

Stray Reflections

The Private Notebook of Muhammad Iqbal

Also includes: 'Stray Thoughts'

Edited with Afterword by
Dr. Javid Iqbal

Revised and annotated by
Khurram Ali Shafique

Appendix
'A Rare Writing of Iqbal'
by Afzal Haq Qarshi

IQBAL ACADEMY PAKISTAN

STRAY REFLECTIONS: THE PRIVATE NOTEBOOK OF MUHAMMAD
IQBAL

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For centuries Eastern heart and intellect
have been absorbed in the question –
Does God exist?
I propose to raise a new question
– new, that is to say, for the East –
Does man exist?

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Nations are born in the hearts of poets;
they prosper and die in the hands of politicians.

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Given character and healthy imagination,
it is possible to reconstruct this world
of sin and misery
into a veritable paradise.

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It is idle to seek logical truth in poetry.
The ideal of imagination is beauty, not truth.
Do not then try to show a poet's greatness
by quoting passages from his works which,
in your opinion,
embody scientific truth.

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Appendix: A Rare Writing of Iqbal

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Note on the Third Edition

In revising this third edition with the permission of Dr. Javid Iqbal, I have retained the previous editions – Dr. Javid Iqbal’s scholarly Introduction (included here as the ‘Afterword’), and the numbered headings to the entries.

Eleven later ‘Stray Thoughts,’ ten of which were discovered by Afzal Haq Qarshi in 1983 (See Appendix) were added to the second edition and have been retained here but form separate sections. Some longer writings of Iqbal, unrelated to the notebook or reflections, were included in the second edition but are now being removed on the advice of the Editor. These may be found in other anthologies where they properly belong.

While revising this notebook I observed that many entries were incorporated into ‘The Muslim Community,’ a lecture that Iqbal delivered at the MAO College, Aligarh, in December the same year. I have marked the comparisons between the entries and the identical or similar passages from the lecture in the footnotes of this edition.

Since Iqbal revised some of the reflections for publication in the *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917, such revisions have also been identified in the footnotes to the present edition.

While annotating this edition I have restricted myself to textual and basic clarifications only. All such notes are suffixed with my initials to differentiate them from the editorial material of the distinguished Editor.

The suggestions and input provided by Mr. Suheyl Umar (Director, Iqbal Academy Pakistan) and the renowned Iqbal scholars Dr. Rafiuddin Hashmi, Dr. Tehseen Firaqi and M. Akram Chughtai are gratefully acknowledged.

I am also grateful to Dr. Javid Iqbal for giving permission for the current revision. It is a matter of personal honour for me to be assisting him in this important national task.

Khurram Ali Shafique

Stray Reflections, 1910

1. Art

Art is a sacred lie.

2. The Discovery

Our Soul discovers itself when we come into contact with a great mind. It is not until I had realised the Infinitude of Goethe's imagination that I discovered the narrow breadth of my own.

* Iqbal always spelled Goethe as "Geothe." Dr. Javid Iqbal's corrections have been retained in the present edition – KAS.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917. "Goethe's imagination" was changed to "Goethe's mind" – KAS.

3. Human Intellect

Human intellect is nature's attempt at self-criticism.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917, as "Human Intellect – Nature's attempt at self-criticism." – KAS.

4. The Economics of Charity

The charitable man really helps the non-charitable, not the indigent. For what is given to the poor is virtually given away to those who do not give anything to the poor. The non-charitable, therefore, are kept in their state of non-benevolence, and the benevolent man pays for them. This is the economics of charity.

5. The Existence of God

My friends often ask me, “Do you believe in the existence of God”? I think I am entitled to know the meaning of the terms used in this question before I answer it. My friends ought to explain to me what they mean by “believe,” “existence” and “God”, especially by the last two, if they want an answer to their question. I confess I do not understand these terms; and whenever I cross-examine them I find that they do not understand them either.

6. A Dialogue

Heart – “It is absolutely certain that God does exist.”

Head – “But, my dear boy! Existence is one of my categories, and you have no right to use it.”

Heart – “So much the better, my Aristotle!”

7. The Satisfaction of Vanity

The satisfaction of vanity has an economic value with us. Call me *sub-assistant surgeon* instead of *Hospital Assistant* and I am quite contented even if you do not increase my salary.

8. Cruel Psychology

Excuse me a bit of cruel Psychology. You fail in your enterprise, and now you wish to leave your home and try your luck in other climes. It is not because your ambition has received a fresh spur from your failure; but chiefly because you wish to hide your face from those who have witnessed your failure.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917. It was reworded as: “ When we fail in an enterprise we feel inclined to leave our home and try our luck in alien climes. If such is your situation, study your soul closely before deciding one way or the other. Is it because your ambition has received a fresh spur from your failure, or because you wish to hide your face from those who have witnessed your failure? Excuse this bit of cruel Psychology.” – KAS.

9. The Power of Belief

Belief is a great power. When I see that a proposition of mine is believed by another mind, my own conviction of its truth is thereby immensely increased.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917 without any changes – KAS.

10. The God of Islam

Christianity describes God as love; Islam as power. How shall we decide between the two conceptions? I think the history of mankind and of the universe as a whole must tell us as to which of the two conceptions is truer. I find that God reveals Himself in history more as power than love. I do not deny the love of God; I mean that, on the basis of our historical experience, God is better described as power.

11. Hegel's System of Philosophy

Hegel's system of philosophy is an epic poem in prose.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917 without any changes – KAS.

12. 15th May 1910

15th May, 1910: Yesterday morning at about 4, I saw that glorious visitor of our hemisphere known as Halley's comet. Once in seventy-five years this superb swimmer of infinite space appears on our skies. It is only with the eyes of my grandsons that I shall see it again. The state of my mind was quite unique. I felt as if something indescribably vast had been closed up within the narrow limits of my clay: Yet the thought that I could not see this wanderer again brought home to me the painful fact of my littleness. For the moment all ambition was killed in me.

13. Forms of Government

“Let fools fight for the forms of government,” says Alexander Pope. I cannot agree with this political philosophy. To my mind, government, whatever its form, is one of the determining forces of a people’s character. Loss of political power is equally ruinous to nations’ character. Ever since their political fall the Musalmans **Error! Bookmark not defined.** of India have undergone a rapid ethical deterioration. Of all the Muslim communities of the world they are probably the meanest in point of character. I do not mean to deplore our former greatness in this country, for, I confess, I am almost a fatalist in regard to the various forces that ultimately decide the destinies of nations. As a political force we are perhaps no longer required; but we are, I believe, still indispensable to the world as the only testimony to the absolute Unity of God – Our value among nations, then, is purely evidential.

14. Poetry and Logical Truth

It is idle to seek logical truth in poetry. The ideal of imagination is beauty, not truth. Do not then try to show a poet's greatness by quoting passages from his works which, in your opinion, embody scientific truth.

15. Personal Immortality

Personal immortality is not a *state*; it is a *process*. I think the distinction of spirit and body has done a lot of harm. Several religious systems have been based on this erroneous distinction. Man is essentially an *energy*, a *force*, or rather a combination of forces which admit of various arrangements. One definite arrangement of these forces is *Personality* – whether it is a purely chance arrangement does not concern me here. I accept it as a fact among other facts of nature, and try to find out whether this arrangement of forces – so dear to us – can continue as it is. Is it then possible that these forces should continue to work in the same direction as they are working in a living, healthy personality? I think it is. Let human personality be represented by a circle – which is only another way of saying that these forces result in describing a definite circle which may be obliterated by an upsettal of the arrangement of forces constituting it. How then can we manage to secure the continuance of this circle? Evidently by energising in a way calculated to assist the constitutive forces in their regular routine of work. You must give up all those modes of activity which have a tendency to dissolve *personality*, e.g. humility, contentment, slavish obedience, modes of human action which have been erroneously dignified by the name of virtue. On the other hand, high ambition, generosity, charity and a just pride in our traditions and power fortify the sense of personality.

Personality being the dearest possession of man must be looked upon as the ultimate *good*. It must work as a standard to test the worth of our actions. That is good which has a tendency to give us the sense of personality; that is bad which has a tendency to suppress and ultimately

dissolve personality. By adopting a mode of life calculated to strengthen personality we are really fighting against death – a shock which may dissolve the arrangement of forces we call personality. Personal immortality then lies in our own hands. It requires an effort to secure the immortality of the person. The idea I have dropped here has far-reaching consequences. I wish I could have time to discuss the comparative value of Islam, Buddhism and Christianity from the standpoint of this idea; but unfortunately I am too busy to work out the details.

* Iqbal seems to be shifting arbitrarily between “P” and “p” as the first letter of the variously used “personality” throughout this reflection, and it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between the small and large letter in the manuscript. See the facsimile at the end of this book for comparison – KAS.

16. History

History is a sort of applied ethics. If ethics is to be an experimental science like other sciences, it must be based on the revelations of human experience. A public declaration of this view will surely shock the susceptibilities even of those who claim to be orthodox in morality but whose public conduct is determined by the teachings of history.

17. Metaphysics

I confess I am a bit tired of metaphysics. But whenever I happen to argue with people I find that their arguments are always based on certain propositions which they assume without criticism. I am, therefore, driven to examine the value of these propositions. The practical in all its shapes drives me back to the speculative. It seems to me to be impossible to get rid of metaphysics altogether.

