

From a campaign against some turbulent folk,
He came at evening to a quiet place
Near Sikri by the roadside through the woods,
Where there were many doves among the trees.

There Salim Chisti a holy man had made
His lonely dwelling in the wilderness,
Seeking perfection. And the solitude
Was sweet to Akbar, and he halted there
And went to Salim in his lodge and said,
"O man and brother, thy long days are spent
In meditation, seeking for the path
Through this great world's impediments to peace,
Here in the twilight with the holy stars
Or when the rose of morning breaks in gold ;
Tell me, I pray, whence comes the gift of peace
With all its blessings for a people's need,
And how may true tranquility be found
On which man's restless spirit longs to rest?"

And Salim answered, "Lord, most readily
In Allah's out-of-doors, for there men live
More truly, being free from false constraint,
For learning wisdom with a calmer mind.
For they who would find peace must conquer fear
And ignorance and greed,--the ravagers
Of spirit, mind, and sense,--and learn to live
Content beneath the shade of Allah's hand.
Who worships not his own will shall find peace."

Then Akbar answered, "I have set my heart
On making beauty, truth, and justice shine
As the ordered stars above the darkened earth.
Are not these also things to be desired,
And striven for with no uncertain toil?
And save thro' them whence comes the gift of peace?"