

In that assembly was an old man ;
When to him the turn of speech at last came,

He suddenly opened his tongue respecting a wonder,
(And) like the other chiefs kissed the ground,

Saying :—“ Of every land, that Dark Land is best,
“ In which is a water, the life-giver.

“ Weigh not thy life with weighty treasure ;
“ For dust (contempt) is on the treasure and on the
porter of treasure.

20 “ Since thou desirest that thou mayst long remain,
“ Bring forth the desire for the fountain of life.”

The assembly passed into lowering of the head (in
thought),

Saying :—“ In the Dark Land, how is there life ?”

Sikandar spoke to him, saying :—“ O my good man !
“ Perhaps at that drinking-water (the fountain of life) that
Dark Land

“ Is the blackness of letters (of books) hand-worn ;
“ Its water,—verily, the meaning, soul-refreshing ?

“ Otherwise who beholds a dark land ;
“ Verily, the fountain that preserves from death ?”

25 The old man, world-experienced, again spoke, saying,
Saying ;—“ Outside of these concealed mysteries

18 The first line may be :—
Of every darkness (in the world) that darkness (of the water of
life) is best.

“ Zulmát ” may mean—zamín-i-siyah (couplet 24) ; siyáhí (couplets
18, 22, 63, 64).

19 Consider not thy life equal to weighty treasure. With much treasure
man’s life becomes not long.

25 The mysteries are mentioned in couplet 23.

“ Is a veil (of darkness) beneath the polar star of the north,—

“ Within it, a pure fountain of limpid water.

“ A veil, whose name is Zulmát,

“ From its ease the water of life flowing.

“ Everyone who drinks of that water of life

“ Takes his life from the life-devourer (death) of this world.

“ If, as regards my word, faith come not to thee,

“ Inquire of other old wise men.”

³⁰ From the perplexity of that discussion,—to the king
The thought of searching occurred.

He inquired of him, saying :—“ Where is that Dark Land ?”
The declarer declared, saying :—“ From the right hand
(beneath the North Pole).

“ From us to that land, the road is short ;

“ Of this road (from Chín to the confines of Russia), which
thou hast travelled, it is one out of ten.”

When the king perceived that that fountain, pleasant-
tasting,

It is possible to find (luminous) like the morning in the
Zulmát,

He placed the door of the court towards the Zulmát ;
Reviewed the army with a view to moving :

³⁵ When he went some stages he looked at the affair (of
marching) ;

Beheld many of the people of the army sick.

A moving world was his general camp ;

Another world, special about his court.

27 The Zulmát (sing. Zulmat) is in the “ sixth climate.”

Through the market (multitude) of the army,—in that
 marching-place,
 The road resembled the market of the place of assembling
 (the judgment-place).

If they turned the rein towards (sought for) bird's milk (a
 rare commodity),
 It,—they found in the market of this camp.

In every arid land where the Khusrau arrived,
 The rain rained; the grass sprouted.

40 Thou wouldst have said:—"The trace of Khizr was on
 that road;
 "That, verily, Khizr was himself with the king."

He reflected on the numerousness of his army;
 He exercised patience as to that hastening (to the Dark
 Land).

Near to the plain was a cave-place (of the mountains of
 Zulmát),
 Which there the Khusrau's court passed.

Whatever heavy baggage they had with them
 They left near to that cave.

Through that multitude (of the army) which there became
 place-occupying (dwelling),
 That desolate land became habitation-possessing (pros-
 perous).

40 The Muslims usually confound Khizr with Phineas, Elias, and St. George, saying that his soul passed by metempsychosis through all three.

Some say that he was one, Balya ibn Malkán, in the time of Firídún (a.c. 800); that he preceded Zú-'l-Karnain (Asa,ab ibnu-'r-Rayesh); and that he lived to the time of Moses.

See Sale's *Qurán*, chap. xviii.; and canto x. couplet 1; lix. 17.

45 The desert watch-keeper (Sikandar) called it Bun-Ghár;
That Bunghar (in time) became, in name, Bulghár.

Those individuals who are chiefs of that territory
Are slave-born of the king, Sikandar.

When the king perceived that that countless army
Was not stage-recognizing as to that road (to the Zulmát).

He chose some individuals, like the impetuous steed,
Bow-possessing, and hardship-enduring, and hard-striving:

Bold, and robust, and hard of bone,
Patient (enduring), and powerful, and youthful.

50 He ordered that no sick nor old person
Should, on that road, become motion-possessing (move).

For, if he be year-stricken, the old man
Comes to toil with the difficulty of the road.

The old men sate, the young men departed;
They went the long road,—without those road-knowing.

From the men of that country, the world-king
Summoned a sensible one, work-versed;

Kept him in front for path-showing to the army;
Performed two stages in every stage:

55 All the road-provisions, sugared or salted,
Despatched on two-year-old camels and bay horses (of
impetuous spirit):

Urged the army, double-horsed, towards the Zulmát;
Appointed a lieutenant over those left behind (in Bul-
ghár):

45 See canto xiii. couplet 13; lxxi. 10.

48 "Sakht-kash." Sakht may mean—the chest; and kash—the upper arm.

56 See canto xxxv. couplet 77; lxxviii. 123.

Spoke to him without limit all fit to be uttered,
Saying :—“ A place (desolate) like this is unfit for sleeping
(Be watchful!).”

When he travelled a month towards the north,
The state of the sun's thoroughfare (the ecliptic) changed
(in its apparent position):

A luminosity (of the sun) appeared from the (northern)
pole of the sky;

It (the luminosity) ascended (above the horizon) and
descended (below) quickly in a moment.

60 The circle of the equator established its extremity on
(agreed with) the circle of the horizon (at the north
pole);

The medial line (the equator) fell to (concurred with) the
pole of the north.

They arrived at a place where the (light of the) sun,
More than a phantom in a dream,—they saw not.

Towards the border-place of the earth they hastened;
In that Dark Land they exalted the standard.

The earth snatched luminosity from the air;
The veil of terror displayed the Dark Land.

In one direction, the Dark Land revealed the margin (of
the earth);

In the other direction, the deep sea (earth-encircling)
closed the path:

59 Otherwise :—

A luminosity appeared from the (north) pole of the sky (the sun);

It (the sun) ascended and descended (rose and set) in a moment.

They say that for forty days every year the people of Balghár have no
'ishá (the time between sunset and dawn); for dawn appears in the east
when the sun sets in the west.

63 The second line may be :—

The veil of the Z̤ulmát appeared fearful.

65 The skilful guide kept travelling northwards ;
In one direction from the compass (the ecliptic) of the
lofty sphere.

When he went little by little from the compass (the
ecliptic) of revolution,
The light (of the sun) became more remote with every
accession of remoteness.

Thus, until the path (of journeying) reached such a spot,
That the luminosity (of the sun) all at once became
invisible.

