

O heart, thy high-prized learning of the schools,
Geometry and metaphysic rules—

Yea, all but love of God is devils' lore;
Fear God and leave this evil lore to fools.

Flash III.

The 'Truth,' most glorious and most exalted, is omnipresent. He knows the outer and inner state of all men in every condition. Oh, what a loss will be thine if thou turnest thine eyes from His face to fix them on other objects, and forsakest the way that is pleasing to Him to follow other roads!

My Love stood by me at the dawn of day,
And said, 'To grief you make my heart a prey;

Whilst I am casting looks of love at you,
Have you no shame to turn your eyes away?

All my life long I tread love's path of pain,
If peradventure 'union' I may gain.

Better to catch one moment's glimpse of Thee
Than earthly beauties' love through life retain.

Flash IV.

Everything other than the 'Truth' (may He be glorified and exalted) is subject to decay and annihilation. Its substance is a mental figment with no objective existence, and its form is a merely imaginary entity.

Yesterday this universe neither existed nor appeared to exist, while to-day it appears to exist, but has no real existence: it is a mere semblance, and to-morrow nothing thereof will be seen. What does it profit thee to allow thyself to be guided by vain passions and desires? Why dost thou place reliance on these transitory objects that glitter with false lustre? Turn thy heart away from all of them, and firmly attach it to God. Break loose from all these, and cleave closely to Him. It is only He who always has been and always will continue to be. The countenance of His eternity is never scarred by the thorn of contingency.

Flash I.

God has not made man with two hearts within him.³ The Incomparable Majesty who has conferred the boon of existence upon thee has placed within thee but one heart, to the end that with single heart thou mayest love Him alone, and mayest turn thy back on all besides and devote thyself to Him alone, and refrain from dividing thy heart into a hundred portions, each portion devoted to a different object.

O votary of earthly idols' fane,
Why let these veils of flesh enwrap thy brain ?
'Tis folly to pursue a host of loves ;
A single heart can but one love contain !

Flash II.

Distraction or disunion (*Tafriqah*) consists in dividing the heart by attaching it to diverse objects. Union or collectedness (*jama'iyat*) consists in forsaking all else and being wholly engrossed in the contemplation of the One Unique Being. Those who fancy that collectedness results from the collecting of worldly goods remain in perpetual distraction, whilst those who are convinced that amassing wealth is the cause of distraction renounce all worldly goods.

O thou whose heart is torn by lust for all,
Ere vainly strives to burst these bonds of all,
This 'all' begets distraction of the heart ;
Give up thy heart to ONE and break with all.

While thou'rt distraught by hell-born vanity,
Thou'rt seen by men of vision base to be ;

By God, thou art a demon,⁴ and no man,
Too ignorant thy devilry to see.

O pilgrim⁵ on the 'path' vain talk reject ;
All roads save that to Unity neglect ;

Nought but distractedness proceeds from wealth ;
Collect thine heart, not store of wealth collect.

³ 'Latifah.' These readings, which are found in other manuscripts, are omitted in this, as before remarked.

⁴ *Kamur*, s. v. cii. 4.

⁵ Also 'tranquillity,' 'congregation,' 'totality.'

⁶ *Nasir-i*; literally, a famous ascetic, a sufi.

⁷ *Sakhi*.

How were it, Lord, if Thou should'st set me free
From error's grasp and cause me truth to see?

Quebrees by scores Thou makest Musulmans,
Why, then, not make a Christian of me?

My last for this world and the next office,
Grant me the crown of poverty and grace

To be partaker in Thy mysteries,
From paths that lead not towards Thee turn my face.

PREFACE.

This is a treatise entitled *Larā'ih* ('Flashes of Light'), explanatory of the intuitions and verities displayed on the pages of the hearts and minds of men of insight and divine knowledge, and of those who enjoy spiritual raptures and ecstasies. It is written in suitable language adorned with pleasing explanations. I trust that readers will hold of no account the personality of the author of this commentary, and will refrain from taking their seats upon the carpet of cavilling and animadversion. For the author plays only the part of interpreter in the following discussions; his sole function is that of mouthpiece, and nothing else.

Believe me, I am wanger—yea, less than naught.
By naught and less than naught what can be taught?
I tell the mysteries of truth, but know
Naught save the telling of this task I brought.

For poverty to make no sign is best,
On love divine to hold one's peace is best;
For him who never felt ecstatic joys
To play a mere reporter's part is best.

