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SECOND.—To promote the study of Aryan and other Eastern literatures, religions, and sciences, and demonstrate the importance of that study.

THIRD.—To investigate unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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General Secretary American Section,
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PRONOUNCE Sanskrit Consonants as in English; Sanskrit Vowels as in Italian or German.

THE SELF.

FROM SHANKARA'S TATTVA BODHA.

WHAT is the Self?

—The Self stands above the three vestures, the coarse, the fine, and the causal; is beyond the five veils, and is witness of the past, the present and the future.

What then is this Self?

—Its own nature is Being, Consciousness, Bliss.

What is Being?

—What stands throughout past, present, and future.

What is Consciousness?

—The essence of knowing.

What is Bliss?

—The essence of all happiness.

Therefore let a man know that the own-nature of his Self is Being, Consciousness, Bliss.

BY WHOM?

KENA UPANISHAD.

By whom commanded does the mind go forth? By whom compelled does the first life go forth? By whom commanded do they put forth creative voice? What bright one rules the eye, the ear?

It is the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, the voice of the voice, the life of the life, the eye of the eye. The wise man set free, rising above this lower world, becomes immortal.

The eye goes not thither, nor voice, nor mind; we know not, we understand not, how any can apprehend it. It is other than the known. It is other than the unknown.

Thus have we heard from those of old who taught us.

That which is not spoken by voice, but that by which voice is spoken; know that as the Eternal, not the god they worship here.

That which is not thought by mind, but that by which mind is thought; that know as the Eternal, not the god they worship here.

That which is not beheld by the eye, but that by which the eye is beheld, that know as the Eternal, not the god they worship here.

That which is not heard by hearing, but that by which hearing is heard; that know as the Eternal, not the god they worship here.

That which does not live by life, but that by which life lives, that know as the Eternal, not the god they worship here.

If thou thinkest 'I know it well', thou knowest but little; knowest thou that form of the Eternal? Is that form to be known among the bright ones?

Yet I think it is known to thee.

I think not that I know it well, nor do I know that I know it not. He among us who knows: 'I know not that I know it not'; he indeed knows.

By whom it is unthought, by him verily it is thought. It is unknown of the knowing, and known of the unknowing.

It is thought to be known by awakening; and thus a man attains immortality. By the Self he obtains valor; by knowing he obtains immortality.

If a man knows this here, this is the real; if he knows it not here, there follows the great tribulation.

Having discerned this among all creatures, the wise, leaving this world, become immortal.

The Eternal won victory for the bright ones; in the victory of the Eternal, the bright ones magnified themselves, and declared: 'This is our victory; this is our might!'

The Eternal knew this, and became manifest to them. But they could not discern what power it was.

They spoke to Fire: 'Thou knower, discern for us what this power is', said they.

'Be it so!' said he.

He ran to it. It addressed him, saying, 'Who art thou?'

'I am Fire', said he; 'I am the knower'.

'Then what valor is in thee?'

'I could burn up the whole world', said he; 'whatever there is on earth'.

Then the Eternal laid down a grass before him; saying 'burn this!' And Fire came up to it with all his might, but was not able to burn it. Therefore he turned back again; 'I could not discern what power this is', said he.

So they addressed Breath; 'Oh Breath! discern what power this is', said they.

'Be it so!' said he.

He ran to it. It addressed him, saying, 'Who art thou?'

'I am Breath', said he; 'I am he who sleeps in the Mother'.

'Then what valor is in thee?'

'I could take up the whole world', said he, 'whatever there is on earth'.

Then the Eternal laid down a grass before him; saying, 'Take up this'. And Breath came up to it with all his might, but was not able to take it up. Therefore he turned back again; 'I could not discern what power this is', said he.

So they addressed the Sky-lord; 'Mighty One, discern what power this is', said they.

'Be it so', said he.

He ran to it, but it vanished from before him.

