



Excerpt
Part II. Autobiography by Hazrat Inayat Khan
America 1910 – 1912

I was transported by destiny from the world of lyric and poetry to the world of industry and commerce, on the 13th of September 1910. I bade farewell to my motherland, the soil of India, the land of the sun, for America the land of my future, wondering: "perhaps I shall return some day", and yet I did not know how long it would be before I should return. The ocean that I had to cross seemed to me a gulf between the life that was passed and the life which was to begin. I spent my moments on the ship looking at the rising and falling of the waves and realizing in this rise and fall the picture of life reflected, the life of individuals, of nations, of races, and of the world. I tried to think where I was going, why I was going, what I was going to do, what was in store for me. "How shall I set to work? Will the people be favourable or unfavourable to the Message which I am taking from one end of the world to the other?" It seemed my mind moved curiously on these questions, but my heart refused to ponder upon them even for a moment, answering apart one constant voice I always heard coming from within, urging me constantly onward to my task, saying: "Thou art sent on Our service, and it is We Who will make thy way clear." This alone was my consolation.

This period while I was on the way, was to me a state which one experiences between a dream and an awakening; my whole part in India became one single dream, not a purposeless dream, but a dream preparing me to accomplish something toward which I was proceeding. There were moments of sadness, of feeling my self removed further and further from the land of my birth, and moments of great joy, with the hope of nearing the Western regions for which my soul was destined. And at moments I felt too small and little for my ideals and inspirations, comparing my limited self with this vast world. But at moments, realizing Whose work it was, Whose service it was. Whose call it was, the answer which my heart gave moved me to ecstasy, as if I had

risen in the realization of Truth above the limitations which weigh mankind down. When our ship arrived in the harbour of New York, the first land of my destination, I saw before me the welcoming figure of the statue of Liberty *, an idol of rock, which I felt was awaiting the hour to turn into an ideal, awaiting the moment to rise from material liberty to spiritual liberty. Its wings suggested to me that it wanted to spread from national liberty to world liberty.