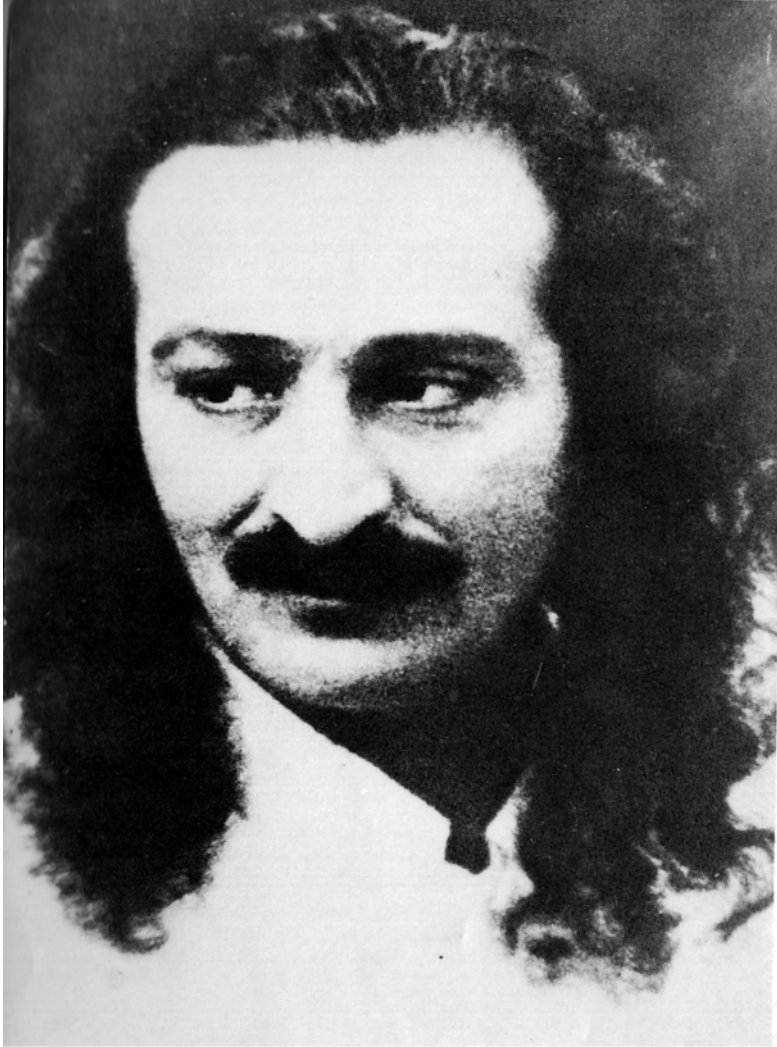


MEHER BABA

JOURNAL





Shri Meher Baba

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" I have not come to teach but to awaken "
– SHRI MEHER BABA

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The Avatar

BY SHRI MEHER BABA

Consciously or unconsciously, every living creature seeks one thing. In the lower forms of life and in less advanced human beings, the quest is unconscious; in advanced human beings, it is conscious. The object of the quest is called by many names—happiness, peace, freedom, truth, love, perfection, Self-realization, God-realization, union with God. Essentially it is a search for all of these, but in a special way. Everyone has moments of happiness, glimpses of truth, fleeting experiences of union with God; what they want is to make them permanent. They want to establish an abiding reality in the midst of constant change.

It is a natural desire, based fundamentally on a memory, dim or clear as the individual's evolution may be low or high, of his essential unity with God; for every living thing is a partial manifestation of God, conditioned only by its lack of knowledge of its own true nature. The whole of evolution, in fact, is an evolution from unconscious divinity to conscious divinity, in which God Himself, essentially

eternal and unchangeable, assumes an infinite variety of forms, enjoys an infinite variety of experiences and transcends an infinite variety of self-imposed limitations. Evolution from the standpoint of the Creator is a divine sport, in which the Unconditioned tests the infinitude of His absolute knowledge, power and bliss in the midst of all conditions. But evolution from the standpoint of the creature, with his limited knowledge, limited power, limited capacity for enjoying bliss, is an epic of alternating rest and struggle, joy and sorrow, love and hate, until in the perfected man, God balances the pairs of opposites and transcends duality. Then creature and Creator recognize themselves as one; changelessness is established in the midst of change, eternity is experienced in the midst of time. God knows Himself as God, unchangeable in essence, infinite in manifestation, ever experiencing the supreme bliss of Self-realization in continually fresh awareness of Himself by Himself.