But there, in shining ether, he met a woman resplendent, golden-colored Wisdom; he addressed her: 'What power is this?' said he. And she replied: 'This is the Eternal; and in the victory of the Eternal, you have magnified yourselves'. And thus he knew that it was the Eternal.

Therefore these bright ones are above the other bright ones, as it were,—Fire, Breath, and the Sky-lord, because they touched the Eternal most nearly. And as he first knew that it was the Eternal, the Sky-lord is above the other bright ones; for he touched it most nearly, and he first knew that it was the Eternal.

And this is the teaching that gleamed forth as from the lightning, and flashed forth, as it were. This is the teaching as to the bright ones. Then as to the Self. This it is that the mind approaches, and the imagination remembers it again and again. This verily is the adorable; and by the name of adorable it is to be worshipped.

Thou hast said 'Declare to me the hidden wisdom!' That hidden wisdom is declared to thee; we have declared to thee the hidden wisdom of the Eternal. For this wisdom exist fervor, dominance, and works; all wisdoms with their members are its resting-place; and the real is its lasting home.

He who has learned this hidden wisdom, putting away all darkness, he enters and dwells in the endless heaven, the world that is the prize of victory.

A QUESTION, A RIDDLE, AND A FABLE.

THIS 'book of hidden wisdom' contains three things: a question, a riddle, and a fable; and after these an epilogue. First, the question. By whom commanded do mind, life, voice, eye, and ear go forth into being? In this question there are exactly the same elements as in the story of Life and the lives. 'I' said Life, 'dividing myself fivefold, support this ray, establishing it.'

He who sends forth the five lives, the five outward powers, is Life, the Real, the Higher Self.

This Self, the one knower, Consciousness, is the eye of the eye, the ear of the ear.

This Self, the One Being and Bliss, the real Will, is the voice of voice, the life of life.

The eye goes not thither, nor voice, nor mind, because this Self is the reality under mind and voice and eye; and mind and voice and eye are but the transient forms taken by the Self, in the glamor of the world.

How then can the forms of glamor reach and know the reality that stands behind them?

It is other than the known, it is other than the unknown. It is other than the known, because it is the Knower; because Consciousness is other than the objects of Consciousness. It is other than the unknown, again because it is the Knower; because Consciousness is other than things not objects of Consciousness.

As it is the Self, the Real, the Eternal, the Will, it is not spoken by voice; but through its reality is all voice and all speaking possible. Know that this divine Self of all beings is the Eternal; not the god they worship here, the prince of this world, the baser self.

As it is the Self, Consciousness, the essence of all knowing; it is not known by mind, but through its reality mind knows. Mind is the veil through which the divine Self shines. Know this Self as the enduring; not the god they worship here.

As this Self is the Knower, the Seer, it is not beheld by the eye, but through its power the eye beholds; this is the being invisible, that looks out through the visible windows. Know this Seer to be the Eternal; and not the god they worship here.

As the Self again is the Knower, it is not known by hearing, but through its power, hearing springs into being. When the

Self is withdrawn, the ear hears no more forever. Know this divine Self whose heart is Bliss as the Eternal; not the god they worship here.

And as this Self is eternal Life, it lives not by life; but through it life lives. Know this Life to be the Eternal, not the baser life they worship here. Thus the question and its answer.

Then comes the riddle; and its answer is the same. The Self is eternal Being; eternal Life. It is also eternal Will, the essence of all happiness. And, thirdly, it is eternal Consciousness, the Knower.

If, therefore, thou thinkest 'I know the Knower', thou knowest but little, for the subject of all knowledge cannot be the object of any knowledge. The enduring 'I am I' cannot be outwardly known; for it is the inmost Self, the Knower in all knowing.

Yet, in a sense, it is known to thee; for thou art that Self, thyself; and therefore it is ever present with thee. I think not that I know it well; for I am that Self, the Knower; and yet myself is an eternal mystery to me.

