## Text and translation

- Decay has brought us into an evil plight. Our adversity is far-reaching.
   Our prestige has vanished from the world, and there is no likelihood of our revival.
   We lie supported by just one hope. We all live in the expectation of paradise.
- We do not seize the advantages of travel, nor are we intrepid voyagers. We are unaware of God's creation. These walls of our home which lie before our eyes are, in our opinion, the limits for mankind. We are like fish gathered in a tank, that is their world, that is their universe.
- Paradise and Iram, Salsabil and Kausar, mountain and jungle, island and ocean,
  And many other such names, we have kept reading about in books,
  But without seeing them, who can be sure whether they exist in heaven or on earth?
- 127 That priceless capital which is real wealth, that noble treasure of decent folk,
  That substance of well-off people, that wealth which consists of time,
  Has no value in our eyes, but is all dissipated uselessly and for nothing.
- 128 If someone asks us for a paisa, we shall have to be more or less careful about granting him it,
  But that capital of religion and of the world, whose every moment is without price,
  In squandering that, we show no meanness, in being prodigal with that, we are most generous.
- 129 If we reckon up all the breaths of day and night, then very few will be left to be gathered for the next day.
  Our days and nights are continually spent for nothing.
  It is as if no one among us was aware that these breaths will come to an end at some moment.

## Text and translation

The dog obedient to the shepherd's command that he continually keep watch over the sheep. When there is the rustling of a leaf among the flock, goes about as furious as a tiger. In all fairness, he is better than us, for he never neglects his duty for an instant.

## The efficiency of the Europeans

- Those peoples who have now traversed all roads, who have laid up treasures of every kind, Who have placed on their heads every load and burden, only came to life after they were already dead. They are racing so fast along the way of searching as if they had still had very far to go.
- They never sleep their fill, they are never sated by hard work, They do not squander their substance, they do not waste an instant uselessly. They do not tire or get weary of going along. They have advanced a long way and keep on advancing.
- 133\* But we, who are still exactly where we were, are a burden on the earth, like minerals. We exist in the world as if we did not. We sit so careless of the world That it is as if all necessary tasks had already been accomplished, and only death remains.

## The honourable communities of Hindus

- As for the other, noble, peoples of this land, prosperity itself salutes Pre-eminent in commerce, famous in wealth, friends of the age, supporters of progress. They are neither neglectful of their children's upbringing, nor careless of the strengthening of the community.
- 135\* Theirs is the shop, theirs is the market, theirs is business and trade. Their commerce extends throughout the world. All of them, young and old, are busily employed. Officialdom has them as its basis, theirs are the offices, theirs are the bureaus.

- 136\* They are honoured in every court, they are respected in every government.

  They are not infamous in their manners and habits, nor notorious in their words and deeds.

  They are not reluctant to enter profession or craft, nor ashamed of hard work and toil.
- 137 Those who fall later recover themselves. When they suffer a blow, they escape and get out.

  They let themselves be poured into every mould. Where things have changed, they change too.

  They know the demands of every occasion. They recognize the expressions of the age.
- But our vision is so exalted that in it all heights and depths are equal.

  We still do not have even the slightest idea as to what sort of carrion bitch progress is.

  Wherever we open our eyes and look, we see the world as less than ourselves.
- Day and night the age gives this signal, 'The way to get on here is by being reconciled with me.

  'Those who do not find it agreeable to follow me will have to be bypassed by me.

  'The ship does not sail forever in a single direction. Sail where the wind blows you.'
- 140 The wind of autumn has already come into the garden, the direction of the gardener's gaze has shifted.

  The warbling nightingale's cry has altered. Now the garden is due to depart at any moment.

  All the visions which are seen are of destruction. Now the dawn of catastrophe is about to break.
- 141 Poverty, which is called the Mother of Crimes, on account of which hearts cease to remain firm in faith,
  Which makes men beasts, because of which neither he who prays nor he who fasts rests assured at heart,
  Is so prevalent among the people of Islam that it is as if it was this that was the mark of a Muslim.

- Here it teaches us the formulas of deceit, here instils in us the love of lying.
   It explains to us the ways of perfidy, and tells us the opportunities for flattery.
   When it does not find these enchantments effective, it finally makes us into beggars.
- In all the communities which exist here besides us, thousands are well off, while two are destitute.

  While in our case, in a hundred thousand, if two are wealthy, a hundred are half dead, and the rest are beggars.

  If we bring into operation the slightest sense of shame, we will realize how utterly abased we are.
- Those men of good family whom the vicissitudes of fortune have ruined do not realize that all they must do is earn their daily bread.

  All have irrevocably decided in their hearts that they should subsist by begging.

  Wherever they discover patrons, they arrive, they beg, and eat.
- 145 Here they mention their forbears, here they operate by acquaintanceship. Here they raise loans by false promises. This is how they get their money, by wheedling entreaties. They go round from door to door, selling the name of their ancestors of which they are so proud.
- Such are the ways of those newly struck by disaster, since whose ruin very little time has passed.
   The entire world still knows about them, and whose sons and grandsons they are.
   Everyone both here and abroad knows them, and is acquainted with their stock and lineage.
- But those whose name and mark is now effaced, whose tale has grown old,
  Who are told of in fables and stories, their descendants' resources in the world are very straitened.
  They are nowhere valued or asked after now. None gives them so much as alms now.

- Many of those who light the charcoal in hookahs, of those who carry bundles of grass,
  Of those who eat by begging from door to door, of those who die from prolonged starvation,
  If you ask which mine these jewels come from, most of them will emerge as being of the stock of kings.
- If was their ancestors who were once rulers, it was they whom young and old humbly served,
   They who were the shelter of the helpless and weak, they who were the asylum of Dailam and Isfahan,
   They who acted as shepherds of the realm, in their households that the conjunction of benefics occurred.
- This, oh community of Islam, is an occasion for taking heed, that the descendants of kings are beggars from door to door.
   Whoever you hear of is immersed in poverty, whoever you see is destitute and without resource.
   None of them is capable of earning. If they are capable of anything, it is of eating by begging.
- There is not just a single method of begging here. There are ever new ways of mendicancy here.

  Here mendicity is not restricted to the destitute. If anyone will give, there is no lack of mendicants here.

  Many have stretched out their hands beneath the cloak. Whether in secret or in open guise, most are beggars.
- Many profess themselves to be founders of mosques, many make themselves out to be of Sayyid lineage.
   Many learn laments and passionate mourning, many exercise their brilliant style in encomium.
   Many become attendants at thresholds, and keep on begging for their food, going about from door to door.
- Those who think hard work and effort disgraceful, craft and profession demeaning,

  Trade and agriculture difficult, the Franks' money carrion, who desire easy circumstances and honour besides,

  That people will sink today, if it has not already sunk yesterday.