Darkness appeared (to the king) from the corner of the
path,
—The world is unpleasant when it becomes dark.—

The Khusrau became dejected, saying :—“ What is the
plan ?
“ Who is the pointer out of the way of this path (to the
Dark Land) ? ”

70 Those versed in affairs exercised thought,
Saying :—“ This Dark Land is the veil of the hidden.

“ Within it,—in every way that is it is possible to go ;
“ The road of returning,—who shall bring to hand ? ”

Everyone hastened to remedy-devising (for coming out of
the darkness) ;

No one found the path to the devising of the remedy.

When night came, that half-lit land (where the north pole
was in the zenith)

Chose the black musk (night, in preference) to the wood
aloe (half-lit day).

73 If az be read for án, the first line will be :—

When from the half-lit land night came,
It chose

The sphere became confounded like one mad (who strikes
hand and foot on the dust),
The Kashmírí (the half-lit land) became changed to the
Zangí (pitch dark night).

75 That road became finer than a hair ;
Darker than the darkness of evening.

Everyone returned to his own abode (in the halting-
place),
In thought remedy-devising as to that matter (of
returning).

There was a generous young man, — war-experienced,
Whose illumined mind was cherished of love (kind to
men).

He had a father, an old man of ninety years,
Through pain of his body, every movement a lament.

On that first day, when the king ordered
That none of the old men should come towards the road,

80 The generous youth was impatient of (seeing) his father,
As the sick man complaining of (the want of) the odour of
the apple (ease-giving).

He kept that doting old man,
As others the red ruby :

Had concealed him in the chest of road-provisions (carried
by a camel) ;
Had brought him at the rate of (as) a valuable present.

On that night, when of the road of returning (from the
Zulmát)
Perplexity came into the thought (of all),

82 The second line may be :—

Had brought him as stores of the road.

The youth opened that closed lid (of the chest),
And began speech with him on this subject (the difficulty
of returning),

85 Saying :—“ Of this advancing the king has become
regretful ;

“ Through hardship-enduring he has become unsteady to
his purpose (of drinking the water of life) :

“ On account of the darkness his heart has come to fear ;
“ For he knows not the design of his own road (of
returning) :

“ Guideless he can go within (the Dark Land),
“ The coming forth,—he knows not how (it is).”

The venerable old man to youth spoke,
Saying :—“ Within this screen is a hidden mystery.

“ When the time of going reaches the king,
“ That he may find the road forth,—know

90 “ For him, sound of body, is necessary a mare,
“ Whose parturition is indeed the first.

“ When the colt of the wind-fleet steed is born,
“ They should immediately cut off its head at the spot.

“ That very spot where the head shall have been severed
“ They should not conceal,—so that at it the mother may
look :

“ By it (the slaying and the bearing),—should bring the
mare’s heart to fury ;

“ And should use haste for departing thence.

“ When the time of returning from the path occurs,
“ Let the mare be the leader to the army.

84 The first line may be :—

The youth unfolded the hidden matter (the difficulty of returning).

95 “ It will run towards its own beautiful colt,
 “ Brought forth on the former path.

“ By that path, the coming guideless ;
 “ By this device (of the mare), the coming forth—are
 possible.”

When the youth heard this account from his father,
 He found the end of the thread for remedy-devising.

In the morning-time, when the musky silk (the black
 night) of Tiráz (the Dark Land at night),
 Became again changed for the brocade of aloe nature (the
 Dark Land by day),

The monarch sate in the assembly,
 As to going, each one an opinion-expresser become.

100 In every way, they prepared a remedy ;
 In a different way, cast a device (for going and returning) ;

Neither,—the king the purchaser of anyone’s remedy ;
 Nor,—the door of remedy apparent to any.

The wise youth of deliberate judgment
 Urged speech as to the matter of road-guidance.

The tale which he had heard from the wise old man,
 To the king he unfolded for remedy-devising.

When the king heard, it came heart-pleasing to him ;
 It came place-occupying in his own wisdom.

105 To him he spake, saying :—“ O noble young man !
 “ Of thyself, how was it possible to express such an
 opinion ?

“ Of thyself, thou acquiredest not this wisdom ;
 “ Say truly—from whom learnedest thou ?

“ If thou should say (truly),—thou wilt become prosperous
with (my) treasure ;

“ But if not, by crooked speaking thou wilt come to
sorrow.”

The youth said :—“ If thou give me protection,
“ I will make the camel-litter (the tongue) void of the load
of sorrow (of falsehood).

“ The first day, when the monarch ordered
“ That the old man, unsound of body, should not come to
the path,

110 “ I had a father, an old man of ancient years,
“ Much chastisement found from the sphere ;

“ From compassion for the old man, my own father,
“ I forgot care of myself :

“ I brought him in concealment with myself ;
“ —It was not evil though I brought him evil—

“ Last night—of the king’s road-journeying, the words
“ Each one I caused to reach his ear :

“ By his instruction I illumined (my) heart ;
“ Learned a remedy like this from him.”

115 The king in secret through the counsel of that guide (the
old man),

Kindled ; and uttered this beautiful subtlety :—

“ Although the young man is the king of counsellors,
“ Yet in remedy-devising he is in need of old men.

“ If the gourd sport with (bring forth) the new bough,
“ It shows exaltation by the old bough (the dry wooden
prop).

“ If the young man were incomparable in wisdom,
“ Yet to him need would come of the words of the old
man.”

In this speech was the world-king,
When suddenly by the door that desert one

120 Entered ; to the king he brought
A back-load of black sable.

Of it—each one (sable skin) more famous (more perfect)
than the ermine ;

In quality,—each one (sable skin) more pleasant-limbed
(soft) than the other.

When the king became a purchaser of his gift,
He became again concealed from the king.

He concealed his chattels in the Darkness ;
The king was astonished at that difficult matter (the present-
bringing and disappearing of the demon man) :

In the thought of the light-displayer (the old man)
Brought his judgment, double-horsed, (for proceeding)
towards the Zulmát :

125 Ordered, saying :—“ A mare, wind-like,
“ Whose pregnancy is (near) the time of parturition,
“ Bring ye ; in that way in which the old man said,
“ Let the colt of the wind-fleet (mare) be matched with
the dust (of the grave).”

When they performed the work which the king ordered,
They took the road to the water of life.

Come, cup-bearer ! that dust like the Zulmát (the place of
passing away)
Seek ; and bring to the hand the water of life (the wine of
senselessness).

121 In some copies :—

Of it (the back-load) each one a famous (perfect) ermine-skin :
It is said that the sick man who puts on the sable skin (samúr)
recovers from his sickness.

123 See canto xxxv. couplet 77 ; lxxviii. 56.

By that luminous water behold me ;
 And (by drinking it) make me more living than this
 (terrestrial) life (so that I may obtain eternal life).

129 The first line may be :—

By that water make me luminous of eye.
 For of the holy man,—the eye is luminous, and life lasting.

CANTO LXIX.

SIKANDAR'S GOING INTO THE ZULMÁT IN SEARCH OF THE
 WATER OF LIFE.