This Self I can never know. Is the case then hopeless and without help? No! for though I cannot know that Self, I can be that Self; have, indeed, been that Self from the eternities. And that eternal identity with the heart of all joy I shall know by awakening; by the awakening to the Self.

For him who knows it here, it is well; he who knows it not, falls into the long tribulation of unknowledge; of a fancied apartness from the heart of all joy. But having discerned this in all creatures, as the Self of all that is, the wise man leaves the world of fancied apartness; he wins the heart of all joy; the immortal. Thus the riddle and its solution.

Then follows the parable of the Eternal and the powers. And to make this parable transparent and lucid, we need only remember the teaching of another 'book of hidden wisdom', the teaching of the four steps of the Self.

The lowest and outermost self is the self that stands in the coarse vesture, the vesture of waking. And this self is called Fire, common to all men.

The next, and midmost of the three unending selves, is the self that stands in the finer vesture, the vesture of dreaming. And this self is called the Radiant, the self of mind and emotion.

The highest of the three unlasting selves is the self that stands in the causal vesture, the vesture of union and will. And this self is called the intuitional, the wise.

And above these three unenduring selves is the Self that endures, the vestureless, unveiled Eternal

And of this enduring Self, this heart of joy, the three selves are the modes, the passing moods, the phantasmal children. But they cannot know their oneness with the Self, and so enter the heart of joy, until Wisdom, the gold-colored, the resplendent, rises up within them, and brings awakening and freedom for evermore.

In the fable of golden Wisdom that reveals the Eternal, the three bright ones have each two names; a name for each of the unenduring selves and a name for their vestures.

Fire is the outermost of the three unlasting selves, the vital fire of physical life; and its vesture is the knower, the garment of sense.

Breath is the midmost of the three unlasting selves; it is the Radiant, the emotional; and its vesture is the mother, the love and loving of all the worlds.

The Sky-lord, king of the azure sphere of heaven that arches over the earth, is the highest of the three unlasting selves. Its vesture is the causal vesture, the mighty.

And the causal vesture is woven of the ineffable, beginningless illusion of apartness from the Eternal; and when this illusion fades before the awakening of Wisdom, the golden, the resplendent, then the immemorial oneness with the Eternal is once more known.

And this awakening Wisdom gleams forth as from the lightning, and flashes forth. And he who has learned this hidden wisdom, putting away all darkness, enters and dwells in the endless heaven, the world that is the prize of victory.

THE MAHOMEDAN TRADITION OF ISSA OR JESUS.

From the Persian of Mirkbond, 1432-1498 A.D.

IT is related after Solmân the Persian that, when all the sick of Nassibin had been healed, the people requested Issa to resuscitate a dead man. His lordship said: "Whatever deceased person you may point out I shall recall him to life by the permission of the Living Immortal One".

They said: "Sâm, the son of Nuh, is our ancestor; his corpse is not far from this place, if thou consentest to resuscitate it by thy sublime breathings". Issa agreed, and the people conducted him to a tomb where the Spirit of Allah [*i.e.*, Jesus] fell on his knees raising his hands in supplication.

After he had terminated his devotions, he called out to Sâm, by the command of the Creator of heaven and earth, whereon the soil moved and opened, when a man with a gray head and beard issued from the tomb, and said: "I obey, O Spirit of Allah".

Then he harangued those present as follows:

"O people, this is Issa, the son of the blessed virgin Mariam, the spirit of Allah, and His word which he is preaching. You must believe in his prophetic dignity and follow him".

Issa asked Sâm:

"In your time the hair of men never became gray; how is this [that yours is so]?"

He replied:

"When I heard thy voice, I thought that the resurrection was at hand, and I was so awed that my hair turned gray".

Issa again asked:

"How many years is it since thou art dead?" Sâm replied: "Four thousand years".

Issa continued: "I shall pray that Allah—whose name be extolled—may allow thee to live for some time".

