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MEHER BABA

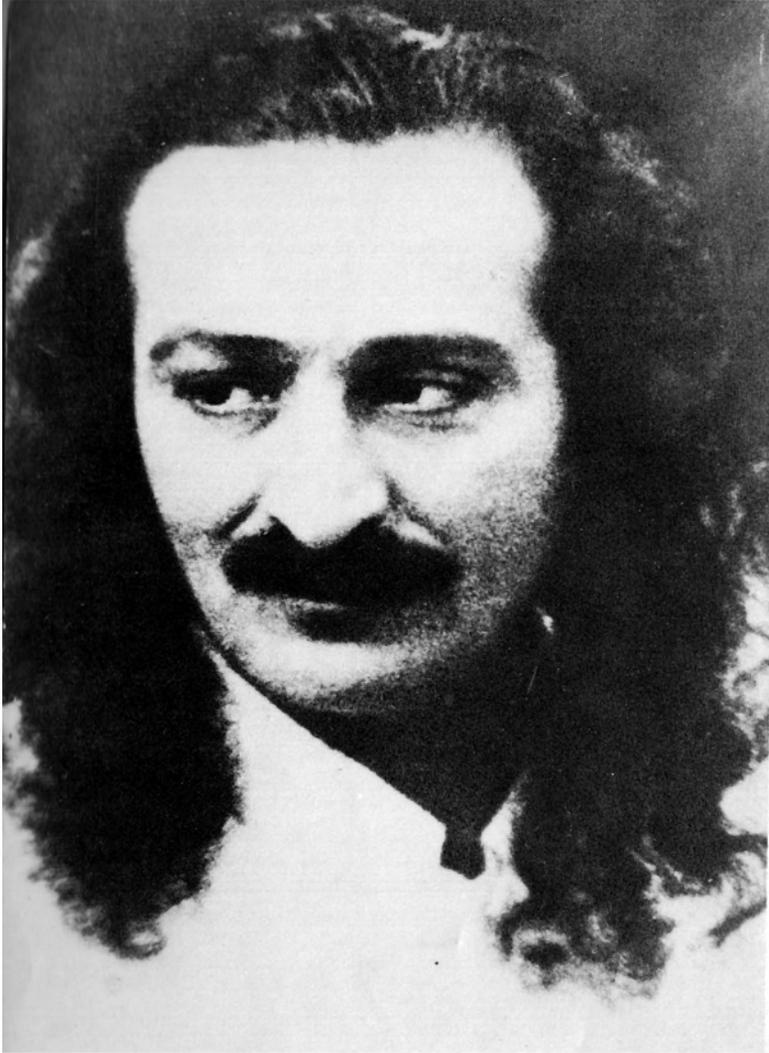
JOURNAL



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Shri Meher Baba

"I have come not to teach but awaken"

-Shri Meher Baba

MEHER BABA

JOURNAL

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Shri Meher Baba on Selfishness

Selfishness comes into existence owing to the tendency of the desires to find fulfilment in action and experience. It is born of fundamental ignorance about one's own true nature. Human consciousness is clouded by the accumulation of various types of impressions deposited by the long course of the evolution of consciousness. These impressions express themselves as desires, and the range of the operation of consciousness is strictly limited by these desires. The *sanskaras* or impressions form an enclosure around the possible field of consciousness. The circle of *sanskaras* constitutes that limited area in which alone the individual consciousness can be focused. Some of the desires have mere latency of action, but others can actually translate themselves into action. The capacity of a desire to find expression in conduct depends upon the intensity and the amount of the *sanskaras* connected with it. To use a geometrical metaphor we might say that

when a desire passes into action it traverses a distance which is equal to the radius of a circle describing the boundary of the *sanskaras* connected with it. When a desire gathers sufficient strength it projects itself into action for getting fulfilled.

The range of selfishness is equal to the range of desires. Owing to the hindrance of multifarious desires it becomes impossible for the soul to find free

Wanting ends in Dissatisfaction and full expression of its true being, and life becomes self-centred and narrow. The entire life of the personal ego is continually in the grip of wanting, i. e., an attempt to seek fulfilment of desires through things that change and vanish. But *there can be no real fulfilment through the transient things*. The satisfaction derived from the fleeting things of life is not lasting ; and the wants of man remain unfulfilled. There is thus a general sense of dissatisfaction accompanied by all kinds of worries.

The chief forms in which the frustrated ego finds expression are lust, greed and anger. Lust is very much like greed in many respects. But it differs in the manner of its fulfillment which is directly related to the gross sphere. Lust finds its expression through the medium of the physical body and is concerned with the flesh. It is a form of entanglement with the *gross* sphere. Greed is a state of restlessness of the heart, and it consists

mainly of craving for power and possessions. Possessions and power are sought for the fulfilment of desires. Man is only partially satisfied in his attempt to have the fulfilment of his desires. And this partial satisfaction fans and increases the flame of craving instead of extinguishing it. So greed always finds an endless field of conquest, and leaves the man endlessly dissatisfied. The chief expressions of greed are related to the emotional part of man. It is a form of entanglement with the *subtle* sphere. Anger is the fume of an irritated mind. It is caused by the thwarting of desires. It feeds the limited ego, and is used for domination and aggression. It aims at removing the obstacles existing in the fulfilment of desires. The frenzy of anger nourishes egoism and conceit, and it is the greatest benefactor of the limited ego. Mind is the seat of anger, and its expressions are mostly through the activities of the mind. Anger is a form of *mental* entanglement. Lust, greed and anger respectively have body, heart and mind as their vehicles of expression.

Man experiences disappointment through lust, greed and anger, and the frustrated ego, in its turn, seeks further gratification through lust, greed and anger.

The Vicious Circle Consciousness is thus caught up in a vicious circle of *endless disappointment*. Disappointment comes into existence when either lust or greed or anger are thwarted in their expression. It is thus a general reaction of the gross, subtle and mental entanglement. It is a depression caused

by the nonfulfilment of lust, greed and anger which together are co-extensive with selfishness. Selfishness which is the common basis of these three ingredient vices is thus the ultimate cause of disappointment and worries. It defeats itself. It seeks fulfilment through desires, but succeeds only in arriving at unending dissatisfaction.

Selfishness inevitably leads to dissatisfaction and disappointment, because desires are endless. The problem of happiness is, therefore, the problem of dropping out desires. Desires, however, cannot be effectively overcome through mechanical repression. They can be annihilated only through knowledge. If you dive deep in the realm of thoughts and think seriously just for a few minutes, you will realize the emptiness of desires. Think of what you have enjoyed all these years and what you have suffered. All that you have enjoyed through life is today nil. All that you have suffered through life also is nothing in the present. All was illusory. It is your right to be happy and yet you create your own unhappiness by wanting things. Wanting is the source of perpetual restlessness. If you do not get the thing you wanted, you are disappointed. And if you get it, you want more and more of it and become unhappy. Say, "I do not want anything," and be happy. The continuous realization of the futility of wants will eventually lead you to Knowledge. This self-knowledge will give you the freedom from wants to the road to abiding happiness.

Wants should be carefully distinguished from needs. Pride and anger, greed and lust are all different from want. You might think, "I need all that I want." But this is a mistake. If you are thirsty in a desert, what you need is good water, not lemonade. As long as man has body there will be some needs, and it is necessary to meet these needs. But wants are an outcome of infatuated imagination. They must be scrupulously killed, if there is to be any happiness. As the very being of selfishness consists of desires, *renunciation of wants becomes a process of death*. Dying in the ordinary sense means parting with the physical body. But dying in the real sense means renunciation of low sense-desires. The priests prepare men for the false death by painting gloomy pictures of hell and heaven. But their death is illusory, since life is one unbroken continuity. The real death consists of the cessation of desires, and it comes by gradual stages.

The dawn of love facilitates the death of selfishness. Being is dying by loving. If you cannot love one another, how can you love even those who torture you? The limits of selfishness are created by ignorance. When a man realizes that he can have a more glorious satisfaction by widening the sphere of his interests and activities, he is heading towards the life of service. At this stage he entertains many good desires. He

**Renunciation
of Wants**

**Love and
Service**

wants to make others happy by relieving distress and helping them. And though even in such good desires there is often an indirect and latent reference to the self, narrow selfishness has no grip over good deeds. Even good desires may, in a sense, be said to be a form of enlightened and extended selfishness, for, like bad desires, they too move within the domain of duality. But in entertaining good desires selfishness is embracing a larger conception which eventually brings about its own extinction. Instead of merely trying to be luminous, arrestive and possessive, man learns to be useful to others. The desires which enter into the constitution of the personal ego are either good or bad. Bad desires are ordinarily referred to as forms of self-

**The Arising
of Selfishness**

ishness, and good desires are referred to as forms of selflessness. But there is no hard and fast line dividing selfishness from selflessness. Both move in the domain of duality, and from the ultimate point of view which transcends the opposites of good and bad, the distinction between selfishness and selflessness is chiefly one of range. Selfishness and selflessness are two phases of the life of the personal ego, and these two phases are continuous with each other. Selfishness arises when all the desires are centred round the narrow individuality. Selflessness arises when this crude organisation of desires suffers disintegration, and there is a general dispersing of desires, with the result that they cover a much wider sphere. Selfishness is the narrowing

down of interests to a limited field ; selflessness is the extension of interests over a wide field. To put it paradoxically, selfishness is a restricted form of selflessness: and selflessness is the drawing out of selfishness into a wide sphere of activity. *Selfishness must be transmuted into selflessness before the domain of duality is completely transcended.* Persistent and continuous performance of good deeds wears out self-

**Transfor-
mation of
Selfishness
into Self-
lessness**

ishness. Selfishness extended and expressed in the form of good deeds becomes the instrument of its own destruction. *The good is the main link between selfishness thriving and dying.*

Selfishness, which in the beginning is the father of evil tendencies, becomes, through good deeds, the hero of its own defeat. And when the evil tendencies are completely replaced by good tendencies, selfishness is transformed into selflessness, i.e., individual selfishness loses itself into universal interest. And though this selfless and good life is also bound by the opposites, goodness is a necessary step towards freedom from the opposites. Goodness is the means of the soul to annihilate its own ignorance.

From the good the soul passes on to God. Selflessness is merged into *Universal Selfhood*, which is beyond good and bad, virtue and vice, and all the other dual aspects of Maya. The height of selflessness is the beginning of the feeling of one-ness with all. In the state of

**Universal
Selfhood**

liberation there is neither selfishness nor selflessness in the ordinary sense; but both of these are taken up and merged into the feeling of *selfness for all*. Realization of the unity of all life is accompanied by peace, and unfathomable bliss. It does not, in any way, lead either to spiritual stagnation or to the obliteration of relative values. *Selfness for all brings about undisturbed harmony without loss of discrimination, and unshakable peace without indifference to the surroundings*. And this selfness for all is not an outcome of merely subjective synthesis. It is a result of an actual attainment of union with the Ultimate Reality which includes all.

Open your heart by weeding out all desires and by harbouring only one longing—the longing for union with the Ultimate Reality. That Ultimate Reality

**Union
with the
Ultimate
Reality**

is not to be sought in the changing things of external environment, but in ones own being. Every time your soul intends entering your human heart, it finds the doors locked and the inside too full of desires. Do not keep the doors of your hearts closed. Every-where there is the source of abiding bliss, and yet all are miserable because of desires born of ignorance. The goal of lasting happiness shines forth fully only when the limited ego with all its desires finds its complete and final extinction.

Renunciation of desires does not mean asceticism or a merely negative attitude to life. Any such

negation of life would make man inhuman. Divinity is not devoid of humanity. Spirituality must make man more a human. It is a positive attitude of releasing all that is good and noble and beautiful in man. It also contributes to all that is gracious and lovely in the environment. It does not require the external renunciation of worldly activities or the avoiding of duties and responsibilities. It only requires that while performing the worldly activities or discharging the responsibilities arising from the specific place and position of the individual, the inner spirit should remain free from the burden of desires. Perfection consists in remaining free from the entanglements of duality. Such freedom from entanglements is the most essential requirement of unhindered creativity. But this freedom cannot be attained by running away from life for fear of entanglement. This would mean denial of life. Perfection does not consist in shrinking from the dual expressions of nature. The attempt to escape from entanglement implies fear of life. But spirituality consists in meeting life adequately and fully without being overpowered by the opposites. It must assert its dominion over all illusion—however attractive or powerful. Without avoiding contact with the different forms of life a perfect man functions with complete detachment in the midst of intense activity.

**Spirituality is
Positive attitude to Life**

Twelve Ways of Realizing Me

BY SHRI MEHER BABA

1. LONGING

If you experience that same longing and thirst for Union with Me as one who has been lying for days in the hot sun of the Sahara experiences for the longing for water, then you will realize Me.

2. PEACE OF MIND

If you have the "peace of a frozen lake, then too you will realize Me.

3. HUMILITY

If you have the humility of the earth which can be moulded into any shape, then you will know Me.

4. DESPERATION

If you experience the desperation that causes a man to commit suicide and you feel that you cannot live without seeing Me, then you will see Me.

5. FAITH

If you have the complete faith that Kalyan had for his Master, in believing it was night although it was day (because his Master said so), then you will know Me.

6. FIDELITY

If you have the fidelity that the breath has in giving you company, even without your constantly feeling it, till the end of your life; (that both in happiness and in suffering gives you company and never turns against you), then you will know Me.

TWELVE WAYS OF REALIZING ME 11

7. CONTROL THROUGH LOVE

When your love for Me drives away your lust for the things of the senses, then you realize Me.

