as fire, certainly in the conscience it does not exist either. The dervish jumps into the fire, and so proves his case. The best way of testing life is to have conscience as a testing instrument, to test and see if there is harmony or disharmony.

Tasawwuf: Metaphysics
Number 7: Conventionality

Conventionality is no doubt man-made, as art is man-made; but, as in art is the finishing of nature, so in conventionality there is the finishing of civilization. Conventionality is no doubt acquired, not inherited, but at the same time the love of conventionality is inherited also. Children born in families in which conventionality has existed for a long time are born with a tendency towards it and it becomes natural for them to learn it, also while learning they do not feel it to be foreign to their nature.

No doubt the extreme of all good and bad things is to be avoided. Nature has helped as far as that the soul is born on earth, and then comes education, in which is the fulfillment of the purpose of life. Conventionality is not the goal, and yet this, which makes civilization, is a bridge which is connected with the goal of life. Conventionality loses its virtue, as do all things, when they become void of sincerity, for sincerity is the soul of every virtue.

Now, coming to the question, "What is conventionality?" It is a law of manner which is used in life for the convenience and comfort of man. All that is man-made is as imperfect as man. Therefore if one would try to find out the mistakes of conventionality one could find them in every civilization existing at any period of history. Nevertheless the most civilized at any period have been the most conventional people of the time.

During the age of aristocracy conventionality increased in every part of the world and became the main part of education for that time. And when revolt arose against the spirit of aristocracy every good and bad thing that aristocracy possessed was condemned. Whatever line of reform the people in the world may adopt, they cannot be free from conventionality and yet progress. These two things cannot be separated. Only what can be done is to break one form of conventionality and build another form, call the first form conventionality and the next Bohemian life, it all comes to the same. There is one thing that must be considered, that freedom is the soul's purpose, and if, without hindering the conventionalities, one can rise above them, so as to breathe the breath of freedom, that would be the true democracy. Democracy void of culture and refinement can very well be called anarchy.

But there are two laws which, if one considers them deeply, will become useful in living the right life. It is one thing to strive to achieve beauty, comfort, happiness and peace in life for oneself; and it is another thing to share the above-said things with the others—that is where comes the necessity of conventionalities. The one who is a slave to conventionality is a captive, the one who is the master of conventionality is the possessor of that kingdom of which it is said in the Bible, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the kingdom of the Earth."

Questions and Answers: (July 21, 1923)

Q: Will you tell us which has the most influence on the individual, heredity or environment?

A: The heredity is the foundation of the house, and the environment is the building. And from this you can understand what is more useful and what less, and what has greater influence and what has less.

Q: The most civilized have been the most conventional people. How does it come that the artist generally is not conventional at all?

A: The artist lives in his own world. The greater the artist, the more his own world he has. He does not live in the world. All those who live in their own world, they are out of the world, they have a civilization of their own. But when it comes to the question of the worldly life, life in the midst of the world, there comes the question of conventionality. He cannot ignore conventionality, and at the same time live in the midst of the world.

Paderewski did not have time enough to comb his hair. That is another thing. But I do not think that he could have come as a president without brushing his hair. As an artist it is all right, but as a man in the midst of the world, he has a world to face.

Q: Is not conventionality very often the result of personal taste and habits? How would it be possible to know what to change and what to keep, when the conventionality of each person depends upon his environment; there would surely always be people who disagreed in this?

A: Of course, this necessitates the exclusiveness of environments. Also this is the cause of divisions of humanity. And yet no civilization can avoid it very well, however greatly advanced in its thoughts. The progress will create necessities of such kind; they will not admit it, but they will live it just the same. But I should think that the best way of understanding conventionality is the spiritual. Once a person understands the spiritual moral, he does not need to learn man-made refinement. It will come by itself, as soon as man begins to regard the pleasure and displeasure of God in the feeling of every person he meets, he cannot be but most refined, whatever be the position of his life. He may live in a cottage, but his manner will surpass the manner of palaces.