18. Fanaticism

All nations accuse us of fanaticism. I admit the charge – I go further and say that we are justified in our fanaticism. Translated in the language of biology fanaticism is nothing but the principle of individuation working in the case of group. In this sense all forms of life are more or less fanatical and ought to be so if they care for their collective life. And as a matter of fact all nations are fanatical. Criticise an Englishman's religion, he is immovable; but criticise his civilisation, his country or the behaviour of his nation in any sphere of activity and you will bring out his innate fanaticism. The reason is that his nationality does not depend on religion; it has a geographical basis – his country. His fanaticism then is justly roused when you criticise his country. Our position, however, is fundamentally different. With us nationality is a pure *idea*; it has no material basis. Our only rallying point is a sort of mental agreement in a certain view of the world. If then our fanaticism is roused when our religion is criticised, I think we are as much justified in our fanaticism as an Englishman is when his civilisation is denounced. The feeling in both cases is the same though associated with different objects. *Fanaticism is patriotism for religion; patriotism, fanaticism for country.*

* This entry was incorporated into the paper 'The Muslim Community' the same year (1910). Granting patriotism to "people whose solidarity depends on a territorial basis," he attacks those who accuse Muslims of '*asabiyyat* [fanaticism]: "We are as much justified in our '*asabiyyat* as they are in their patriotism. For, what is '*asabiyyat*? Nothing but the principle of individuation working in the case of a group. All forms of life are more or less fanatical and ought to be so, if they care for their individual or collective life. And as a matter of fact all

nations are fanatical. Criticise a Frenchman's religion; you do not very much rouse his feelings; since your criticism does not touch the life-principle of his nationality. But criticise his civilisation, his country, or the corporate behaviour of his nation in any sphere of political activity and you will bring out his innate fanaticism. The reason is that his nationality does not depend on his religious belief; it has a geographical basis – his country. His *'asabiyyat* is then justly roused when you criticise the locality – which he has idealised as the essential principle of his nationality. Our position, however, is essentially different. With us nationality is a pure idea; it has no objective basis. Our only rallying-point, as a people, is a kind of purely subjective agreement in a certain view of the world. If then our *'asabiyyat* is roused when our religion is criticised, I think we are as much justified in it as a Frenchman is when his country is denounced. The feeling in each case is the same though associated with different objects. *'asabiyyat* is patriotism for religion; patriotism, *'asabiyyat* for country." – KAS.

19. Patriotism

Islam appeared as a protest against idolatry. And what is patriotism but a subtle form of idolatry; a deification of a material object. The patriotic songs of various nations will bear me out in my calling patriotism a deification of a material object. Islam could not tolerate idolatry in any form. It is our eternal mission to protest against idolatry in all its forms. What was to be demolished by Islam could not be made the very principle of its structure as a political community. The fact that the Prophet prospered and died in a place not his birthplace is perhaps a mystic hint to the same effect.

* This entry was incorporated into the paper 'The Muslim Community' the same year (1910). The passage read: "To my mind the feeling of patriotism which the national idea evokes is a kind of deification of a material object, diametrically opposed to the essence of Islam which appears as a protest against all the subtle and coarse forms of idolatry." The very next lines embody the substance of the previous reflection, 'Fanaticism.'

20. Justice

Justice is an inestimable treasure; but we must guard it against the thief of *mercy*.

21. Muslim Solidarity

From what I have said above on Islam and patriotism it follows that our solidarity as a community rests on our hold on the religious principle. The moment this hold is loosened we are nowhere. Probably the fate of the Jews will befall us. And what can we do in order to tighten the hold? Who is the principal depositary of religion in a community? It is the woman. The Musalman woman ought to receive sound religious education, for she is virtually the maker of the community. I do not believe in an absolute system of education. Education, like other things, is determined by the needs of a community. For our purposes religious education is quite sufficient for the Muslim girl. All subjects which have a tendency to dewomanise and to de-Muslimise her must be carefully excluded from her education. But our educationists are still groping in the dark; they have not yet been able to prescribe a course of study for our girls. They are, perhaps, too much dazzled by the glamour of western ideals to realise the difference between Islamism which constructs nationality out of a purely abstract idea, i.e. religion, and “Westernism” the very life-blood of whose concept of nationality is a concrete thing, i.e. country.

22. The German Nation

In the economy of nature each nation has a function allotted to it. The function of the German nation is the organisation of human knowledge. But they have recently started on a commercial enterprise which may give them an empire, but they will have to suffer the displacement of a higher ideal by the all-absorbing spirit of trade.

23. The Modern Hindu

It is extremely interesting to watch the birth and growth of a new ideal among a people. O! the enthusiasm it inspires and the force with which it attracts all the energies of a people to one common centre. The modern Hindu is quite a phenomenon. To me his behaviour is more of a psychological than a political study. It seems that the ideal of political freedom which is an absolutely *new* experience to him has seized his entire soul, turning the various streams of his energy from their wonted channels and bringing them to pour forth their whole force into this new channel of activity. When he has passed through this experience he will realise his loss. He will be transformed into an absolutely new people – new in the sense that he will no longer find himself dominated by the ethical ideals of his ancestors whose sublime fancies have been a source of perpetual consolation to many a distressed mind. Nations are mothers of *ideals*; but ideals, in course of time, become pregnant and give birth to new nations.

24. Right and Might

Philosophy is the logic of *right*, history the logic of *might*.
The cannons of this later logic appear to be more sound
than those of her sister logic.

25. The Future of Afghanistan

The verdict of history is that buffer states have never been able to form themselves into great political units. So was the case with Syria – a buffer state between the Empire of Rome and that of the Persians. It seems difficult to forecast the future of Afghanistan.

26. Life as Criticism of Poetry

Matthew Arnold defines poetry as criticism of life. That life is criticism of poetry is equally true.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917 without any changes – KAS.

27. European Christianity

In the sphere of human thought Muhammad, Buddha, and Kant were probably the greatest revolutionaries. In the sphere of action Napoleon stands unrivalled. I do not include Christ among the world's revolutionaries, since the movement initiated by him was soon absorbed by pre-Christian paganism. European Christianity seems to me to be nothing more than a feeble translation of ancient paganism in the language of Semitic theology.

28. Christ and Spinoza

The Jewish race has produced only two great men – Christ and Spinoza. The former was God incarnated in the Son, the latter in the universe. Spinoza was only a completion of the greatest teacher of his race.

29. Aristotle

I have the greatest respect for Aristotle, not only because I (living in the twentieth century) know him much better than the older generations of my community, but also because of his vast influence on the thought of my people. The tinge, however, of ingratitude revealed in his criticism of Plato's doctrine of Ideas withholds me from giving him my fullest admiration. I do not deny the *truth* contained in his criticism of his master's views; but I detest the spirit in which he chooses to approach them.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917. The last sentence was changed to: "I do not deny the element of truth in his criticism, but I do detest the spirit in which he chooses to handle his master." – KAS.

30. The Madness of Nietzsche

There are strange inconsistencies in the nature of man. If I marry a prostitute I indicate thereby that I do not object to such nasty alliances. But if you make my conduct the subject of a story I take it ill – I condemn in theory what I permit in practice. The philosophy of Nietzsche – at least in the domain of ethics – is an attempt rationally to justify the conduct of Europe, yet this great prophet of aristocracy is universally condemned in Europe. Only a few have realised the meaning of his madness.

31. Aurangzeb

The political genius of Aurangzeb was extremely comprehensive. His one aim of life was, as it were, to subsume the various communities of this country under the notion of one universal empire. But in securing this imperial unity he erroneously listened to the dictates of his indomitable courage which had no sufficient background of political experience behind it. Ignoring the factor of time in the political evolution of his contemplated empire he started an endless struggle in the hope that he would be able to unify the discordant political units of India in his own lifetime. He failed to Islamise (not in the religious sense) India just as Alexander had failed to Hellenise Asia. The Englishman, however, came fully equipped with the political experiences of the nations of antiquity and his patience and tortoise-like perseverance succeeded where the hasty genius of Aurangzeb had failed. *Conquest does not necessarily mean unity.* Moreover, the history of the preceding Mohammedan dynasties had taught Aurangzeb that the strength of Islam in India did not depend, as his great ancestor Akbar had thought, so much on the goodwill of the people of this land as on the strength of the ruling race. With all his keen political perception, however, he could not undo the doings of his forefathers. Sevajee was not a product of Aurangzeb's reign; the Maharatta owed his existence to social and political forces called into being by the policy of Akbar. Aurangzeb's political perception, though true, was too late. Yet considering the significance of this perception he must be looked upon as the *founder* of Musalman nationality in India. I am sure posterity will one day recognise the truth of what I say. Among the English administrators of India, it was Lord Curzon who first perceived the truth about the power of England in India.

Hindu nationalism is wrongly attributed to his policy. Time will, I believe, show that it owes its existence to the policy of Lord Ripon. It is, therefore, clear that in their political purpose and perception both the Mughals and the English agree. I see no reason why the English historian should condemn Aurangzeb whose imperial ideal his countrymen have followed and whose political perception they have corroborated. Aurangzeb's political method was certainly very rough; but the ethical worth of his method ought to be judged from the standpoint of the age in which he lived and worked.

32. The Conquest of Persia

If you ask me what is the most important event in the history of Islam, I shall say without any hesitation: “The Conquest of Persia.” The battle of Nehawand gave the Arabs not only a beautiful country, but also an ancient civilization; or, more properly, a people who could make a new civilisation with the Semitic and Aryan material. Our Muslim civilisation is a product of the cross-fertilisation of the Semitic and the Aryan ideas. It is a child who inherits the softness and refinement of his Aryan mother, and the sterling character of his Semitic father. But for the conquest of Persia, the civilisation of Islam would have been one-sided. The conquest of Persia gave us what the conquest of Greece gave to the Romans.

* This entry was incorporated into the paper ‘The Muslim Community’ later the same year. Only minor changes were made. Namely, “but also an ancient people; or, more properly, a people who could...” was tightened up as “but also an ancient people who could...” In the same sentence, “civilisation with the...” was changed to “civilisation out of...” Next, “It is like a child who inherits...” was changed to “It inherits...” and “character of his...” to “character of its...” The last two sentences were re-arranged to read: “The conquest of Persia gave to the Musalmans what the conquest of Greece gave to the Romans. But for Persia our culture would have been absolutely one-sided.”