This realization must and does take place only in the midst of life, for it is only in the midst of life that limitation can be experienced and transcended, and that subsequent freedom from limitation can be enjoyed. This freedom from limitation assumes three forms.

Most God-realized souls leave the body at once and forever, and remain eternally merged in the unmanifest aspect of God. They are conscious only of the bliss of union. Creation no longer exists for them. Their constant round of births and deaths is ended. This is known as *mukti* or liberation.

Some God-realized souls retain the body for a time, but their consciousness is merged completely in the unmanifest aspect of God, and they are, therefore, not conscious either of their bodies or of creation. They experience constantly the infinite bliss, power and knowledge of God, but they cannot consciously use them in creation or help others to attain liberation. Nevertheless, their presence on earth is like a focal point for the concentration and radiation of the infinite power, knowledge and bliss of God; and those who approach them, serve them, and worship them are spiritually benefited by contact with them. These souls are called *Majzubs* and this particular type of liberation is called *videh-mukti* or liberation with the body.

A few God-realized souls keep the body, yet are conscious of themselves as God in both His unmanifest and His manifest aspects. They know themselves both as the unchangeable divine essence and as the infinitely varied manifestation. They experience themselves as God apart from creation; as God the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of the whole of creation; and as God who has accepted and transcended the limitations of creation. They experience constantly the absolute peace, the infinite knowledge, power and bliss of God. They enjoy to the full the divine sport of creation. They know themselves as God in everything and are, therefore, able to help everything, spiritually, and to make other souls realize God, either as *Muktas*, *Majzubs* or *Sadgurus* as they themselves are called.

There are fifty-six *Sadgurus* or Perfect Masters in the world at all times. They are always one in consciousness. They are always different in function. For the most part, they live and work apart from and unknown to the general public, but five, who act in a sense as a directing body, always work in public and attain to public prominence and importance. In *Avataric* periods, the *Avatar*, as supreme *Sadguru*, takes his place as the head of this body and of the spiritual hierarchy as a whole.

Avataric periods are like the spring-tide of creation. They bring a new release of power, a new awakening of consciousness, a new experience of life—not merely for a few, but for all. Qualities of energy and awareness, which had been used and enjoyed by only a few advanced souls, are made available for all humanity. Life, as a whole, is stepped up to a higher level of consciousness, is geared to a new rate of energy. The transition from sensation to reason was one such step; the transition from reason to intuition will be another.

This new influx of the creative impulse takes, through the medium of a divine personality, an incarnation of God in a special sense—an *Avatar*. This *Avatar* was the first individual soul to emerge from the evolutionary process as a *Sadguru*, and he is the only *Avatar* who has ever manifested or will ever manifest. Through him, God first completed the journey from unconscious divinity to conscious divinity, first unconsciously became man in order consciously to become God. Through him, periodically

God consciously becomes man for the liberation of mankind.

The *Avatar* appears in different forms, under different names, at different times, in different parts of the world. As his appearance always coincides with the spiritual birth of man, so the period immediately preceding his manifestation is always one in which humanity suffers from the pain of the approaching birth. Man seems more than ever enslaved by desire, more than ever driven by greed, held by fear, swept by anger. The strong dominate the weak; the rich oppress the poor. Large masses of people are exploited for the benefit of the few who are in power. The individual who finds no peace or rest, seeks to forget himself in excitement. Immorality increases, crime flourishes, religion is ridiculed. Corruption spreads throughout the social order. Class and national hatreds are aroused and fostered. Wars break out. Humanity grows desperate. There seems to be no possibility of stemming the tide of destruction.