With men of light I sought these pearls to string,
The drift of mystics' sayings forth to bring;
Now let his trusty slaves this tribute bear
From Sadr-in-ana to Hamadān's wise king.¹

¹ Majl Kh. Sh. (v, p. 344) says Sayyid Kāsh Karīmī wrote a Persian commentary upon it.

² The person referred to is probably Shihā Marashahī, Governor of Hamadān, who paid much attention to Sadr when he visited the town in 877 A.H. See Sadr's preface to the '*Nafahāt*' p. 11. Note the pun on '*Mām Dār*' ('All-knowing'). Amir Sayyid Ali of Hamadān, a Shī'ite, is mentioned in the '*Nafahāt*' p. 315, but as he died in 786 A.H., it is not likely that Sadr is speaking of him.

What am I? Can I count myself the peer
Of the poor dog that's suffered to draw near?
I may not join the caravan—enough
If from afar the camel bells I hear.

O Lord, send down Thy blessing upon Muhammad, the standard-bearer of praise and possessor of 'the glorious station,'¹ and upon his family, and upon his companions who through earnest endeavour have succeeded in attaining the goal of their desire, and pour upon them all Thy perfect peace!

SUPPLEMENT.²

O God, deliver us from preoccupation with worldly vanities, and show us the nature of things 'as they really are.'³ Remove from our eyes the veil of ignorance, and show us things as they really are. Show not to us non-existence as existent, nor cast the veil of non-existence over the beauty of existence. Make this phenomenal world the mirror⁴ to reflect the manifestations of Thy beauty, and not a veil to separate and repel us from Thee. Cause these unreal phenomena of the universe to be for us the sources of knowledge and insight, and not the cause of ignorance and blindness. Our alienation and severance from Thy beauty all proceed from ourselves. Deliver us from ourselves, and accord to us intimate knowledge of Thee.

Make my heart pure, my soul from error free,
Make tears and sighs my daily lot to be,
And lead me on Thy road away from self,
That lost to self I may approach to Thee.

Set enmity between the world and me,
Make me averse from worldly company:
From other objects turn away my heart,
So that it be engrossed with love to Thee.

¹ 'To say, O Muhammad, that thy Lord will raise thee to a glorious station' (Morseu, xvil. 51), interpreted to mean, his power of intercession.

² The headings are all omitted in this manuscript, but spaces are left, which were probably intended to be filled in with gold lettering.

³ A prayer recited to Muhammad. See 'Gulshan-i Râz,' p. 21, note 1.

⁴ The divine Real Being is reflected in 'Nothing' (Feyd) as in a mirror, and gives it all the reality it possesses. See 'Gulshan-i Râz,' p. 14, l. 134. This idea comes from Plotinus, 'On the Soul of the Greeks.'

TRANSLATION OF THE LAWĀ'IH.

'I do not render praises unto Thee.'¹ How is this, seeing that 'all praise returns to Thee'? The threshold of Thy sanctity is too high for my praises. Thou art what Thine own praises declare Thee. O Lord, we are not able to tell Thy praises or set forth Thy glories. Whatevsver is manifested on the pages of the universe is praise reflected back to the threshold of Thy most glorious Majesty. What can faculty or tongue of mine declare worthy of Thy glory and honour? Thou art such as Thou hast Thyself declared, and the pearls of Thy praise are what Thyself hast strung.

In the vast largesse of Thy Majesty
This whole world's but a drop from out the sea;
What power have we to celebrate Thy praise?
No praises save Thine own are meet for Thee!

Where the speaker of the words, 'I am the most eloquent [of the Arabs]'² lowered the flag of his eloquence, and found himself impotent to render Thee fitting praises, how shall a mere stammerer venture to open his mouth or a dullard deliver an apt discourse? Nevertheless, in this case to excuse one's self on the ground of one's incapacity and deficiencies is itself the gravest of defects, and to put one's self on a level with that prince of the world and of the faith would be a serious breach of propriety.

¹ A saying of Mubtata'ail.

² Firoozi (Haji Khalfa, v. 544) translates, 'Quomodo possim?' Cp. Sura xvi. 46, 'Neither is there aught which doth not celebrate Thy praise,' and Ps. cxlv. 10.