Another thing, when man has begun to judge his own actions, the fairness will develop in his nature. And therefore everything he will do will be just and fair. He does not need very much the study of outer conventionalities; he naturally will become conventional. And the third thing is that Sufi conception of God as the Beloved. When this conception is practiced in everyday life, and one regards it in dealing with everyone, that in everyone there is the Divine Spirit, more or less, one would regard everyone with that devotion and respect, with that thought and consideration which one would give to the Beloved God. And in these three ways this spiritual life teaches man the very depth of conventionalities. And if a civilization was built, which no doubt will be built one day, on a spiritual basis, the conventionalities of the world will become genuine and worth having.

Q: Do you think that conventionalities are fundamentally based on common sense?

A: Sometimes based on common sense, sometimes on the super sense, and sometimes beneath it.

Q: How can one make people who are lacking in education see a thing that does not exist in their eyes, where they think there is no such a thing as what the aristocratic people feel as necessary for their happiness?

A: Civilization means progress. Those who are not educated, they must be educated to understand life better. There are only two things; either go forward, or go backward. Either begin to think as everybody else without education thinks, or take the one who is not educated with you, and go forward. One thing or the other. As the inner inclination is to go forward, and to take the one who cannot understand just now gently ... that the beautiful things are for the benefit of humanity.

I should think that an ordinary man in the street, he is neglected, man turns his back to him. If he was taken closer to oneself, if he was taught with simplicity and good will, not showing that he was ignorant of beauty or culture, but showing him that in this is his real benefit, I am sure that the conditions, as bad as they are now, will not be. And there will be a better understanding between the classes as they are just now.

I will tell you a little example. When traveling in India, I was staying in a place near a Hindu temple. And there were two porters who took care of that temple. They were of Afghanistan, proud and stiff, rough and rigid in their manner, and yet in their expression there was honesty and goodness. As I passed through that way I saw them ignoring, so to speak, my entering and going out, lest they may have the trouble of observing any conventionalities. One of them came to me with a message from his master. I got up from my seat, and I received him most cordially. And since that time, every time I passed, even if five times in a day, I was very well-received with smiles, and with very warm welcome, and there was no more ignoring, because education was given to that person without hurting his feeling. That gave him the pleasure; certainly he thought that he can give to another also.

To force a virtue upon a person is pride, but to let him see the beauty of a good manner, that is education. The condition today would become much better if we would take that to heart, and know as our sacred task to approach the people who need ripening, in such a gentle way, with such sympathy and love, and to develop in their spirit that culture and beauty which will then be shared between us and them.

Tasawwuf: Metaphysics
Number 8: Life

The life which we know is from our own life, therefore the nature and character of that life which is eternal is beyond man's comprehension. By this it is not meant that man is incapable of knowing the deeper life, but only that what man knows of life is from the knowledge of his own life. The difference between the life known to the generality and the life which is unknown is that of illusion and reality. Man mocks at the idea if he be told that all this is illusion, until he dives deep and finds out by comparison that this life which is subject to birth and death and subject to changes is a life and yet no life. This life is like a bubble in the sea. The bubble is existent and yet in reality non-existent when compared with the sea. And yet we cannot say that the bubble is non-existent, for it merges in the same sea in which it once appeared; so nothing takes it away but its own source and its original being.

The nature of this life of ours can be better understood by knowing its secret; and the knowledge of its secret will certainly enable us to live it to its best advantage. What happens is this: Man, eager and anxious to get the best out of life, owing to his ignorance, becomes a loser in the end. In

order to know the secret of life one must understand the law of creation, the law of sustenance and the law of destruction. We must understand that destruction awaits every created thing, and to save it from destruction there is one mystery to be solved and that is the mystery of sustenance. What happens is that in every activity which is directed toward a certain result, owing to one's anxiety and eagerness, one draws that result closer before the time, and in this way very often man brings about that destruction which, if he knew that it can be warded off, he can put off to a later time. By this knowledge one develops patience, for very often it is the lack of patience which becomes the cause of destruction. An impatient person tries to reach too soon that culmination which causes destruction; and, by patience, the one who is able to control his activities in life will become the sustainer of life and will make the best of life. In the Hindu mythology Vishnu is the Sustainer, in other words the king of life.