At this moment the *Avatar* appears. Being the total manifestation of God in human form, he is like a gauge against which man can measure what he is and what he may become. He tries the standard of humanity by interpreting them in terms of divinely human life.

He is interested in everything, but not concerned about anything. The slightest mishap may command his sympathy; the greatest tragedy will not upset him. He is beyond the alterations of pain and

pleasure, desire, and satisfaction, rest and struggle, life and death. To him, they are equally illusions which he has transcended, but by which others are bound, and from which he has come to free them. He uses every circumstance as a means to lead others towards Realization.

He knows that men do not cease to exist when they die, and therefore, is not concerned over death. He knows that destruction must precede construction; that out of suffering is born peace and bliss; that out of struggle comes liberation from the bonds of action. He is only concerned about concern.

In those who contact him he awakens a love that consumes all selfish desires in the flame of the one desire to serve him. Those who consecrate their lives to him gradually become identified with him in consciousness. Little by little their humanity is absorbed into his divinity, and they become free.

Those who are closest to him are known as his circle. Every *Sadguru* has an intimate circle of twelve disciples, who, in point of realization, are made equal to the *Sadguru* himself, though they differ from him in function and authority. In *Avataric* periods, the *Avatar* has a circle of one hundred and twenty disciples, all of whom experience realization, and work for the liberation of others.

Their work is not only for contemporary humanity, but for posterity as well. The unfoldment of life and consciousness for the whole *Avataric* cycle, which has been mapped out in the creative

world before the *Avatar* took form, is endorsed and fixed in the formative and material worlds during the *Avatar's*, life on earth.

The *Avatar* awakens contemporary humanity to a realization of its true spiritual nature, gives liberation to those whose are ready, and quickens the life of the spirit in his time. For posterity is left the stimulating power of his divinely human example, the nobility of a life supremely lived, of a love unmixed with desire, of a power unused except for others, of a peace untroubled by ambition, of a knowledge undimmed by illusion. He has demonstrated the possibility of a divine life for all humanity, of a heavenly life on earth. Those who have the necessary courage and integrity can follow when they will.

Those who are spiritually awake have been aware for some time that the world is at present in the midst of a period such as always precedes *Avataric* manifestations. Even awakened men and women are becoming aware of it now. From their darkness they are reaching out for light; in their sorrow they are longing for comfort; from the midst of the strife into which they have found themselves plunged they are praying for peace and deliverance.

For the moment, they must be patient. The wave of destruction must rise still higher, must spread still further. But when from the depths of his heart, man desires something more lasting than wealth, something more real than material power, the wave will recede. Then peace will come, joy will

come, light will come.

The breaking of my silence—the signal for my public manifestation—is not far off. I bring the greatest treasure which it is possible for man to receive—a treasure which includes all other treasures which will endure for ever, which increases when shared with others. Be ready to receive it!

Editorial

BY THE MEHER EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

The *Meher Baba Journal* has come into existence through the earnest enquiries relating to Shri Meher Baba by seekers of spiritual truth and the desire of so many of his disciples throughout the East and West, to keep in closer touch with his activities. To these former, he is merely a name towards which they have turned for light, yet know little of this radiant personage and still less of his varied activities. To the latter, whom the Master contacted on his numerous journeys throughout the world, he is best known by the simple appellative *Baba*, which name from the Persian means "Father" or "Friend." The spiritual title *Sadguru*, or Perfect Master, is well recognized in the East, especially India with its rich heritage of spirituality, to connote one who has transcended the planes of duality and is "God-realized." In the book entitled *The Perfect Master* by C. B. Purdom of London, which is the life story of Shri

Meher Baba, Mr. Purdom has defined it for his Western readers as follows: "The title 'Perfect Master' is that by which Shri Meher Baba is known. It means one who himself reached the goal to which he leads or directs others. It means a teacher who himself practised his own teachings and attained its fruits. It means one who, pointing to God, has himself realized God."