1 In this happy section (chapter)—from new to old,
 I sing the song of the villager's (the fire-worshipper's)
 history.

The village-narrator thus wrote,
 Saying :—The first night of the month (Urdíbihisht),

Sikandar gathered resolution for (going) to the Darkness ;
 For in the Darkness the heart comes to its place (of
 tranquillity).

1 The first line may be :—

At this happy time (Urdíbihisht, the second spring month, when
 the sun is in Taurus) from new to old.

Alluding to Khizr of verdant foot, the time is said to be happy.

3 In the darkness of the house is—the answer of prayer to those
 praying ; and the sight of God's majesty to those sitting in retirement.
 Pious men (ahl-i-dil) sit in the dark corner, for in darkness is freedom
 from the dangers and the temptations of lust and Satan.

Poets have a disengaged heart in retirement, where they bring to
 view wondrous subtleties of verse.

Seest thou not that from this lock (the sky) of golden key
(the sun)

They (Fate and Destiny) bring apparent the jewel (the
stars) out of the Darkness?

- 5 That one who makes the water of life his own place,
If before himself he bring a veil (of darkness),—'tis
proper :

The sitter,—at the reservoir of the (deep) water-pool (of
life) ?

Yes; for he has no help as to the veil (of concealment
from men's eyes).

When Sikandar made the resolution of (going to) the
Zulmát,

He inclined to the abandoning of important affairs (world-
seizing) :

Loosed the rein towards the Dark Land ;

Became concealed like the moon (eclipsed) in the mouth of
Draco :

-
- 4 Otherwise :—

Seest thou not that from this lock of golden key (the mine)
They (the delvers of the mine) bring to view the jewel from the
darkness (of mountain-caves) ?

The first line may be :—

Seest thou not that from this lock (the sun) of golden key (efful-
gent rays).

- 5 Otherwise :—

That one who makes the water of life (the view of God's majesty)
his dwelling,—

If he bring before himself the veil (of concealment from men, heart-
disturbing), it is well.

- 6 If az nílí hijábí be read for bale kaz hijábí, the couplet will be :—

The sitter (the pearl-diver) at the reservoir of the deep water-pool
Has no help of the black veil (the loin-garment).

- 8 See canto xxviii. couplet 22.

Gave the order in that new road (of journeying) in such a
 way
 That the prophet Khizr was leader.

10 The grey (khatlán) steed, the hastener (given by the
 Khákán of Chín), which he had beneath him,—
 To him, he gave, because he (Khizr) had the boldness of
 the lion :

For the reason that by it he might make an incursion ;
 Might employ means (of going) towards that drinking-
 water (the water of life) :

Gave him a jewel, which, within the (dark) cave (the Dark
 Land),
 Would become luminous for water-proving.

To him he spoke, saying :—“ Of this road, before and
 behind,
 “ Thou art the leader ; none is before thee.

“ Alone make the rein of hastening in every direction ;
 “ Unfold thy vision with sensible brainedness.

15 “ Wherever the water of life reveals (its) splendour,
 “ —For the gleaming jewel utters not a lie—

“ Drink ; when thou hast drunk with auspiciousness,
 “ Point out to me so that thou mayst enjoy profit (wealth
 and dignity) from me.”

At his order Khizr, moving with greenness,
 At the vanguard (in front), took up the step (proceeded
 quickly) ;

9 See Sale's *Kurán*, chap. xviii. *Khizr*, whether a prophet or a slave of God, obtained spiritual blessing by drinking of the water of life.

15 The first line may be :—

Wherever it (the jewel) brings forth (its own) splendour,—(is) the water of life.

17 “ *Khazrá* ” signifies—verdure or the sky. Hence, *khazrá-khirá*m may signify—moving with loftiness on the *khatlán* steed.

Fell (advanced) to one side from the path of the army ;
Opened the glances of resolution in every direction.

When he sought much for the water in concealment,
The lip of the thirsty one (Khizr) became not mated with
the water.

²⁰ The jewel, the illuminator, shone in his hand ;
Khizr looked down ; what he sought, he found.

That fountain appeared like silver,
Like a silver stream which strains from the middle of the
rock (the mountain-mine).

Not a fountain,—which is far from this speech ;
But if, verily, it were,—it was a fountain of light (not of
water).

How is the star in the morning-time ?
As the morning star is in the morning,—even so it (the
fountain) was.

How is the undiminished moon at night ?
So it (the fountain) was that it was greater (in effulgence)
than the (full) moon.

²⁵ As to motion, not a moment was it ease-taker,
Like mercury in the hand of the paralytic old man.

On account of the purity of its nature, I know not
What comparison I may make of its form.

Not from every jewel come that light and luminosity ;
One can call it both (luminous, moving) water, also the
sun (fire).

²⁰ Since in the darkness Khizr could not see far,—he kept looking at
the jewel in his head.

²¹ “ Pálúdan ” signifies—either şáf kardan or şáf shudan.

When Khizr caught acquaintance with (beheld) the
 fountain,—
 By it, his eye caught illumination.

He alighted and quickly plucked off his garments ;
 Bathed head and body in that pure fountain :

³⁰ Drank of it as much as befitted ;
 And became fit for eternal life :

Verily, he washed that grey steed and made him sated ;
 Put pure wine (the water of life) into the pure silver (the
 grey steed) :

Sate on the grey steed, the desert-traveller ;
 Kept his eye on that drinking-water,

So that when the king should come,—with gladsomeness
 He might say :—“ Behold the water of life ! ”

When he looked (for the twinkling of an eye) into the
 fountain,
 From his eye that fountain became hidden.

³⁵ Through intelligence Khizr knew
 That Sikandar would be void (of a share) of the fountain.

On account of his (Sikandar's) disappointment,—not (on
 account of) his anger,
 He Khizr became, like the fountain, concealed from his
 eye.

As to this account, the old men of Rúm
 Have recited this tale in another way,

Saying :—Ilyás (Elias) was fellow-traveller with Khizr,
 To that fountain which was on the path.

³⁰ Note.—Bar kár shudan.

³⁶ Prophets have no fear of anyone's wrath.

³⁸ See Sale's *Qurán*, chap. xviii. p. 223.

When they came,—with mutual salutation,
They descended into that water of the fountain.

40 At that fountain-head they spread the table-cloth;
For a fountain renders food pleasant-tasting.

On that bread, which was more fragrant than musk,
Was a dry salted fish.

From the hand of one of those two of auspicious beauty
(externally and internally),
The fish fell into the limpid water.

In the water of turquoise colour, the endeavourer
Endeavoured that he might bring the fish to his grasp.

When the fish came into his hand it was alive;
To the inquirer,—happy was the omen!

45 He knew that that fountain, soul-refreshing,
Came his guide to the water of life.

He drank the water of life with joy;
Obtained everlasting permanency in life:

Verily, he acquainted his friend;
So that he also drank water of that drinking-water.

—A wonder it was not that water having the essence of
the water of life
Should make a dead (salted) fish alive.—

A wonder it was as regards that dead (salted) fish,
That it showed the path to the fountain of life.