The science of today, wakened to the same mystery, has been able to control matter to man's best advantage, more than we have ever known before in the history of the world. If the same mystery were used from a spiritual point of view in everything one does and one wishes to accomplish in life, success would surely be one's own. In every little thing one does in life this point of view must be understood. Even in such things as eating and drinking, if one does not sustain the rhythm he cannot take the real benefit of the food he eats and the water that he drinks. The person who reaches before the time that culmination of appetite in eating will always complain of lack of digestion. So in business, industry, professions, study, meditation, in all affairs of life, whether affairs of the heart or of the head, the consideration of controlling one's activity and guiding it and proceeding gradually toward a culmination is needed.

Questions and Answers: (July 21, 1923)

Q: In regarding the activity in life of the Shiva side of the deity ...?

A: It is a subject which is very vast, and it is difficult to explain that subject in two words. But that aspect of destruction and knowing about destruction can be easier understood again by something which we see in the modern science, by the medium of what they call inoculation. By putting that destructive element in one's body, one makes one's body disease-proof, that that particular disease is no longer a disease, but the nature of that person. That is the method of the mystic from a spiritual point of view. That death is a death so long as man is unacquainted with it. When man eats it up, then he has eaten death; death cannot eat him. Then he knows the life eternal. That is the mystery of the Message of Jesus Christ. To seek eternal life from the beginning to the end. The mystery of eternal life is past once a person has eaten death, then he is eternal.

In little things of life, one person says, "I do not like to touch vinegar. It hurts my health." One person says, "I cannot bear to eat cream, I cannot digest it"; another person says, "I cannot stand to have sugar in the tea, I do not like it." For him the sugar is a poison. If he took the poison once, the same would become sugar for him. All things that one thinks that they are foreign to his nature, by this he makes his nature exclusive. And by becoming exclusive he makes himself subject to them in a way. There comes a time when they rule him, a situation when he is under them. A person who says, "Bitter quinine, it is too bitter, I cannot stand it" —he is in a fever, the doctor says he must have it. He dreads having it; at the same time he cannot help it. Therefore the way of Shiva was always to work against one's weaknesses. He counted them as weaknesses, not as nature. "Nature, all is my nature, but what I cannot have, that I make foreign to my nature; if I have separated it, there comes a time perhaps that I become so weak that I cannot help

having it." Would you believe that the snake charmers, I have found some of them who have gradually, by making the snakes bite them time after time, developed so that poison does not hurt them. So that when they go, they just catch the snake in their hand; if the snake bites them, it does not hurt them. Shiva is pictured with a cobra round his neck; out of death he has made a necklace; it is no more a death to him.

One can go to extremes. But still it is a law that must be studied and known. The only mystery it teaches is not to consider anything in nature as foreign to one's nature. If it was not in use one would not know it. By this one overcomes all the destruction which is the source of fear and pain and disappointment.

Q: Does it mean that if there is no poison there is no moral? There is no good and no bad, if there is no poison?

A: No. It does not mean that. Good is good, and bad is bad. But at the same time one can rise above bad, or one can be submitted to badness. One can become weak before the evil, or become strong. The idea is to become strong before the evil instead of weak.

Q: If one sees that a thing has begun with precipitance, what should one do?

A: One should be sorry for having begun it too quickly, and one should try to regulate the rhythm. As in the beginning there is a need of patience, so also in the end. Patience should be all along. Patience is the secret of the whole thing. There are many virtues, but no virtue can be compared with patience. For it is not only a virtue, it is a power within itself.

Q: Is it perhaps God's way of making us immune to sorrow, when He sends us troubles and difficulties?

A: Every way is God's way. When He sends us troubles and difficulties, that is God's way; neither there is the law of God to send only sorrow and trouble, nor to send us only joy and happiness. But if we are thankful, and see the hand of God in all, we would certainly be grateful—and even after sorrow —and to see in both the way of God.