8. SELFLESS SERVICE

If you have the quality of selfless service, unaffected by results, similar to that of the sun which serves the world by shining on all creation—on the grass in the field, on the birds in the air, on the beasts in the forest—on all mankind with its sinner and its saint, its rich and its poor, unconscious of their attitude towards it, then you will win Me.

9. RENUNCIATION

If you renounce for Me everything physical, mental and spiritual, then you have Me.

10. OBEDIENCE

If your obedience is as spontaneous, complete and natural as the light is to the eye or the smell to the nose, then you come to Me.

11. SURRENDERANCE

If your surrenderance to Me is as whole-hearted as that of one, who, suffering from insomnia, surrenders to sudden sleep without fear of being lost, then you have Me.

12. LOVE

If you have that love for Me which St. Francis had for Jesus, then not only will you realize Me but you will please Me.

Individuality

By Adi K. Irani

Taking into view the entire creation, the whole manifestation of the changing material coming out of the Infinite, its varied spheres of existences coloured by their difference in makeup, their substance, their constitution, their motion or inertness, their utility or apparent uselessness and all their relative differences, the wide un-compromising contrast these differentiations present, we would believe that to think for a moment of the birth of the universal change to have precipitated in one *individual absolute entity*, is false. It is difficult to think wherefore this current of mass-unsteadiness should lead us to a realm of insecurity and uncertainty when it has been the outcome of a stable unshakable state of oneness. To believe that the universal flux of affairs with its evil and relative goodness is a permanent inconsistency wherein lies the aim of our life and the panacea of our happiness, is too gloomy a picture to paint and too unjust an attitude to

adopt. Every thought and act of us betrays a sense of secureness and stability beyond words amidst the seeming changes and the vicious vicissitudes of life. To try to believe that all are one, and the outward differences exist only in so far they are seen, is to be happily practical about it. The deeper you go the sooner the differences come closer to each other, lingering for a time in their individuality, visible only to the lenses of intuition and insight. Finally all change, all relativity and all individuality is hushed into one silent Supreme Being.

To have lost individuality, however great and powerful the idea of oneness, is to have lost faith in everything; in all greatness and goodness which have blessed the world ever since the *first individual* came into being. By the first individual we mean he who, having sacrificed the abundance of ecstasy, of righteousness and power *squeezed himself down* to the limitations of an individual

for the purpose of manifesting the vastness of experience, of knowledge and of bliss in a way palatable and understandable to other individuals whom, for our exposition, we call the *Ordinary Individual*.

There are three individualities in the main throughout the cosmos; *Ordinary Individual*, *Divine Individual* and *The Individual* as the most general classification of individuals. The first and very common is an Ordinary Individual who, beside himself, his intellect, his feelings and his habits is not conversant with anything outside of himself or outside of anything that cannot bend and twist through the narrow windows of his perception and subjective understanding. Anything he sees is what he sees and is not what it really is. Anything he hears and smells is not the sound or fragrance that objectively exists. The touch of things he senses also suffers from the perversion of a faithful perception. All his senses are the interpreters of the true knowledge of things. Their interpretation is not false from being true, or wrong from being right; they are nar-

rowed, limited and partial. The *Ordinary Individual* labouring under the delusion of a true perceiver is not a charlatan. He is true, he is honest and he is sincere. He sees what comes before him and says what he sees. His faculties of smell and sound and of understanding are exactly how they reveal to him. Should he disclaim them, he disowns them; should he refuse them, he sees nothing higher than them; should he deny them he finds hard to thwart the *in*. This is the *Destiny* of our *Ordinary Individual* or his *hereditary principle*; this is the *harvesting* of what he *sowed*, or the *chance* that has made him so. This is the *stage* in his *development* or a well t bought out *plan of nature*; this is the *curse of a god* or a *vision in synthesis*. He is not a charlatan but he surely is an obstinate. He thinks, does and moves right, but he insists on what he thinks, on what he does and how he moves to be considered the only way how all should behave and all should think. He has his ways and he wants to standardize them. He wants all to be crushed within the precincts of his subjective understanding

and partial perspective. He fails to find out how much unexplored the layers of consciousness are which are yet to be enlightened. This is what he is and how we see him. There is no denying that our tiny perverted visioner, claiming all the glories of the world, is but a mighty speck of an individual only perfect in purity of consciousness and mightily imperfect in its widened application. An *Ordinary Individual* has fully developed consciousness but he cannot make use of it extensively. He can only let it shine through the apertures of his senses and cannot connect himself with the universal understanding which, by its very universality, can see and understand things irrespective of time and space.

One universally conscious we call a *Divine Individual*. He is not divine in the sense that another is void of divinity; divine and not divine are terms only in relation to each other and die when faced with Reality. In the light of Truth and higher understanding they drown into insignificance such as not to sustain an independent existence

of its own. *Reality*, the only substantial Being ever sustaining and never changing, is the back-ground of all activities material and spiritual, and is the state which the *Divine Individual* enjoys. He is free from the miseries of life, from the happiness of the world with its reaction, free from the good and ill effects of his surroundings. He does not desire to be jealous; he does not live to face death; does not think to be confused; does not move to be tired; does not see to be deluded; does not smell to be nauseated; does not touch to be contaminated. His desire is his exclusiveness; his death is his sustained life; his thoughts are his overflowing consciousness; his movements are his abounding presence; his sight is his Self; his smell is his divine fragrance; his touch is his infinite contact. He experiences everything in him-self and everything begins in him. He is God conscious and he is the identity of God on earth. He is an individual still, infinitely more individual than the *Ordinary Individual*. He is forever in the 'I am God' state. *Individuality* here is at its

paramount state. From the heights of this state, which words fail to describe and actions fall short of expression, the *Divine Individual* sees every thing in him, yet cannot spare a look into the practical lives of those who are the members of the family of *Ordinary Individuals*. He is too full with the richness of his experience; too stuffed with the contents of the Infinitude and too en-grossed in the effulgence of the Almighty. If he were to look low upon the affairs of mankind, he could not be self-contained. The most destructive upheavals of modern times bearing mass-suffering and heart-rending sorrows cannot invoke his blessings. He is engaged in the divine state of ecstasy and in its merging, relieved only by a feeling of subjective distinction running concurrently with the divine experience.

The impersonal God is personified by the *Divine Individual*, but the personification is mute and inarticulate. He can neither think nor help the thinking man. He is all for himself; except by the force of his transcendence he can make one like himself. People by rendering service to him,

which he usually needs being unconscious of his body and the world, is said to be serving God in human form. He, on his own, cannot help or advise a Truth-seeking soul, neither can he contribute to the spiritual uplift of humanity. The work of understanding the *Ordinary Individuals* and from the base of their respective levels, raising them higher and also contributing to mass-welfare of a spiritual uplift, is entirely left to our third and last *Individual* we treat next.

The Individual, as the name signifies, is one of those very rare beings infinitely above the *Ordinary Individual* as well as the *Divine Individual* who, besides being a *Divine Individual*, functions as an *Ordinary Individual* least unaffected by the weakness of the *Ordinary Individual* during and after the period of such functioning. He has all the attributes of the *Divine individual*, all the richness and depth of experience, and is endowed with the knowledge of how his achievements should be practically applied. His knowledge is unlimited; he has become one with the Infinite; and his universal activities are the

additional phase which gives him a marked distinction from the *Divine Individual*. He is conversant with all the spheres of the existence of mind, of body and of emotion and of all the moving bodies in space. He has a grip over collective life as strong as individual. His infinitely deep insight is so overflowing and so adjustable that for a thing to remain unsighted in any domain of consciousness, in the face of a deliberate search, is impossible. He can see through men and things and can place himself objectively, so as to appreciate and feel as adequately for others, as they would for them-selves. He has achieved the art of objective knowledge and feeling through adjustability in consciousness that he has gained alongside the super-consciousness of the *Divine Individual*. Normal consciousness runs concurrently with super-consciousness and can be attached or detached whenever desired. Various other forms of consciousness, of more or less intensity between normal and super-normal, are also an open hook to him. He can poise on any consciousness, and, from here,

review and know things and incidents of any other consciousness. The falsity of experience arising out of a maladjustment of consciousness can have no hold on him. He can arrange objects of experience in their due place of importance, but cannot overestimate or underrate their respective values. To him the super-conscious state is the only reality, but, for his universal functioning, he has to make use of the lower consciousness. As a *Divine Individual* he is all power and authority, and as *The Individual* he is free to choose his own living. What living could he choose but the life of others; what breath could he breathe but the breath of others; what thinking could he do but the thoughts of others; what feelings could he enter but the hearts of others; for verily he is all, and all are in him. *The Individual is* nature's Creator and Creation in One.

In nature does Meher Baba find as much joy as in *The Individual* Himself; and in the welfare of others finds as much happiness as in His own blissful state. To Him all bodies are His body, all minds are His mind and all hearts are

His heart. He cannot live without the thoughts of others; He cannot long but in keeping with the wishes of others and cannot act but for the benefit of others. He is what all bodies, all minds, all hearts put together, become. He is cosmically alive and free from all fetters of thought, word and deed. He thinks through anyone He finds fit. He moves through those whom He chooses. He expresses through the pen of whom He wants to speak. He is the organ, and the varied vehicles are His mouthpiece. He has His first-hand experiences of Truth and in the light of this stand His ideas. He is Truth incarnate, He chooses His medium for uni-

versal expression. His message and His writings bear His original import. The varieties of His self-chosen spokes-men are the different beads on one string of His knowledge of divine facts and their relation to Truth.

He is the one source of our inspiration, and an Infinite one. He is the incentive to this organ, our small sized monthly with a big flow of ideas. He does not talk except through an alphabetical parchment, and invariably writes through His disciples. He is the spirit of our book and through-out the varieties of language and style in His articles written by His chosen expositors, runs a consistency of His well chosen words.

Shri Meher Baba and Healing

BY COUNTESS NADINE TOLSTOY

*"Death is better for him that lives for himself;
that man lives, who lives for others." "I am the
Lord and the servant of men."*

Shri Meher Baba

Since I have met Shri Meher Baba, all my existence with all life's common and uncommon interests and activities, joys and sorrows, has received a new perspective and significance. It became a fascinating fact in view of *one* sure end to achieve.

The contact with the God-realized man became the source of all good and of a new pure and true vision of life. Standing as a perfect example to follow, Shri Meher Baba guides men with supreme authority and knowledge. He does not make them follow patented courses, artificial and often dangerous practices; He does not promise easy ways for great outcomes. He awakens *within* men the immanent resources that gradually and naturally unfold in the disciple or devotee into a true stature of full Being. The grace of His love is a profound and pure experience which

convinces without words and sets the awakened soul on the Path. From duality and bondage of attachments, from many-ness and its illusion, the Master lifts men to Oneness and true Reality, which He Himself unceasingly enjoys. To make men free, He comes down to meet them on their level. His spiritual genius performs His life work as the *Infinite One in all life's aspects*; in His own subtle way He links all life experiences with their deeper spiritual connections and outcome, thus through ever growing purer expansion He helps the growth of new consciousness of the perfected man.

In this ashram, the Meher Retreat of "Meherabad," we witness a microcosm in full function, individually and collectively. Here we see all expressions of human nature, all needs and inclinations, all

varieties of works done. On the top of the hill, overlooking the wide horizon, in the centre of a vast circle of space, stands the new building, interesting in its symbolic simplicity of balance and unity—the Meher Retreat. The high white tower in the centre bears the insignia of all spirituality—“*Mastery in Servitude*”. Being situated on a hill it gives a wonderful feeling of floating in vastness of pure sky and space; only the ethereal line of distant mountains on the horizon gently breaks the fascinating monotony of landscape. Right beyond the wall, our Ashram has recently expanded into a few additional buildings to suit the extended activities planned by Shri Meher Baba for the group. In this simple unpretentious building is the Free Hospital for the poor, women and children; right next is the office of the new Meher Baba Journal.

Baba has said: "There are thousands of hospitals in the world, I could have here thousands of nurses to work. If I have given this work in the hospital to you, it is because I want you to learn serving in real spirit, selfless service."

To the hospital, came mostly the poorest elements of the country wrapped in their rags and wornout *saris*, emaciated and panting, they dragged up the hill. Others were called for in cars or were brought on a stretcher to the door of the hospital. Mostly unwashed and heads uncared for, which one could well see and smell, help-less in their ailments, they are the real destitute. Often they brought their children along, having no one to care for them at home. Patient and enduring, humble and childlike, one could not help loving them. These people we had to wash immediately, change into new clothes, put to bed and made them feel at home.

I will always be grateful for the opportunity in contacting these simple people. Faith and devotion to our Beloved Baba always beautifully shines in their expressive eyes! When Baba used to come to the hospital, giving an embrace to one, a loving pat to another, touching with His healing hand the ailing body, how quick and sincere was the spontaneous response of the heart. Sick, they dragged their paining limbs to Baba's

feet, with surrender, paying him the holy *Darshana*. When the medicines and injections given by the professional doctor could not bring its due relief, Baba's appearance and loving embrace acted as the holy wine, reviving their hopes and giving them the lasting impetus of recovery. The joy of seeing Baba and the faith that He alone can really help, acted within their hearts as a sure remedy. This injection of new life and love, of real *awakening within* them was that miracle, that unseen cure which spared life and despair of many. In death, when it had to be so, as well as in birth, it is again Baba who was the consolation of the forsaken and the joy of the mother in relief of the new born. It is Baba who was always the source of their strength in supreme effort of life and hope.

