

PART ONE

BEFORE 1905

THE HIMALAYAS

O Himalah! O rampart of the realm of India!
Bowing down, the sky kisses your forehead
Your condition does not show any signs of
old age
You are young in the midst of day and night's
alternation
The Kaleem of Tur Sina witnessed but one
Effulgence
For the discerning eye you are an
embodiment of Effulgence.
To the outward eye you are a mere mountain
range
In reality you are our sentinel, you are India's
rampart
You are the divan whose opening verse is the
sky
128 Collected Poetical Works of Iqbal
You lead Man to the solitudes of his heart's
retreat
Snow has endowed you with the turban of
honour
Which scoffs at the crown of the
world-illuminating sun.
Antiquity is but a moment of your bygone age
Dark clouds are encamped in your valleys
Your peaks are matching with the Pleiades in
elegance
Though you are standing on earth your abode
is sky's expanse
The stream in your flank is a fast flowing
mirror
For which the breeze is working like a
kerchief.
The mountain top's lightning has given a
whip
In the hands of cloud for the ambling horse
O Himalah! Are you like a theatre stage
Which nature's hand has made for its
elements?
Ah! How the cloud is swaying in excessive joy
The cloud like an unchained elephant is
speeding.
Gentle movement of the morning zephyr is
acting like a cradle
Every flower bud is swinging with
intoxication of existence
The flower bud's silence with the petal's

tongue is saying
"I have never experienced the jerk of the
florist's hand
Silence itself is relating the tale of mine
The corner of nature's solitude is the abode of
mine"
The brook is melodiously descending from
the high land
Putting the waves of Kawthar and Tasnim to
embarrassment
As if showing the mirror to Nature's beauty
Now evading now rowing against the rock in
its way
Play in passing this orchestra of beautiful
music
O wayfarer! The heart comprehends your
music
When the night's Layla unfurls her long hair
The sound of water-falls allures the heart
That silence of the night whose beauty
surpasses speech
That state of silent meditation overshadowing
the trees
That dusk's beauty which shivers along the
mountain range
Very beautiful looks this rouge on your
cheeks.
O Himalah! Do relate to us some stories of the
time
When your valleys became abode of Man's
ancestors
Relate something of the life without
sophistication
Which had not been stained by the rouge of
sophistication
O Imagination! Bring back that period
O Vicissitudes of Time speed backwards