Very often there are people more impressed by the doctrine of Karma, who say that if illness has come, "Well, now it is our Karma, that we have to pay the due. Then we must take it patiently." I think there is a virtue in it also, and to see that it is from Karma. But it is not sufficient. We must know that happiness is our birthright. In our happiness there is the happiness of God. In our sorrow there is the pleasure of God. Therefore we must do everything in our power to get out of that illness, instead of thinking that the Karma had thrown that illness, and we must lie patiently, with a rock over us, and not try to push it off because it is Karma.

Q: Is it bad to be too impatient, even for spiritual development?

A: "Too" is always bad. If a person asked me, "Is it right to be too good?" ... it is enough to be good. Impatience of every kind is to be avoided. One loses one's equilibrium. There is no gain out of impatience.

Q:

A: Patience does not necessarily mean sloth, negligence and laziness.

Q: Is in our sorrow not God's sorrow reflected?

A: Certainly, as in our happiness God's happiness is reflected, so in our sorrow God's sorrow is

reflected. If God would not sorrow man would be greater than God. For man is capable of two things, and God would only be capable of one.

Q: Why did you then say that God is not pleased in our sorrow?

A: I did not mean to say that in our sorrow there is not God's sorrow, but I meant to say that God is not pleased—as man is sometimes—in causing sorrow to man. It is impossible to have no sorrow, but we want balance in sorrow and joy. When too much joy and no sorrow then life becomes monotonous.

Q: After all is it not a good plan for one to look for the cause of their sorrow or gladness in their own thought and action?

A: Sometimes it so happens that it is not conditions which make sorrow. We allow them to make us sorrow. It is not only on their part that it depends, it depends upon both: A part of the sorrow comes from life, and a part one makes oneself. Therefore, if there is a response, one helps life to give a little joy, then the life will give one a little joy also. But if one prevents the life to give a little joy then the life becomes helpless.

There may be out of a hundred things ninety-nine in everyday life that we take too seriously. We might take perhaps one thing seriously, and of the ninety-nine say, "It matters little."

Tasawwuf: Metaphysics
Number 9: The Word "Shame"

The word "shame" is used in all different languages, and, more or less, the meaning of the word as understood by different people is the same. But the question what, really, the word "shame" means could be answered by saying that shame means "want." A feeling which one feels in oneself of wanting something to make up one's ideal gives the feeling which one calls shame; or when one sees in another person something wanting, it is that which brings to one's mind that sense of want, and one expresses that sense by the word shame. It is interesting to notice that in the Persian language there is a word, Kham (which can also be pronounced as "shame"), the meaning of which is "foolish," but the true meaning is "wanting."

The question arises whether the conception of shame is inherent or acquired. That is where the point of view of the mystic differs from the conception of modern psychology. While modern psychology says that all this is acquired, the Sufi will say it is inherent. The springing of this sense in a child is worth noticing, and is of very great interest to a seer. But when one sees it from a metaphysical or from a spiritual point of view, it opens up a very vast field of thought. One learns, by thinking about this sense of wanting, that the human soul by nature is perfect and the life of limitation on earth is imperfection; therefore the soul continually sees wanting in itself and want in others, and becomes unhappy over it

The soul who sees the want in others becomes unhappy over others. Therefore there will be no end to the unhappiness of that soul, for there will always be the want in this life of limitation. But the soul who sees the want in itself no doubt has a chance to gain all that which is wanting, although the more a soul will advance the more it will find itself wanting.

It is therefore that the nobler the soul is, the more sense of shame it has, for that sense is wakened in it; and the lack of nobleness of spirit is signified by the lack of that sense. There is one person who fights against that sense, which in time becomes blunted; and he might feel happier for the moment having that sense in him so blunted. However the limitation is there. The sense of shame is a channel which leads to that goal which is called perfection. But no doubt the more it is awakened the more one is subject to unhappiness. And yet true happiness is in the realization of perfection, and therefore in the end he does not lose much, in spite of the apparent gains that come to the one who is shameless. In practical life in the midst of the world the shameless has apparently more ease of action and of movement likewise. The one who has the sense of shame awakened, for him life is difficult.