The hospital presents a natural medium of spiritual learning—serving the sick and suffering, one spontaneously is led to self-forgetfulness; the response to Baba's guidance becomes natural and easier. Yet, even the portion of unresponse brings to greater evidence the

failings of the ego, thus showing the results of the test.

Baba's frequent visits to the hospital have been to all a source of great inspiration, of renewed inner efforts *to be in* order to do well. *To be is* to act quietly; *to be is* the impersonal aloofness and detachment from results of action; *to be is* less self-consciousness in our outer and inner efforts equally ready to act in spontaneous response to the moment's need. *To be*, that is what we *are*, and how in the spiritual pure sense, *we do*. It is this that counts as a spiritual act.

The act of pure love freely given, disinterested in motive and result is a pure act; it obliges none and bears no mark of self-satisfaction. The Master's guidance brings it out in the devotees as an in-ward urge, of its pure volition, constantly purified through His Infinite Being.

As Shri Meher Baba says: "Do not think that in serving others you put them under obligation to you; be happy that they have given you the opportunity to serve."

*The Vaishnavite Saints of Southern India and their Hagiology**

BY C.V. SAMPATH AIYANGAR

These are called the Dravidian Saints. Their wonderful lives clearly show the significance of God's love to man, and man's love to God; the former being the fulfilment of His object of creation, and the latter being man's aspiration to 'know' Him. As St. Francis de Sales observes: "The end of speculative theology is to teach us to know God; and the object of mystical theology is to teach us to love Him. One produces learned men, doctors, theologians; while the other forms Saints or ardent lovers of the Almighty, devoted to His service and burning with zeal for His interests."

It has been said that the power of salvation, which these great Saints possess, exceeds even that of God. For do not we, who are the disciples of Baba, realize this important truth? This spiritual fact is very well illustrated by the story of Uparichara-Vasu.

This is given in Mahabharata Shanti Parva, Moksha Dharma.

Uparichara-Vasu was a great king; but by a Rishi's curse he had to live with the demons of the nether regions. There he worshipped the One Great God with intense devotion. The demons harassed him, but to no effect, as he was His devotee. Then they requested their teacher, Sukra, to suggest some way by which they might conquer him. The teacher told them that they could easily conquer him if they could turn him from his God. The more the demons tried to do so, the more steadfast he became, and his heart was full of pity for those unfortunate sinners. He prayed to God that He might shower His mercy even on those people and this prayer of that great Saint had its immediate effect. The vile demons became loving devotees of God and were blessed.

* Continued from November 1938 issue

A great book says: "Not all the copious waters of the sacred rivers, not all the idols made of mud and stone, but Saints alone purify by mere sight." If we live our lives we are sure of salvation through them, for Saints are Gods on earth, they intercede for us with Him. The great Nanjiyar often used to say that when-ever he saw a Saint, a devotee of the Lord, he fell at his feet with his head touching them, exclaiming that he felt as if he had eaten his fill, and his hunger had vanished. What is the secret of this? Our dear Baba, in his own inimitable way, said: "The root of all our difficulties, individual and social, is self-interest." Self-ness is spiritual death. It is this selfness *ahankara* and selfishness *mamakara* which are the cause of one's spiritual retardation.

To Saints all things in this beautiful universe remind one of God. They have conquered self-love. In this connection the beautiful observations of St. Francis de Sales on 'Love of God' are very instructive: "If we compare several theologians who speak eloquently of the Almighty, but who love Him little,

with those who love him ardently as the Ignatiuses, the Cyprians, the Chrysostoms, the Augustines, the Hilaries, the Ephrems, the Gregories, the Bernards and several other illustrious men of antiquity, oh, what a difference shall we discover in their language. We all use the same expressions, but the words pronounced by those lovers of the Almighty were inflamed and embalmed, if we may say so, with the delicious perfume of divine love; whereas with us they are only cold expressions which contain neither the energy nor the sweetness of charity." Thomas a Kempis said: "The love of self is more hurtful to the soul than the united power of the world."

We find complete sacrifice of self-love in our great Dravidian Saints of Southern India. Their chief characteristic is *love*. The great Nanjiyar once said: "The test of a real Vaishnava is this: if on seeing a person in adverse circumstances his pity is excited, he is then a true Vaishnava; but if his heart is then one of steel he is not a Vaishnava. To be a Vaishnava is to belong to the One great God, and to belong

to the great God is to be a Vaishnava. To belong to God is to conform to the ideals He has laid down, one of those ideals being to be the friend of all creatures."

And surely those great Saints were the friends of all creatures, just as our great living Saint, Meher Baba, is. Has He not taught us the spiritual dignity of humble service by his own example of cleaning the latrines of the God-mad men and the destitute, to feed and tend to the sick and give our less fortunate brothers a spiritual bath? Such were the real Saints of old.

There were a dozen Vaishnava Azhvar (Saints) whose lives show that they were real Vaishnavas and they are really worthy of worship.

They were:

- 1 St. Tondar-adippodi Azhvar
- 2 St. Peri Azhvar.
- 3 St. Andal
- 4 St. Poygai Azhvar
- 5 St. Pudat Azhvar
- 6 St. Pey Azhvar
- 7 St. Tiru-mazhisai Azhvar
- 8 St. Kula Sekhar Azhvar
- 9 St. Tiruppan Azhvar
- 10 St. Tirumangai Azhvar
- 11 St. Madhura Kavigal
- 12 St. Namm Azhvar

(To be continued)

N.B.—Vishnu connotes God's Omnipresence—a Vaishnava is one who realizes God as such. On realization of this Truth he becomes one with all. Vaishnava means God.

Sufism

Dr. ABDUL GHANI MUNSIFF

Sufism *is* the esoteric cult of Islam, the religion founded by the Prophet of Arabia. Historians differ very much as to its origin in time and place. Some ante-date its source to a pre-Islamic period, and a few consider it a later infiltration after the conquest of Persia by the Mohamedans. The majority, however, do not countenance the theory that Sufism is an Hellenic product or a Persian complex acquired by Islam. They strongly maintain that it is a by-product of the Quranic teaching itself.

There is no denying the fact that the Quran itself is responsible in developing the mystical aspect of Islamic religion, popularly known as Sufism. The exoterics laid emphasis on the letter of the Quranic text and they form the preponderant majority as represented by the Church of Islam. With these on the side of *Faith*-belief in one God, Mohamed the messenger, Al-Quran the angels, the day of judgment and on the side of *action*, *Namaz*

(prayers), fasting, Haj (pilgrimage to Mecca) and Zakat (poor tax) was a sufficient guarantee of a moral life on earth and a sure passport to heaven after death. They were deeply imbued with the idea of sin, and, to them, salvation meant escape from the fires of Hell and the attainment of Paradise—a highly magnified picture of the sense pleasures of this life. They looked upon (Allah) Almighty God, as the supreme judge perched up high above the (Arsh) seventh heaven, dispensing justice to sinners and His mercy to the righteous. The Muslims, his slaves must, of necessity, because of their sinful origin, dedicate their lives to avert his wrath and induce his grace by acts of worship, repentance and humility. In short, the God of an orthodox Muslim is a God of fear, not of love.

The esoterics—the Sufis insisted upon interpreting the spirit of the Quranic teaching and believed in individual

initiative and effort as more conducive to spiritual benefit than the levelling influence of common dogma and ritual. Not feeling satisfied at being spoon-fed by the established Church of Islam on questions concerning the why and where-fore of existence, the origin and the ultimate destiny of man, etc., they began to probe into and investigate the matter independently. Like the exoterics they, too, based their Philosophy on the Q u r a n i c text, and claimed to derive authority and sanction for their Theosophy from the common source. The Sufis ignored the letter and imbued the spirit of Quranic teachings. They affirmed that there was a world of spiritual knowledge and information hidden away behind the words of the Holy Book waiting to be explored by a sincere student. One such successful seeker of Truth, Moulana Rumi, could not resist blurting out the truth when he said,

"Marrow have I extracted
from Quran to be sure;
Discarding mere bones for dogs
to fight over."

The word 'marrow' here evidently

means 'spiritual' Truth, and bones signifies the quibbling of words by learned divines which very often gives rise to mutual bickerings and condemnation.

It is an admitted fact that Sufism in some covert or overt form did exist during the life-time of the Prophet Mohamed and his famous companions. Nay, the Prophet himself is looked upon by the Sufis as the first illustrious mystic of the order, and Hazrat Ali, the first one to be endowed with the esoteric or spiritual charge of the domain of religion symbolized by the Prophet bestowing the 'black mantle' to the latter in the presence of all his companions. Hazrat Ali has an unique position amongst the mystics of Islam. Practically all the Muslim saints, the world over, trace their spiritual lineage to him, and, in him, all the different orders of Sufism are said to converge.

ASCETIC STAGE

The first stage of Sufism was characterized by ascetism and quietism, and there was little mystical about it. The early Sufis attracted very little

notice and were considered to be harmless maniacs suffering from some form of neurosis.

ECSTATIC STAGE

It was in the ecstatic stage, about three centuries after; the Prophet, that Sufism compelled the attention of orthodoxy. The Sufi poets, of this era, made free use of sensuous terms like beauty, love, wine, tavern, etc., to describe their individual approach and experience of divinity. This unlicensed form of address to God, smacking of familiarity and insolence, compelled orthodoxy to denounce them as heretics. Nevertheless this libertinism in matters divine had a subtle appeal to the masses who found therein a refreshing change from a life of restraint and discipline imposed by the Church. In course of time the 'man in the street' openly began to advocate the Sufi way. Some miracles, evinced by a few notable Sufis of the day, not only invested them with an halo of sanctity and saintliness but made the cult of Sufism a serious rival to the established Church of Islam.

THEOLOGICAL STAGE

It is at this crucial stage in the history of Islam that the famous Theologian, Imam Ghazali, assumed prominence by successfully trying to harmonize the rivalry between dogma and reason which threatened to accentuate the cleavage past redemption. The execution of the renowned Sufi, Mansoorbid-Hullaj, by orthodoxy for the utterance of the famous blasphemy *Anal-Huq* (I am God) is symptomatic of the resentment felt by the Islamic Church towards latitudinarianism in matters religious. On the contrary, the defence of Mansoor by prominent Sufis of the day, who called him a martyr in the way of God, is a pointer to the extent of their drifting away from the moorings of conventionalism.

Orthodoxy, faced with an ever-increasing wave of rationalism and mystic individualism, thought it expedient to give Sufi saints and their miracles an Islamic status, but not without some reservations. The Sufi saints came to be tolerated as religious freaks, an exception rather than the rule, and not a pattern not to be emulated by a true Muslim. There was no harm in their being approached for material

gain, but to entrust one's spiritual welfare to such irresponsible guides no true believer should think of when the sure 'path of religion' (*shariat*) was there for all.

MYSTICAL STAGE

Henceforth, fear of ostracism and persecution being removed, the mystical aspect of Sufism became more pronounced. The Sufis, in spite of their rationalism and mystical experiences had, up to now, invariably conformed to the external form of religion. Now the tendency was notice-able to dispense with externalism altogether. The Islamic Church had, by now, learned to canonise many Sufis of a high spiritual calibre as saints, in spite of their non-conformity to dogma and ritual; but it refuses, even today, to accord official recognition to any saint or spiritual Master out-side the pale of Islam, whatever be his spiritual worth.

After this synoptic survey of the origin and growth of Sufism meant for the edification of those not familiar with the subject, let us study what a real and perfect Sufi is like; what is his subjective experience of Truth and his

objective attitude towards established religion.

Sufi is another term, in Islamic world, used very loosely to signify anyone from a beginner to one of highest spiritual attainment, like the word *Wali* designating anyone from a neophyte to an adept (*Kamil*). A Sufi is generally one who is undergoing prep a ration and inner training on the spiritual path irrespective of the length of time and severity of his ordeals. But no sooner some-thing in the nature of a miracle occurs round about a Sufi than he comes to be known as *Wali* (saint). For the purpose of this article we are only concerned with Sufis of the highest order and what they have to say with regard to spirituality within and beyond the pale of Islam.

A comparative statement of some of the Sufi beliefs against orthodoxal canons of faith would be found interesting:

A Sufi affirms the seat of God to be man's heart, while the Church points to God some-where above the clouds.

The formula of Divine Unity (*Tauohid*) *la-ilaha-illallah* to an orthodox Muslim means, there is no second God; a Sufi there-

by understands that there is nothing but God.

A Sufi believes in only one prophet or Avatar, appearing at different times in different places assuming different names, the latest being Prophet Mohamed. Islam recognizes only Hazrat Mohamed as the perfection of all prophets mentioned in the Quran.

Sufis say, the angels are symbolic of one's awakened spiritual powers; the Church imagines them to be an independent creation by itself.

According to Sufis there is no such thing as Heaven or Hell. It exists in imagination, what you think, you realize. For orthodoxy it is the 'end all and 'be all' of their religious endeavours.

The Church looks forward to day of reckoning with hope and fear, to some point of time in futurity. With the Sufis the day of judgment is here and now; they interpret the text in the Quran, "Those who are blind in this life will be blind in the hereafter," to mean that those who do not see God in this life will not see Him after death.

With the Sufi there is no such thing

as sin and error; to him everything is relative truth. the Church cannot shake off the idea of original sin.

A Sufi believes in the brother-hood of man; the Church believes in the brotherhood of Islam.

A Sufi conceives the divinity of man; the Church concedes only the vicinity of God.

The Islamic Church canonizes only Muslim saints; the Sufi admits the possibility of sainthood to Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Hafiz has voiced this thought in the couplet:

"If only the Holy Ghost were to help once again, others also can have what Jesus did attain."