Eight men and women, Easterners and Westerners from varied walks of life, are dedicating themselves to this task of answering the call and Shri Meher Baba himself has endowed the group with the name *Meher Editorial Committee* for the purpose of the publication of this Journal. It is a happy fact that C. V. Sampath Aiyangar, late of Madras Judicial Service and editor of the former *Meher Gazette*, which is now incorporated with the *Meher Baba Journal* is continuing his editorial activity as one of the editors of this Journal.

Our monthly issues will each contain an article by Shri Meher Baba. It is our aim to publish facts tending to demonstrate the Master's Divine Knowledge and Love, his direct influence in the unfoldment of life on the Path, his guidance in the ordinary lives of people, his psychological healings and physical help and healings, besides his philosophy and teachings. It is intended as well to publish past and present impressions and diaries of his followers in the East and West. Furthermore will be printed the life stories of great Saints of India and elsewhere whom Shri Meher Baba calls his "blessed selves" and who, though born in a particular country, belong to mankind as its greatest patrimony. Articles will be included on various other subjects such as religion, science, art, literature, music, which in their broad sense, according to Shri Meher Baba's teaching, are all spiritual

expressions when rightly interpreted.

It may be of interest to our readers to know that since July 1925, Shri Meher Baba has observed complete silence; he communicates by means of an alphabet board. He reads and can speak five languages, among them English. In his presence all barriers of thought communication seem removed as his understanding is universal. Therefore it is most common that those who write their impressions and quote the words of Shri Meher Baba in these pages, use such term as "Baba said", although it should be clearly understood by the readers that the Master always spells out his words on the alphabet board. His silence is for profound spiritual reasons and is a prelude to his manifestation.

Shri Meher Baba has stated in regard to his mission: "I intend bringing together all religions and cults like beads on one string and revitalize them for individual and collective needs."

*The Mad Ashram**

BY DR. ABDUL GHANI MUNSIFF

OF all phases of Shri Baba's activities extending over a period of about twenty years, the Ashram for the insane and mad at Meherabad, stands out in bold relief and possesses a significance of its own. Readers already familiar with the personality who has inspired this Journal, can easily understand that Baba, whatever activity he initiates, he does so with a set purpose and that is nothing but the achievement of some spiritual end. Baba aims and plans nothing short of this. The humanitarian aspect of such a work is only secondary and which more or less provides a training ground for his disciples.

Like many other sporadic manifestations of Baba's spiritual activities on the material plane, the Mad Ashram, too, has never been advertised. Naturally very few are aware of its existence and the idea behind it. It behoves us,

therefore, to give the world a little insight into the working conditions of the above Ashram and its *raison-d'etre*.. It may interest a few and amuse a good many to know why the institution has been started and how it is managed. The 'why' is the spiritual object thereof and will be discussed later on in this article.

Suffice it to say, the Mad Ashram at Meherabad has very little in common with institutions of its kind in the world. Baba has ordered it to be run on a plan peculiarly his own. The inmates, about forty of them at the moment, are cared for and served by some of the seasoned disciples of Shri Baba. They are under strict instructions to treat their charges like normal human beings. Unlike other such institutions, no chastisement of any kind, no chaining, no exaction of manual and physical labour is allowed. The only restriction imposed is that on their liberty of movement,

*The Mad Ashram, situated in a separate area at Meherabad, is one of a number of philanthropic institutions under Shri Meher Baba's guidance.

cooped in as they have to be kept, within a spacious but defined area.

The science of medicine may perhaps suspect in this the application of psycho-therapy for the reclamation of unbalanced minds; but it is nothing of the kind. Psycho-therapy, as a curative instrument, is of doubtful efficacy, and is still in an experimental stage. Even conceding it some appreciable success, it is only applicable individually in not very advanced cases, but never collectively.

Baba's method in the matter of reclaiming these mental derelicts is amazingly unique. Divinely dictated, divinely acted, it (Baba's method) cannot become a pattern for others to copy. It is impossible for ordinary mortals to emulate him, unless they find themselves elevated to the same spiritual heights. It is one more testimony of Baba's perfection. Perfection is the experience of any two or all extreme opposite states of being or conditions at one and the same time.