But the sense of shame living in the heart of man is like a pearl in the shell. And as long as it is in the shell it may not fetch its price, but there is a pearl just the same. Whatever price the pearl fetched, the market-place is not the place of the pearl; its real place is the crown of the king. So a person with real, living quality may not always be appreciated, may have troubles in life, and yet sometimes his qualities will fetch their proper price. And if they did not fetch the proper price still there is no loss, for beauty in all its aspects is beyond price.

Where does man learn virtue? He learns it from that sense of shame. And what develops virtue in man? It is again the same sense. Often this sense works as a sharp knife upon a feeling heart, but it only makes it a cut diamond. By this we come to a realization that what is most precious in life is feeling. And if the feeling sense loses its sharpness, it is as if man, who is the salt of the earth, has lost savor; and there is nothing else from where it can be gained. In all times of the world's history whenever a civilization had touched its summits, this sense was developed in the generality. For the heights of every civilization show the fineness of human feeling, which is the highest of all aspects of culture.

The manner of the saints has been to approach God with this feeling. It is this feeling which made the Prophet Mohammed cover himself with a mantle every time when the thought of God came. It is the same feeling which gives a person modesty. And all the different forms of prayer have come from this inner tendency of man in the presence of the God of perfection.

Questions and Answers: (August 15, 1923)

Q: False accusation fills a child with a sense of shame, though there is no justification.

A: Anything wrongly suggested has always a wrong result. Sometimes a person carries a sense of shame too far, but it has its own value when it is used rightly.

Often people have done great things, beyond their ordinary power, taken hold of by their sense of shame. They get such a desire to amend that they are awakened from a sense of death, they make superhuman efforts and they live again.

Repentance is the outcome of shame.

When the sense becomes more living the person feels the lack in himself and so he respects the lack in others. So what he does is to cover the lack of another, instead of exposing it by criticism. When he develops further he sees other persons exposing their own lacking. So the pain of the wise and of the saintly souls is the pain they feel for others as if for themselves. They feel

it like a knife; spiritual life means to feel the life of another man as one feels one's own life. It looks so cruel on the part of man to expose the lack of another. It may satisfy his vanity or bring him a moment's pleasure, but from the spiritual point of view it looks very cruel. One can overcome this by feeling the oneness of life, the same life in him and in me, so his pain, his sorrow, his pleasure I share, because his life is my life. So people cannot but be sympathetic to all in life, and have more or less love, but the difficulty is they do not know how to use it to their best advantage.

Q: Will you please explain from the lesson on "Shame:" "The sense of shame is like a pearl in a shell?" And further: "The price cannot be given in the market-place. The place of that pearl is the crown of the king?"

A: That means that a virtue like this is appreciated and understood and rewarded fully in its right place. That is why it is said, "In the crown of the king." A person with this virtue is not appreciated by everybody. The person who has not got this virtue cannot appreciate it. Therefore for a greater person a greater place is required.

Tasawwuf: Metaphysics
Number 10: Tolerance

Tolerance is the sign of an evolved soul, for a soul shows the proof of its evolution in the degree of the tolerance it shows. The life in the lower creation shows the lack of tolerance. The tendency of fighting with one another which one sees among beasts and birds shows the reason at the back of it, that intolerance is born in their nature. By a psychological study of the nature and the tendencies of the lower creation one will find that the evolution that takes place among birds and beasts shows this tendency of intolerance becoming less and less. It is the love element developing in their nature which brings them together to form flocks and herds. The same tendency of intolerance sometimes manifests in a more distinct and pronounced form in man. The reason is that man's responsibility in life is greater, his difficulties are many, and he lives in a crowd which is larger than a flock or a herd.