³ Referring to the saying, 'I am the most eloquent of those who pronounce the letter *Zaf* (Dzād),' the Arab shibboleth.

gested by the Mīrzā's version. From the beginning of *Flash VIII.* to the end of the book the translation is the Mīrzā's French version turned into English by me. In this part of the work I have followed the Mīrzā closely, only referring to the original to verify a word here and there. I am solely responsible for the preface and notes. If they contain errors of fact or doctrine, these must not be imputed to the Mīrzā.

The references to the *Gulshan-i Kās* are to my edition of that work (Trübner, 1880); those to the *Masnavi* of Jalāl-ud-dīn Rūmī to my translation of that poem (second edition, published in Trübner's Oriental Series, 1898); those to Omar Khayyām to my text and translation, published in the same series, second edition, 1901.

As regards transliteration, I follow the rule laid down long since by the Indian Government, that when foreign words have become naturalized in English they should be spelled according to English usage. Thus I write Calcutta, Delhi, Koran, Abulhasan, etc. Again, when a Persian writer has chosen to transliterate his own name in a particular way, I do not presume to interfere with his discretion. I give titles of books as they are spelled on the title-pages, and, like *Bien*, I represent *Haoua* by the 'spiritus lenis' ('). With these exceptions, I have in the main observed the transliteration rules of the Royal Asiatic Society.

E. H. W.

The manuscript of the *Lawa'ih* now reproduced is undated, but was probably written within a century of Jāmī's death in 998 A.H. It once belonged to the royal library at Delhi, and the outside pages contain notes by the librarians, one of which, dated the twenty-fourth year of Aurangzeb, states that it was worm-eaten even then. W. H. Morley, who also owned it, has noted on the fly-leaf his opinion that it is not Jāmī's work, but written by one Sayyid 'Abd-ul Kāfi. This, however, is certainly a mistake. Haji Khalfā, in his notice of Jāmī's *Lawa'ih*, quotes the beginning, which agrees with the beginning of this manuscript,¹ and one of the quatrains gives Jāmī's name. The British Museum possesses three copies--viz., Add. 16,820 (Iken, p. 44a); Add. 10,519, iv (Iken, p. 326b); and Add. 7,689, iv, folio 150 onwards (Iken, p. 810b). Copies are to be found in other libraries. In addition to that now reproduced, I possess one, written in an Indian hand, probably in the eighteenth century.²

The facsimile of the manuscript has been made by Messrs. Nops, of Ludgate Hill. They have been very successful in removing nearly all traces of the stains and worm-holes in the original and I think the writer of the manuscript himself, could he see it, would find little fault with their reproduction of his handwriting.

I began the translation some years ago, but, owing to failing eyesight, had to stop after getting to the end of *Flash VII*. I have now been fortunate enough to secure the assistance of a very competent scholar, Mirzā Muḥammad Kāẓim, who has furnished me with a literal French version of the whole, together with some valuable notes. In his translation the Mirzā has chiefly followed the British Museum Manuscript, Add. No. 16,819, which contains several passages not found in this manuscript. Most, if not all, of these seem to me to be glosses which have crept into the text, but I have given them in this translation, marking them with square brackets. Up to the end of *Flash VII*, the accompanying translation is that made by me some years ago, with some corrections sug-

¹ Haji Khalfā, v, 814.

² The Munich 'Catalogue,' p. 21, mentions a manuscript of the '*Lawa'ih*' (sic) with a different beginning.

asceticism by the example of the Christians in Syria, where the first Sūfī convent was built, and Neoplatonist doctrine furnished the rationale of ascetic practice. Matter was evil, and therefore all material and sensuous taint, including the natural instincts (*phronētic zōtēs*), must be purged away and extirpated by all who claimed to be spiritual men.¹ Thus a double system of religious conduct was set up—the external law for ordinary men and the ‘counsels of perfection,’ the more perfect way of asceticism and contemplation for spiritual men. The external law of ritual observances had no longer any dominion over spiritual men.² This abrogation of the ceremonial law naturally tempted some undisciplined Sūfīs, as it has tempted some professing followers of St. Paul, to laxity in the observance of the moral law. It is needless to say that these antinomian developments were never countenanced by any reputable theologians or teachers, but, on the contrary, were always condemned by them. Still, it cannot be denied that wild enthusiasts and false brethren did occasionally misinterpret Sūfī doctrines in this way, and thus gave some ground for the prejudices of orthodox Moslems against the whole body of Sūfīs.