It has been said, "Man is God playing the fool," then a mad person may be said to be "God playing the child." The

insane people are veritable babies, altogether irresponsible, having no control over their bodily actions and functions. Baba treats them as such, and children, we know, respond very quickly and easily to love. Baba's panacea for all the ills of life is love, pure and simple, not the spurious imitation thereof which passes for love in the market of the world. Even parental love of a most exclusive and altruistic kind cannot come up to the love emanating from a God-realized Being, as it has its source in Divinity. Divine Love playing the servant through Baba is the *modus operandi* of the Mad Ashram under discussion.

Hence no parallel institution, however idealistically founded, can approach the one at Meherabad under Baba's aegis. Innumerable institutions functioning throughout the world for the mental and physical relief of suffering humanity are at best the outcome of pity. And pity, you must know, is one of the most subtle and clever disguises assumed by the human ego. All the same, it cannot be despised as it supplies a great motive force,

unhampered by barriers of religion, culture and nationality. Pity is the saving grace of mankind; where religion and morality fail, it steps in to save man from degenerating into a beast.

Thus far only ordinary mortals can rise. But when Love appears, it transforms the whole field of action. The most altruistic and selfless motive pales before its glamour, the most beautiful dream of religion and philosophy—the brotherhood of man—looks up to it hopefully to be interpreted into reality.

Nothing in universe can resist the force of Divine Love expressed through man. History of the world bears ample testimony to this. Divine Love, with man as the vehicle thereof, has flooded the world from time to time; has subdued continents and elevated mankind from depths of moral degradation to heights of spiritual excellence. Meher Baba is the chosen vehicle of Divine Love today. His playful and loving contact with the mad inmates of the Ashram is a practical demonstration on a small scale of what the worried world may expect of him when he

manifests himself and delivers the message of Love and Peace on earth. The upheaval which Baba speaks of is very near, and the message, according to him, once delivered will be irresistible.

Cynics will be convinced and critics silenced, if only they were to witness the astounding and successful results of experimentation with the diseased minds and brains in the laboratory of Love at Meherabad. The personal touch of Baba in the matter of feeding, clothing, bathing and even cleansing the lavatory, has wrought a miraculous change in the inmates of the Mad Ashram. The sub-normal are tending towards normality and the abnormal, that is those stranded or lost on the Path, are given a spiritual push forward or reclaimed. The latter are glaring instances of the dangers involved in treading the spiritual Path all alone unaided by a Perfect Master. The most expensive medical service or even an ultra sincere *Karma Yogi* will fail here, in what is only possible of Divinity in flesh.

It may amuse people to know that the Mad Ashram enacted a

drama on 25th September based on the life of the King renunciator *Gopichand*. The chief cast in the play, consisting solely of the mentally deranged, is a feature perhaps the first of its kind ever attempted. For the mad to dance, deliver, sing and play is not only a sign of their returning normality, but it is also a tribute to the potency of Love as a curative factor.

The spiritual aspect of the question is difficult to explain and perhaps still more difficult for the worldly-minded to accept. The explanation vouchsafed by Baba in one of his playful moods, as to the spiritual significance of the Mad Ashram, will no doubt impose a severe tax on one's credulity. But it cannot be helped; the explanation on the subject is there; take it or reject it. It all depends on the individual preparedness or susceptibility to matters spiritual.

The Mad Ashram has not come into being haphazard. It is deliberately evolved to serve a spiritual purpose. According to Baba, perfection born of realization owes a certain duty towards creation. This duty is not a condition

precedent to perfection, but it is a mission self-imposed out of Love, on seeing or realizing one's own self as the Self in all. One freed Soul finds itself bound and limited by time and space in innumerable others. Hence to advance others individually or collectively towards freedom, Self-knowledge or Realization is the spiritual object of Divine Incarnation on earth. The end justifies the means. Perfect Masters employ material means for the spiritual end, analogous with Universal Consciousness devolving into matter to evolve individual consciousness. Mad Ashram is one of the means in Baba's spiritual programme to restore normality to the war-crazy world. The question 'how he is going to work it' does not lie at all. Miracles of raising the dead to life, restoring of sight to the blind, curing of lepers by a mere touch or glance wrought by Perfect Masters, are accepted facts. Even if explained, it is impossible for the limited mind to understand the functioning part or process thereof. You yourself are an answer to such spiritual or metaphysical questions

beyond the domain of mind, Become That.