A Sufi does not discard evolution and reincarnation. Mansoor Hallaj, Abu Muslin) Khorasani, Ahmed-ibni-Sabit, Shaikhul-Ishraq were avowed reincarnationists. Omar Khayyam not only expounded reincarnation (*Naskh*), but even admitted retrograde incarnation (*Maskh*). Jalaluddin Rumi openly preached evolution (*Iteqa*). The orthodox condemn such ideas as preposterously heathenic.

The Sufis divide the world

into two main divisions. viz., *Muslim-bil-lisam* (Muslims by profession) and *Muslim-bil-qalb* (Muslims by conviction). The first category consists of all Muslims, Sufis or otherwise, who conform to *Shariat* (cannons of Islam). To the latter category belong all Muslims and non-Muslims who have realized Truth and God irrespective of their external form and behaviour. Muslims, by conviction, look upon *Shariat* (the Law) as the means to an end and not the terminus of one's religious life. There are higher realms of spiritual progress to be explored, viz., *Tariqat* (the mystical journey), *Maarifat* (Gnosis) and *Haqiqat* reality). A few bold utterances of the Sufis, expressed in different stages of spiritual unfoldment, are given here, and will be found very illuminating. Some of these utterances have been responsible for causing the Sufi concerned untold difficulties and persecution at the hands of orthodoxy.

"A man divested of all desire is veritable God "

-Abu Mohomed Martash

"Prophet Mohomed was God Himself and none else."

-Mohomed Shareef

"The *Kafirs* (infidels) are not the non-Muslims, but men of God who are condemned and

persecuted by the Church, because, being with God, they do not profess the faith of the masses."

-Omar Farooq

"One observing external forms of religion, even after realization, is a dualist (*Mushrik*)."

-Ghaosul Azam Gilani

"He is not a God who allows Himself to be temperamentally controlled and affected by human acts, good and bad."

-Abubkr Wasity

"Man is the offspring of Eternity without beginning and end and not the composition of clay."

-Niyaz Ahmed

"The heresy that takes one to God is much preferable to faith which keeps one away from Him."

-Bu Ali Qalander

"I am Truth; so need no religion. This heresy is incumbent on me; but Musalmans ignorantly condemn it."

-Husain Ibni Hallaj

"One moment in the company of a saint is better than an hundred years sincere piety."

-Moulana Rumi

"Men of God are equally at home in a mosque or a tavern."

-Abu Sayeed Abul Khair

"One who prays does not know God, and one who knows God has no need of prayers."

-Yusuf Husain Razi

"It is the intention and not the act that matters."

-Hadis

"God and Truth is no single religion's prerogative."

-Abu Bakr Wasity

"Muslims and non-Muslims achieve and impart spirituality alike. The difference is in quantity but not in quality."

-Ghaosali Qalander

This, in short, is Sufism. Against this background, in the next issue of this Journal, it is intended to give a pen picture of the Perfect Sufi of the age, Hazrat Meher Baba.

Question Baba Answers

SERIES BY DR. ABDUL GHANI MUNSIFF

Ques.

What is the spiritual significance of Mantra (Persian 'Zikr')? How is a neophyte helped by a monotonous incantation or repetition of a certain word or words?

Ans.

Mantra is very beneficial to a neophyte on the spiritual path, particularly so when it is given by the Guru. The first and immediate result accruing from the oft repetition of word or words is the concentration of the mind on the subject to be gained. Secondly, the sound vibrations as a result of continuous repetition induces, in course of time, an harmonious sympathy to the sound vibrations of the higher planes engendering a blissful feeling—a factor greatly encouraging to a beginner. This blissful feeling, coupled with the awakening of mental powers, is called the *Mantric* force, and it has immense possibilities for good as well as bad.

Shri Meher Baba

IMPRESSIONS

BY PRINCESS NORINA MATCHEBELLI

It is the 'New Life' in external perpetual opposition that in Being in 'I' conscious, indivisible in Him who is our own very Being, has come to the pure point of new awareness. This new form in conscious order in man He, as the Pure Power, is stirring, awakening. He creates the opposing order when men in themselves become indifferent and satiated with life inert within. We become under His guidance the alive Being in constant adjustment. The indispensable strife in life He can accentuate if need be. He can arouse the 'Divine Theme' in any individual. Our mind, that busy factory of habit thoughts, misery, illusionary schemes of material happiness, making us feel separate creatures with separate lives, with separate goals, with expectation of reward for our good or bad deeds, these He will transmute in new conscious order in *idea* and make man see and

know and feel. In the self-ordering state in new awareness of Truth within, men will feel equal; men will have confidence in each other. He will bring to fulfillment the human being who will create better living conditions in the world.

A joyful pilgrimage towards God is life in action for Him. No one but He, the Perfect One can assure in us the old Faith which is infallible Wisdom. God in His abstract state of *OM*, will remain mental illusion until one like Him gives us the experience of God as the 'Living Reality'. When the personal impersonal God appears it is the *tangible sign* for man to make good. That time is on. It is now. We need to be in readiness to react for the 'pure exchange'.

When Shri Meher Baba took upon Himself the superhuman self-imposed sacrifice of silence that until now has lasted over thirteen years, He did it

Continued from November 1938 issue.

to serve the *divine plan*, to benefit mankind. Operating within He fulfills the 'One Way' towards Union, which we, by the use of mind, by finite dual thinking order, too easily counteract. Being in us Life, Truth in *Being order*, He can within readjust the *purls* aim and that is the straight 'One Way' to God.

His instrument to operate with is life itself. Life positive and negative, a s t he opposites that we call unconditional form in strife, to evolve into the *one all state* that is pure. He designing into our 'intuition' does the *new stir*. The Truth in its 'one all fulfilling plan', achieves the exchange in consciousness.

Traveling in foreign lands and walking through cities which have no other importance than to be the accumulation of the masses driven in self-experience by the illusion making mind, He, the unfathomable All Fate causes the inevitable evolution.

Moving about like any ordinary human being, He uses motor cars, trains, airways. He lives in small huts, in luxurious abodes. He communes with the rich and with the poor.

He uses the crude energy of the masses, and He searches out of the individual the more subtle contribution. The expansion of human qualities, jealousy, hate, anger, lust, are the impure work in our spiritual soil. Vice and deprivation are the manure He uses to fertilize the *spiritual show in advancement*. He removes fear through the awakening life in Being that in itself is the state of fearless pure existence wherein one experiences security, safety, hope. He awakens in us the optimism that results from this knowing experience. We realize that we are part in Him in Being which is divine. He forms in us a *life of Hope* that in us is divine humour. We can in this state of divine Being in 'I' conscious see, feel and know the Truth in full order in Being, and that is to see life pure, good, unconditional in its *onward hope* to readjust in all the Truth. We react in Him alive, sure, simple and natural. He, the pure 'Love Being,' in love with life, in love with all and any show in the human creature, designs into life the Truth as the form in which we know to want to become the

form in which we result free, liberated human. We then have the *winning will* to overcome the show of the old pessimist who, as He humorously says, makes the worst of the best; we shall become true optimists and true idealists. the optimist that makes the best of the worst, and the idealist that makes the best of the best. In the *new state* in consciousness we make good, feel good and see good in all in life, as it is. The New Awakening in man will bring the fruit of hard labour, hard struggle, long-lived longing, long-lived *immune making work* in the dual human. Love divine will make the miracle.

Shri Baba is poor. He is impersonal in the use of gold and silver. We are supposed to give love while we perform the charitable gesture, and the material gift has to serve merely as a symbol. The fact of giving becomes impersonal when we begin to be unattached to the object that we have cherished as possession; we then realize the difference between giving for sharing and giving for self-satisfaction. It is the same in the work

within. We learn to detach ourselves from the act in Being when in our own selves we awaken to *profess love* as life, and in the external act are *unselfish*. We learn to exchange the personal use of our individual experience with the divine order in Being that is unconditional in selfless use of its reactions and expresses external life unattached to any result, to any self-satisfaction. "Do no more than you can feel," says Shri Meher Baba. "By pre-meditated giving you give parts of yourself, and by *feeling* in giving you give of your divine Self." He awakens in us the divine wisdom of the heart. No one can do the ultimate good until he has realized the good within. We exchange free and light life impersonal with life personal; the lower mental intuition with our Being intuition. We are determined not to resist to the changing work that He in us stirs, adjusts and forms to new life.

He may reveal Himself to the most humble form in consciousness and hide before the most creative erudite intellects. Blessed are the pure in mind, to them God will reveal in Being. The meaning of this

thought is pure, wise use in us. Pure thinking is that state of *stillness* of the mind, it is non-reaction in 'I' individual. Stilled in mind, freed from experience, we become conscious of the expansion of, pure love, of the pure *living exode* that is fusion in light winning rhythm of pure *indivisible joy*. We live life as a child, we then have the blessed state to be pure in mind, rich in heart ; it is like playing in Being, playing in life with illusion, as a child whose life is an unbroken dream state, whose life is pure exode in breathing, fulfilling unconsciously the unconditional expansion in consciousness without resistance.

Baba makes us become *humble*. He does the act of joining in us life as the individual form in external existence with the inner life in Being, that in its fulfilling order in awakening, works out in us—God. He joins God and human life, life individual with life immutable. He liberates us from the ordeal of life in ourselves that in us is dual experience. He merges the opposites into the *one all form* and that is *Love* that gives and never demands.

We can in no way *see* above the line of our finite mind. He will lift the veil of ignorance and help us to *see* the face of God. The veil is the ego. *His* love does the pure clearing work of the *elimination of the ego*. We in our own Being in exchange in consciousness react in pure winning *will* to our own qualities. These to us in life in finite existence seem crude, harsh, and give pain, and are the cause of our individual misery; they constitute in our own life the problem of individual reaction in experience. We know that life can in no way be *seen as* Truth-order as long as man has to react in finite mind in experience. Man is bound to react to the low order in experience of lust, jealousy, anger, greed, avarice. Resigned in Him, *the Redeeming Pure Form*, these low experiences of life finite transmute into pure energy and become the *impetus* of divine life *indivisible*. It becomes Truth action in pure winning will. Love in Being. Joy in Being. It becomes the divine action as the *unfathomable longing for Union with the Beloved*. He in His work indivisible realizes in us life

indivisible. He *transforms, redeems, resurrects*. Awakening in 'I' conscious we become fearless and doubtless; we are freed from prejudices, free from divisionary ideas. When man resigns in Him, man will realize Liberation. His alive breath is our own life in exchange in life and death. As human Being He reflects our life in joy and pain. His pure order in suffering is our own life in Him suffering expiation. His Grace performs the work of Redemption.

Within the realm of pure expansion in Divine Existence He is painless,

calm, pure Bliss. He is like Jesus. He never sleeps, His sleep is indivisible Intuition work, indivisible love expansion, *un-interrupted conscious action*. He loves within, without, above, beyond all and everything—All Knowing, Immutable. With His head he feels. With his heart He devises. He says: "I do not think, I feel." Shri Meher Baba works, still, silent, knowing, from working field to working field, from type to type, from nation to nation. His head includes God, universe, and every individual in Being. He will awaken in us the pure need to want to be like Him.

(To be continued)

The Need for a Master

BY DR. C. D. DESHMUKH, M. A., Ph. D. (London)*

The human soul finds itself in a world which it does not completely understand and where it does not recognize its own true nature. It identifies itself with the limited individuality or finite consciousness; and its actions are impelled by *sanskaras* which use the mind for finding expression and fulfilment. In life, the ego tries to adjust itself to the world, or adapt the world to itself. But as long as the mind is clouded by past *sanskaras*, its actions are not free and inevitably lead to conflict, chaos and suffering. Human suffering would thus have been end-less had it not been for the help of the Perfect Masters who have *Self-knowledge* and are free.

The Perfect Master imparts light to the groping soul and gives a new direction to life. The aspirants who have met Shri Meher Baba are always conscious of a reorientation of life; for his contact effects the *entire overhauling and reconstruction of the mind*.

such complete overhauling and reconstitution of the mind is indispensable for right search. There cannot be right search without some perception of the goal; and there cannot be perception of the goal unless there is profound disturbance in the normal limited outlook which, owing to previous *sanskaras*, is false and binding.

Some aspirants rely solely on their conscience for guidance in life. But the conscience of most persons is often just a collection of prejudices and opinions which they absorb for the social atmosphere; it is at best based on experience and is therefore *sanskaric*, limited and binding; and even where the aspirant has begun to think for himself, he is likely to come to wrong conclusions owing to the operation of *sanskaras*. He may embrace a false view firmly and cling to self-delusion without knowing his error; and he may take very long to realize his limitations unless he is lifted out of his groove by the Grace of the

*Lecturer in Philosophy, Morris College, Nagpur (C. P.)

Master. It is true that the Source of Light is within; but as it is hidden by the cloud of *sanskaras*, the Light does not always come through in its purity. It is, therefore, not sufficiently effective in guiding human search. On the other hand, the Light coming from the Master comes through an unclouded mind and, when it is received by the finite consciousness of the soul, it helps the soul to bring out the Light from within.

The awakening which many aspirants experience by coming into contact with Shri Meher Baba is due to the divine touch which he gives to the inner Self. It is a mistake to imagine that the Master works only from without in a semi-mechanical fashion. By the Divine Love which Shri Meher Baba pours into the aspirant, he gets into his heart and works from there as an abiding source of happiness and inspiration. The effect of the contact with the Master, however, depends also upon the receptivity of the aspirant. Spiritual progress is thus most rapid where the soul, which is ready through its past efforts, has the good fortune to

get the help of a Perfect Master.