50 Of the fish and that water, jewel-scattering,
The Arabic history (the Kurán) gave another account,

49 For the tale of Moses and the Dead Fish, see Sale's Kurán, chap. xviii.

Namely :—The water of life was of another place (outside of the Zulmát) :

The fire-worshipper (the Persian) and the Rúmish historian missed the path (of true narrative).

—If there be a (luminous) water (internal purity, the *real* water of life) in this dark dust (the dusty body),
Of wandering in error from its fountain (the *apparent* water of life)—what fear?—

When Ilyás and Khizr found the drinking-water,
They turned from those thirsty ones (Sikandar and his followers).

From the moistening of the palate by that event
One (Khizr) went to the sea ; the other (Ilyás) went to the desert.

55 From one fountain (the water of life), their grains (everlasting life) sprouted ;
Their mill-house (the place of moving and resting) became two fountains (abodes,—the sea and the desert).

In the hope of the water of life, Sikandar
Exercised firmness in toil and hardship (on the path to the Zulmát) :

Sought freshness (pleasant life in youth) from the fountain
(of the water of life) for himself ;

For verdure grows more succulent by the fountain :

Consumed forty days in searching for the fountain (of the water of life) ;

On it,—he cast his shadow (came near to it) ; and (deprived of the luminosity of the water) remained in the shade (the Dark Land).

51 Otherwise :—

Namely,—the water of life was of another place (the knowledge of God) ;

The fire-worshipper and the Rúmish historian missed the path (of knowledge).

By God's grace, internal purity is rarely denied to the striver ; but Destiny decrees whether the apparent water of life shall be one's share, or not.

—Perhaps in his straitened heart he possessed great
ardour,

That he preserved his resolution (of going) to the fountain
and the shade (the Zulmát).

60 From the (luminous) fountain, not shade arrives, but
light;

But the shade (of kindness and joy) seldom falls far from
the fountain :

If the luminous fountain, shade-possessing, had been
proper

To the sun's fountain,—where the shade?

Since the fountain (of water) became pleasant-tasting
through (receiving the rays of) the sun,

Why went that fountain (of the water of life) beneath the
shade (the Zulmát)?

Yes ; for the fountain the shade is better than the sun ;

For that (the sun) is the burner (the heater of the
fountain), and this (the shade) is cool (the cooler of
the fountain).—

See couplet 1 for the fire-worshipper ; couplet 37 for the Rámish
historian.

The water of life maintains life for ever, but changes not the state of
the body. Thus, *Khizr*, who drank it when old, is still old.

The water of life signifies—*faiẓ-i-azalíy*, *va 'ilm-i-ladání*, *va şafá, e*
báṭin.

59 Couplets 59–63 are uttered by *Nizámí*.

60 Shade from a fountain falls on none, for it is not a gross body.

Otherwise :—

From the fountain (of the water of life) not shade arrives, but light
(from its luminosity) ;

But the shade (of lasting life) is far from the fountain.

Since in couplet 59 the words *chashna*, a fountain, and *saya*, shade,
are coupled by , , couplet 60 cannot be rendered as follows :—

From the fountain not shade arrives, but light (from its sparkling
water) ;

Yet the shade (of trees, water-loving) is seldom far from the
fountain.

In that place of shade (the Zulmát), the Khusrau was
dejected,
—To him, the day become dark like the shade.—

65 In the hope of that, that he might drink the water of life.
—Everyone whom thou seest suffer griefs of soul (saying :—
May my life be long !)—

From that road which became life (long time)-expending,
When at last he became hopeless of returning,

In that grief how he might use design
By which he might deliver himself from that shade (the
Zulmát),

An angel came before him on the road :
Rubbed his own hand on his hand,

(And) said :—“ The world altogether,—the whole, thou
seizedst ;

“ Thy brain became not sated of vain fancies (long life for
the enjoyment of unprofitable lust): ”

70 Gave him a stone less than a groat,
Saying :—“ Keep this stone dear to thyself.

“ Of the tumult of so much desire, verily,

“ Thou mayst become sated only with something equal in
weight to this.”

From him, the monarch took the stone ;

From him, the deliverer of the stone became concealed.

Into that darkness he went hastening,

Fear (of destruction) in the heart and blindness (by dark-
ness) in the vision.

65 As rendered, the second line is uttered by Nizámí; but properly the whole of the couplet is his utterance.

73 The second line represents the state of Sikandar. It may, however, describe the darkness (tíragí), which should then be written *khíragí* (a state of bewilderment).

From a corner a celestial messenger gave voice,
Saying:—"Destiny (eternity without beginning) gave
back to everyone the (predestined) writing (of
acquisition of desire).

75 "When Sikandar sought he found not the water of life;
"To Khizr the water of life, unsought, arrived.

"Sikandar uses haste to the Darkness (unsuccessfulness);
"Khizr finds the path of luminousness (successfulness) to
the water (of life)."

Another angelic messenger spoke, saying:—"O Rúmí!
"When this stone-soil (the Zulmát) became an illuminator
(by reason of its jewels),

"Regretful becomes he who takes it up;
"More regretful, he who (takes up and) lets it go."

Of it, into his chattels everyone cast
To the extent of his own fate and fortune.

80 In secret (in the Zulmát), the king beheld many a wonder,
Out of which (wonders) it is not possible to utter one in
ten.

The tale of (the description of) Saráfíl and the sound of
(the description of) his trumpet
I uttered not; for the path (of speech) went far from the
path (of reason).

-
- 81 In some copies o occurs in place of ráh, the second line will then be:—
(a) I uttered not; for it (the description of Saráfíl and of his trumpet)
went far from the path of my description.
(b) I uttered not; for he (Sikandar) went far from the path (of
army).

In Captain Macan's Persian text of the Sháh-Náma, by Firdausí,
p. 1341, canto dc. couplets 54-60, Sikandar's interview with Saráfíl, on
going into the Darkness, is given.

Of the angels that surround God's throne are four of the highest
dignity—Gabriel (Jibrá'il, Sarosh, Raván-bakhsh, Rúhu-'l-ḡuds), the

When the other speaker (Firdausí) opened that mine
 (related the tale of Saráfíl),
 One cannot lay another foundation (account).

When the king obtained not knowledge of the fountain (of
 life),
 He hastened towards the fountain of luminousness (the
 light outside of the Zulmát).

At the king's order, the army also
 Took up the road for returning.

85 On the road, that very exertion which was formerly was
 renewed;
 That very mare which was (before) became guide.

When again forty days passed from reckoning,
 The marge of that darkness appeared.

The sun came forth from beneath the cloud;
 In torment the Khusrau's limbs, through want of the water
 (of life).

He strove for what was not his fortune;
 When fortune is not,—striving, what profit?

It is improper to run behind fortune;
 Sit thou! that fortune herself may appear.