33. Ghalib

As far as I can see *Mirza Ghalib* – the Persian poet – is probably the only permanent contribution that we – Indian Muslims – have made to the general Muslim literature. Indeed he is one of those poets whose imagination and intellect place them above the narrow limitations of creed and nationality. His recognition is yet to come.

34. The Tutelage of Nations

A disinterested foreign rule is an impossibility. Yet the tutelage of nations is a necessity. The fee paid for this tuition is sometimes a nation's daily bread. The Mexicans had to undergo a severe training under the Spaniards before they could undertake to manage their own affairs.

35. The Popularity of a Poem

The popularity of a poem does not depend on the amount of logical truth revealed in it. Goldsmith's "Deserted Village" is extremely popular; yet the poem is full of scientific inaccuracies and bad economic reasoning.

36. Hegel, Goethe, Ghalib, Bedil and Wordsworth

I confess I owe a great deal to Hegel, Goethe, Mirza Ghalib, Mirza Abdul Qadir Bedil and Wordsworth. The first two led me into the “inside” of things; the third and fourth taught me how to remain oriental in spirit and expression after having assimilated foreign ideals of poetry, and the last saved me from atheism in my student days.

37. Parables

To explain the deepest truths of life in the form of homely parables requires extraordinary genius. Shakespeare, Maulana Rum (Jalaluddin) and Jesus Christ are probably the only illustrations of this rare type of genius.

38. The Jewish Contribution to Civilisation

In the development of universal civilisation the Jewish factor cannot be regarded as a negligible quantity. The Jews were probably the first framers of the principles of business morality summed up in the idea of *righteousness*.

39. Mazzini

The true sphere of Mazzini was literature, not politics. The gain of Italy is not much compared to the loss which the world has suffered by his devotion to politics.

40. The Dependence of Science on Metaphysics

Modern science ought not to mock at metaphysics, for it was a metaphysician – Leibnitz – who first gave science her working idea of matter. The “substance,” said he, is essentially “force” “resistance.” Borrowing this notion from metaphysics, science devotes herself to the study of the behavior of this force. And it is clear that she could not have discovered it for herself.

41. Modern Science and Democracy

Ideas act and react on each other. The growing spirit of individualism in politics is not without its influence on contemporary scientific thought. Modern thought regards the universe a democracy of living atoms.

42. The Relationship of Ideas to Their Historical Context

The progress of thought cannot be divorced from other phases of human activity. Our histories of philosophy tell us what various peoples have thought, but they give us no information as to the various causes – social and political – which have determined the character of human thought. To write a complete history of philosophy would certainly be a tremendous task. A mere theologian cannot fully reveal to his readers the rich content of Luther's Reform. We are apt to isolate great ideas from the general stream of man's intellectual activity.

43. Polygamy

The institution of polygamy was never meant to be a universal institution. It was permitted to exist in order to meet certain difficulties which are not peculiar to Muslim society alone. The worst of permitted things, according to Islam, is “divorce”. It was partly to avoid “divorce” becoming a common social phenomenon that polygamy was tolerated. Of the two social evils divorce and polygamy (evils if universalised), the later is certainly the lesser. But the avoidance of divorce is perhaps not the only justification for this institution; it is partly a concession to the nature of the male who, according to this institution, is allowed to indulge in his inclination for variety – without escaping scot-free from the responsibility arising out of this indulgence. In England the individual, does in some cases, indulge in such inclinations, but the law leaves him absolutely free from the responsibilities which may arise from his sexual freedom. He is not responsible for the education of the children he produces. Nor can such children inherit their father. The consequences, in some cases, are awful. France has been compelled to recognise prostitution as a social institution which it is the ugly duty of the State to keep healthy. But perhaps the greatest criticism on monogamy is the existence of the superfluous women in several European countries where various forces of a social and political nature are tending to enhance the number of women who cannot secure husbands. They cannot become mothers, and consequently they are driven to seek interests, other than the bringing up of children. They are compelled to “conceive” ideas instead of children. Recently they have conceived the inspiring idea of “votes for women.” This is really an attempt on the part of the superfluous woman, or, if you like an attempt on

her behalf, to create “interests” for her in the sphere of politics. If a society cannot allow their women to produce and bring up children they must give them something else to be occupied with. The Suffragette movement in Europe is at bottom a cry for husbands rather than votes. To me it is nothing more than a riot of the unemployed.

44. The Spiritual Ideal of the German Nation

It is Goethe's *Faust* – not the books supposed to have been written by the Galilean Fishermen – which reveals the spiritual ideals of the German nation. And the Germans are fully conscious of it.

45. On Loving One's Enemy

Love is more than elixir. The latter is supposed to turn baser metals into gold; the former turns all the baser passions into *itself*. Christ and Buddha were absolutely correct in their perception of the nature of love; but in their passion for ethical idealism they ignored the facts of life. It is too much to expect of man to love his enemies. Some extraordinary individuals may have realised this maxim in their life; but as a principle of national morality the maxim clearly falls down. The results of the Russo-Japanese war would have been different if the Japanese had acted on the principles of morality associated with their religion.

46. Ideas

Individuals and nations die; but their children, i.e. ideas, never die.

47. White Man's Burden

An English gentleman once told me that he hated the Jews, because they believed themselves to be the Chosen People of God – a belief which implies and perhaps justifies contempt of other nations. He did not remember that the phrase *White Man's Burden* concealed the same Jewish belief in a different garb.

48. Goethe's *Faust*

Goethe picked up an ordinary legend and filled it with the whole experience of the nineteenth century – nay, the entire experience of the human race. This transformation of an ordinary legend into a systematic expression of man's ultimate ideal is nothing short of Divine workmanship. It is as good as the creation of a beautiful universe out of the chaos of formless matter.

49. Milton

The Puritan theology of Milton cannot appeal to the imagination of our age. Very few people read him. Voltaire is quite true in saying that Milton's popularity will go on increasing because nobody reads him. There is, however, one thing in Milton. No poet has been more serious about his task than him. His style – a gigantic architecture consecrated to false deities – will always stand untouched by the palsied hand of time.

50. The Soul of Oscar Wilde

The soul of Oscar Wilde is more Persian than Eng[lish.]

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917 without any changes – KAS.

51. Robber Nations

The spendthrift is nature's own child. She does not like the accumulation of large masses of wealth in the hands of a few individuals. When the maker of a family succeeds in amassing a fortune, it often happens that in the third or even in the second generation a spendthrift appears and scatters the whole wealth. But for this agent of nature the circulation of wealth would be clogged. What is true of individuals is also true of nations. When a nation, by industry or otherwise, amasses and hoards up wealth – thus clogging the wheel of the world's industry the working of which depends on the continual circulation of money – robber nations appear on the scene and set the imprisoned wealth at liberty. Warren Hastings, Clive and Mahmud are the representative types of such nations which are unconscious agents of nature in the advancement of world's industry. The robbery of Warren Hastings finds its true explanation in the history of the European currencies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

52. The Memory of Man

The memory of man is generally bad except for the offences he receives from his fellow men.

53. Amusements in Muslim Countries

There are no amusements in Muslim countries – no theatres, no music halls, no concerts, and better so. The desire for amusement once satisfied soon becomes insatiable. The experience of European countries clearly proves this deplorable fact. The absence of amusement in Muslim countries indicates neither poverty nor austerity nor bluntness of the sense for enjoyment; it reveals that the people of these countries find ample amusement and enjoyment in the quiet circles of their homes. The European critic ought not to be so hasty in his denunciation of the Muslim home. I admit that indifference to outdoor amusement is not a necessary consequence of domestic happiness; nor does love of amusement necessarily mean domestic unhappiness.

54. The Power of Minorities

The fate of the world has been principally decided by minorities. The history of Europe bears ample testimony to the truth of this proposition. It seems to me that there is a psychological reason why minorities should have been a powerful factor in the history of mankind. Character is the invisible force which determines the destinies of nations, and an intense character is not possible in a majority. It is a force; the more it is distributed the weaker it becomes.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917. “... there is a psychological reason” was changed to “there are psychological and physiological reasons” – KAS.

55. Scepticism and Religion

There are some people who are sceptical and yet of a religious turn of mind. The French Orientalist Renan reveals the essentially religious character of his mind in spite of his scepticism. We must be careful in forming our opinion about the character of men from their habits of thought.

56. Arab Poetry

“There is my uncle’s son walking along the edge of a precipice. Shall I go and, from behind, push him down the rocky valley to die without a dawn? Considering his treatment I am perfectly justified in doing so; but it is mean and unmanly to do such a thing.”

So says the Arab poet in the *Hamasa* (?) This passage may be taken as a typical specimen of Arab poetry. No poetry is so direct, so straightforward and so manly in spirit. The Arab is intensely attached to reality; brilliancy of colour does not attract him. The poet *Mutanabbi*, however, may be regarded as an exception; but he is an Arab poet by language only; in spirit he is thoroughly Persian.

57. Wonder

Wonder, says Plato, is the mother of all science. Bedil (Mirza Abdul Qadir) looks at the emotion of wonder from a different standpoint. Says he:—

زنگت م است از آشوبی بنا خانه نصرت
مژد برانم مزن تا نقلی زتیب قماش ما

To Plato wonder is valuable because it leads to our questioning of nature; to Bedil it has a value of its own irrespective of its intellectual consequences. It is impossible to express the idea more beautifully than Bedil.

* The Persian couplet could be translated as: "Fragilities are contained in the glasshouse of Wonder. Blink not the eye, lest the show might be over!" KAS.