There are some who sincerely believe that a Master is not necessary for spiritual life. This view is erroneous, and overlooks the significance of many ordinary facts concerning the process of learning. A child has to be taught how to walk, talk, dress, read and write before it learns to do these things for itself. Even for adults it is always easier to assimilate the truths imparted by others than to discover and realize them independently. This will be seen in practical life as well as in the pursuit of scientific knowledge. It took many years of work for a scientific genius like Newton to discover and establish the Law of Gravitation; but today even ordinary persons can understand it in much less time. In the same way it took a mechanical genius to invent a motor engine; but even ordinary persons can understand and control its mechanism when it is explained to them. In short, human progress in the various departments of life would have been considerably less, had it not been for the capacity of man to profit

by the experience and understanding of others. The same is true of spiritual life. The need for a Master is even greater in spiritual life, because ordinary man is at the mercy of ever increasing *Sanskaras*. His ignorance leads to ignorant actions which further fortify ignorance. For example, if he develops a craving for wine or greed for money, with the lapse of time he becomes more and more a slave of his desire, and clings more and more firmly to the wrong belief that it is absolutely necessary for his happiness. Attachment makes him feel helpless and dependent upon external circumstances. It is true that the suffering which a man experiences, as a result of his ignorant actions, often provokes thinking, and compels him to revalue everything in a new Light. But the impact of the suffering is not in itself sufficient to lead him to wisdom, because the mind has a general tendency to attribute all suffering to unfavourable circumstances rather than to its own assumptions. Man, therefore, needs guidance from the Master who can effectively impress upon him the true cause of

suffering which is wrong valuation. When he is thus turned to-towards the Light and yearns with all his heart for the Light, every experience clarifies and strengthens his spiritual intuitions. The Master, however, is necessary not only to initiate the aspirant into the Path but also to *secure* his steady progress; for he is likely to slip and fall into the abyss of ignorance again, unless he is constantly warned and encouraged by the Master.

The greatest hindrance in spiritual life is egoism which increases not only through bad actions but also through good actions. No amount of 'thinking' is in itself sufficient to purify consciousness from egoism. Just *as a man cannot stand upon his own shoulders, the ego cannot annihilate itself*. It feeds upon everything it does, and grows through its actions and achievements. Complete self-surrender is the only way to oust the ego from consciousness. The Master alone can, by using the various circumstances of life, lift from the mind of the aspirant the woeful burden of egoism. The aspirant cannot independently

shake it off even if he wants to.

With the help of the Master the aspirant cannot only eliminate egoism but also develop divine qualities. The spirit of love and selfless service which Shri Meher Baba awakens is due to his divine intervention and the supreme insight which he has in the working of the human mind. The impersonal path of seeking the abstract Truth, or the unmanifest, is bound to be mainly intellectual and, therefore, does not provide sufficiently for the development of the heart or the perfection of activity. The Path of the Master, however, is rich with potentialities for the expression of love and action. And, further, the aspirant can always depend upon the knowledge, love and power of the Master who sees him safely through the pitfalls and the dangers of the Path.

In spiritual life, teaching can in no way be an adequate substitute for the Teacher. Teaching has undoubtedly an important function in spiritual life, but it cannot give the same inspiration as personal contact with the Master. A man can construct his ideal out of what

he has read in the books, but it can hardly affect his life seriously. And even when the ideal is born of his own speculation, it is bound to be deficient owing to the limitations of his experience. Further, though the ideal may seem to him as being reason-able, it still comes to him as a mere possibility, and, therefore, remain ineffective. It may appeal to him as desirable, but he continues to doubt its actual practicability in life.

In fact, to set up a conception as an ideal often brings about more or less permanent despair about realizing it in practical life. The ideal appeals to the imagination as an inviting possibility. But the aspirant who relies only on himself for realizing the possibility also knows, or will discover, his own weakness, and is, therefore, unable to have sufficient self-confidence. The ideal is for him an intellectual theory or merely the hope of imagination, while his limitations are a matter of experience in everyday life. He is, therefore, likely to be over-powered by these limitations and come to look upon the distance between the actuality

and the ideal as unbridgable. This means acquiescence in the actual, and ends in the cessation of serious endeavour, although the aspirant may continue to harbour idle longing for the ideal.

On the other hand, contact with a Perfect Master inspires confidence, since, in him, the ideal of the imagination is apprehended not as a theoretical possibility but as a realized actuality. The speculative ideal is only a construction of ideas, while the Master represents Reality and therefore has all the Infinite Powers of the life-force at his disposal. Contact with Shri Meher Baba not only keeps spiritual aspiration alive and intense, but inspires active effort, because he is the ideal which has become Real. *Knowledge of the reality of the Ideal is a much greater stimulus than a vague hope.*

For spiritual transformation, the help of the Master is thus much more impor-

tant than mere speculation or the reading of scriptures. The doctrine that the Light can only come from within and not from the Master presupposes the "dire heresy of separateness." The division of within and without is based upon duality which is created by the false identification with the body. The Master is and knows himself to be that Unity of life in which there is no division. To externalize the Master is, therefore, to identify him falsely with nothing but the form. Really speaking the Master is neither merely internal nor merely external—but *both*. He is the all-pervading Divine Life. He takes form only in order to help aspirants towards the goal of Truth-consciousness. By meditating on the Master, the aspirant is generally transformed into his likeness, because the mind becomes like that which it contemplates. And just as one torch sets aflame another torch, the Light which the Master brings imparts Truth to the seeker.

You Must Believe It

BY Dr. ABDUL GHANI MUNSIFF

Thirty-six years fast, penance and solitude by Hazrat Baba Farid Shaker-ganj found him nowhere nearer the goal i. e. Realization. He, therefore, came to Ajmere (Central India) to seek discipleship of Khawja Moenuddin Chisti, the Perfect Master of the time. When Baba Farid approached the Master, he saw the latter seated on the ground leaning against a tree which was dry and denuded of all foliage. His psychic ego protested against the phenomena and wanted the tree, against which the Master of the age Khawja Moenuddin was resting, to be exuberantly green and leafy. He cast a glance at the tree, and with the psychic power made the tree verdant and green. The Master looked up at the tree and made it dry again. Again Baba Farid turned it green, and again Khawja restored it to its early state.

After this thaumaturgic duel, the Master pulled up the well meaning but misguided visitor, saying: "Farid, have

you come to learn perfection or to demonstrate cheap powers born of long asceticism? Divine nature wants the tree to be dry and leafless; who are you to interfere? Go straight to Delhi where Kutubuddin, my disciple, will teach you a lesson."

Baba Farid went to Delhi as ordered and sought out Khawja Kutubuddin, whom he found playing with children. Baba Farid was very advanced in age, at the time, and he thought the Master Khawja Kutubuddin looked very much younger. In a flash this thought was read by the Master who immediately left the children playing and retired. After a time the Master emerged from his house completely transformed, robed, white-bearded and leaning on a long rod, and addressed the visitor thus: "Tell me, Farid, do I now look old enough to be your Master?" The utterance of these words instantaneously imparted to Baba Farid God-consciousness.

After a period, the master

bestowed upon Baba Farid the robe of discipleship and allowed him to depart. The above historical episode brings into prominence two points often emphasized by Hazrat Meher Baba. The first is, that however long and severe one's self-imposed asceticism or *yoga* may be, the goal of Self-realization cannot be achieved without the Grace of a living Master. The second point is the question of connection or spiritual relationship, the result of past preparation. Now here, in the above episode, is a Perfect Master Khawja Moenuddin of Ajmere quite capable of giving Realization to Baba Farid. Instead he directs the latter to Khawja Kutubuddin of Delhi. The

reason is this. Baba Farid had spiritual connection with the Master of Delhi and not Ajmere. Hazrat Meher Baba's experience is somewhat parallel to the above. After achieving and experiencing God (*Mushahida*) from Hazrat Babajan of Poona, he was spiritually directed by the latter to seek another Master for the completion of the experience by knowledge (Gnyan-Taleem). Hazrat Meher Baba there-after met Baba Tajuddin of Nagpur, Sai Baba of Shirdi and Narayan Maharaj of Kedgaon, all Perfect Masters of the time. But it was Upasani Maharaj of Sakori who received him and helped him to Perfection. This is what Hazrat Meher Baba means when he speaks of spiritual connection with a Master.

(to be continued)

How I Met Them And What They Told Me

BY ABDUL KAREEM ABDULLA

The world is always changing. Every split second a change takes place in every part and particle in existence. In some cases the change is prominent, in many cases it is scarcely perceptible. But all the same, a change in all beings is an incessant process in nature. This applies equally to mind as well as to matter, since beliefs, ideas, theories and opinions are no less being shuffled and reshuffled all the time. And yet a change is the last thing that the world can stand fairly and squarely. Mankind has to be hammered or humoured to accept any new departure in life.

Although history is hoarse shouting from the house tops the inevitability of the change in all mundane laws in keeping with the ever changing situations in the world, and Masters have from, time to time, clearly drawn the distinction between the form and substance of all religious laws, and humanity has an inveterate and grim

tendency to cling to the prevalent customs, formalities and rituals, as if they were as eternal as some of the laws that govern day and night, life and death, right and wrong, and love and hate. Consequently the moment a man does something contrary to the established practices and popular routine, a hue and cry is at once raised as if the whole structure of society was about to topple down to pieces.

Some eighteen years ago, when Hazrat Babajan of Poona and Shri Upasani Maharaj of Sakori had not yet made the formal declaration about Baba, when he was still popularly called 'Merwanseth' and only a handful of friends whispered about him as Baba, one afternoon the change of all changes came about quite simply and inostensibly in my life, which was till then materially and spiritually quite insignificant.

We were traveling from Bombay to Poona, and in the

third class compartment of the moving train Baba was pleased to offer me two options. I do not remember the exact words, but the purport was that either I could ask him for any boon for my material benefit, or promise to carry out his orders literally in all matters hence-forth if I preferred spiritual betterment. I was advised to think well and take my own time before giving a reply. I was also warned that complete surrender meant a difficult life ahead.

Electing to follow Baba in letter and in spirit there and then, the first order immediately given to me was to get disassociated from all public activities—social, political and religious the very next *day*. It was a difficult task to carry out, as I was one of the office-bearers of about half a dozen public institutions at that time, and, therefore, had to find successors, complete the accounts and hand over charge of all within a few hours. I succeeded in all this without detriment to any individual or institution, but I had to be relentlessly resolute in refusing to postpone my decisions on any account, and could

not satisfy the curiosity of friends and relations as to why I was in such a desperate hurry to carry out the peculiar plan on that particular day. But what I had not bargained for were the forced smiles, foreboding frowns, nods of disapproval and suggestive shrugs of the shoulder from most of the people concerned.

Shortly following my resignation from public activities, I had orders to arrange disposal of my business, and prepare to leave the place with which I had twenty-five years of family connections, without knowing where I had to go and what I had to do next. In fact, every little detail had to be settled in a particular way and on a particular day.

I caused no harm or loss to anyone, and I did not fail in making good my obligations to my family and friends; but I had often to disregard formalities, customs and rituals when these clashed with my duty, and, above all, I could not quite explain the whys and wherefores of all my actions. But this was enough to shock the slaves to the routine of everyday life who could not tolerate the liberties I was

taking with society in trampling upon its 'eternal' rules and regulations with its insignificant details.

Within one month I found I had brought the hornet's nest about my ears and felt the surrounding world completely estranged from me. Some took pity on me for having lost my bearings, some attributed sinister motives to all that I did, and, on the whole, I became the laughing stock of the town but with a new world of wonderful possibilities opened up before me in which the life of the average human being just appeared to be a fleeting shadow chasing after shadows, so I did not mind the gibes and jeers flung at me from all corners. What I could not help feeling was the bleak loneliness of a solitary life.

It was amidst this fateful transition that there came about my first mystical meeting with a saint. Probably it was the last Saturday in January or the first Saturday in February 1922 when, at about 3 p.m. I received a note from one of my previous colleagues in public life. It was a very short communication

scribbled with pencil on a small piece of paper. "Will you please come and see me as I want to see you, but I do not know why I want to see you."

With curiosity pitched high I called on my friend and found him sitting in his study simply killing time. I was soon disarmed of any ulterior motive behind that simple note when my friend explained, "I just felt I should see you and so I wrote that note. Perhaps it is due to the long time that we have not met. Now that you have come, let us have tea together." We then sat talking about nothing in particular for half an hour, and, just as I thought of leaving our conversation, was interrupted when the door of an adjoining room was lightly opened from the inside and, for a few seconds, there stood framed in the doorway the silent figure of a man beyond fifty, short in stature and sparse in build, with ordinary features but remarkably liquid greyish blue eyes. He had two flowers in one of his hands.

For those brief seconds in which he stood still like a statue looking at me I felt a

passing fancy that there was a look of 'smiling recognition' in those eyes. He then advanced toward where we were sitting, offered one flower to me and passed on the other to my friend. After the stranger had taken his seat, my friend broke the momentary silence and introduced me to Mr. L. as his guest, and added, "I am sorry I forgot to tell you about my guest and introduce you to him earlier." After exchanging a word or two of formalities with Mr. L., I left my seat saying, "I am sorry I must leave you abruptly as I have to finish some work and catch the evening express for Poona." "Oh, you are going to Poona by the express," said Mr. L., and added, "I am also going there by the same train." It was more out of politeness than with any particular intention that I remarked, "I hope we shall meet at the station," and then I hurried out.