Baba is prophetic, not merely in his utterances, but lives up to it. His suddenly inspired whirlwind trips round the world, contacts with a select few Westerners, utter disregard for publicity, incognito visits to unexpected places in Europe, affording as it does sufficient food for thought and speculation, still leaves one baffled as to what really he has up his sleeves. For instance, the sudden and unexpected requisitioning of a particular mad inmate of the Ashram to Cannes (Southern France), where Baba was staying sometime last year with a few Western disciples, left even his seasoned disciples a-guessing. A trip to Europe, by a mad inmate of the Ashram, at great expense and inconvenience ordered by Baba was surely not for reasons of health.

All the above may sound pretty tall, but surely not outside the domain of possibility. A cursory acquaintance with the Master-minds of the world, who have shaped the destiny of mankind, leaving so many religions behind as an

aftermath of the spiritual force released by them, will at once rule out the question of possibility. The affairs of the world are governed by cycles of time and tide, which is popularly termed the repetition of history. That which has happened before can and does happen again; what one man has achieved, it is possible for another to repeat the performance or even improve thereon.

A negative attitude of mind to such claims and questions leads nowhere. Almost all questions and doubts with regard to the method and means employed by the Master-minds are generally out of place or premature. The working of the Universal Mind cannot be gauged by measures or standards set up by the individual mind. Only the time factor is there to justify the claimant or the cynic.

Till then, it would ill become the world to ignore the potentiality of Meher Baba as a Divine Manifestation on earth, which according to all religions is long overdue. I, therefore, invite all lovers of Truth to seek, search and study the Perfect Master Meher Baba.

The Vaishnavite Saints of Southern India and their Hagiology

BY C. V. SAMPATH AIYANGAR

The *Azhvars* (pronounced Awzhwars), or Saints of *Sri Vaishnavas*, were the exponents of the Triune Monism and the Divine Love of the Upanishads, i.e., *Visishta-dvaitism*. These *Sri Vaishnavas* are also called *Ramanujas*, the followers of the great *Acharya Ramanujas*, who was that 'glorious spiritual reservoir' into which flowed the wisdom of Saints and Sages of Southern India. Those Saints are called *Azhvars* (meaning literally, those drowned in or maddened with God-Love) and the Sages, *Acharyas*.

The *Azhvars* or Saints answer to the description given by the American thinker Emerson in his essay, "The Oversoul": "A certain tendency to insanity has always attended the opening of the religious sense in men, as if they had been blasted with excess of light. The trances of Socrates, the union of Plotinus, the vision of Porphyry, the

conversion of Paul, the aurora of Boeme, the convulsions of George Fox and his Quakers, the illumination of Swedenborg are of this kind. What was in the case of these remarkable persons a ravishment, has, in innumerable instances in common life, been exhibited in less striking manner. Everywhere the history of religion betrays a tendency to enthusiasm. The rapture of the Moravian and Quietist; the opening of the internal sense of the word in the language of the new Jerusalem Church; the revival of the Calvinistic Churches; the experiences of the Methodists are varying forms of that shudder of awe and delight with which the individual soul always mingles with the Universal Soul."

The *Azhvar* Saints belong to all grades of society, and mere birth was never an obstacle to their elevation to Sainthood by the path of 'Love to God.' This reveals to us indisputably

the Catholic feature of early Brahmanism in Southern India. Thus says S. Johnson: "It was a redeeming element of Hindu Caste itself, that it constituted every Saint an incarnation of *Brahma* for the preservation of the world, in virtue of his fulfillment of the ideal of Sainthood. The equal opportunity, even within the limits of a hereditary class, was at least the recognition, that fresh access to union with Deity by discipline and faith could never be wholly foreclosed. Nor was any past form of Sainthood regarded as permanent possession, either of supreme and final virtue, or of invincible authority. Its throne was held provisionally and liable to pass to a stronger master in the sphere of devotion. This democratic element in Brahmanical holiness has already attracted our interest. Under favouring circumstances, it would have reconciled incarnation with liberty and progress."

