

Rubáiyát reproduces the spirit and color of the original, transplanting successfully into English verse the strange, outlandish imagery of the original. Fitzgerald's own conception of what a translation should be is well set forth in the preface to his *Agammemnon* of Æschylus. Here he maintained that in the absence of the perfect poet, who shall recreate in his own language the body and soul of his original, the best system is that of a paraphrase conserving the spirit of its author—a sort of literary metempsychosis. How well he has done this is apparent in his translation of Omar Khayyám. Whether it be judged as translation or simply as a contribution to English poesy, one is enchanted by the quaint exotic Oriental imagery sprinkled all through the hundred and one Rubáiyát which Fitzgerald has given us. Even the elusive Springtime fragrance of the rose-scented Naishápûr garden pervades the whole book as it does those first verses—

"Iram, indeed, is gone with all his Rose,
And Jamshyd's Şu'n-ring'd cup where no one knows;
But still a Ruby kindles in the Vine,
And many a Garden by the Water blows."

Apropos of the lately published "Súfi Interpretation of Omar Khayyám," by Bjerregaard, there may yet be some who will class Omar among the *Súfi*, but Fitzgerald interpreted him as Epicurean, and accordingly the Fitzgerald Rubáiyát are Epicurean in tone; and it is as this sometimes merry, oftentimes sad follower in the path of Epicurus and Lucretius that we prefer to consider old Omar.

Of Roman Epicureanism, which in its tendencies seems to have been almost, if not quite, identical with that of the more recent *vanitas vanitatum* philosophy of the Rubáiyát, we have an excellent account in Walter Pater's "Marius, the Epicurean." That old Roman doctrine, compounded of even older Greek philosophies, principally Heraclitus and Aristippus, of Cyrene, was almost identical with the doctrine of the famous Sophist, Protagoras—Pater fittingly terms it "a philosophy of the despair of knowledge." In essence it taught