90 One sows the seed; another reaps;
 Happy that one who hears this speech.

angel of revelation, who communicated the *Ḳurán* to Muḥammad, and who promised the Virgin Mary "a Holy Son"; Michael (Michá,il, Bihtar), the friend of the Jews; enmity against either him or Gabriel involves enmity against God; Azrael (Azrá,il, Murdád), the angel of death, the death-giver, who separates men's souls and bodies; Isráfíl, the blower of the two trumpets on the last day; besides Al Mu'aḳḳibat, "the succeeders," who attend on every man to observe his actions, and Azazíl (Iblís, Shaitán), Satan.

88 Couplets 88 to 96 are uttered by Nizámí.

It is improper to sow always for one's self,
For victual-devourers are beyond limit.

From the garden which the forerunners (ancients) sowed
The fruit,—the after-comers took up.

When some things have become sown for our sake,
We also should sow for others' sake.

When we look at the sown-field of the world,
We are all the husbandmen of the village (of the world)
of (for) each other.

95 Come, cup-bearer! that wine which is heart-alluring
Give me; for wine is pleasant in youth.

Perhaps, when I make my mouth moist with that wine,
By it I may make my own fortune more youthful.

94 So that the after-comers reap the fruit of the toil of the forerunners.

CANTO LXX.

SIKANDAR'S COMING FORTH FROM THE DARKNESS (THE
DARK LAND).

1 When the vigilance of fortune became guide,
Sikandar came forth from the Darkness.

For him, that mare displayed guidance, in such a way
That (going either) left or right (of the former road)
occurred not.

To that line (the straight path) which she passed the first
day,—

To it, like the compass, she returned in the end.

3 After motion the compass returns to the same point (the magnetic
north).

When the other parties (Richard) opened
 (the) the road by which he had been
 When he was obliged to knowledge of the
 He turned towards the direction of
 light towards the left.

In the night under the way when
 finding the road for crossing.

As the road, when they were about to
 (the) the road.

That they were obliged to (the) the road
 (the) the road.

When suddenly they passed from the
 the way of the river, appeared.

When they were about to (the) the road
 to cross the river, they found

to cross the river, they found
 the river, they found

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to cross the river, they found
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When with it they associated a handful of dust,—
 With its (dust-) counter-weight, the weight (of the small
 stone) came true.

From that delightful example (God-given) the king became
 informed

That—dust is (my body); and the dust (of the grave)
 makes it sated of brain.

25 One day with the chiefs of the army
 The king prepared an assembly like Heaven :

Slaves of golden girdle around the throne,
 Like silver pillars around the golden tree.

All the crown-possessors of earth's surface
 Two knee-sitting at that foot (of the throne) like shade
 (head-lowered).

Of every custom which was heart-accepting,
 Of the revolution of the old sphere,—speech passed :

Of the Darkness of the water of life,—much
 Speech within speech passed on everyone's part,

30 Namely—if that water be beneath the Darkness,
 How comes it not to the seeker's (Sikandar's) hand ?

And if that water be not in the dark soil,
 Why is not its name (effaced) out of the books ?

On this point (the existence or the non-existence of the
 water of life) passed excellent words,
 From which illumination comes to the brain.

23 "Yáz kardan." See canto lxiv. couplet 104.

24 The second line may be:—

That it (the small stone) is dust; and the (handful of) dust makes
 it sated of brain.

27 In some copies the second line is:—

Became two knee-sitting at that foot of the throne.

Two knee-sitting. See canto lxxii. couplet 6.

Of the old men of that land of strange soil
 An old man to the sage of Rúm thus spoke,

Saying:—"The king, the world-seizer, the world-
 wanderer,

"Who became region-wanderer, like the (wandering) sky,

35 "If he seek the water of life, for the purpose

"That he may obtain safety from Death's grasp,

"In this land (outside of the mountains of Zulmát), is a
 city sufficiently prosperous,

"In which no one ever dies.

"In that city, a mountain loftily extended;

"By it,—the men of the city become city-bound (so that
 they cannot on that side move out).

"At every period of time, issues from the mountain—a
 noise,

"At which awe comes to the hearer.

"It calls one of the men by name,

"Saying:—O certain one! arise; move proudly towards
 the height!

40 "The hearer at that sound (of death) causing order to be
 accepted,

"Becomes not a moment ease-taker:

"Hastens from the low ground to the height;

"No answer comes from him (the ascender) to the
 inquirer.

"He becomes invisible behind the mountain;

"Of that difficulty none knows the key.

40 The first line may be:—

At that sound,—the hearer, order-accepting.

When with a day's rest I had a handful of them,
And in their own right, the night had
been a success.

From the highest range that glows in the
distance
The dawn is grey, and the stars are
under a moonless sky.

1. The day will be dark as the night
The day prepared to receive the dawn.

From the peaks of the range the dawn
The dawn is grey, and the stars are
under a moonless sky.

At the dawn of the dawn of the dawn
The dawn is grey, and the stars are
under a moonless sky.

At the dawn of the dawn of the dawn
The dawn is grey, and the stars are
under a moonless sky.

At the dawn of the dawn of the dawn
The dawn is grey, and the stars are
under a moonless sky.

2. At the dawn of the dawn of the dawn
The dawn is grey, and the stars are
under a moonless sky.

At the dawn of the dawn of the dawn
The dawn is grey, and the stars are
under a moonless sky.

At the dawn of the dawn of the dawn
The dawn is grey, and the stars are
under a moonless sky.

3. At the dawn of the dawn of the dawn
The dawn is grey, and the stars are
under a moonless sky.

At the dawn of the dawn of the dawn
The dawn is grey, and the stars are
under a moonless sky.

At the dawn of the dawn of the dawn
The dawn is grey, and the stars are
under a moonless sky.

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The dawn is grey, and the stars are
under a moonless sky.

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The dawn is grey, and the stars are
under a moonless sky.

At the dawn of the dawn of the dawn
The dawn is grey, and the stars are
under a moonless sky.

At the dawn of the dawn of the dawn
The dawn is grey, and the stars are
under a moonless sky.

At the dawn of the dawn of the dawn
The dawn is grey, and the stars are
under a moonless sky.

At the dawn of the dawn of the dawn
The dawn is grey, and the stars are
under a moonless sky.

Freed himself by much artifice and violence ;
Became a wanderer from them like the flying ant.

At him,—his friends were astonished ;
From him,—everyone took warning,

Saying :—“ In this expedition (to the city) wiser (more
determined to disobey the mountain-voice) than we,—
“ Behold how he went from us and unfolded not the
mystery ! ”

When over this event some time passed,
(And) the sun shone on mountain and plain,

70 Again the turn reached another friend ;
He also in a moment became invisible.

The few men who were left
Read not one letter of that tablet (the mountain) of
mystery.

They became fearers of that matter ;
For the sky assisted none (of those sent, to return from
the mountain).

Through their own roadless state (of ignorance of that
mystery) they came to the road (of returning, or of
confessing) ;
And came from that city to the king.

They represented the state, saying :—“ Many of us
“ Went towards the mountain ; none returned.