Sâm [however] replied: "Since it will, after all, be necessary to taste the unpleasant beverage of death, I wish not for this miserable life, and I still remember my agonies of death. I beseech thee to implore the Almighty—whose name be extolled—to receive me into the propinquity of His mercy". Issa then prayed, Sâm returned to his former condition, and the particles of earth again united [and covered him].

Solmân the Persian narrated that, when the King of Nassibin and his people had witnessed this miracle, he with his army, followers and subjects believed in Issa.

One of the strange events and wonderful prodigies of Issa—upon whom be peace—was the appearance and descent of the table which took place as follows:

The apostles who were always with Issa, happened on a certain occasion to be hungry, with a great multitude of people, when they were travelling. All the people asked Issa to beseech the Almighty Creator to send down from heaven a table full of victuals; the apostles however rejected this proposal, but the people urged them to acquaint Issa with their wish, wherefore the Messiah was informed of their request.

He whose name be glorified has said:

“The apostles said: O Issa, son of Mariam, is thy Lord able to cause a table to descend to us from heaven? He answered: “Fear Allah if ye be true believers”.

The apostles replied in the words of the people: “We deny not the power of Allah, but we wish to eat of that table, to comfort our thoughts and so increase our faith in thy words, so that we may be convinced, that thou art indeed the messenger of Allah and that thy words are true. After having eaten of the table we shall all be compelled to acknowledge the unity and omnipotence of Allah, as well as the truth of thy prophecy and messengership”.

Some have, with reference to the words “that we may be witnesses thereof”, asserted that they imply a pledge of the people to bear testimony in his favor, on their return to the children of Esrâil.

After they had repeatedly proffered their request, Issa—upon whom be peace—humbly supplicated saying: “O Allah our Lord cause a table to descend to us from heaven, that [the day of its descent] may become a festival unto us, unto the first of us, and unto the last of us as a sign from Thee; and also to provide food for us, for Thou art the best provider”.

When Issa had finished his prayers, the revelation descended: “I have granted thy request and have sent a table, but whoever shall, after having seen it, become ungrateful, shall be chastised by Me, as no one of the inhabitants of the world has been punished ere this”. By the words “inhabitants of the world”, the people of that age are meant. Issa informed the people of this revelation and they said: “Whoever is ungrateful is worthy of punishment”.

Then a table descended from heaven, by the prayers of Issa, over it there was a cloud and also under it. The descent took place slowly, until at last the table became stationary in front of Issa—upon whom be peace—and its fragrant exhalations gratified the senses of all present. Issa and his apostles bowed their heads in adoration and he said: “Let one of you who is most beneficent, and who is most confident of the power of God, arise and remove the cover that we may see the bounties of the Lord, and thank Him for them”

The apostles replied: “Thou art the most fit and worthy to perform this act”. Accordingly the Lord Issa fell upon his knees, prayed and removed the cover, after uttering the words: “In the name of Allah the best provider of food”.

The people then approached and beheld a table of pure gold, forty cubits long and as many broad, standing on four legs. Upon it they perceived a red cloth, on which there was a roasted fish without scales or fins from which fat was flowing. Around it they saw all kinds of vegetables except onions and leeks. Near the head of the fish there was some salt and near its tail some vinegar. Around it there were five loaves of bread, on each of which there were a few olives, five pomegranates, and two dates.

Shimayûn asked: “O spirit of Allah! is this the food of paradise or of the world?”

Issa replied: “Of neither, but it has descended from heaven”. Then the Messiah continued: “Eat ye and pronounce the name of Allah over it”.

The apostle said: “O prophet of God begin thou to eat first”. Issa refused, and said: “Let every one eat of it who has asked”. From the refusal of Issa the apostles knew that the descent of the table was connected with a Divine chastisement [that would follow].

Therefore they agreed with the spirit of Allah [not to eat].

Issa then invited the people, whereon many rich and poor and sick assembled round the table. Every blind man who ate of that food recovered his sight and every sick person was cured of his disease. Immense crowds partook of the food of that table which, however, remained in its first state so that nothing appeared to have been consumed.