58. The Critical Period for the Musalmans of India

In so far as the evolution of religious ideas is concerned there are principally three stages in the development of a community:

- 1) The Attitude of scepticism towards traditional religion – a revolt against dogma.
- 2) But the need of religion as a social force of great value is at last felt and then begins the second stage – an attempt to reconcile religion with reason.
- 3) This attempt leads necessarily to difference of opinion which may have awful consequences for the very existence of a community. Difference of opinion, if not honest (and unfortunately it is generally not honest), must lead to utter disintegration. The Musalmans of India are now in the third stage; or, perhaps, partly in the second partly in the third. This period in the life of our community appears to me to be extremely critical; but I am glad that there [are] forces of a different nature at work which have a tendency to preserve the solidarity of the community – though their influence, I fear, will be only temporary.

59. The Interpretation of History

History is only an interpretation of human motives; and, since we are liable to misinterpret the motives of our contemporaries and even of our intimate friends and associates in daily life, it must be far more difficult rightly to interpret the motives of those who lived centuries before us. The record of history, therefore, should be accepted with great caution.

60. Equality

The working power of an idea depends on the force of the personality in which it embodies itself. Muhammad, Buddha and Jesus Christ are the great embodiments of the ideas of Equality, yet Islam is the only force in the world which is still working in the direction of Equality.

61. The Worth of Things

God created things; man created the worth of things. The immortality of a people depends upon their incessant creation of “worths,” said Nietzsche. Things certainly bear the stamp of Divine manufacture; but their meaning is through and through human.

* This reflection was incorporated into the paper ‘The Muslim Community’ the same year (1910), and reworded: “We must criticise our values, perhaps transvaluate them; and, if necessary, create new worths; since the immortality of a people, as Nietzsche has so happily put, depends upon the incessant creation of worths. Things certainly bear the stamp of divine manufacture, but their meaning is through and through human.” – KAS.

* The original reflection, however, was published without any changes in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917 – KAS.

62. The End of Education

What is the law of things? Continual struggle. What must, then, be the end of Education? Evidently preparation for the struggle. A people working for intellectual superiority reveal thereby their febleness.

63. God is Power

Power is more divine than *truth*. God is power. Be ye, then, like your father who is in heaven.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917. The first letter of “father” became capitalized (“Father”) – KAS.

64. The Powerful Man

The powerful man creates environment; the feeble have to adjust themselves to it.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917 without any changes – KAS.

65. The Touch of Power

Power toucheth Falsehood, and lo! it is transformed into Truth.

66. The Thought of the Powerful Man
Civilization is a thought of the powerful man.

67. Waiting for the Mehdi

Give up waiting for the *Mehdi* – the personification of *Power*. Go and *create* him.

68. The Idea of Nationality

The idea of Nationality is certainly a healthy factor in the growth of communities. But it is apt to be exaggerated, and when exaggerated it has a tendency to kill the broad human elements in Art and Literature.

69. Kant's Categorical Imperative

No one can fully understand the significance of Kant's Categorical Imperative who does not study the political history of the German people. The rigor of Kant's conception of duty finds its full explanation there.

70. To Revitalise the Dying Organism

A diseased social organism sometimes sets up within itself forces which have a tendency to preserve the health of the organism – e.g. the birth of a great Personality which may revitalise the dying organism by the revelation of a new ideal.

* This entry was incorporated into the paper ‘The Muslim Community’ later the same year. The passage read: “... just as an individual organism, in a state of disorder, sometimes unconsciously sets up within itself forces which tend to its health, so a social organism, under the corroding influence of destructive forces, may sometimes call into being counteracting forces – such as the appearance of an inspiring personality, the birth of a new ideal, or a universal religious reform – which tend to restore its original vitality...” – KAS.

71. Self-Control

Self-Control in individuals builds families; in communities, it builds empires.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917 without any changes – KAS.

* The pages containing the entries 71 to 81 are supposed to be lost from the MS of *Stray Reflections* sometime since the publication of the first edition in 1961, where these entries were included in this order – KAS.

72. Idolatry

Both Islam and Christianity had to deal with the same adversary, i.e. idolatry. The difference, however, is this – that Christianity made a compromise with her adversary; Islam destroyed it altogether.

73. The Wonderful History of the Muslim Community

The more you reflect on the history of the Muslim community, the more wonderful does it appear. From the day of its foundation up to the beginning of the sixteenth century – about a thousand years, this energetic race (I say race since Islam has functioned as a race-making force) was continually busy in the all-absorbing occupation of political expansion. Yet in this storm of continuous activity this wonderful people found sufficient time to unearth and preserve the treasures of ancient sciences, to make material additions to them, to build a literature of a unique character, and above all to develop a complete system of law – the most valuable legacy that Muslim lawyers have left us.

74. To Reconstruct This World

Given character and healthy imagination, it is possible to reconstruct this world of sin and misery into a veritable paradise.

75. Suffering

Suffering is a gift from the gods in order to make men see the whole of life.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917 without any changes. Curiously, he translated this same line in a letter to Syed Sulieman Nadvi on 2 December 1918, as the saying of “a writer of English who had experienced the far-reaching effects of suffering.” – KAS.

76. Infinity

A mathematician cannot but a poet can enclose infinity in
a line.

77. The Poet and the World-Spirit

The world-spirit conceals the various phases of her inner life in symbols. The universe is nothing but a great symbol. But she never takes the trouble to interpret these symbols for us. It is the duty of the poet to interpret these symbols for us. It is the duty of the poet to interpret them and to reveal their meaning to humanity. It would, therefore, appear that the poet and the world-spirit are opposed to each other; since the former reveals what the latter conceals.

78. The Vague and the Obscure

Matthew Arnold is a very precise poet. I like, however, an element of obscurity and vagueness in poetry; since the vague and the obscure appear profound to the emotions.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917. The second sentence was changed to: "I like, however, an element of vagueness in poetry; since the vague appears profound to the emotions." – KAS.

79. The Gramophone of History

History is a sort of huge gramophone in which the voices of nations are preserved.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917. “... a sort of huge gramophone” was changed to “a huge gramophone” – KAS.

80. Sin and Piety

At least in one respect sin is better than piety. There is an imaginative element in the former which is lacking in the latter.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917 without any changes – KAS.

81. Virtuous People

Sin has an educative value of its own. Virtuous people are very often stupid.

82. Contemplation Without Action

Life, like the arts of poetry and painting, is wholly expression. Contemplation without action is death.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917 without any changes – KAS.

83. Success in Life

It is determination, not brains, that succeeds in life.

84. To Become A Public Leader

If you wish to become a public leader you ought to know how to flirt with the Dame Public. Entertain her with platitudes and, if necessary, with lies.

85. A Successful Man

Recognise your limitations, estimate your capacities and your success in life is assured.

86. The Lazy Mind

There is something of the plant in the lazy mind; it cannot dance.

87. The Moral Value of Suffering

No religious system can ignore the moral value of suffering. The error of the builders of Christianity was that they based their religion on the fact of suffering alone, and ignored the moral value of other factors. Yet such a religious system was a necessity to the European mind in order to supplement the beautiful but one-sided Hellenic Ideal. The Greek dream of life was certainly the best, as Goethe says; but it was wanting in the color-element of suffering which was supplied by Christianity.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917 without any changes – KAS.

88. The Big Library

If you have got a big library and know all the books therein, it only shows that you are a rich man, not necessarily that you are a thinker. Your big library only means that your purse is heavy enough to hire many people to think for you.

89. Miracles

The question is not whether miracles did or did not happen. This is only a question of evidence which maybe interpreted in various ways. The real question is whether belief in miracles is useful to a community. I say it is; since such a belief intensifies the sense of the supernatural which holds together primitive societies as well as those societies (e.g. Islam) whose nationality is ideal and not territorial. Looked at from the standpoint of social evolution, then, belief in miracles appears to be almost a necessity.

90. Democracy

Democracy has a tendency to foster the spirit of legality. This is not in itself bad; but unfortunately it tends to displace the purely moral standpoint, and to make the illegal and the wrong identical in meaning.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917 without any changes – KAS.

91. Democracy and Imperialism

The imperial ambitions of the various nations of Europe indicate that the Westerners are tired of Democracy. The reaction against Democracy in England and France is a very significant phenomenon. But in order to grasp the meaning of this phenomenon the student of political sciences should not content himself merely with the investigation and discovery of the purely historical causes which have brought it about; he must go deeper and search the psychological causes of this reaction.

92. Moral Readers

The ancients produced Personalities; we produce moral readers.

93. The Young Prophets and the Muslim Woman

Our young prophets of social reform think that a few doses of education on western lines will revitalise the dead Musalman woman and make her tear her ancient shrouds. This is perhaps true. But I fear, finding herself naked, she will have once more to hide her body from the eyes of these young prophets.

94. Poets and Politicians

Nations are born in the hearts of poets; they prosper and die in the hands of politicians.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917 without any changes – KAS.

95. A Prophet

A prophet is only a practical poet.

96. Philosophy and Poetry

Philosophy is a set of abstractions shivering in the cold night of human reason. The poet comes and warms them up into objectivity.

97. Plato and Goethe

Nature was not quite decided what to make of Plato – poet or philosopher. The same indecision she appears to have felt in the case of Goethe.

98. The Most Charming Thing on Earth

A woman of superb beauty with a complete absence of self-consciousness is to me the most charming thing on God's earth.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917. "...is to me the most charming thing" was changed to "is probably the most charming thing" – KAS.

99. Conformity Without Dogma

The attitude of toleration and even conformity without belief in dogma is probably the most incomprehensible thing to the vulgar mind. If such is your attitude, keep quiet and never try to defend your position.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917.
The hyphens were removed – KAS.

100. Sunset on the Banks of Ravi

All the wonderful booklore in your library is not worth
one glorious sunset on the banks of the Ravi.

101. True Political Life

True political life begins not with the claiming of rights,
but with the doing of duties.