There was no time to think about these strange happenings as I had to meet Baba that evening in Poona, and, before I could start, it was necessary to finish some work. I had, therefore,

almost forgotten about Mr. L., until I arrived at the railway station and found him looking for me. He appeared just the same as any other passenger waiting there on the platform. But from close quarters it did not take me long to distinguish that he was as much serenely unconcerned with the surrounding animation as he was found averse to idle conversation.

The meeting between us now appeared to be a well carried out plan by nature, starting with an impulsive invitation and culminating into the coincidence of both of us having decided to travel by the same train. When we found seats to ourselves in the train I looked forward to interesting discussions. But neither did Mr. L. put to me a single question nor give me an opportunity to ask him one. As soon as the train moved out of the platform and began to rush to Poona, Mr. L. commenced telling me all about himself in a matter-of-fact way. All the time that he talked, he did not even look at me or see whether I listened or not. He appeared to take it for granted that I was bound to lend him

my ears, and the fact was I could not help following him with rapt attention. Here is the gist of his story as far as I can remember, in his own words:

"My father was very fond of *sadhus* and *fakirs*.. There was hardly a day when I did not find him surrounded by such people. In fact our house was a regular *dharmashala* (free waiting room) for ascetics and mystics who were always very welcome. Many came and went, but a few of them were regular visitors. I neither felt any attraction or repulsion for these people. As a rule, I always kept myself aloof from them.

"I had my own hobby. Since my childhood, I was very fond of distributing money to the poor, but I never liked to give coppers. I always tried to collect silver pieces and then distribute them. The more I could give, the more I felt pleased.

"After my father's death, many changes came about our family life. For one thing, all the holy men disappeared into thin air. Our house ceased to be the meeting place and waiting room for

such. They neither came, nor were they invited, excepting one of the frequent visitors of my father, who continued to see me of his own accord now and again. After prolonged perseverance he succeeded in inducing me to go with him, from time to time, to his out-of-the-way hole of a place that used to be full of dirt and filth. I used to be shocked with the surroundings and it was with effort that I could remain by his side there. The more aversion I felt, the more he persisted in making me share with him his indifference to the repulsive surroundings. He would put his finger into the filth and brush it on my hand, and when I shrank with dislike, he would bite his own hand. I could not also stand the sight of his hurting himself, particularly when he bit himself to bleeding."

As abruptly as he had started the narration, he stopped it, and for the first time asked me point-blank: "Where are you going to Poona?" I was going to meet Baba, but I did not disclose the fact and replied, "I am going to call on a friend." In spite of an evasive answer that I gave him, after he had taken me

into his confidence, he neither appeared offended nor inclined to probe further. He then asked me how long I was going to remain in Poona. Hearing that I was going to Bombay by the next morning train, he again declared that he also happened to be going there by that same train, and this time I meant it when I promised to meet him the following day.

When I came to the station, the train was already along-side the platform, and I had no alternative but to look for Mr. L., in every compartment. While doing so, I had an impulse that, granted Mr. L. was a saint, why should I look for him when I belonged to the "Imperial Order"? Thereupon I lost all interest in looking for him, but as I had promised to meet him, I finished searching all the carriages, and feeling a pleasure in not finding him, I got into the train.

For about ten minutes I was all absorbed planning the details of the work I had to carry out in Bombay, when, quite abruptly, my mind swung

back to the propriety of the attitude adopted by me in looking for Mr. L., and felt, that for the very fact that I belonged to the "Imperial Order," I ought to have been all the more humble in my attitude. To the surprise of those sitting beside me, I jumped from my seat and shot out of the carriage with a determination to go through all the compartments once again, although only a few minutes remained for the train to start.

Practically I did not have to search at all. There he was in the next but one compartment, his eyes twinkling with welcome. "You are very late," I told him after I had taken the seat beside him. But he simply took my breath away by replying: "How do you mean late? I am sitting here looking for you since half an hour." We were then together for nearly four hours in the train, but we might scarcely have talked in all for ten minutes. It was all a silent but pleasant companionship.

"You will meet many more of the type," was all that Baba told me when I described to him this unusual meeting.

News About The Master

F. H. DADACHANJI

DRAMA ACTED BY GOD-MAD MEN

On the twenty-fifth of September last, a performance of the drama "*Raja Gopichand*" the King renunciator, was held at the Ashram of the God-mad men at "Meherabad". This has already been referred to by Dr. Abdul Ghani Munsiff in his article on "The Mad Ashram" which appeared in the November 1938 issue of this Journal. I shall not dwell on the subtle or spiritual aspect of the subject, since a Western spectator has written her impressions which will appear in the next issue. However I will try to explain, by way of news, some significant facts regarding the performance, in order to give our readers an idea of this interesting phase of Baba's workings on the physical plane as I saw it with the eye of an objective observer.

It may be significant to note that for the preparation and direction of this unusual spectacle, Shri Meher Baba chose none other than our *mandali*

'brother' Pleader. This disciple of the Master is one of those rare types whose only aim in life is to realize God, and who, for this attainment, has fully surrendered to the Master's strictest discipline, enduring untold mental and physical hardships. He has, for years at a stretch, observed absolute seclusion and long fasts; he has been sent throughout India to take *Darshana* of Masters and Saints (wherever he was supposed to meet them), visiting places of pilgrimage under the most difficult conditions requiring heroic courage and steadfastness, practically impossible to achieve except with an undying faith and love for a Master whose benign *grace* alone would enable one to endure these. Baba's selection of such a type, as director and organizer of this understanding, speaks for itself of the variety of phases and experiences which Baba wants his disciples to go through. Half a dozen of the *mandali* members

were delegated to assist and cooperate with Pleader in the preparation of the performance.

These derelicts of humanity, in the Mad Ashram, who can hardly stand steadily on one spot longer than a moment without doing something erratic, who talk vaguely and usually remember nothing, could so easily have blurred the text of the dialogue. They have lovingly and patiently been taught and trained and enabled to deliver speeches at the proper moment and even to sing songs and act their different roles at the same time. To prepare such a mad group for a dramatic performance, standing on a stage facing a gathering of about two hundred people for three hours, is almost inconceivable. The realism of the whole show could be judged from the fact that the actual scenery, screens, lighting, costumes and all necessary requirements, used for a professional dramatic performance, were ordered, and the entire drama performed in its true spirit. The real beauty and charm of the show were due to the interpretation of

The different characters acted by these God-mad men, particularly the portrayal of the principal role of *Gopichand* was superb. The perfect gestures and the kingly posture this mad-man assumed while sitting on the throne surrounded by his courtiers, bespoke the dignity and versatility of a born actor. The entire performance was so true and startling that the audience could scarcely believe these actors to be mentally deranged human beings.

It was the Master's *plan*. His orders, definitely issued with all the force of his inspiring word, were literally and faithfully carried out which brought the amazing result. In short, the master made the impossible possible.

One of the significant facts during the day of the performance was Baba's repeated visits to the Ashram, not only to supervise and give impetus to the workers but to give particular force, as was later remarked, in a 'certain direction' which threatened to spoil the whole show. As it was the monsoon season, it had been raining regularly for the last three days; the clouds

had not yet dispersed and threatened a downpour at any moment. Baba presumably seemed not to want this. The performance had to be a success. At a particular moment, in one of his playful moods, he asked Mahomed (his principal inmate in the Mad Ashram) to order the clouds to disperse. Mahomed, in his own characteristic way, at first seemed to hesitate, but Baba's loving insistence impressed on the deranged mind, brought Mahomed down in consciousness to follow out the Master's wish. Quick as lightning Mahomed picked up the hint and ordered with a childlike command: "No rain." Simultaneously he insisted that a certain object, 'a pot,' in his own use, should be turned over. It did not rain. The performance could be acted undisturbed. As soon as the show was over and the audience was leaving, a strong shower poured down, seemingly to hail the success of the performance. Baba was happy with the result and in his loving way, appreciated the work of those who were instrumental in having it come out successfully.

This is the external aspect of the

drama as evinced by the human eye. The internal aspect, which is the true aspect of the work of the Master, is all the more significant in this case since Baba, from the very beginning, gave great importance to this performance declaring repeatedly that out-standing occurrences in the world then 'in a cauldron' would depend on the result of this performance. That is why Baba, himself, gave so much personal care and impetus in making the play a success. How strangely do all these apparently insignificant incidents, in this desolate and quiet corner of the world, reflect on the happenings and changes in the outside world.

Half of the members of the Mad Ashram were sent away two days after the performance. To each was given a brand new robe, *Kafani*, underwear and a blanket before leaving the Ashram. Sweetmeats were distributed to all, thus giving them a hearty send-off. After Pleader had accomplished this unusual duty, he was also ordered to leave "Meherabad," with instructions to stay in Panchgani in Baba's cave and to return to Baba on a

given date.

Since their departure, significant changes in the details and method of treatment in the lives of the remaining inmates of the Mad Ashram came into effect. This, Baba explained, had certain bearing on the important aspects of his work; for instance, the particular manner in which Baba splashed water on the face of each of the God-mad men when giving them a bath, as, also, the process of the *champi* (massage) which Baba in person gave them individually. The Master explained that through these processes he gave them the *spiritual push*; and through the power of his personal touch, in other cases, he brought them down to normal consciousness.

THE HOSPITAL ON THE HILL

Simultaneously with the going away of half of the members of the Mad Ashram, commenced preparations for the opening of the Hospital on-the-Hill for female patients. A lady doctor was placed in charge of the Hospital. Countess Nadine Tolstoy, a disciple of Shri Meher Baba and daughter-in-law of the great Russian writer, was appointed

matron of the institution with other Western and Eastern disciples residing in the "Meher Retreat" on the hill. They cooperate and work in different capacities in selfless and loving service for the poor and destitute who come pouring in from the surrounding villages and from Ahmednagar city, not merely for treatment and loving care in this free Hospital, but also for Baba's *Darshana* and blessings. This benevolent institution has been described in an article in this issue entitled "Shri Meher Baba and Healing."

THE FIRST BABY BORN IN THE HOSPITAL ON THE HILL

On October thirteenth a crazy woman rambling along the road, about twenty-five miles from here between Rahuri and Ahmednagar, was picked up by one of the Master's *mandali*, brought to "Meherabad" and admitted to the 'lying-in' ward of the hospital.

On October fourteenth, at 4 a. m. the woman gave birth to her child, the first baby born in these holy precincts. It may be interesting to note that by a peculiar freak of nature, this child, of a poor, unknown, neglected wife, had the rarest of good fortune to be born in

this holy atmosphere, next door to the abode of one of the greatest spiritual Masters of the age, Shri Meher Baba. Baba was the first to hear the cry of the new born, before dawn, and to see and bless it. He instructed special care to be taken of the little one during the first days of its earthly life, as the poor mother was mentally unbalanced. Often he went near the child, playfully caressing with the love he alone can give, and bringing tears of joy to the

eyes of those who witnessed the divinely touching scene.

A Master's true greatness is not in performing miracles as much as in doing these little acts of love and selfless service that move and inspire the hearts of those who witness. Service is the keynote and watchword of the life and spiritual training under Baba's guidance, and no example can be more impressive than his personal act in spontaneous giving of his infinite love in service to the needy.

Redemption

BY MALCOLM SCHLOSS

Wielder of infinite powe!
 Enjoyer of infinite bliss!
 Master of infinite wisdom!
 Why dost Thou come like this?

Seemingly worn and haggard;
 Seemingly wracked with pain;
 Seemingly utterly puzzled;
 Seemingly all in vain?

The woes of the world are heavy;
 The faults of the world great;
 I have assumed its burdens;
 I will redeem its state.

Then shall my infinite glory,
 Which Thou hast known in part,
 Reign for unnumbered aeons,
 Enthroned in every heart"

St. Teresa Of Spain

Adapted by Will Backett (London)

"Shri Meher Baba visited the birthplace of St. Teresa, in 1933, as he had a very special work to do there. He and His disciples all fasted for twenty-four hours, and during that time they were not to touch Him, and together they walked over the hills. The next day they saw many of the treasures of the cathedral and were very exalted; the spiritual atmosphere was not unlike that of St. Marks in Venice or the one at Assisi. After visiting the shrine of the Saint, on the sight of her former home, they walked to a hill behind the town, looking back at Avila, as they climbed up a dusty donkey track, just the same as Teresa had travelled during the thousands of miles she journeyed in Spain. Baba had been there long ago. They came to a small plain between two rocky summits and strangely shaped boulders. Twenty miles away were the snow topped peaks of the Sierra Gredes. They reached the memorable place, a sandy lonely rock

carpeted with thyme basil and other herbs... Time seemed to roll away, and it was wonderful to be with Baba there. The fast was broken on their return. Baba explained that in Europe, as in other countries, there are Saints and advanced Souls whom He calls His dear ones; and to manifest externally His expression of love for His dear ones, He abstains from eating when blessing their places. There are many holy places connected with spiritual workings in Europe. The four in Europe—St. Marks in Venice, a place on the Ligurian Coast, Assisi and Avila had now all been visited with Baba... Baba arranged that one of the party should visit this spot in ten days every day for seven days in succession."*

"From her earliest years Teresa had heard of saints and lived in the atmosphere of romance and chivalry, which her nature strove to express in action. When only six years old, she was fired to emulate

* Extract from "Perfect Master" by C. B. Purdom.

the martyrs, and left her home with her little brother, a few years older, and with provisions for their journey set out to seek the Meers and suffer death at their hands. But they had to content themselves by building tiny monasteries in the garden, as a chance meeting with a relative on the outskirts of the town cut their journey short. Despite the opposition of her father whom she dearly loved, she vowed her life to the Church. "I do not think that when I die, the wrench will be greater than when I left my father's house, for it seems to me that every bone was rent asunder, and there was no love of God to take the place of the love of father and kinsman. The struggle was so great that if the Lord had not helped me, my own resolution would not have been enough to carry me through."*

At that time she was not conscious of the Divine Love within, and the picture of hell which religion then presented, preyed on her imagination as she felt her unworthiness. The rigorous convent life affected her health and she returned home to be nursed. She sub-

mitted to the barbarious treatment of the village Curandera, as medical science of the time proved ineffectual. Her limbs were stretched until they cracked and life was almost extinct. Teresa adds that touch humour which sometimes gleamed through her darkest experiences, "With this gain, that life was almost extinct." At her own request she returned to the Convent, when a profound trance came over her; so she remained four days; the others thought she was dead. Neighbouring friars sang for her soul, her grave was dug and funeral arrangements proceeded, but her father watching by her side, opposed her burial saying, "This my daughter is not yet for the grave."

