

DIVINE WINE*

My Saki made me drink the wine
Of "There is no God but He";
From the illusive world of sense,
This cup divine hath set me free.

Now I find no charm or grace
In song and ale or harp and lute;
To me appeal the tulips wild,
The river-side and mountains mute.
Lo, the great contempt displayed,
By one, who begs at tavern's door,
When he comes to Fount of Life,
He breaks the pitcher on the floor.
My flagon small is blessing great,
For the age athirst and dry ;
In the cells where mystics live
Big empty gourds are lying by.
In love a novice I am yet,
Much good for thee to keep apart,
For my glance is restive more
Than my wild and untamed heart.
Though the pearl its station takes
Beneath the surges of the main,
Yet by dint of essence clean
Unsoiled its lustre doth remain.
The dark unfathomed caves of sea,
Hold gems of purest ray serene,
The gems retain in midst of brine,
Their essence bright and clean.
Through the poet's quickening gaze,
The rose and tulip lovelier seem,
No doubt, the Minstrel's piercing glance
Is nothing less than magic gleam.

*English rendering of a ghazal in Bal-i Jibril, pp. 19-20,

The pain and anguish born of love Is like a precious ware:

I would not change my bondman's state For lordship free
from care.

How can this life or life to come A lover's heart enslave?

An endless life must pinch him there And here the fear of
grave.

The veil that keeps your beauty hid In flames a lover's heart:
The fire of love still brighter burns If the Dear keeps apart.

On mountains bleak, in deserts waste, The hawk can find
some rest:

He thinks it as too mean and base To seek a cosy nest.

Was it the bounty of a glance

Or tutor's skill or art ;

From whom the son of Hajar learnt

To play the filial part?

The brave and firm for pilgrimage To my tomb shall wend:

For way-side dust from me hath learnt The secrets of
Alwand.

Good thoughts can spare a rhymer's art To make them trim
and smart:

To give the tulip crimson hue

Nature shall play its part.

—A. A. Shah English rendering of a ghazal in Bal-i Jibril,
pp. 21-22.

Dost thou not to mind recall, Mine early days of love ?

By the dread of whipping glance, As quiet I was as dove.

The painted dolls of present age At seats of learning taught,

Have not infidel's charm, or mould Of idols, Azar wrought.

The earth, despite its stretches vast, Hath no nook for rest:

How passing strange that this world Is neither cage nor rest !

For Thine bounteous rain await The thirsty ducts of vine:

Taverns of Persia stand

Devoid of Magian wine.

My fellow bards ascribe to spring My sudden burst of song:

How can they know the ardent strains, Poured by passion
strong?

From the blood and bones of man Thine world hast come to
life: What more can be a martyr's meed Than lasting fret and
strife?

Through Thine Grace, O Mighty Lord,

My life is sailing safe:

Against my friends I have no plaint,

Nor world can make me chafe.

A. A. Shah

English rendering of a ghazal in Bal-i Jibril, pp. 23-24.

Once more with poppies red and bright Glow the happy hill and
dale;

My Muse is also prompted now

By the warble of nightingale

Flowers bright in the valley gay Like a host of fairies stand:

And in their vestures green and blue They look a jolly band.

The morning wind with gems of dew Has decked the blossoms
all ;

That still more glint and shine When darts of Phoebus fall.

Who can say whether the town is Full of grace or the wold,

When for the display of its charms Woods are liked by Beauty
cold ?

Know yourself, if you wish to grasp The aim and goal of life,

Your forging ties with others matters not ; With yourself have no
strife.

The world of flesh is a world Of Craft, art, loss and gain: The
realm of mind is replete With longing, zeal and pain.

The wealth of mind, if attained, Does not end and does not wane
; Whereas the riches of the world Like a shadow lose and gain.

In world of mind I did not find The kingdom of the Man of West;
The Shaikh and Brahman with their feuds Ruffle not mind's
repose and rest.

The hint of hermit bold

Struck me with woe and shame:

"If your head before others you bow, You cannot rule mind or
frame".

A. A. Shah English rendering of a ghazal in Bāl-i Jibril, 48-49.