102. The Importance of a True Marriage

The beauties of nature can be realised only through the eyes of a lover. Hence the importance of a true marriage.

103. God and the Devil

Both God and the Devil give man opportunities only, leaving him to make use of them in the way he thinks fit.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917. The last portion was reworded: "... leaving him to make use of those opportunities in the way he thinks best." – KAS.

104. Think of the Devil

Think of the Devil and he is sure to appear.” This is equally true of God.

105. Thanksgiving

God! I thank Thee for my birth in this world of rosy
dawns, flame-clad sunsets and thick forests wherein the
gloom of nature's bygone nights rests in eternal sleep!

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917.
The last word was changed from "sleep" to "slumber" – KAS.

106. The Psychologist and the Poet
The psychologist swims, the poet dives.

107. The Instinct to Collect Testimonials

In a certain class of Indian families – mostly creatures of the British rule – the tendency to collect and print testimonials from various officials has grown into a sort of instinct, which reveals itself sometimes very early in the offspring. I look upon it as a kind of moral infirmity developed by an unhealthy environment.

108. The Anatomy of the Human Mind

If you wish to study the anatomy of the human mind you may go to Wund, Ward, James or Stout. But a real insight into human nature you can get from Goethe alone.

109. Man and Infinity

As a plant growing on the bank of a stream heareth not the sweet, silver music which sustains it from beneath, so man, growing on the brink of infinity, listeneth not to the divine undertone that maketh the life and harmony of his soul.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917 without any changes – KAS.

110. The Poet As a Human Being

Come dear friend! Thou hast known me only as an abstract thinker and dreamer of high ideals. See me in my home playing with the children and giving them rides turn by turn as if I were a wooden horse! Ah! See me in the family circle lying in the feet of my grey-haired mother the touch of whose rejuvenating hand bids the tide of time flow backward, and gives me once more the school-boy feeling in spite of all the Kants and Hegels in my head! Here Thou will know me as a *human being*.

111. The Effect of Philosophy and Poetry

Philosophy ages; Poetry rejuvenates.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917 without any changes – KAS.

112. Shakespeare and Goethe

Both Shakespeare and Goethe rethink the Divine thought of Creation. There is, however, one important difference between them. The realist Englishmen Rethinks the individual; the Idealist German, the universal. His Faust is a seeming individual only. In reality, he is humanity individualised.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917. In the first sentence, "...the Divine thought of creation" was reworded to "the thought of Divine creation" and in the last sentence, "His Faust" was changed to "Faust" – KAS.

113. The Value of the Moment

I judge the worth of my days, months and years from the experiences which they bring to me; and sometimes I am surprised to find that a single moment is more valuable than a whole year.

114. Experience and Knowledge

Every experience evokes something from the soul of man. Even the experience of sin will reveal some aspect of your soul of which you were not cognisant before. Experience, then, is a double source of knowledge; it gives you an insight into what is without you, as well as an insight into what is within you.

115. Common-place Facts

Nothing is more common-place than facts; yet mankind were blind to them until Bacon opened their eyes.

116. Horace, Montaigne and Azad

“So are we drawn, as wood is shoved,
By others’ sinews each way moved.”

Montaigne remarks on the above lines of Horace:—

“We go not, but we are carried, as things that float, now gliding gently, now hulling violently, according as the water is either stormy or calm.”

While reading this passage in Montaigne I was put in mind of a verse by our late and lamented poet “Azad” who has given an expression to this idea much more beautifully than either Horace or Montaigne. Says he:

جہازِ عمرِ رِوَالِ پے سوار تھیجے ہیں
سوار خاکِ اِیں بے اختیار تھیجے ہیں

* The Urdu couplet could be translated as: “We ride the boat of the passing age. Nay, not ride it but merely sitting on board without control.” KAS.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917. The “poet” was changed to “writer”, and in the second line of Azad’s Urdu couplet, *khak hain* was changed to *kabay ko* – KAS.

117. Literary Criticism

Literary criticism does not necessarily follow the creation of literature. We find Lessing at the very threshold of German literature.

* This reflection was also published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917. The first sentence was revised as “Literary criticism sometimes precedes the creation of a great literature.” The phrase “at the very threshold” was also changed to “on the very threshold” – KAS.

118. Goethe and Heine

No nation was so fortunate as the Germans. They gave birth to Heine at the time when Goethe was singing in full-throated ease. Two uninterrupted springs!

119. Hafiz

In words like cut jewels Hafiz put the sweet unconscious spirituality of the nightingale.

120. Love is a Playful Child

Love is a playful child. She makes our individuality and then quietly whispers in our ears – “Renounce it.”

121. Seeking Wisdom

I have often played hide and seek with wisdom; she conceals herself always behind the rock of determination.

122. The Man With a Single Idea

If you wish to be heard in the noise of this world, let your soul be dominated by a single idea. It is the man with a single idea who creates political and social revolutions, establishes empires and gives law to the world.

123. Art Alone is Boundless

Science, Philosophy, Religion all have limits. Art alone is boundless.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917. It was reworded: "Science and Philosophy have limits, Art is boundless." – KAS.

124. Absolute Knowledge and Moral Growth

The result of all philosophical thought is that absolute knowledge is an impossibility. The poet Browning turns this impossibility to ethical use by a very ingenious argument. The uncertainty of human knowledge, teaches the poet, is a necessary condition of moral growth; since complete knowledge will destroy the liberty of human choice.

* This reflection was published in *New Era*, Lucknow, in 1917. “...teaches the poet” was changed to “says the poet” – KAS.

125. Flattery

Flattery is only exaggerated good manners.

Stray Thoughts, 1917

In 1917, Iqbal published a series of 'Stray Thoughts' in *New Era*, Lucknow. They are now included in *Discourses of Iqbal* compiled by Shahid Husain Razzaqi. All but one of these are taken from the private notebook, although revised in most cases.

The entries correspond to the following numbers of the present volume: 124, 117, 116, 112, 109, 82, 80, 71, 63, 64, 54, 79, 3, 2, 9, 8, 11, 29, 98, 103, 105, 111, 123 and 50. Where these vary from the notebook, the changes have been carefully annotated in this edition.

A new entry appears in the above sequence between 54 and 79. It does not occur in the notebook and might have been written at some later period. It was included in the second edition of *Stray Reflections* in 1992 and given the heading 'The Verse of Naziri.'

KAS

1. The Verse of Naziri

I would not exchange for half a dozen systems of philosophy this one verse of Naziri:

هیست در خشک و جز بیست من کوتاهی
پای هر نفس که منبر نشود وار کفم

* The Persian couplet could be translated as: “Nothing falls short in my wasteland; every wood that could not be my pulpit I turned it into the gallows” – KAS.

Stray Thoughts, 1925

Another ten 'Stray Thoughts' were published in *The New Orient*, Lahore, in 1925. These were discovered by Afzal Haq Qarshi and reproduced in his paper 'A Rare Writing of Iqbal' in *Iqbal Review*, June 1983 (See Appendix).

Since these were written in a similar vein to the notebook (although they do not appear there and may have been later writings), they were included in the second edition of *Stray Reflections* in 1992 and given appropriate headings.

KAS

1. The Weak and the Strong

The weak lose themselves in God; the strong discover Him in themselves.

2. The Question

For centuries Eastern heart and intellect have been absorbed in the question – Does God exist? I propose to raise a new question – new, that is to say, for the East – Does man exist?

3. Islam

Islam is not a religion in the ancient sense of the word. It is an attitude – an attitude, that is to say, of Freedom and even of defiance to the Universe. It is really a protest against the entire outlook of the ancient world. Briefly, it is the discovery of Man.

4. The *Taubid* of Islam

Nietzsche thinks that belief in God makes man feeble. The wisdom of Islam consists in exploiting the idea of God in the interest of Man, and transforming him into a source of power for the *Taubid* of Islam means absolute freedom from fear and superstition in actual life. A mere intellectual belief in God does not count for much in Islam.

* *Taubid* refers to the Muslim belief in the oneness of God. In Arabic it means unity – KAS.

5. Self-Sacrifice

Before you talk of self-sacrifice you must see whether you have got a self to sacrifice. The egotist alone is capable of self-sacrifice.

6. The Rebirth of Humanism

One of the most interesting phenomena of modern history is the birth, or rather the rebirth of humanism in the world of Islam. This will no doubt sharpen our sense for matter which centuries of speculative Sufism had dulled; but we must not forget the distinction which the mediaeval thinkers of Europe made between “use” and “enjoyment”. We “use” all that is a means to the acquisition of the ultimate good. The Eternal alone is enjoyable; all else is useable only. Europe forgot this distinction long ago and there is no knowing where her unrestrained humanism will carry her.

7. Knowledge and Fate

Knowledge partly contributes to the structure of what we call objective reality; but the character of events that drop out of the womb of Fate is wholly determined by the heart of man. It is the weak man who endows Fate with its sting. The strong man exploits his misfortunes, in as much as he enhances the force of his soul by maintaining an attitude of total indifference to them.

8. Mi'raj

The idea of Mi'raj in Islam is face to face vision of Reality without the slightest displacement of your own ego. It is impossible to forget the words of the Muslim poet who said of the Prophet this much:

موسے زہوش رفت بہ یک جلوہ صفات
تو عینا ذات می گمری در تہمتے

* Iqbal translated the couplet in *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* as: "Moses fainted away by a mere surface illumination of Reality: Thou seest the very substance of Reality with a smile!" KAS.

9. Human Freedom

Most of our theologians thought the doctrine of human freedom could not be reconciled with the fore-knowledge of God. They looked upon belief in freedom as veiled atheism. So thought Mahmud Shabistri. But the author of *Gulshan-i-Raz* made the tacit assumption of an absolute and independent Time like Newton. He did not see that if his view of Time were true, then the freedom of God would also disappear. Shabistri's argument will not hold to-day; for God can be conceived as creating Time from moment to moment. If the Universe is an open one, there is no pre-existing future, and God does not know the future because there is nothing to know.