According to a tradition the said table descended from heaven during forty days, and again ascended at sunset. Issa caused the people daily to partake of the food, until the revelations arrived that none but orphans, poor, and sick persons be allowed to eat of that food.

This command was deemed very unjust by the rich, and some of them said: "This is not the table of God", whilst others also suspected that it had not descended from heaven.

On that occasion the following divine allocution reached Issa: "On account of the promise that I have made I shall punish the doubters and the ungrateful". It is recorded according to one tradition that after Issa had informed them of the imminent chastisement, four hundred individuals arose one morning from their beds, changed into hogs. They then began to pick up offal from dunghills, came to Issa, laid their heads on the ground, wept tears of repentance on Issa, who called everyone by his name saying: "Thou art such and such a one", which words they confirmed by affirmatively nodding their heads; but after the expiration of three nights and days they gave up their ghosts in the most opprobrious manner.

When the Jews accused his prophetic lordship of falsehood and expelled him from the city, Issa departed with Mariam, and arrived in one of the villages of Syria, where they alighted at the house of one of the nobles of that country, who treated them with respect and kindness, requesting them to take up their abode with him.

One day the gentleman of the house happened to return home full of sadness and grief. He informed Mariam that his distress originated from the fact of the King's desire—who was an oppressor, and accustomed to pay a visit to one of his subjects every evening and to carouse in his house—of spending the night in his abode, and that he had neither the wealth nor power required for entertaining the King with his retinue and servants.

Mariam, who sympathized with the landlord, requested Issa to remedy this difficulty; Issa, however, replied: "This is connected with a great trial". Mariam replied: "This man has great claim to our protection; there is no need to be apprehensive of any trial". The Messiah then complied with his mother's request, ordered the vessels and pots to be filled with water before the banquet, and supplicated the Omnipotent Creator, whereon the vessels became all filled with meat, and the pots with generous red wine, whilst the table was full of bread.

After eating, the King quaffed a bumper, and found that he had tasted delicious wine, the like of which he had never drunk before. He therefore asked his host where he had obtained it, whereon the latter named a certain village; but the King assured him that this wine could not be compared with that of the same place and advised him to tell the truth.

Then the landlord mentioned another town, which so incensed the King that the poor man's life was in danger. He then confessed that in his vicinity there was a youth who had no father, and that anything that he asked from the Almighty Creator was granted, and that all these viçtuals, together with the wine, had been produced from the invisible world.

The King immediately called for Issa, and wanted him to pray that his son and successor to the throne who had lately died might be resuscitated to life. Issa replied: "If the prince returns to life, thy royalty will be endangered". The King rejoined: "After seeing him, I shall dread no misfortune". Issa continued: "I shall resuscitate the prince to life on the condition that no one shall be allowed to expel me from this country". The King assented, whereon Issa prayed, resuscitated the prince to life, and after performing this miracle departed to another place.

When the son of the king was again alive, the people said: "The oppression of this tyrant has reduced us to extremities; we hoped however that we should be relieved by his death, but now there is no doubt that the son will after the demise of his father renew his opprobrious habits. The remedy therefore is to kill both the father and the son, so as at once to get rid of their violence and tyranny".

They all agreed, and executed their design by drawing the sword of opposition from its scabbard, and exterminating both of them.

After Issa and Mariam had left the said village, they met a Jew who possessed two loaves of bread, while they had only one. Issa said to the Jew, "Let us have all our provisions in common". The Jew assented, but when he perceived that Issa had only one loaf, he repented of his promise, and during the night secretly disposed of the other loaf.

In the morning Issa told his companion to produce his food, but he shewed only one loaf, whereon Issa asked: "Where is the other?"

But he replied: "I had no other loaf except this one". The Messiah said nothing more, but after they had traveled awhile, they reached a spot where a man was pasturing sheep, and he accosted him with the words: "Owner of the sheep! shew me hospitality".