Harnack, in his ‘History of Dogma,’ has shown how profoundly Christian theology has been affected by Neoplatonist ideas. The disputes about *Ousia*, *Hypostasis*, and *Physis* which rent Christendom asunder³ mainly grew from ‘after-thoughts of theology’ suggested by these ideas, and their influence has extended to our own days.⁴ It is hardly too much to say that their influence on the course of events has been as considerable as that of the Roman law. In Islām their influence has been much more restricted than in Christendom, but, such as it was, it is instructive to trace it.⁵

¹ Jalāl ad dīn Rūmī, however, takes occasion to warn his disciples that this counsel of perfection is not to be taken too literally. See the parable of the peacock who tore off his plumage to avoid the pursuit of the fowls (‘Masharīf,’ p. 259).

² See ‘Masharīf,’ p. 229.

³ Gibbon’s ‘Decline and Fall,’ chapter xxi.

⁴ ‘*Quædam genera Augustinorum et Augustini ut gentis Catholicorum.*’ With Paul should be coupled Plotinus. See Bigg’s ‘Introduction to Augustine’s Confessions’ (Methuen, 1908).

⁵ For a sketch of the system of Plotinus, who is the best exponent of Neoplatonism, see Appendix II.

not only permitted evil, but of set purpose allotted evils, present or future, to the majority of mankind. This strange doctrine (which has its parallel in Europe) forced the Sūfī theologians to attempt some reconciliation of Divine power, as thus interpreted, with Divine goodness, and here, like Augustine, they availed themselves of the 'not-being' ('*ada*') of Plotinus.¹

Perhaps, however, the true Sūfī spirit was best interpreted by Jalāl-ud-dīn Rūmī, when he declared that he agreed with all seventy-three sects as being all honest attempts to grasp the obscure truth. Errors in 'naming the names of God' are of small account. According to the *Haddīth*, 'He who does the works will know the doctrine.' And true love to God atones for all mistakes of doctrine.²

Jāmī is a typical Sūfī theologian. He works hard to construct a reasoned basis for Sūfism, but finally realizes that his logical definitions and syllogisms cannot express the truth as it really is, and add nothing to the grounds on which the convictions of Sūfīs must always rest. It is only by means of true spiritual clairvoyance generated by love that Divine knowledge (*ma'rifa*) can be attained.³ Those who have these spiritual intuitions do not need demonstrations, and to those who have them not all demonstrations are useless.

G. Muhammad, like Luther, rejected asceticism. Suhrawardī quotes several of his anti-ascetic sayings, including the familiar one, 'There is no monasticism in Islām.' He approved of poverty, it is true, and prescribed a month of fasting, but set his face firmly against the cloistered life and celibacy.⁴ The early Sūfīs were, perhaps, attracted to

¹ See 'Mishnavī' (second edition), Introduction, p. xxi, etc., and *Diras* XXVII. in this treatise.

² See the parable of Moses and the shepherd who was faulty in theology, but fervent in spirit ('*Musawwī*,' v. 62, and also p. 139).

³ See 'Mishnavī,' p. 200. Newman ('*Apologia*,' p. 19) quotes Keble as saying, 'The firmness of assent which we give to religious doctrine is due, not to the probabilities which introduced it, but, to the living power of faith and love which accepted it.' This is worked out in Newman's '*Grammar of Assent*.'

⁴ See the '*Sayings of Muhammad*,' by Suhrawardī (Constable, 1906), Nos. 152, 301, 162, etc.

will be Paradise and the Houris?"¹ On the other hand, those who led evil lives would lose by degrees the portion of real being within them, dropping to the level of animals, or even plants, and finally relapsing into non-existence. This result is nowhere clearly stated, but seems implied in the language used, which is, of course, very guarded.²