75 “ Neither was there (even) a little delay at the time of going ;
“ Nor also was there hope of returning.

“ We know not what the sound of that note is ;
“ Who is the player of the instrument of that note,

“ When we recognized not the mystery of that sound,
“ From that sound,—behold we hastened !

“ Some of us prepared for (agreed with the order of) the mountain ;

“ From that mountain, a sound came not back.

“ When we saw that they took (to) the mountain (retirement-choosing),

“ We took (to) the plain ; we came,—this troop.

80 “ Like this is the vault (of the sky) quickly-revolving,

“ On account of which, they (in death) take sometimes (to) the mountain, sometimes (to) the plain.”

When Sikandar heard the mystery of the guards,
He beheld a road,—its returning invisible.

Then to him, used to come the wish by that road (of death),—

That (back) by it one departed (in death) had returned.

Through anger at that matter he remained disquieted ;
Because no one read the lettering of that tale (of mystery).

He learned that that sudden departing
Is for that one to whom the world (time) comes to an end.

85 He uttered a proverb :—“ Everyone who was born died ;
“ From death's grasp, none saved his life.

“ When they (the asses) have no power with (against) the wild ass catchers,

“ The asses (men) come on their own feet to the grave.”

To suffer the arrow (decreed by fate),—sometimes the bold eagle

Comes on its own wing (of its own free will) from sublimity (the sky) to profundity (the earth).

87 This hints at the falling of the eagle by an arrow feathered with eagles' feathers.

Come, cup-bearer ! take up quickly that wine ;
For without wine it is improper to show gladness.

Give me help with one draught of that wine ;
Give me escape from the grasp of (spiritual) death (through
carelessness of God).

CANTO LXXI.

SIKANDAR'S RETURNING FROM SUBDUING THE CLIMES OF THE
WORLD, AND COMING TO RÚM.

1 While thou strikest together the eye-lashes, Time
Is the teacher of good and of bad to a hundred persons.

It makes one foot-bound to the earth ;
Causes another to reach the lofty sphere :

Brings down one from the stage (of sublimity) to the pit
(of profundity) ;

Brings forth another from the fish (beneath the earth) to
the moon :

Makes ready some such sport ;

Its sport, in the end, is nothing and nothing (for neither
loftiness nor lowness remains to anyone).

5 In place of this obstinacy (acting contrary to the teaching
of Time), best if we be submissive ;
For the steed rein-impatient suffers blows.

When the Arab steed displays impatience of the rein,
He makes the ass (patient of rein, easy of stride) of the
Egyptians a (precious) slave.

6 "Táz" signifies—táj; tájík.

The restive Arab steed is worse than the patient wild ass ; and people
part with him to bestride the gentle Egyptian ass.

The world (Time) saw (cherished) many people in the
world ;
It ran from all ; remained with none.

The world is for that one, who in the world
Becomes acquainted with the work (of God-worshipping)
of those work-knowing (the experienced).

In this workshop the narrative became of this kind
That—when the king pitched the court in that cave (of
the mountain of Zulmát),

10 He spent much treasure in the matter of (going to and
coming from) that cave ;
In that cave he planted a city like Bulghár :

From Bulghár he came to Russia ;
Adorned that land like the bride,

And came thence to the sea of Rúm ;
Took out the bark from the prosperous soil (of Rúm).

The chiefs of Rúm obtained news ;
Hastened towards the king's standard :

Drew forth their soul in thanks,
When they beheld the face of their own lord.

15 From the king's curiosities, all the dust of Rúm
Shone, like the night with the shining moon.

Every jeweller's face became like the ruby,
At (purchasing) the ruby of the Zulmát entered by
Sikandar.

7 The first line may be :—
(The goods of) the world proved many people in the world (Time).

10 See canto xiii. couplet 48.

All the land and the city came into decoration (through the building of palaces) ;
 Earth obtained a share (of freshness) from the hidden treasure.

They (Sikandar's army) evoked a paradise out of every palace ;
 Scattered much pearl and gold (in building palaces) on the earth :

Shattered the lock of the door of the treasury (of taxes collected from the landholders of the world) ;
 The world fixed a lock on the door of sorrow.

²⁰ The moon, the illuminator (Sikandar), came to her own mansion (Rúm) ;
 A cap of Chín on the head like the sun.

From Rúm, went the king,—near was he to the earth (in lowness) ;
 To Rúm, back he came,—more was he than the sky (in loftiness).

As the (little drop of) water—which the cloud takes to sublimity,—
 Takes in returning the (great) pearl to the sea.

He sate in pomp on the throne of Greece ;
 Rested from the toil of the long road :

From the heart, he let go the skirt of seven territories ;
 In every territory appointed a vice-regent.

²⁵ At his order, the kings of the tribes
 Loin-girt to his faith and covenant.

¹⁷ The hidden treasure may be—the buried money of the wealthy ones given to Sikandar's army for the purchasing of the rubies of the Z̄ulmát.

²⁵ See canto lvii. couplet 75.

For his honouring, head-exalting they came;
Toward their own country returned they,—

Separately, each one, in pride (at the king's exaltation)
and happiness (of heart),
Neck-exalted in arrogance.

None (of the kings) gave his own neck (in obedience) to
any (other king);
Everyone displayed haughtiness on his own part.

They took the cup (of pleasure) in memory of Sikandar;
Took the name of none save him.

30 When the king again arrived in the country of Greece,
To him, the treasure of happiness (of religion) gave the
key (country-subduing).

With knowledge (of religion), he prepared much wealth
(books of precepts);
(And) opened the door of Divine philosophy.

When the order as to prophesying reached him,
He turned not the neck from order-bearing:

Took up again road-provisions;
Took up anew the reckoning of world-travelling.

Twice he became world-keeper of the world (by spreading
justice and religion),
The first time,—the city and territory; the second time,—
the mountain and plain.

35 Of *that* time,—that was when the prosperous soil (the city
and territory)
He saw all together and came to Rúm.

31 God has called—'ilm-i-shari'yat, philosophy (ḥikmat).

Of *this* time,—that was when roadless (the mountain and plain)

He moved the standard like the sun and the moon.

When I became disengaged from this banquet-place (the Sikandar Náma, e bara),

I prepared another banquet (the Sikandar Náma, e bahrí),
sugar-scattering.

In this half of the casket (the Sikandar Náma, e bara),—
sweet words,

Many, I expended from virgin thought.

If those pearls,—which I have one by one fastened to it
(the Sikandar Náma, e bara);

Which I have bound to every poem-opening (canto)—

40 They (the sages) should bring upon the thread in one
place,

The thread of the jewel-preparer would be full of pearls.

Separately,—the abridgement of every canto

Would be a book of the rules of philosophy (the mysteries
of governing and world-seizing).

Verily, the cup-bearers of the narrators,

Whom at the end (of one canto) to the end (of another
canto) I have placed,

38 The thought is virgin because it is of youthful vigour and unexpended in the writing of this book.

40 In couplets 39, 40, the pearls signify—words of counsel and precept scattered throughout this work.

41 “*Fahrist-i-har paikar*” signifies—*maṭla’-i-har dastán*; *khuláṣa, e har ḳiṣṣa*.