She was his favourite daughter, and since his wife's death and the marriage of his other daughter, the bond between them had deepened. On returning to consciousness, she was too weak to do anything, but move her little finger. The wax from the tapers was taken from her eyelids, and for eight months she lay helpless and paralysed. She was the wonder

*Extract from " Autobiography of St. Teresa."

of the nuns during her illness, sustaining them in spiritual matters and comforting them in spite of her own sufferings and weakness. She had the gift of awakening others to higher consciousness. During her father's last illness when he was convulsed with pain in his back, he groaned in his agony despite his natural fortitude. To her outer events were seen in their relation to her Lord, whose divine humanity reached out to all. Thus she reminded her father of the agony of Christ when bearing the cross of the Calvary and showed him that. "The Lord had willed him to understand something of what he had suffered when he bore the cross on his own back to Calvary." The old knight never uttered a sound again of his sufferings, his own sense of it lost in the contemplation of the Supreme Sacrifice.

How Teresa shared the inner struggles of others and awakened them to their higher self, is shown when during the illness described, she met a local priest at confessional, as she was away from the convent. "He became deeply attached to me—his disposition

and understanding were good enough, but it might have been purer and was not without danger since if God had not been present, there were opportunities when he might have offended more gravely. For seven years he had carried on illicit connection with a woman of the place which had destroyed his reputation—none bold enough amongst his flock to censure. I was able to speak to him much of God, and this must have done him good, though I believe what touched him most was his great affection for me." He wore copper ornaments from his mistress, and Teresa had the intuition to persuade him to throw them away, not because she felt that there was any real power in chance; they formed a physical link between them so long as retained. "He was then," she adds, "like a man aroused from a deep sleep and began to consider all that he had done in those years, lamenting his ruinous state." Her simplicity is revealed as she adds, "I love him much, for so frivolous and blind was I that it seemed to me a virtue to prove my gratitude and loyalty to anyone who loved me."

She prayed for him through-out, often with agony which affected her physically and the nuns were greatly distressed. Sometimes she was partly stifled by the astral emanations, when praying for him, gasping for breath. Through her inner vision she saw the repellent element or astral form assailing her, produced by his impure desires. It is not given to all to awaken the soul of another to its real state, but her description of the effect prayer had upon her consciousness shows how much greater must be the influence when the soul consciously uplifts the human relations, for no form of hypnotism or psychic influence was used.

In prayer, she writes, "The soul is suspended in such a way that it seems utterly beside itself. The *will* loves. The *memory* is as it were lost. *Understanding* makes no reflections but is not lost, it is not at work. It is as it were amazed."

Memory and reflection being in abeyance, time merges into timelessness, freeing the will entirely to energize the love divine, resulting in complete elimination of personal

desires in full consecration of the whole nature of God, which the understanding recognizes.

Thus consciousness receives, when will, memory and understanding are passive and the soul upraised.

A Master can expound the laws of the subtle world in which Teresa and the saints and seers move. Baba explains.

"Nature is much bigger than what a man can perceive through the ordinary senses of the physical body. The hidden aspects of nature consist of finer matter and forces that interpenetrate and exist together with the physical. There is no unbridgable gulf separating the finer aspects of nature from its gross aspects. The finer aspects of nature are not perceptible to man, but they are nevertheless continuous with the gross aspects. They are remote, and yet they are inaccessible to his consciousness. This is due to the fact that his consciousness is functioning through the physical senses which are not adopted for perceiving these aspects of nature which are finer than the gross aspects. He is unconscious of these inner planes just as a deaf

man is unconscious of sounds; and naturally he cannot also deal with them consciously. For practical purposes they are ether worlds to him.

"The pathway of a man through the divisions of nature's hidden part, is called gnosis; the object of the various systems of religious ceremonial and doctrine is to prepare for it. It is believed by some that this was the aim of the mystery religions of the ancient world in their original purity, when there were spiritual initiates to guide

neophytes. The veiled allusions scattered through mystic and gnostic literature, and the vast ruins of the places where, hidden from the world, these arcane secrets were demonstrated, have left traces to show that the Path is One through all ages. Gnosis is: 'The internal but actual pathway inside a human being though it is not exactly like a material road, yet it is distinctly perceptible to the internal eye of a real mystic or gnostic, who actually feels traveling along it.'"

(to be continued)

Meherabad

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT ITS FOUNDATION

BY F. H. DADCHANJI

Shri Meher Baba's colony at "Meherabad" has been one of the most important centres of his activities in India for about fifteen years. It is situated on the outskirts of Arangaon, a small village six miles from Ahmednagar City, the history of which can be traced to the Mogul period. This region has been the abode of many saints and hermits for several centuries, and its religious importance dates back to the hoary times of Rama. A place of pilgrimage and also of recreation, not far from Ahmednagar, is known as "Happy Valley" where Rama and Sita took refuge during their *Vanvas* or wanderings in jungles. Some historical facts, concerning the sanctity of this locality due to their saintly associations, are worth recording.

There is in Arangaon a temple dedicated to Shri Vithoba, the deity of Pandharpur, who lived about a thousand years ago and who is still

worshipped by multitudes. Pandharpur, two hundred miles from Arangaon is, even today, considered one of the greatest places of pilgrimage in India and Vithoba's devotees flock there twice a year during the festivals. It is said that on account of Vithoba's presence, during a period in Arangaon, the village came to be known as *Choti Pandhari* (small Pandharpur) and as such has been revered to this day.

A Hindu saint, Buvaji Buva, who lived in Arangaon about three hundred years ago, was the great *Bhakta* and *Sat Purush*. The legend goes that once when there was a *Kirtan* (religious recital) in praise of Vithoba at Arangaon in Vithoba's temple, the saint in a spiritual trance suddenly began to rub the palms of his hands against each other. This strange gesture made the gathering of the devotees wonder, and upon enquiry as to its purpose, Buvaji himself

is said to have explained that he was extinguishing a fire which was blazing at the time in the *sabha-mandap* (hall) in Vithoba's temple at Pandharpur. Strangely, however, both the hands of Buvaji Buva bore stains of black smoke. The information subsequently obtained at Pandharpur accurately corroborated the statement of the saint that a fire had actually broken out in the temple of Vithoba at Pandharpur and was extinguished exactly at the time when Buvaji made that significant gesture during the religious ceremony at Arangaon. It is thus a recorded fact that Buvaji Buva, through his gesture, had extinguished the fire at a distance of two hundred miles. Furthermore this saint is said to have buried himself alive and his *Jivant-Samadhi* (living internment) still exists in Vithoba's temple at Arangaon village in a sepulchre. Ever since that time he is held in great reverence and worshipped by the people at his shrine.

Another recent personage, known locally, was a Mohamedan saint who lived in Ahmednagar City. His name

was Hazrat Maulana Shamsuddin Chisti, popularly called "Maula Baba ". He lived a secluded life, completely aloof from public activities, and never accepted any gifts. He was, therefore, very little known even to the inhabitants of Ahmednagar where he lived for many years. Those who knew him and had had personal contact said that his life, habits and character were exemplary and bespoke the dignity of a true saintly Being. Once he asked his followers to drive towards Arangaon. When he arrived at a distance of two furlongs from Arangaon where "Meherabad" stands today, near the well, he ordered a halt in order to take a walk around. After a while, about seventy-five feet from this well, he marked out with his stick a square in the dust expressing the wish to his devotees that he would be very pleased if his body, after his passing away, be interned there. The disciples wondered why of all the good locations in and around Ahmednagar, where he had lived almost all of his life, he should select this distant spot that appeared so desolate and would be so

inconvenient for his devotees who would later desire to pay their respects. To this the Saint smilingly remarked: "You are like children, you would not now understand if I told you what great importance this place bears. You think that those who want to pay their respects to my tomb would hesitate to come to this place so distant and desolate. But remember, very soon after I pass away, a great Master will come and establish his abode here. Then you shall know and understand." This significant prophecy, made in 1922, came to be realized within two years when Meher Baba in 1924 established at "Meherabad" the centre for his public activities. The fact that this particular area is so rich with holy memories and, also, the fact that the present heads of the spiritual hierarchy of the world have their seats in these surroundings of Ahmednagar and Poona districts, seem to be weighing factors for Meher Baba to select this place which, ever since, has been preferred as his residence and the centre of his activities. Within this spiritual environment live five Perfect

Masters who control the spiritual destinies of our era.

In Poona lived the late Hazrat Baba Jan, a Perfect Master, whom young Merwan (now known as Meher Baba) met when he was nineteen. It was through her spiritual contact that Meher Baba experienced the *superconscious state*.

Sakori, 53 miles from Ahmednagar City, is the present abode of Shri Upasani Maharaj, who is Shri Meher Baba's other Master.

Just three miles from Sakori is Shirdi where lived the late Shri Sai Baba, the spiritual Master of Shri Upasani Maharaj.

Kedgaon, about fifty-nine miles from Poona, is the present centre of another Sadguru, Shri Narayan Maharaj.

From all this, it can be clearly seen that it was not by mere 'chance' that Meher Baba selected "Meherabad" as the centre for his initial public spiritual activities, as indeed we know that whatever Perfect Master does is for deep and significant spiritual reasons relating to his work for the spiritual benefit of mankind.

Strange as it may seem

materially considered, the district of Ahmednagar is notorious as one of the driest and famine-stricken districts in India, having very little or practically no rainfall as compared to other parts of the country. The surrounding districts of Poona and Nasik have an average of forty to fifty inches of rainfall during the monsoon season as compared to only 15 to 20 inches in Ahmednagar district, and even this scanty rainfall is very irregular, some years passing off with hardly 6 to 8 inches of rainfall at the most.

The choice of a place in a famine-stricken district may seem incomprehensible from the ordinary point of view, but the lives and activities of all great Masters and saints have been strange and incomprehensible for human intellect. Yet, if one considers the backgrounds, such as the barren hills around Jerusalem, or the desert lands around Mecca, or even the parched soil surrounding Assisi, this would seem to be in conformity with the lives of martyrdom of the Great Ones. History repeats itself, and these difficult conditions in the principal

centre of activities in "Meherabad" bear testimony to this, as also to the teachings and life of Shri Meher Baba. Answering the question of his *mandali* as to why they always had to suffer through the handicap of water scarcity, Baba once humorously remarked: "Mohamed's greatness was not in Kaba but in Karbala and this is my Karbala." Kaba in Mecca, Arabia, is the sacred sanctuary where the Prophet Mohamed manifested himself and his mission, whereas Karbala in North Arabia is known in history as the place of martyrdom. Karbala is not only dry and barren but typifies desolation and destruction. Baba's reference to Karbala's true greatness conveyed that the greatness of a Master lies not in manifestation but in suffering in the cause of humanity.

The water scarcity that has been a continuous handicap throughout all developments at "Meherabad" is an experience too well-known to the *mandali* all these years and quite in conformity with the Master's training for a life of true renunciation. Yet, it may be carefully marked that

whenever Baba wanted, this and all other consequent difficulties have been overcome and solved. The remarkable activities displayed in this place which he qualified as Karbala, have left indelible marks in the hearts of those who have been associated with him during the various phases of his initial activities. Baba has given ample proof and evidence, not alone of his infinite powers, controlling and superceding even the elements, but also of his divine motive and his selfless dedication for the well-being of mankind—especially the poor and needy—seekers and sinners a like. Throughout his life and activities in this colony, Baba has established for various periods a number of institutions of public welfare and service, such as: the school for boys and girls; the Ashram for over a hundred boys with board and lodging arrangements and with free supplies of clothing and books; the *Sadhak Ashram*, a retreat for seekers, here named after the *Sadhakas* which means seekers; as well as the dispensary, hospital and leper asylum; the *Dharmashala* (resting house) for trave-

lers and pilgrims; also the residential quarters for large number of the regular *mandali* serving at "Meherabad". In short, life in this colony numbered at times from four to five hundred inhabitants. Besides on special festivals and holidays like birthday celebrations of Shri Meher Baba, also of Shri Upasani Maharaj, of Hazrat Baba Jan and even of Rama and Krishna observed here during these years, several thousands at a time have gathered from all corners of the country—when "Meherabad" was truly a place of pilgrimage.

For years at a stretch, it is this holy solitary well which has supplied water, even for gardening, although at times it ran down to an alarmingly low level. Even last year, during Baba's visit to France when he left instructions to the *mandali* for important alterations to be made to the existing quarters on the hill, the *mandali* had to call on Baba's *grace*, through a special cable, as the well at a certain period due to failure of rainfall had practically dried out, threatening life and activity at "Meherabad". Baba quietly replied to this, not by cable,

but by a casual letter, instructing: "Carry on, don't worry." When Babas letter from France, conveying this reply, was dispatched, an immediate downpour occurred in "Meherabad" and the water level rose to sufficiency. The danger was averted and the work was carried on as had been directed.