3. Muhammad had no taste for speculation. He said: 'Think on the mercies of God, not on the essence of God.' And again: 'Sit not with those who discuss predestination.' His language on predestination is merely popular. In one passage it is that of determinism, in another that of freewill. In one place Allah constrains all, guiding some aright and causing others to err.³ Elsewhere man acts freely without constraint. But the theologians astounded on these obscure problems, and did their best to shift the religious centre of gravity from right conduct to right opinion on these problems. The traditionists fathered on Muhammad various sayings to prove that he regarded orthodoxy on these 'afterthoughts of theology' as all important for salvation. Thus the saying, 'My people shall be split into seventy-three sects, all of whom but one shall perish in hell fire,' is one which betrays theological authorship. In Muhammad's lifetime the contest was not with sects within Islam, but with those who denied Islam altogether. For these he had no mercy, but he would scarcely have been so hard on his own people for venial errors of opinion. Again, he could hardly have said, 'Qadarites are Magian (dualists),' at a time when (as is almost certain) no sect of that name had yet arisen.⁴ The early Sūfīs did not concern themselves with the disputes of the sects. But the Sūfī theologians could not altogether ignore them. They took sides against the sects which leaned to anthropomorphism, and, on the other hand, fully agreed with the doctrine of the Compulsionists or extreme Predestinationists.⁵ That sect held that God, as the One real Agent,

¹ 'Gulshan-i Raz,' I. 701.

² See Omar Khayyām (second edition), Appendix, p. 568.

³ Koran, xvi. 88, 89.

⁴ The Qadarites would be classed as semi Pelagians by Western theologians.

⁵ See 'Gulshan-i Raz,' I. 195 and 538.

matters merely relating to ritual observances was not clearly laid down. It has been said that Islām means 'striving after righteousness.'¹ That is so, but righteousness was interpreted as including the scrupulous observance of trivial rules as to ablutions, prayers, fasting, etc.² It may well be doubted if Muḥammad is responsible for some of the directions about ritual which are ascribed to him,³ but, be this as it may, more and more importance came to be assigned to the scrupulous observance of these ritual forms. The early Ṣūfis disliked this externalism, and came to regard all rites as of small account. They thought that the mechanical routine of rites (*taqīd*) only served to induce the spiritual torpor, which Dante called 'Accidia.'⁴ St. Bernard remarked this result in his monks, but he set it down to the fault of the men, not to that of the system. The Ṣūfī theologians adopted the Neoplatonist view that the ritual law is not binding upon spiritual men. St. Paul held a similar view. Shabistārī contrasts the mere outward Islām of ritual observances with the true piety of some heathens, much to the advantage of the latter, and Jalāl-ud-dīn Rūmī declares that 'Poets exit the Mosque while they ignore the true temple in the heart.'⁵

4. The Koranic doctrine of future rewards and punishments was ultimately refined away. The early Ṣūfis held very strongly that love to God should be quite disinterested and unaimed by hope of reward. They thought 'other-worldliness' no better than worldliness. According to the Ṣūfī theologians there is no material heaven or hell. When union is attained, asks Shabistārī, 'of what account then

¹ Hera, lxvii. 11; Hirschfeld, p. 11; and Sulzwadg's 'Saviors of Muḥammad.' Jomard defines Islām as unquestioning obedience and submission to Allah's commands ('Notices of Eastern Asia Manuscripts,' x., p. 381).

² See the rules about ablution, etc., in the 'Mishcat ul Musallī,' translated by Mr. Evans (Calcutta, 1896). Cf. Omar Khayyām's 'whimsical complaints,' Quatrain 189.

³ They seem opposed to the spirit of the text: 'Righteousness does not consist in turning to the east or to the west, etc.' (Buraḥ. 172).

⁴ Purgatory (Canto XVIII.).

⁵ 'Ghazal i Dīz,' l. 977; and 'Masewi,' v. 100, and Introduction, p. xxiv (second edition). But elsewhere (ib. p. 76) Jalāl-ud-dīn says forms and symbols are generally needed. In default of some outward and visible sign which they can perceive, men find it hard to conceive the inward spirit.

Greek terminology. Thus Hakim Šaḥrāʾī, who lived at the same time as Ghazālī, introduces 'Universal Reason' and 'Universal Soul,' the second and third hypostases of the Trinity of Plotinus, and the principal later poets follow suit.¹

The first Šūfis differed from ordinary Moslems only in their quietism (*qasīda*) and their puritan ideal of life. They held the orthodox doctrines, with perhaps a few reservations. But when Greek influences came into play all these doctrines underwent more or less modification. Take the following samples:

1. The cardinal doctrine of Islām was altered from Monotheism to Monism. 'There is no God but Allāh' became 'There is no real Being or real Agent but "The One," "The Truth" ' (*Al-Haqq*).