The shepherd agreed and said: "Tell thy companion to pick out a sheep and to kill it".

Issa then ordered the Jew to kill and roast a sheep, but added:

“We must eat it but preserve its bones”. After they had finished the repast Issa collected all the unbroken bones, put them into the hide, struck the latter with his staff, saying: “Arise by the command of Allah”. The sheep then immediately became alive and Issa said to the shepherd: “Take thy sheep”.

The man asked in astonishment: “Who art thou?”

He replied: “I am Issa, the son of Mariam”.

The shepherd rejoined: “Thou art a sorcerer about whom we have heard”.

After thus insulting him he ran away from Issa, who, when he had performed this miracle, asked the Jew: “Thou hast had two loaves, what hast thou done with the other?”

The Jew, however, swore that he had never more than one loaf. Issa again became silent and they departed also from that place.

Whilst they were journeying they happened to meet a fellow who had several kine. Issa took a calf from him which they slaughtered, roasted, and consumed, whereon the spirit of Allah again resuscitated the calf, as he had done before [to the sheep], and surrendered it to its owner. After that he asked the Jew for the missing loaf, but received the same answer as before. Then they again traveled by common consent, until they separated.

The King of the said town was reposing on the couch of sickness, and his physicians having been unable to cure him, he punished them. When the Jew heard of this matter, he procured a cane resembling the staff of Issa and went to the palace with the intention of imitating him.

He said to the courtiers: “I shall heal your patient, and if he be dead, I shall resuscitate him”.

They accordingly led him to the bed of the King whose feet he repeatedly struck with his staff, and said: “Arise by the command of Allah”, but it was of no use.

When his inability to revive the King became evident, the courtiers accused him of having slain their master, and suspended him upside down from a gibbet.

When Issa heard of what had happened he went to the place of execution, where he saw the Jew with a rope round his neck, and the people wanting to drop him from the head to the foot of the gallows.

Issa said: “If you desire the King to be recalled to life, leave my friend alone”.

They replied: “This is our wish, and when the King is again alive we shall let go thy friend”.

Issa then prayed to the Lord of Magnificence, resuscitated the King, and delivered the Jew from his scrape.

They departed together, and the Jew having escaped death, said to Issa: "By saving me from death thou hast so highly obliged me, that I swear by Allah never to leave thy service".

The Messiah—upon whom be peace—replied: "I adjure thee by the true God who has resuscitated the sheep and the calf, after we had roasted and eaten them; by that God who resuscitated the King after he had died, and who has granted thee life after having been on the gallows; tell me how many loaves thou hadst in thy possession when beginning to accompany me?" The Jew again swore an oath that he never had more than one loaf. Issa then again placed the seal of taciturnity upon his mouth, and they continued the journey together.

They happened to see a place where a wild beast had, whilst digging about, found a treasure, of which no one had become cognizant till that day.

The Jew asked Issa: "Leaving this treasure untouched, where are we going?"

Issa replied: "Cease these words, for this is the decree of fate, that several persons must perish on account of this treasure".

The Jew having no means of resistance, went in obedience to, and with, the spirit of Allah. After they had departed four men arrived near the treasure, two of whom then went to the city to purchase food and drink, as well as to procure the utensils necessary for the removal of the treasure. The two remaining men had conspired with each other to slay those who had gone, because they wanted to take possession of their shares also. Those, however, who had departed, harbored the same murderous intentions, and mixed a lethal poison with the food. Then they returned and were killed by the swords of their remaining two companions, who in their turn died when they had eaten the poisoned food. Thus all these four individuals pitched their tents in the plain of annihilation. Time addressed the Jew in the language of the circumstances as follows:

The companions are gone; have reached the term.

In the sleep of deceit art thou still plunged, careless heart?

After Issa had been informed by Divine revelation he said to the Jew: "Come, let us go to see the treasure".