42 Nizámí has said—“*guzarish kun*” at the beginning of each canto, and—“*biyá sáḳí*” at the end.

The couplets in which these phrases occur are as guards over the treasure.

This fashion of writing was formerly rare.

In the way of imagination, each one a sitter,
Like the watch-keeper over the treasure of jewels.

Who knows—how to raise such a picture (of lustrous
verse);

To mix it with a colour in a way heart-ravishing like this?

- 45 I so bound the silk (cord) of its instrument (this work),
That its voice (of melody) became more pleasant than
(the sound of the harp of) Zuhra (the mistress of
minstrels).

In the place where I found untruth (discord as regards
melody or of meaning),

For it (at the time of revision), I prepared the jewel of
truth (or of concord).

The speech (the couplet) that finds no path to truth
(concord),

Is contemptible (in the opinion of the wise), though it
take its rank to the moon (in the opinion of the
people).

Wherever the old man (Firdausí), the former decorator (of
speech),

Had urged mistakenly from the truth of the matter,

I bound again the decoration (of verse) to the uttered
error;

That uttered word, I uttered again with this excuse.

- 50 When a half (the Sikandar Náma,^e bara) of this edifice
(the Sikandar Náma,^e bara va bahrí) became finished,
A half of the world (the populous part) came to my hand.

If Time (my life) were,—the other half,
I would utter,—through my ability the teacher (of skill
in verse),—in such a way

50 "Muhr bastan" signifies—tamám gashtan.
See couplet 34.

That it would bring forth the head of the sleeper (restless
and desirous of hearing my melodious verse) from
sleep ;

Would bring to dancing the fishes in the water.

If Time will give me respite,—
Of reflection, in thought so it is,

That in the garden of this picture of Rúmish fold (the
Sikandar Náma, e bahrí)

I will cause the red rose (fresh speech, joy-exciting) to
spring from the yellow dust (my withered yellow
body) :

55 Will make a treasure full of versified speech,
Its turquoise (the subtle image), like the turquoise ; its
pearl (the verse), like the pearl :

Will bring a rose of sweet perfume (the essence of the
forms of speech) from every garden (of the forms of
speech) ;

Will bring rose-water to the rivulet (the Sikandar Náma, e
bahrí) from every side.

If the goodwill of the king (Nasratu-'d-Dín) be my hand-
seizer (helper),

Speech (the composing of the Sikandar Náma, e bahrí)
may quickly become represented (in writing).

Come, cup-bearer ! the cup (of senselessness), luminous
(pure) like the moon,

Give me, in memory (worthy) of the ground-kiss (of
adoration) of the king.

53 The second line befits mention of the Sikandar Náma, e bahrí.

Until I draw the cradle (of praise of the king) to the
summit of the Pleiades,
I will drink that golden cup in memory of the king.

CANTO LXXII.

THE CONCLUSION OF THE BOOK IN PRAISE OF THE PRAISED
ONE, THE KING NASRATU-'D-DÍN.

1 The king, the country-seizer, the world-shatterer,
(In majesty)—of Firídún-girdle; nay, of Khákan-crown!

The king, Nasratu-'d-Dín,—by reason of whose justice
Everyone drinks wine to his memory:

(In loftiness), he is a sky, on which the (auspicious, natal)
star has shone;

(In extent of territory), an ocean from which the crown
has obtained the jewel:

Like the third river (rain), the washer of the bed of dust
(the earth),

He washed the world pure of—(the confessor) “the third
of three.”

4 In the world are three great seas—Daryá,e muhít, the sea that
surrounds the earth; Daryá,e shor, the salt sea on the earth; and
Daryá,e hawá, the sea between the earth and the sky, from which
clouds get rain.

The washer here signifies—the washer of earth's surface from
destruction and desolation by repelling the strife of strife-exciter.

“Şális-i-şaláşat” (muşallaş) signifies—the confessor of the Christian
faith as understood in Ganja, Burda', and Arabia. He is the confessor
of three persons (iķáním), who are the three persons of the Trinity
(iķnúm), namely, God, Jesus, and Mary.

In place of Mary, some put the Holy Spirit (rúhu-'l-ķuds), who is the
angel Jibrá'il.

- 5 Like the planet Jupiter, lofty of head ;
 His glances (of kindness on the people, and of wrath on his enemies) altogether effective.

In (both star-aspects) the quartile (the sinister, or inimical) and trine (the auspicious or amicable),—(he is) the jewel-scatterer (both on friend and on foe).

The square-sitter (at ease, on the masnad); and the causer (of others) to sit (before him) on two knees (with reverence).

- 5 Jupiter's auspiciousness is in no way overpowered by the aspects of the other planets.

- 6 The conjunction (ḳirán) of two planets may be—auspicious (sa'dayn), sinister (nahsayn), or indifferent (malíh). The last aspect may be—ním dushmání or ním dostí.

The zodiacal signs that are :—

watery	are Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces.	airy	are Gemini, Libra, Aquarius.
fiery	„ Aries, Leo, Saggitarius.	earthy	„ Taurus, Virgo, Capricorn.

The zodiacal signs that are :—

moveable are Aries, Cancer, Libra, Capricorn.

common „ Gemini, Virgo, Saggitarius, Pisces.

fixed „ Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, Aquarius.

The moveable, common, and fixed signs are always in quartile aspect to one another, three signs apart; and the fiery, earthy, and watery signs in trine aspect, four signs apart.

There are twelve zodiacal signs, each of 30°. When two planets are distant from each other—60°, they are in sextile aspect, tasdís, half-friendly, as one planet in Aries, the other in Gemini; 90°, they are in quartile aspect, tarbí', half-hostile, as one planet in Aries, the other in Cancer; 120°, they are in trine aspect, taślís, amicable, as one planet in Aries, the other in Leo; 180°, they are in opposition, muḳábila, inimical.

When two planets are in the same house, they are in conjunction—auspicious (sa'd), sinister (nahs), or indifferent (mutawassit), as the case may be.

“ Murabba'-nishín ” signifies—chahán pahlú nishínanda; char-zánú nishín. Thus do Amírs and Sultáns sit cross-legged (tailor-like) at ease. In this posture the form of a square appears.

“ Marba' ” signifies—a place where they pass the spring-time; a throne of four corners; a place of retirement of four walls.

“ Muḣallaḣ (ḣális-i-ḣalásat)-nishán ” signifies—the putter away of the confessor of “ the third of three ”; one who causes others to sit on two knees with reverence, as attendants sit before the king. In this posture

By his head-verdure (youthfulness),—the world prosperous;
Of so many kings a token to the world.

The (natal) star which rubs its head on the (lofty) sphere
Struck the coin of worship at his door.

By the power of sovereignty, the world
He made full of skill, and void of grief (by casting out
strife-exciter).