2. God is no longer a supremely remote Deity, enthroned above the empyrean heaven, creating the world by one fiat, ruling His subjects like some mighty monarch, by commands and prohibitions, and paying them wages according to their deserts. He has become a Being Immanent and 'deeply intertused' in the universe,² and giving it all the real existence it has. The Koran speaks of Allāh as omniscient, but omniscience was now expanded into 'omni-essence,' if one may use such a word.³ And the Plotinian emanation doctrine was borrowed to support this.

3. Like all great religious teachers, Muḥammad laid chief stress on right conduct, and this consisted in implicit obedience to every one of Allāh's commands, as disobedience to any one was sin. The distinction between moral laws and com-

¹ Mr. Nicholson has brought this out in his '*Discrīptīve Sharīfī Tabrīz*' (Cambridge, 1899). For a sketch of the system of Plotinus see Appendix II.

² Cf. Wordsworth, '*Lines on Tintern Abbey*':

"A sense sublime
Of something far more deeply intertused,

Of something far more deeply intertused,
Whose dwelling is the light of seeing eyes,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the heart of man;
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things."

³ Or 'omnity,' as Sir Thomas Browne calls it in the '*Religio Medici*,' § 85.

the great Imām Ghazzālī as among the first who wrote systematic treatises on the doctrines of the Sūfis.¹ We have Ghazzālī's own account of the way in which he was attracted to Sūfism,² and other passages in his writings prove that he used the forms of Greek thought to explain Sūfī principles.³ If it be asked how Greek philosophy reached Ghazzālī, who was a native of Khurāsān,⁴ the answer is easy. When Justinian closed the schools at Athens, Damascius and his Neoplatonist brethren fled to the court of Nushirvān. They only remained there about a year, and left in 538 A.D.; but Nushirvān had some translations of Neoplatonist books made at the time, and times were followed by many others, made two centuries and a half later, under the Abbasides at Baghdād.⁵

Greek philosophy was expounded by the so-called Arabian, but really Persian, philosophers, Al Farābī and Avicenna, and afterwards in the *Ikhwān-ūṣ-Ṣafā*.⁶ Shahrastānī, a contemporary of Ghazzālī, gave accounts of all the chief Greek philosophers, including the 'Sheikh of the Greeks' or Plotinus,⁷ his editor Porphyry and Proclus. The so-called 'Theology of Aristotle,' which is a summary of the 'Enneads' of Plotinus,⁸ appeared probably soon afterwards. The result was that Neoplatonism, mainly in the form expounded by Plotinus, was used by all the more learned Sūfīs to explain and justify the simple emotional sayings of the early Sūfīs. Henceforward, Neoplatonism pervades all systematic treatises on Sūfism, such as the *Kitāb-ūṣ-Ḥikam*, the *Maqṣad-ūṣ-Ṣifā*,⁹ the *Gulshan i Raz*,¹⁰ and the *Tawḥīq*. Even the poets use the

¹ 'Notizen et Extracts des Manuscrits,' &c., pp. 501, 502.

² See Schenkl's, 'Kleine Philosophien des Arabes,' p. 55.

³ See the passage on 'Tahfīd' given in Appendix I.

⁴ Khurāsān was the 'land of culture,' as Hammar says, and most of the philosophers came from that Eastern province.

⁵ Whitaker's 'Neoplatonists,' p. 133; and Schenkl's, 'Notizen et Extracts des Manuscrits' (Bonn, 1836), Introduction.

⁶ See Diez's 'Die Weisheit' (Leipzig, 1872).

⁷ See Hammar's German translation of Shahrastānī's 'Book of Sects,' ii. 192 (Halle, 1850).

⁸ See Dr. Brown's note, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, April, 1901. The book was published with a Latin translation by Petrus Nicolaus in 1618.

⁹ The late Professor Palmer published a summary of this book under the title of 'Oriental Mysticism' (Cambridge, 1897).