10. The Present

People extol the past and deprecate the present, not understanding that the present is the whole of the past concentrated in one point.

Afterword¹

This notebook has been lying among Muhammad Iqbal's papers. According to this notebook Iqbal started writing it on 27th April 1910. It appears that he continued to write it for several months and then stopped for some unknown reason. The Poet himself gave the title *Stray Reflections* to this notebook. It contains odd jottings based on his impressions of the books he was reading at that time, his thoughts and feelings about the environment in which he lived, and reminiscences of his student days.

Iqbal may have stopped writing the notebook, but most of these jotting as well as additional notes which he went on scribing during the subsequent years (and which are incorporated in this volume) did appear from time to time in different English journals, news-papers, etc. of the subcontinent until 1932. (See *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal* ed. by Syed Abdul Wahid; *Mementos of Iqbal* ed. by Rahim Bakhsh Shaheen; *Discourses of Iqbal* ed. by Shahid Hussain Razzaqi; *Speeches, Writings and Statements of Iqbal* ed. by Latif Ahmad Sharwani; and *A Rare Writing of Iqbal* ed. by Afzal Haq Qarshi In *Iqbal Review* April 1983).

Although we may disagree with some of his ideas, this notebook enables us to glimpse the liveliness, richness, and fertility of Iqbal's mind. We see the many-sidedness of his interests and meet his views on a wide variety of subjects such as art, philosophy, literature, science, politics and religion. He also refers to the psychological effects of imperialism on a subjugated people.

Iqbal's style is very simple, direct and forceful; his abruptness is sometimes startling. Usually he expresses his thoughts in a few sentences or a paragraph; and although he is writing in prose his

¹ This was written by Dr. Javid Iqbal as an Introduction at the time of the first publication of the notebook in 1961. It was later updated for the second edition in 1992, and that version is followed in the present text – KAS.

style suggests the brevity of the poet who is attempting to communicate in a few words a wealth of meaning. Apparently there is no continuity between the thoughts expressed in this notebook because they were not jotted down according to any fixed plan. Nevertheless these notes reflect the Poet's quick and sensitive responses to many of the ideas and forces which were affecting him, and they assist us in gaining some understanding of the complexity of his character. Iqbal is a thinker who constantly surprises us with the unexpectedness and provocative-ness of his thought. Therefore, although most of us are familiar with his greatest works, it would be wrong to assume that we have fully understood him.



In 1910 Iqbal was thirty-three years old and was living in a flat in Anarkali Bazaar. He returned to Lahore in 1908 after having secured his Ph.D. and having been called to the Bar. On his return he was enrolled as an advocate and started practising in the courts of law. At the same time, he joined the Government College, Lahore, as a professor of Philosophy. After a year and a half he resigned his professorship at the Government College because he felt that he was not free to speak openly as long as he was in Government employment.

In 1909 Morley-Minto Reforms were promulgated in India. Under the new Indian Councils Act the principle of election through separate electorates had been introduced and was applied in a very limited way. Apparently there was no political life of the kind that offered any acceptable opportunities of service to a person like Iqbal who was opposed to British Imperialism and concerned to work for the establishment of political Independence of the people of the Indian sub-continent.

In spite of Iqbal's severe financial difficulties, he was hesitant to serve the British Government even though a person with his qualifications could have been easily absorbed in the British system. He was, therefore, interested in the possibility of seeking some form of academic employment under a Muslim ruler where he could express his ideas freely. A few months before beginning this notebook, it appears that he visited Hyderabad

State for this object; but he returned to Lahore absolutely disgusted and disillusioned with the deadness prevalent among the people and obsequious attitude of the Nizam towards the British.¹

Iqbal's letters to Atiya Begum written in this period show a man bitter and frustrated because of the oppressive pressure of the social customs of his community upon creative individuals like himself. His letters are full of cynical disgust with the hypocrisy, narrowness and self-righteousness of the people among whom he was born.

"I do not wish to enter any service," he wrote to her, my object is to run away from this country as soon as possible... My life is extremely miserable... As a human being I have a right to happiness – if society or nature deny that to me, I defy both. The only cure is that I should leave this wretched country forever, or take refuge in liquor which makes suicide easier. These dead barren leaves of books cannot yield happiness. I have got sufficient fire in my soul to burn them up and all social conventions as well."²

In another letter he burst forth:

I live a straightforward honest life: my heart is in perfect unison with my tongue. People respect and admire hypocrisy. If hypocrisy brings me fame, respect and admiration, I would rather die unknown and unlamented. Let the many-headed monster of public give their dross of respect to others who act and live in accordance with his false ideals of religion and morality. I cannot stoop to respect their conventions which suppress the innate freedom of man's mind.³

He was so unhappy at this time that in one letter dated 7th April 1910 (a few weeks before beginning this notebook), he wrote to Atiya Begum:

¹ Iqbal visited Hyderabad Deccan in March 1910 – KAS.

² *Iqbal* by Atiya Begum, pp.36, 37

³ *ibid.*, p.49

But I have no enthusiasm for poetry: I feel as if somebody has slain my pretty muse and I am left widowed of all my imagination. Perhaps the poem on Aurangzeb – whose tomb I have recently visited – will be my last.¹

Although it was customary for the Anjuman Himayat-i-Islam, Lahore, to ask Iqbal to recite a poem at their annual session, he did not recite any poem on this occasion in 1910. There were dissensions within the Anjuman which led to litigation, and this also may have upset him. However, Iqbal did write a few poems during this period which were published in the local magazines, but they were not of very high quality. It seems that his creative activity was in abeyance during this year owing to his disillusionment and deep-seated frustration with what he saw around him. It is possible that since he felt unable to write poetry, he turned instead to writing these notes. This notebook, therefore, is the main work produced during 1910.

It is a part of the strangeness of the creative process that periods of silence and retreat often seem to serve their own mysterious purpose. Beneath the surface calm of Iqbal at this time there must have been violent storms. In the following year, 1911, the Poet erupted in his vigorous protest to God, *Shikva*². In this famous poem he proclaimed his anger at the decadence of the Muslims, and in his rage held God responsible for it. From this time onwards his creative activity developed more and more, and almost every year saw the production of another brilliant work. The lyrical poet who sang of love and suffering was gradually dying out and giving way to the philosopher and the moralist.

¹ He had visited the tomb of Aurangzeb during his recent journey to Hyderabad Deccan (March 1910). He was on a ten-days leave from the Government College, Lahore, and in order to fit the visit to Aurangzeb's tomb into his whirlwind itinerary he skipped a courtesy call upon Atiya's family in Janjirah (Bombay), which strained their friendship for a while – KAS.

² *Shikva* was recited at the annual session of Anjuman Himayat-i-Islam, Lahore, in April 1911. It is now included in *Bang-i-Daru* – KAS.



The Indian National Congress was founded in 1885 when Iqbal was eight years old. The Congress was founded on the principles of Victorian radicalism. As time passed this organisation gained increasing prominence, because the Hindus were working through it for the cultural, political, economic and educational regeneration of their community.

The condition of the Muslims of the Indian sub-continent was, however, completely different from that of the Hindus. In the nineteenth century the political power in India had been completely snatched from the Muslims by the British, and the Muslim Jurists had declared India *Dar al Harb* (country of war). The followers of Syed Ahmad of Bareilly had been fighting against the British on the Frontier, and the allegation of treason for instigating the 1857 Mutiny had been levelled against the Muslims. After the suppression of the 1857 Mutiny, the British adopted the policy of crushing the Muslims, and the Hindus supported this British policy for their own political and economic ends.

The attitude of the British towards the Muslims changed in 1870 mainly owing to the sincere and untiring efforts of Syed Ahmad Khan. He was the first Indian Muslim who had realised that the medieval Muslim political, social, cultural, educational and economic structures could not be implemented in modern times. He also felt that to cope with the altered conditions, new social and economic structures were essential. Such new structures were essential. Such new structures could not be developed unless and until the Muslims discarded their old modes of education, assimilated the new sciences, and found a radically new attitude towards life.

The experience of Syed Ahmad Khan had shown him that the Hindu majority had little sympathy for the Muslims; rather they were suspicious of the Muslims progressing educationally and economically. Accordingly he arrived at the conclusion that it was necessary for the Muslims that they should entirely concentrate on the acquisition of modern education and the development of their economic life. He thought that they should, under no circumstances, abandon their support of the British.

Thus in 1886 Syed Ahmad Khan founded, in opposition to the Indian National Congress, the Muhammedan Educational Congress at Aligarh. In the following year, in his famous speech, he warned the Muslims that educationally and economically they were not in any position to participate in the political life of the country. He also pointed out to them that if the democratic principle was introduced in India, the Muslims would find themselves completely at the mercy of the Hindu majority.

In 1893 when the Indian National Congress came under the influence of Tilak and the inflammatory speeches of this Hindu nationalist led to a serious Hindu-Muslim riot in Bombay. Syed Ahmad Khan founded at Aligarh an organisation called the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental Defence of Upper India for the safeguarding of the rights of the Muslims. Two years after his death, i.e. in 1900, when the Hindus had launched a movement for the replacement of Urdu by Hindi in India, an Urdu Defence association was founded at Aligarh. In the following year, the Muhammedan Political Organisation came into being at Aligarh and, although this organisation remained active until 1903, it was only used to support the British rather than to train the Muslims in political life.

In 1906 when it appeared that the British under pressure from the Indian National Congress were going to introduce some form of elected representation in India, some of the members of the Muslim upper class and landlords who had always followed the political policy of Syed Ahmad Khan founded a political organisation called the All-India Muslim League. This organisation was not founded on radical or progressive principles, but was based on conservative and reactionary principles. As a result, the Muslim League failed to develop any living contact with the Muslim masses. There was, however, one achievement: the Muslims' demand for separate electorates was conceded through this organisation.