Do not Masters play with nature and the elements as they do with souls? How lightly and unconcernedly they

look upon our worries and smile at the most dangerous and intricate problem, at times involving question of life and death. Numerous experiences of this playing with the elements and even with human lives have convinced the *mandali*, time and again, that Baba is capable of doing anything at his sweet will, handling any situation however delicate or dangerous with a calm ease and unconcern that he alone commands.

Sufi Thoughts

VERSIFICATION BY Dr. ABDUL GHANI MUNSIF

How long you'll waste your precious years,
In pilgrimage to tombs of this and that;
Against a thousand lions-dead and gone
More spiritually alive is an Adept's cat.

Wordly desires are often fulfilled
By e'en invoking the dead, 'tis true;
But to knowledge of Self—the Kingdom within
Only a living Master can give you the clue.

Spiritual Anecdote

By Dr. ABDUL GHANI MUNSIF

Once a disciple of Ghausali Shah Qalander complained of no spiritual progress in the Saint's company. The Saint flared up and said, "God be praised ! It seems you were not a babe at birth, but old, wrinkled and hoary! Yesterday you came as a disciple and today you want to be perfect! My dear boy, 'men of God' have knocked at the door of the Divine Beloved for years and from amongst thousands, *one* has been allowed to cross the threshold. The spiritual path is not a joke and no business of a suckling either." Having said this, the Saint fell into an ecstatic reverie and began reciting the illuminating and awe inspiring lines of the Poet-Philosopher Hakim Sanai :

Days are required for a goatful of wool,
To be a robe for a priest or rope for a mule.
Weeks are needed for a cotton seed to sprout,
To become beauty's attire or martyr's shroud.
Months go by, for a biological zero,
To develop into a bride or an Ali-type hero.
Years change a stone acted on by the sun,
Into ruby from Badukshan and Sapphire of Yamen.
Decades drag on before a stripling full of promise,
Turns out a philosopher, poet or an artist.
Ages roll on, to induce Heavens to smile,
To grant lovers a union or home for the exile.
Cycles evolve a perfect soul or produce a master mind,
Like Bayazid of Khurasan or Owayse of faith blind.
Either depart and like women flirt away your time,
Or like Sanai take your chance forgetting mine and thine.



Shri Meher Baba's Tour

OF NINE DAYS THROUGH CENTRAL INDIA*

BY PRINCESS NORINA MATCHABELLI

We have reached Talegaon. Shri Meher Baba seems, as usual, to want to avoid formalities and ceremonies, therefore the welcome of the Unique Guest has to be rushed and hushed. While Baba accepts the beautiful garlands, hastily walking through the little garden He lifts them off. The garden is sweet, filled with multicoloured flags waving us welcome.

Baba enters His room, the usual quarters prepared for Him on the occasions of His rare visits. At once Baba, in His executive manner, calls for the different members of the family—the two brothers-in-law, the hostess and also R., her brother from Nasik. Baba's order was that during this visit to Talegaon He would not see crowds of people, but when A. lays before Baba his practical viewpoint, that it would be better to see a few important men and a few of his best clients who were clamouring for Baba's

Darshana and give them a chance to meet his August Guest, Baba leniently smiles stating, "Do as you think best." This He often does.

Baba came especially to look into the personal affairs concerning the two brothers who are partners in business. It seems there is much to adjust between them. All these small or huge complications are the usual nightmare in the mind of man that He, the *true friend of man*, will take on to Him in compassion—dissolve and readjust.

A perfect luncheon *is served* at 11 a.m. cooked by the hostess's own hands. On such occasions it is customary when the Master visits His disciples and is a sign of deep respect for the disciple to cook and serve the meal for the Master and His party regardless of their number. It is a demonstration of selflessness and devotion.

The programme for the afternoon is to motor to the Meher

**Continued from November 1938 issue.*

Rice Mill, the ancient Fortress of Talegaon which Baba never misses to see, and the Glass Factory. The excursion had its reason. When Baba moves, heaven and hell moves too. The first stop is at Meher Rice Mill, not far from the official residencies including missions, bank, post office, etc. The mill is a huge shack; but to visit the rice mill is not the only reason for Baba's appearance. There are two black-eyed joyous young men, simple workmen, whom Baba loves very dearly who have also to be looked up from time to time and whom He has to touch and stir to enhance their spiritual courage, look into their eyes and renew His own Life in them. Baba takes in the whole work and leaves behind that unfathomable *smile* which is so sure and real and good and makes everyone feel sure and real and good.

We drive on to the Fortress. It has the appearance of an ancient gigantic monument, huge forms towering over other forms in ruin seem the work of some giant of obscure age—fallen trees, jungle-like vegetation, bright shining strange looking flowers filled

with venomous juice, parrot-like birds, all seem to live with and against one another in natural excitement of life. All of a sudden Baba takes a running flight to the far end of this wild jungle-garden. There, like a majestic solid mould in human form He stands still, right in the centre of the red, gold, purple and blue circle of light of the setting sun. He, the Truth Being in existence throwing the divine shadow on its own phenomena, the setting sun in Talegaon. Again we realize how the smallest adventure can become a spiritual romance when with Him we walk through life. We leave feeling light and refreshed.

Our next halt is at the Glass Factory. Baba's wish for us to see this little establishment is very definite. We walk in, and it was as if we were passing from process of making; we see light fluid matter which in its process through fire, becomes solid glass; we see a potter taking inarticulate matter, making a form which in itself is art. We see the God-man forming men and expanding souls. The two young workmen came to take

Baba's *Darshana*. They realize that Baba's coming has a meaning, and they live up to the occasion with humility. Also these two humble worshippers, whether conscious or unconscious, belong to the spiritual pioneers of mankind and are destined to participate in the *new awakening*, whether in Talegaon or New York, in Paris or in Palestine which Baba today governs.

We return home. A line of people are already waiting in the garden. Meanwhile the weather, unusual to its season, suddenly changes; it is bitter cold and all the preparations for the evening feast which was to be held in the garden, has to be abandoned. The little living-room has to be quickly transformed into the holy place. To do this is easy, because wherever Baba is, a barren space becomes life, light, pure air. These virtues replace in beauty the external seductions. The music is heard from the garden, while, in still reverence, a few devotees are sitting at Baba's feet. Whether good or bad, self-important or unimportant in social position, we see men, women, children

kneel and bow, making the cross in the order of Christ, or prostrate themselves in other religious manner, in experience of pain or joy, before this Grace in Being who never did but *smile*. Without giving more attention to the postmaster or the banker or the owner of the best shop or the schoolmaster than to any soul in need, He takes in close into His pure heart, all life. Poor or destitute, hungry pilgrims of different castes, for all, He, impartial, pure, is the same sign of divinity for whom these intrepid seekers for Truth cross rivers, valleys and mountains, taking endless roads on foot. It is a rush towards God, soul and happiness. The procession goes on until late.

We are now all ordered to retire to our rooms. The night *is* good, quiet and without dreams for all of us but for one who is restless all night outside of Baba's door waiting for Grace, merged in excited anguish of his struggling mind. At the right moment Baba opens the door. It is 4 a. m. and A.'s brother-in-law walks in, quiet, unconditional in acceptance. The wakeful night in front of the Master's

door has changed him into a new man, he is ready to realize what in the struggle of his mind the day before he was unable to understand. Later, the judge, his wife and all of us are called into the room to witness the 'turning point'. It happens that all come out right, everybody feels sure and is ready to give in. The Peace-maker has reconciled the differences. Each one realizes in his appeased mind that within all differences lies Truth disguised. We realize that the impersonal standpoint begins to be of use to us when in Being we awaken. Leaving behind order, clarity, peace of mind, Baba gives signal to depart.

We speed on to Bombay. It is the twenty-first of December. The air is nice and cool; quiet and blue is the range of the romantic mountains where Shivaji, the king and great warrior, destroyed the Mohamedan enemies who fought against him.

In Bombay, Baba is given quarters in the home of a close disciple on Frere Road. Many people are already waiting in the long corridor when Baba, in His real executive manner at once seeing

the need in the hearts of these many, begins to open the *eternal well* of His great curing Life. While watching the questioning anguish of all these people who call for Grace, it seems as if now mankind's ordeal has come to some climax in suffering. Again in un-ending compassion and patience, Baba takes on the human struggle and makes light and fluid *hope* in everyone's heart.

We are invited for luncheon to the home of C.'s brother. The reception is cheers of merry love. The house is filled with young and old people and children who, in their natural simplicity, respond lightly and unhampered to Baba's love. Among the events, during this gathering, we wish to recall a little anecdote. A charming young Parsi mother asks to be received as soon as possible, because she can no longer control her very bad tempered 'baba'. This little two weeks creature, the mother tells, is subject to fits of anger so fierce that it is torture to all who have to witness. The child is as small as a doll unusual in size but almost perfect in its tiny proportions—to be compared

to a small edition of Krishna or Ram or any god of some other name. Baba has been informed of the difficult case, but, for good reason, creates suspense...The atmosphere catches His Peace rhythm and in it suddenly the child grows calm. The drama handled with discretion and care by Baba, from a distance, indeed works pure and deep. The child falls fast asleep. After a while Baba calls for the mother and the little one. When He takes the child into His arms, under His look the child's eyes open. The meeting of the soul with the all Soul was sure. The divine dream, as in a fairy story, the child must have experienced. The sign of Grace is on the little face. It is the blissful glow that we in Him worship... Never shall I forget the beauty of the miracle on that child's face; never have I seen the limitless soul radiate in so small a form. The mother who is well aware of the powerful unseen work of Baba, when going out of the room, carries the child up high like a glorified idol, herself having the unique expression of unquestioned faith.

We return to Frere Road. Several of Baba's disciples have arrived from various places, among them R., who left "Meherabad" at the time of Baba's last trip to Europe. Not wishing to be there during Baba's absence, he accepted the call to teach in a girl's school in Bombay. R. appears to me changed, as though he was going through a new phase of adjustment. In his eyes is the fire of war. I could not follow the excited arguments between him and Baba who, unusually energetic, is holding a long discussion on His board in vernacular. One sentence in English left a definite picture in my mind. Baba's words were: "A man who cannot control *action* is not a man." Baba, who always gives us the ultimate outlook, no doubt wanted to enhance within all who were present the impetus to drive on with unflinching courage to the very end, that is aloofness from experience as life of subjective reaction.

N., from Nasik, is another friend well acquainted with Baba's work. He tells about P., who again is put on a further test; such are called the intervals of separation from

Baba. Baba's message to P., on this particular occasion is: "I suffer every second of my life untold tortures, you have to share, it is now the last phase, when you see me again you will see me in my true Self."

While N. is reporting all this in a low voice, Baba hears it, and, turning round, writes on His board, "Gossip." To Him, the Pure Silent One, all these facts as told by us in our half conscious childish manner must appear as mere gossip: nevertheless Baba smilingly urges us to go on. Furthermore, we hear P. has to go on a begging tour, that it will be very hard for him, he will be abused by many, but he will stand it bravely. To us this seems natural.

On the 23rd of December at 6 a.m. we take the train called "The Flying Ranee" for Navsari. On the train a young man called M., who is to be married to one of the D. girls on the 27th of December, has come to Bombay especially to escort Baba who is to be the guest of the bride's family. The D. family of Navsari is one of the most influential and prominent Parsi

families in the Baroda State. Since many generations they were great land owners. These estates were gifts to the family for services rendered to the State of the former Maharajah of Gaikwad. The family can be traced back for twenty-eight generations, having lived on that estate. During the evening we are informed of the exceptional preparations for the marriage feast to be held in the home of the bride's famous uncle, the well-known author in Gujarathi language who, for many months, has been very ill...When Baba moves in the lives of men it is always for some great warning. Baba's visit to Navsari is to call for a soul. He goes to see the dying man to ordain in him the Divine will, to help him on through the redeeming transgression.

Later on while discussing among ourselves some subtle subjects, suddenly Baba, with the speed of lightning, interrupts the waste in exertion of our minds, making the following statement on Selfless Service:

"God as God alone is not consciously man, and man as

man alone is not consciously God. The God-man is consciously both God and man; so the God-man is both Lord and the servant of the universe. Lord, in the state of helping all souls toward reality. Servant, as continuously bearing the burden of all. To serve Him who serves all is serving the universe.

Selfless service and love are twin divine qualities. Only the one who loves can serve.

Serve your Beloved God-man and you are serving your own self in every other self.

The service He exacts is for your own spiritual benefit; but this service must be spontaneous, willing, whole-

hearted, unconditional and not expecting any reward. His service is an ordeal which tries body, mind and spirit; or else where-in would the perfection of serving lie if it were to be easy and at one's convenience. The body suffers, mind is tormented, but the spirit of the *selfless server* of the Master experiences the bliss of satisfaction.

Only the one who has, can renounce. A king giving up everything and becoming a beggar, is his true renunciation; and so only the one who without any question and regardless of consequences serves the God-man, really serves; otherwise it would be just like paid labour."

Life

By ADI K. IRANI

Life without aim is a life of drift,
 Life with low desires is a life of death.
 Let Him be the guide of you all Who
 can ignite the fire of longing Into a
 flame of love, that doth impart All lives—
 Knowledge, Bliss and Love.



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