¹⁰ Edited and translated by me (Trübner, 1889).

suggests the philosophy employed to systematize and give a reasoned basis for the unreasoned 'experiences' of unlearned Sūfis. It of course refers to the 'inner light.' The Platonists were called *Ishraqīn* or *Illuminatī*, because they regarded intellectual intuition or intuitive reason as the main source of knowledge, whereas the Peripatetics (*Mashshū'īn*) recognised no sources of knowledge except the senses and the discursive reason (*Hisābīn*). The word *Ishraq*, or 'lights,' is often met with in this connection. Thus Shams-ud-din Muḥammad ash-Shahrastī is called by Ḥajī Khalfā 'a metaphysician learned in the inner lights' (*Ishraq*).¹ Shihāb-ud-dīn as-Suhrawardī, who was put to death at Aleppo in 587 A.H., by order of that valiant defender of the Faith, Salḡan Ṣalḡ-ud-dīn, wrote a book entitled *Ilḡnāt-ul-Ishraq*, or 'Philosophy of Inner Light.'² The author of the *Dalīl-nāma* says that the belief of the pure Sūfis is the same as that of the *Ishraqīn* or Platonists,³ and also that Sūfīs were classed as orthodox (*Mutasharrīf*) and Platonists.⁴ Ḥajī Khalfā, in his article on Sūfism (*Tasawwuf*), says that anyone who reads Sūfī books cannot fail to remark that their terminology is borrowed from the Platonists (*Ishraqīn*), and more especially from the later ones—i.e., the Neoplatonists.⁵

It was probably at about the end of the 11th century A.H. that Neoplatonic *gnōsis* began to influence and modify Sūfī doctrine. Up to that date the doctrine had been expounded in short precepts, parables (*matḡal*), and similes like those in the *Kornā*. But educated Moslems had outgrown these primitive methods of instruction. They wanted something more systematic. Jalāl-ud-dīn Rūmī tells us how his critics assailed him for dealing in trivial examples and parables instead of giving a systematic account of the stages of the soul's ascent to God.⁶ Ibn Khallikān mentions Muḥāsibī and

¹ Ḥajī Khalfā, iii. 479.

² Ibn Khallikān, iv. 138. This Shihāb-ud-dīn must not be confounded with his more famous namesake who died at Baghdad in the colour of sanctity in 682 A.H. Ibn Khallikān, ii. 362.

³ Shams and Teyler's translation, iii. 261.

⁴ *Flāḡ*, ii. 274; see also iii. 122.

⁵ Ḥajī Khalfā, ii. 509.

⁶ See 'Masnavī,' p. 108.

PREFACE

THE *Lawā'ih* is a treatise on SŪF theology or theosophy, as distinguished from the religious emotions experienced by all Sūfis, learned and unlearned alike. Catholic authorities have drawn this distinction between 'experimental' and 'doctrinal' mysticism,¹ and it is a great help towards clear thinking on this subject. The religious emotion common to all mankind is, so to speak, raised to its *akī* power in the mystic. They are overwhelmed by the sense of the Divine omnipresence, and of their own dependence on God. They are dominated and intoxicated by their vivid sense of the close relation subsisting between the soul and God. They conceive themselves as being in touch with God, feeling His motions in their souls, and at times rising to direct vision of Him by the 'inner light' vouchsafed to them. These religious experiences were the rough material out of which the doctrinal reasoned system, set out in treatises like the *Lawā'ih*, was built up. Psychologists have advanced various theories as to the genesis of these 'experiences.' With these we are not at present concerned. But as to the origin of the philosophical ideas and terms employed in the *Lawā'ih* and similar works to formulate the Sūfī theology, there can be little doubt. The source of Sūfī theology was Neoplatonism.

The title of the book, *Lawā'ih*, or 'Flashes of Light,'

¹ See the article on 'Mystical Theology' in Adie and Arnold's 'Catholic Dictionary.'

² See Dr. William James's 'Varieties of Religious Experience' (Longmans, 1902). It may be doubted whether the 'subliminal self' affords a satisfactory solution of the problem.

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See but One, say but One, know but One.

GULSHAN I RÂZ: l. 683.

The *Alif* of the Loved One's form is graven on my heart,
No other letter did my Shaikh ever to me impart.

HĀZIR: Ode 416 (ed. Brockhaus).

My heart inquired, 'What is the heaven-sent lore?
If thou'st attained it, teach me. I implore.'

'*Alif*!' I said, 'if there be one within,
One letter serves to name him—say no more.'

OMAR KĀHYĀM: Quatrain 109.

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LAWĀ'IH

A TREATISE ON SŪFISM

BY

NŪR-UD-DĪN 'ABD-UR-RAHMAN JĀMĪ

FACSIMILE OF AN OLD MS.

WITH A TRANSLATION BY

E. H. WHINFIELD, M.A., AND MIRZĀ MUHAMMAD KĀZVĪNĪ

[And Preface on the Influence of Greek Philosophy
upon Sūfism]

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