During this phase of Muslim history, such organisations as were founded had only limited objects. They could not be called political organisations because their objects were confined to the propagation of modern education among the Muslims, to the unconditional support of the British, and to defence against the rising power of the Hindu majority. Thus, although during the lifetime of Syed Ahmad Khan and after his death the older and

the younger generations of the Muslim upper class and landlords continued to support his political policies, the younger generation of the Muslim middle class only supported these policies for a few years after his death and then they abandoned them.

Iqbal belonged to the younger generation of the Muslim middle class. He received his early education in Sialkot under Maulana Syed Mir Hasan, an enthusiastic follower of Syed Ahmad Khan. It can be deduced that Iqbal became acquainted with the Aligarh movement through the Maulana, and justified its aims in the earlier part of his career.

Iqbal left Sialkot and came to study in Lahore at the age of eighteen. Like any other sensitive young Muslim he was aware of the tensions and frustrations of his age. The degraded condition of the Muslim world was not hidden from him.

The Ottoman Empire was tottering. The Central Asian Muslim Republics had been absorbed into Tsarist Russia. The old dynasty in Iran was decaying and the economy of the country was collapsing. In China the Muslim provinces had been absorbed into the Chinese Nationalist Empire and the Muslims had ceased to exist as a distinct political entity. In Eastern Europe also the Muslims were gradually being driven out. Egypt was under the heels of the British. France was preparing to seize Morocco. The Dutch were ruthlessly oppressing and exploiting the Indonesian Muslims. After the suppression of the 1857 Mutiny the Muslims of the Indian sub-continent had given up all hope of regaining their lost freedom and political power.

In this condition of despair the Indian Muslims turned their eyes towards the movement for Islamic solidarity under the leadership of the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph who was the only independent Muslim power left in the world. But the European Colonial Powers sought to destroy even this last remnant of Muslim civilisation. The British were instigating the Greeks to rebel against the Ottomans, and this had increased the hostility of the Indian Muslims towards their British rulers.

Syed Ahmad Khan, remembering the disastrous effects of the 1857 Mutiny, was always anxious to prevent any further political uprising by the Indian Muslims against their British rulers. He was mainly concerned to protect the edifice he had erected for the peaceful progress and betterment of the Muslim

community. He, therefore, attempted to prevent the Indian Muslims from taking any part in the political struggles which elsewhere convulsed the Muslim world.

Syed Ahmad Khan and his followers rejected the fiery appeals of Jamal al-Din Afghani when the latter came to India in 1882. The movement for Islamic solidarity was largely the creation of Jamal al-Din Afghani. He believed that unity of purpose among the Muslims was the only weapon with which they could hope to frustrate and defeat European Imperialisms. His message elicited response in some part of the Muslim world and numerous societies were founded to propagate his ideas.

Despite the hostile attitude of Syed Ahmad Khan and his followers, many young Muslims responded with enthusiasm to the appeal of Jamal al-Din Afghani. The reformer left many disciples behind him in India. Iqbal was one of the members of the younger generation of the Indian Muslims who were profoundly influenced by Jamal al-Din Afghani's vision of Islamic solidarity.

Iqbal wrote many poems in the period from 1899 to 1904 in which he bewailed the miserable condition of the Indian Muslims and lamented the sorrows of the Muslims of the world entangled in their bitter struggle for independence. He spoke of the Muslim nation as *Tasvir-i-Dard* (Portrait of Pain)¹, and as *Nala-i-Yatim* (The Sighing of an Orphan)². He brought forth *Fariyad Ba-hazur Sarwar-i-Kainaat* (A Complaint to the Prophet)³.

¹ The poem was recited in the annual session of Anjuman Himayat-i-Islam, Lahore, in March 1904. It is now included in *Bang-i-Dara* – KAS.

² This poem was Iqbal's first recital in an annual session of Anjuman Himayat-i-Islam, Lahore, in 1900. He did not include it in his anthology but it can be found in the posthumous editions of his uncollected works, such as: *Ibtidai Kalam-i-Iqbal* (1987), edited by Gian Chand; *Kulliyat-i-Baqiyat-i-Iqbal* (2004), edited by Sabir Kalorvi – KAS.

³ This is a reference to *Abr-i-Gubarbar*, (The Pearl-laden Cloud), subtitled as *Fariyad-i-Ummat* (A Complaint by the Muslim People) and *Na'at-i-Ashiqana Ba-hazur Sarwar-i-Kainaat* (A Devoted Eulogy to the Holy Prophet). It was recited at the annual session of Anjuman Himayat-i-Islam, Lahore, in 1903. A stanza was later included in *Bang-i-Dara* under the title *Dil* (The Heart), while the original poem can be found in the posthumous editions of his uncollected works such as those cited in the previous note – KAS.

Iqbal was in Europe from 1905 to 1908. These years seem to have convinced him fully that solidarity among the Muslim peoples was the only possible hope for the survival of Islam. He saw everywhere around him the collapse and decay of the Muslims, and he could see that soon there might be no trace of independent Islam left in the world.

Before accepting the vision of Islamic solidarity, Iqbal had passed through different phases in the development of his philosophical and political ideas. For instance, in this very notebook he confesses that he was saved by Wordsworth from atheism in his student days. This atheism of his student days indicates the questioning and searching nature of his mind; he was never one to accept the validity of anything merely on the authority of others. The Muslim mystics call this kind of atheism *Hijab* (Veil) and they subdivide it into two types. The first type of *Hijab* is that veil which cannot be lifted; it is as if the heart of the person is completely sealed. This is the permanent atheist who is absolutely static and incapable of change.

The second type, *Hijab-i-Haq*, is justifiable atheism which originates in doubt and leads to belief. The inner self of such a person is constantly struggling to discover God and to learn to distinguish between Good and Evil. Such atheism is only a passing phase in the development of a searching mind, and is common to many of the greatest Muslim thinkers as well as to many philosophers and poets in other faiths.

It may be asked why Wordsworth had this effect on him when Iqbal had been given a traditional Muslim education. Iqbal's questioning, however, reveals his readiness to break away from the narrowness of his own tradition. Since he had entered the Intellectual turmoil of the nineteenth-century European thought, it is not surprising that he found in Wordsworth, as did many other searching minds like John Stuart Mill. An intelligible answer to the emptiness of rationalism. It is a tribute to the quality of his mind that he was not led more deeply astray by the general atheistic and materialistic trends in the thought of his age.

Any student of Islamic mysticism would say that Wordsworth comes very close to the pantheistic teachings of Ibn al-Arabi. So it is easy to conclude that Iqbal, during this phase of his mental development, became a pantheist and

accepted the Influence of Hafiz – the great Persian pantheistic poet. He started as a lyrical poet and at the same time founded his political Ideas on a pantheistic philosophy. Accordingly he wrote poems In support of Indian nationalism. But this was also merely a passing phase. His three years’ stay in Europe brought a complete revolution in the mind of Iqbal. He discarded pantheism as an unsatisfactory philosophy and turned instead to the principle of Islamic solidarity as the foundation of his thought. Later, when the Middle East came under the spell of nationalism, Iqbal became the first exponent of ‘Muslim nationalism’ in the Indian sub-continent and until his death in 1938 supported this cause vigorously. It was the growth of ‘Muslim nationalism’ which led to the bifurcation of the Indian nationalist movement and eventually resulted in the secession of Islam from India. One of Iqbal’s letters, written in 1909, reflects the change that had taken place in him:

I have myself been of the view that religious differences should disappear from this country (India), and even now act on this principle in my private life. But now I think that the preservation of their separate national entities is desirable for both the Hindus and the Muslims. The vision of a common nationhood for India is a beautiful ideal, and has a poetic appeal, but looking to the present conditions and the unconscious trends of the two communities, appears incapable of fulfilment.¹

If Iqbal had lived to see the establishment of Pakistan (the realisation in a concrete form of his abstract and nebulous political ideal) it is certain that he would have developed into yet another phase, and laid the foundations of what may be termed ‘Pakistani nationalism’. But he died at a stage when Indian Islam was still struggling to gain Independence from the British and, at the same time, emancipation from the Hindus. Those were the times when supporting the cause of territorial nationalism or patriotism In the Indian sub-continent meant the submergence of the Muslims Into the majority community and their extinction as a distinct political entity. Iqbal, therefore, took pains in

¹ *Safina-i-Hayat* by G.Q.Farrukh, p.23.

providing a religio-philosophical justification for the rejection of territorial nationalism and patriotism, although he approved of the growth of territorial nationalism and patriotism in the countries of the Middle East. In his own words:

Nationalism in the sense of love of one's country and even readiness to die for its honour is a part of the Muslim's faith: it comes into conflict with Islam only when it begins to play the role of a political concept and claims to be a principle of human solidarity demanding that Islam should recede to the background of a mere private opinion and cease to be a living factor in the national life. In Turkey, Persia, Egypt and other Muslim countries it will never become a problem. In these countries the Muslims constitute an overwhelming majority and their minorities, i.e. Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians, according to the law of Islam, are either 'People of the Book' or 'like' the People of the Book', with whom the law of Islam allows free social relations including matrimonial alliances. It becomes a problem for the Muslims only in countries where they happen to be in a minority, and nationalism demands their complete self-effacement. In majority countries Islam accommodates nationalism: for there Islam and nationalism are practically identical; in minority countries it is justified in seeking self-determination as a cultural unit. In either case, it is thoroughly consistent with itself¹

In 1908 when he returned from Europe the position of the Muslims in the Middle East was very insecure. The European Colonial Powers were either putting economic pressure on the Muslim lands or were occupying them one after the other. There was unrest in the whole of the Middle East. The expansionist policy of the European Colonial Powers had resulted in the growth of a violent type of Muslim nationalism. It engendered a patriotic spirit throughout the Muslim world: wars of independence were being planned all over the Middle East. But in Muslim India; as has already been noted, political activity was

¹ *Islam and Abmedism*, pp. 43-44.

forbidden to the Muslims. The Muslim League was completely in the clutches of the upper classes who were unconditionally loyal to the British. These upper class Muslims seemed to be interested only in safeguarding their own interests and were completely unconcerned with the troubles and miseries of the Muslims of the Middle East.