At the back of this tendency there is a most wonderful secret hidden, the depths of which are fathomed by the mystic. The mystic who sees God within and without, both, who recognizes God in unity and in variety both, the mystic realizes that it is the One Who has known Himself to be One, Who does not know of two, Who feels uncomfortable and agitated, and shows a revolt on knowing that "There exists another besides Me." And it is therefore that the birds have the tendency to fight with their own element, and so the same thing one finds among the beasts. Among men, man is the enemy of man, and woman of woman. The rivalry that exists between professions and between people of the same position and between nations shows the same thing, that one principle that the nature of the ego, through every name and form, revolts against another, especially of the same name and form, in some way or other. One may give a thousand reasons for intolerance. They exist too, but the inner reason is one and the same in all aspects of intolerance. The Sufis have called it *Kibriyy*, which means "vanity," vanity of the One to Whom alone it belongs.

As one evolves spiritually so a person seems to rise above this natural tendency of intolerance, for the reason that he begins to see, besides himself and the second person, God; and he unites himself with the other person in God. It is the third person whose love or devotion makes two people unite. For instance, the children of the same parents love one another in realization of the idea that

they are of the same parents; the people of one nation love one another in the thought that they belong to one nation. And when two people tolerate one another with the thought of God as their Creator and as their support, then they are more evolved, because they can tolerate anyone of any country or race, of whatever name or form.

But when a soul has evolved still more, tolerance becomes the natural thing for him. Because the highly-evolved soul then begins to realize "Another person is not separate from me, but the other person is myself; the separation is on the surface of life, but in the depth of life I and the other person are one."

Therefore tolerance is not learned fully by trying to follow it as a good principle. It is learned by having the love of God, by attaining the knowledge of self, and by understanding the truth of life. There is no need to ask further about a person who, you think, is spiritual; once he says, "I tolerate all," this is certainly the proof of his spirituality.

Questions and Answers: (August 4, 1923)

Q: Does the law of attraction work on a scientific basis, according to the law of vibrations?

A: Yes, there is a law hidden under every activity; and therefore certainly there is a law of vibration in every activity. No movement is free from the law of vibration. Therefore in attraction and repulsion also.

Mastery comes from evolution of the soul. And the sign of mastery is to conquer everything that revolts one. And that is tolerance. And the souls who have attained to some degree that spiritual mastery, they will see with me, not only with people, but even with the food, that where a person will say, "This I do not like, that I will not eat," the soul who has gained the mastery, nothing it rejects; it may not approve of it, it may not be especially attracted to it. And then with the weather, the masterly soul will not say, "It is too hot," or "too damp," or "too dry." "We do not tolerate what is before us." It is hard to tolerate, but we cannot help to meet it; the difference is in tolerating it. The whole system of the Yogis, especially of the Shiva Bhaktis, is based on making oneself acquainted with something that the nature revolts against. In this way they could go too far in tormenting themselves. The extremity in all things is not right. At the same time that is the principle.

It is not the food but how the person accepts it, if he eats it. Thought works with simple food like medicine; if he says, "It will do me good," it can cure. There are Yogis just now who will drink poison and not die, or jump into the fire and not be burnt. It is a practice to see that even the element such as fire Because you will find the intolerating souls most unhappy; everything hurts them, food, water, air, the change of the weather, every person they see hurts them. Where should they be, uncomfortable in the house, and restless outside?

Q: What to say to such a one?

A: It is very difficult. Therefore that tendency of rejecting, dislikes, prejudices, it is that tendency which must be conquered. It gives such a mastery.

I remember my own experience once that in the school my teacher said that there was a tree, that the leaves of that tree are very good for a person. They purify the blood—that did not interest me. But, he said, it is so bitter that you cannot drink it, nor taste it, nor touch it. I thought "I think

I can!" I did not care for the medicine, only I thought, "Cannot? No one can?" I went home and gathered leaves, and everybody could not understand why I was gathering the leaves. It is more bitter than the water in the sea. I drank it, and my satisfaction was that I did not even make a face. I was not tired of it, I continued for five, six days.

It is a demand on the part of a person, if he wants to fight against all things. That gives the mastery. One does not fight mostly. One always fights against things that prevent getting what he wants. If one could fight with oneself, then one would fight against the tendency of rejecting; that leads in the end to mastery.

Q: I thought it was no use trying to force yourself.

A: As a general principle in life there is no use to force. But to train oneself is another thing. It is a method.