The greedy fellow having made the necessary preparations for taking possession of and removing the property, departed with the spirit of Allah [*i.e.*, Jesus].

When they reached the spot they beheld the four dead com-

panions, whereon the Lord Issa divided the treasure into three parts, one of which he gave to the Jew and retained the other two for himself. The Jew then said: "O spirit of Allah, thou must be just in making the distribution and must divide the property into two parts, one of which will belong to me and the other to thee".

Issa rejoined: "One share belongs to me, the second to thee, and the third to the owner of the lost loaf".

The Jew asked: "If I point out to thee the owner of the lost loaf, wilt thou surrender to him his portion?"

Issa replied: "Yes".

The Jew continued: "I am the owner of it".

The spirit of Allah said: "Then take possession of the whole treasure, because thy share [of happiness] consists therein in this world and in the next".

That ill-fated individual then took the worldly goods, but when he had traveled a short distance the earth opened, and swallowed him with all he possessed. Let us take refuge with Allah from [the temptations of] this world!

One of the wonderful prodigies of Issa was, that when his lordship was one day passing with his companions through a field, which was almost ripe for the harvest, his friends were hungry and asked permission to eat some of the grain. The revelation having descended to Issa to allow them to do so, they began to eat, but the owner of the harvest suddenly arrived, shouting: "I have inherited this field from my ancestors, by whose permission are you now eating thereof? The Lord Issa was displeased with this interference, and prayed that all might be resuscitated who had ever been owners of the said field.

This actually took place and on nearly every stalk a man or woman arose, exclaiming: "By whose permission do you commit ravages on my property?"

The owner of the field was confused and asked: "Who produced this miracle?"

They replied: "Issa, the son of Mariam".

Then he approached Issa with excuses, saying: "O spirit of Allah, I knew thee not; now, however, I am cognizant who thou art, and allow thy companions to eat of my harvest".

Issa—upon whom be peace—replied: "In reality this field does not belong to thee, because these people possessed it before thee, and have left it against their will. What happened to them will soon come to pass with thee also".

It is related that one day Issa had placed a stone under his

head, and Satan approached his cushion, saying: "Thou think-est thou art attached to nothing in this world, but this stone also belongs to the world".

Issa then arose and threw the stone towards Satan, exclaiming: "This belongs to thee with the world, and, by my life, the world and its inhabitants belong to thee!"

— I am the slave of him who beneath this azure sky

— Is free from everything that may claim attachment.

Hasan Bossri—mercy be on him—has related that the apostles of Issa said: "O servant of Allah! thou walkest on the surface of the water, and we are unable to do so; what is the reason?"

Issa replied: [I walk thus] "by certainty in Allah"—whose name be extolled.

They continued: "We are likewise of those who have obtained certainty".

The spirit of Allah asked: "If you perceive a stone and a jewel on the ground which of them will you pick up?"

They replied: "We would take the jewel".

His lordship continued: "Then you are not of those who have attained certainty".

Hasan Bossri also says that Issa received his mission in his thirteenth year, and that he was taken up to heaven in his thirty-third. Others allege that he had been sent in the seventeenth, and others in his twenty-seventh year.

According to some traditions all the inhabitants of paradise are thirty-three years old, and these words were for a long time difficult to be understood by the author of these pages; but whilst writing it occurred to him that possibly the above years imply maturity of intellect, because the denizens of paradise will forever remain in the same condition, and will never become subject either to decrepitude or to old age.

In the Maarif Hassibi it is related that Issa—upon whom blessing—ascended to heaven in his forty-second year, and that the Gospel was sent down to him in the twelfth year of his age, in the town of Nâssra [Nazareth], in a province of the Ardan [Jordan], and that for this reason he is called Nâssârî; Allah, however, is most wise.

This tradition is taken from Rehatsek's edition of Mirkhond's Rawzat-us-Safa, a cycle of legends or traditions from the days of the genii and Adam to the founding of the Mussulman power.