Although political discontent was stirring the hearts of the Muslim masses of the Indian sub-continent, there was at this time no real leadership to direct their discontent into effective channels. In the following year, however, when the Muslims had been thrown out from the Balkans, Iran was involved in a life-and-death struggle, and the plains of Tripoli were red with Muslim blood, Iqbal exploded into *Shikwa* and *Jawab-i-Shikwa*.¹ A series of other dynamic and creative works like *Asrar-i-Khudi* and *Rumuz-i-Bekbudi* rapidly followed.² Thus Iqbal's voice was gradually stirring the Muslims and determining a direction for them.



Although the amount of literature which has been written on Iqbal is much greater than what has been written on any other Muslim poet, there is still nothing available which does justice to the humanity and complexity of the man, and to his deep involvement with and life-giving response to the deadness of the world in which he lived. What Iqbal did was to discover inspiration from the Islamic past, and to make use of that inspiration in relation to the problems of his age. He was by no means a dreamer of vague fantasies or a backward-looking romantic. Rather he was always essentially a realistic and practical man whose entire object was to communicate with the

¹ *Jawab-i-Shikwa* was recited in a fundraiser for the Balkan War in November 1912 – KAS.

² *Asrar-i-Khudi* (The Secrets of the Self), Iqbal's first Persian *mathnawi* was published in 1915 and translated into English by R. A. Nicholson in 1920. Iqbal had started writing it properly in 1913 but an initial draft in Urdu was attempted and discarded as early as 1910. *Rumuz-i-Bekbudi*, the sequel, was published in 1917 – KAS.

common man and to see that his Ideals were effectively implemented in a particular society.

This notebook contains the germs of many of the major ideas which were developed and elaborated later in his poetical and philosophical works. It may be observed that he thought of history as a process, and that he believed that the spiritual and philosophical ideas of a community were largely the expression of its *political* environment. He also believed that the implementation of sound political structures was essential for the development of the character of a people. In his belief about the unique purpose of the Muslims in history, and his comments on the vital significance of good government for building up character, one can see the basis for his future insistence on the need for a separate state for the Muslims of the Indian sub-continent.

“To my mind,” he writes in this notebook, “government, whatever its form, is one of the determining forces of a people’s character... Ever since their political fall the Musalmans of India have undergone a rapid ethical deterioration... We are, I believe, still indispensable to the world as the only testimony to the absolute Unity of God.”¹

Life, to Iqbal, meant *struggle*. Therefore, to him, the end of education was preparation for struggle, rather than the cultivation of intellectual superiority. He speaks frequently of the necessity of power and the importance of the powerful man. To him even sinners who act creatively are better than apathetic virtuous people. He thought the decay of the Muslims was partly a result of their adherence to passive virtues such as slavish obedience and humility.

Iqbal’s emphasis on power has often been criticised by some of the Western writers who accuse him of Fascist tendencies. Such critics generally fail, however, to grasp the nature of the social and political context in which the Muslim Poet was speaking. His object was to stir the Muslims to act vigorously for the acquisition of power because only their action could save them from their condition of political subjugation and moral decay.

¹ See Entry 13, “Forms of Government.”

He was acutely conscious of the collapse of the communal economy of the Indian Muslims, and regarded their poverty as one of the important reasons for their ethical deterioration. In his first published Urdu prose work entitled *Ilm al-Iqtisad* (The Science of Economics) which he wrote before he went to Europe, he maintained that the study of Economics was extremely essential in India because of the appalling poverty in the country. In his words, the nations who do not care to improve their social and economic conditions are bound to be obliterated.

It would not be wrong to say that the works which have so far been produced on Iqbal have generally failed to bring his ideals home to the common man. Why is it, it may be asked, that in the more than forty years since his death most of the writings about Iqbal have been superficial and insignificant?

One reason seems to be the development of a trend in Pakistan of quoting odd verses of Iqbal or talking about his ideas without having any deeper understanding of what the man actually said or meant (or in what context he said or meant). While discussing Milton in this notebook, Iqbal has quoted a remark of Voltaire (the famous French satirist) on Milton. Voltaire is reported to have said that Milton's popularity will go on increasing because nobody reads the man. This remark of Voltaire could be regarded as equally true about Iqbal in Pakistan.

Another reason seems to be the political significance attached to his name. The left-wing 'intellectuals' of Pakistan have always regarded Iqbal as a stumbling block, an obstinate barrier or a kind of protective wall which has to be demolished before the Muslims could be made to accept their 'progressive' views. The left-wing intellectuals, therefore, try to pull Iqbal down whenever they get an opportunity. On the other hand, the right-wing 'intellectuals' of Pakistan, who claim to own Iqbal, have their own pre-conceived notions about him. They, indeed, stand for Islam, but, in their zeal to 'protect' Iqbal from the dirty hands of the left-wingers (and from those who attack Iqbal on religious or rather sectarian grounds, or detract him out of provincial or regional considerations), they depict the Muslim Poet as holding such views which they think he should have held. Consequently, Iqbal is represented as a 'conservative' and a

‘reactionary’, and everything that is written on him by this group of ‘intellectuals’ fails to capture or interpret the exciting, dynamic and forward-looking qualities of his thought.

Still another reason seems to be the medieval type of love for the obscure and the abstract which is characteristic of many of our scholars and which tends to paralyse their minds and to prohibit the development of genuine and creative research among us. Such scholars tend to do only static research, and their achievement is to represent Iqbal – the warm and human iconoclast – as a cold and forbidding idol. Such people tell us that Iqbal’s greatness lies where he is incomprehensible and not where his ideals could be implemented. The effect of such literature about Iqbal is to pin him like a dead fly on the wall rather than to mediate his ideals to the people so that he might become a living force in our minds – inspiring, directing and sustaining us in our struggle to reconstruct our cultural, social, economic and political life.

These scholars generally fail to relate Iqbal’s ideals to our contemporary problems in the same way as the Poet related the Islamic past to the struggles of his times. The crux of Iqbal’s teaching is his vision of the Muslim society of the future, a society devoted to the full development of individuals in their capacity as *co-workers* with God. He was, therefore, the first Muslim in the Indian sub-continent to express a coherent demand for the establishment of Islamic socialism. A genuine response to Iqbal would be the development of economic and other structures through which the realisation of his vision could be facilitated. Iqbal stood for passionate action, not scholastic quibbling. Unfortunately, in spite of the many efforts to popularise the Ideals of Iqbal, he remains lying as a jewel in the dust.

This notebook is part of the papers of Iqbal which contain letters, unpublished articles etc. and is displayed along with other documents at the Allama Iqbal Museum. The present volume is the second and enlarged edition thereof. The jottings, etc. of Iqbal have been left intact as they were arranged in the notebook by the Poet himself. Notes scribbled during the subsequent years have also been added, but no alteration has been made in the original text except for the addition of numbers and titles for the different subjects which the Poet discusses. These additions have

been made so that we could have some understanding of the variety and richness of the ideas which were occupying the Poet's mind.

Javid Iqbal

Appendix

A Rare Writing of Iqbal

A paper by Afzal Haq Qarshi
published in *Iqbal Review*, April 1983

The magazine *The Orient* was launched from Lahore in 1925. It was a monthly review containing articles of political, social, economic, educational and general interest. Syed Nur Ahmad B.A. (Alig.) was its editor and publisher. The office of the journal was situated in the Australia Buildings (near the Lahore Railway Station). In its issue number 6–8 (June–August 1925) of Volume I, the magazine announced a scheme of establishing a printing press on co-operative basis. A joint stock company was thus set up to undertake this work and it was declared as follows:

The New Orient has had to wait in the meanwhile, and will have to wait for some time more after the publication of this issue – the next issue will be printed at its printing machines.

Nothing is known of the fate of the press after the above-mentioned combined issue. However, we come to know through the *Statement of Newspapers and Periodicals published in the Punjab and Native States* that the magazine continued its printing during 1926 at the same press, i.e., Punjab Cooperative Printing Press and ceased to exist during 1927. *The New Orient* contains, in this issue, among other material, an article of Iqbal entitled *Stray Thoughts* which is not included in any of the following collections of his writings:¹

¹ These were the standard anthologies of Iqbal's uncollected prose up to the time this article was published – KAS.

1. Abdul Wahid, Syed. *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*. Lahore: Sh., Muhammad Ashraf, 1964.
2. Dar, B.A. *Letters and Writings of Iqbal*. Karachi: Iqbal Academy, 1967.
3. Razaqi, Shahid Hussain. *Discourses of Iqbal*. Lahore: Sh. Ghulam Ali, 1979.
4. Shaheen, Rahim Bakhsh. *Mementos of Iqbal*. Lahore: All-Pakistan Islamic Education Congress [n.d.]
5. Sherwani, Latif Ahmed. *Speeches, Writings and Statements of Iqbal*. Lahore: Iqbal Academy, 1977.

Iqbal's *Stray Thoughts*, edited by Dr. Javid Iqbal under the title *Stray Reflections* and published from Lahore in 1961, does not contain these *stray thoughts*. These are being produced here for scholars in the field of Iqbal Studies.¹

¹ These are now included as 'Stray Thoughts, 1925' in the book itself and therefore not being repeated here – KAS.