10 He is,—at the banquet, a sun enkindled;
In battle, a dragon, world-consumed.

the form of a triangle appears; it is the posture used in confessing that Muhammadan faith (tashahhud), signifying:—"I profess that there is no God but God; I acknowledge that Muhammad is the Apostle of God; and I confess that Muhammad is His servant and Apostle."

"Muşallaş" signifies—wine that the Persians call siki, wine boiled down to a third and mixed with sweet herbs; a diagram in which the effects are great.

"Maşlaş" signifies—the third chord of the rabáb; the three-stringed instrument, the kánún.

The second line may be:—

- (a) Sitting in the place of spring-time, and placing the fragrant wine.
- (b) Sitting on the four-cornered throne, and placing the kánún.
- (c) Sitting in the place of retirement, and planting the diagram.

In the first line the jewel may mean:—

- (a) The jewel stone fit to be given.
- (b) The lustre of the sword of slaughter.

The first line will then be:—

In the sinister (inimical) aspect, sword (-blow) giving; in the auspicious (amicable) aspect, jewel-giving.

For further information on astrology see "A Christian Astrology, modestly treated of in three books," by William Lilly, 1659; "An Introduction to Astrology," by W. Lilly, edited by Zadkiel, 1835; and "An Introduction to Astrology," by W. Lilly, with a "Grammar of Astrology," by Zadkiel, 1852. Also canto xii. couplet 13.

7 With an aged sovereign the world is distracted. For they say:—
"Behold he is at the point of death and his country will be convulsed!"
Nasratu-'d-Dín is a token of Naushíraván, in justice; of Rustám, in bravery; and of Jamshíd, in pleasure and ease.

A token they call him from seeing whom another comes to mind.
10 The second line means:—a dragon that has consumed the world.

By that illumined heart, like (pure, translucent) water,
 that he has,
 By it,—the (resplendent) sun has become luminous of eye.

When his sword gathers resolve for blood,
 It brings forth water and fire (a fountain of blood) from
 stone.

When he casts the arrow from the bow into the ambus-
 cade,
 He hurls sky's summit to the earth.

Europe and Palestine and the provinces of Rúm,—
 Accepters of his seal's order, like (soft) wax.

15 When I saw that on the victorious throne
 He became lofty of head by the prosperity of fortune,

I had no offering (of scattering) worthy of him,
 Which I might pour at his royal throne.

From the Iskandrian water of life (the tale of Sikandar,
 pure of dross),
 I prepared a limpid water bejewelled (speech beset with
 the subtleties of verse) like this.

When from preparing it I became disengaged,—
 It, I made the present (in place of an offering of scattering)
 at his court.

I gave the bejewelled seal-ring (the Sikandar Náma, e
 bara) like this,
 Of a Sikandar (Zu-'l-Karnaiñ) to a Sikandar (Nasratu-'d-
 Dín).

20 For the king,—be permanency by fortune's power!
 By him,—be the prosperity of the crown and the throne!

12 In stone collected in mass water and fire exist; in broken stone they do not.

In his rose-garden (Turkistán), a nightingale (Nizámí) like
this—

Be its breath auspicious to his soul!

A crown-possessor,—O excellent! the crown of the sphere
Raises the summit of thy throne to the sun.

In the world, thou art the king of vigilant fortune;
Fortune considered thee worthy of the throne.

In the world, none has that power
That he may send a present worthy of the king.

- 25 If a drop of water (the Sikandar Náma, e bara) trickle
from this clay pitcher (Nizámí's dusty body),
In that deep sea (Nasratu-'d-Dín, of great majesty),—how
may it be visible?

The fountain that comes from the hard stone
When it is little,—how may it reach the sea?

Nizámí, who made himself thy slave (thy praise-utterer),
Made representation of speech in thy name:

Before the throne, he arranged the same (humble) enter-
tainment
As the ant arrayed before Sulaimán (Solomon).

Regard not the voice (of song) of the peacock (Firdausí),
nor his (long) flight (of verse),
For his voice comes harshly, like the (voice of the) cat.

- 30 Look at this small nightingale (Nizámí), who by (magic)
melody
Brings down the bird from the sky.

25 This work, containing 6,887 couplets, is a drop compared with
Firdausí's Sháh-Náma, containing 60,000 couplets.

28 It is said that by way of repast the ants offered Solomon the leg of a
locust. See Sale's Kúrán, art. Solomon.

That happy nightingale, am I who hastened from Iram
 (happy 'Irák);
 (And) made my place of repose in thy garden (empire).

Of thy time, I sing a song
 By which thy name will years endure.

In thy name (praise), I made this book, for that reason
 That the picture (thy name) makes (my) pen golden.

The object (of this composition) is not the elephant-load
 of gold from thee;
 For thy elephant (laden with gold) is not like the elephant
 of Mahmúd.

35 Without a person's desiring it,—thou givest
 Abundant treasure and dresses of honour.

If I had uttered this book for gold (from the kings of the
 age),
 How could I have pierced a single jewel (of verse of this
 work) in a long lifetime?

To this task, verily love (of verse) kept me;
 Love kept many a weak tongue like me.

34 Mahmúd bin Sabuktagín, the Sultán of Ghuzní (A.D. 997), enchanted with the powers of verse exhibited by Hakím Abú-'l-Kásim Túsí, directed that the records of Persian history should be given to him to versify; and that a thousand miskáls of gold (£674) should be given for every thousand couplets he wrote,—or, in all, an elephant-load of gold. He honoured him with the title of Firdausí (from Firdaus, Paradise), because of the paradise-like delight that he had shed on his court.

The poet unfortunately preferred waiting for his reward till he should have completed the work (the Sháh-Náma, which he began A.D. 980 and completed in A.D. 1009), containing 60,000 couplets.

For this Mahmúd sent him sixty thousand silver dirams (£2,600). Firdausí, being in the bath at the time, gave twenty thousand to the bath-keeper, and an equal sum to the refreshment-seller and to the slave who brought the money.

37 If *dásht* be contracted for *dáshtam*, the second line may be:—
 When, weak of tongue (silent, sitting in retirement),—I possessed
 much love of verse.

God gave me the grace of uttering ;
Lasting be thy skill and judgment !

Before that thou bringest it to mind,
Be country-seizer and world-taker !

⁴⁰ Age to age, from the lofty sphere,
Be victorious as to further victory (over fresh lands) !

May Time (till the Day of Judgment) be merely the fore-
taste of thy (long) youth !

May thy life be greater than (that of) all (kings) !

Come, cup-bearer ! from the jar of the old villager
Give me a cup (of senselessness) and seize my hand.

(A cup) of that wine by which sense may be the soul's ;
Be it—for me, the draught (of senselessness) ; and for the
king, the water of life !

⁴³ This wine gives life to my reason, so that I plant not my foot out of
the highway of the shari'at (the law of Muḥammad) and the ma'rifat
(the knowledge of God).

From this it appears that Naṣratu-'d-Dín was of the number of holy
travellers.

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