

TIDE POPPY LAMPS*

Dr Muhammad Yusuf 'Abbasi

The poppies lit their lamps,
On the desert brow;
Minstrels of the air,
In their plumage fair,
Burst into song,
And so stir my heart,
That I like to take part,
In their musical throng.
The flowers like fairies stand,
In prismatic rows,
Reds, yellows, and blues;
Gay flags!
Of magic hues,
Fluttering in the spring morn,
And the dew drops,
Like the pearl spray,
In their crystal glory,
Shine in every ray;
Liquid diamonds glisten,
On green leaves,
On jaded eaves,

* A free rendering of Iqbal's inimitable chromatic lyric "Phir Chirāgh-i Lālah Say Raushan Hū-ay Koh-o Daman" (Bāl-i fibril, pp. 48-49).

Of the rolling desert.

This flower carpet,
This gorgeous array,
In the desert,
This poppy-lit expanse,
Is the Nature's display,
Fairer than the urban medley.
Such is the realm of mind,
In it I did ever find,
The secret of life,
By your own,
If you can't be mine.

The world of the Self,
In spirit is love,
And zest in style;
The world of the pelf,
Lying, lust and guile.
The wealth of mind,
A sun of light,
A lasting joy;
But the wealth in gold,
A shiny blight,
All tinsel and toy.
The Self shall ever remain,

A free domain,
Of truth and light,
As there doesn't reign,
Any king or priest.
How could I be the same,
Either in spirit or frame,
If I ever bowed,
Before anyone,
Except Him,
Like Whom there is none.