Who are these *Azhvars* or Saints? Are these souls celestials directly emanating from God, or are they of terrestrial kind, who, having passed through bondage, were raised to Sainthood so as to serve

as teachers for humanity? The latter explanation seems to us to be more probable.

Lord Shri Krishna himself says in his *Gita*, "Many are the births that have been passed by Me and thee, O Arjuna. I know them all, whilst thou knowest not, O scorcher of foes" (IV. 5). Again he says, "Whenever, O descendent of Bharata, there is decline of *Dharma** and rise of *Adharma*** , then I body myself forth...for the protection of virtue, and for the removal of vice, and for the establishment of *Dharma*..." (VII. 8). This is also stated in *Naradiya Srimushna Mahatmya*. It is clear that the great *Azhvars* have been chosen by God for the benefit of mankind. It decidedly proves their release from the state of bondage. It gives us hope. This Grace of God is certainly a covenant to us. God in His mercy assures us that every soul now in bondage is ultimately bound to arrive at Sainthood even as our holy *Azhvars*, who came out of ordinary men, attained Sainthood and Godhood.

It is true that every soul is of God. But in the case of

* Conventional Religion. ** Irreligiosity.

Azhvar—Saviours—God enters into them in a special manner, infusing the all-comprehending wisdom (*Jnana*) of the Sage and the all-enfolding Love (*Bhakti*) of the Saint.

It is interesting to note that even in spiritually developed souls like the *Azhvars* there were periods of distress when they bitterly complained of the same, in their outpourings. They worked hard and were amply rewarded in the end. They approached the well of Divinity with purity of heart and humility. They drank the spiritual waters, and actuated by Divine Love, gave the nectar to thirsty souls. According to them, God is immanent and not only transcendent; and this supernatural conception is really a miracle. Everything cannot be physically proved. Self-realization cannot be proved in a physical laboratory. As Count Leo Tolstoy said: "The shore is God, the course tradition, the oars are the free-will given me....." We must follow in the footsteps of great Saints which alone would enable us to know the Truth. Are we not successfully trying to realize the Truth (oneness in

manyness) by following the greatest Saint of the age, Shri Meher Baba? With faith and patience we have therefore to approach the supernatural with the help of a Perfected One. Such Perfected Ones were in the past. And we should with humility, learn something about their holy lives.

Amiel says: "The supernatural is miracle, and miracle is an objective phenomena independent of all preceding causality. Now, miracle thus understood cannot be proved experimentally, and besides, the subjective phenomena, far more important than all the rest, are left out of account in the definition. Men will not see that miracle is a perception of the soul, a vision of the Divine behind nature; a psychical crisis, analogous to that of *Aeneas* on the last day of Troy, which reveals to us the heavenly powers prompting and directing human action. For the indifferent, there are no miracles. It is only the religious souls who are capable to recognize the figure of God in certain given facts."

We shall narrate succinctly the life of a dozen holy *Azhvars* who, as sacred guardians of

religious Truths, helped mankind in their onward march on the Path, and

who never let religion itself die out among men.

(*To be continued*)

Shri Meher Baba

BY PRINCESS NORINA MATCHABELLI

It is the end of a Cycle in Evolution. We know that the spiritual awakening of the world gives new evidence in exchange of consciousness. The urge in mankind to see and find Truth is deep and creative. The new intuition in man to know and find God within, is pure. The time in its divine outward phase is sure in pain, pure in lure to move out of darkness.

We need to rely on the alive performing example of God. We can no more be sure with the deluding impersonal experience within. We can no more rely on second-hand information. We have no further proof than our own self-deluding experiences of the mind. We have no further individual ambition in our own human than to be 'I' and to magnify the

'I' for the 'I's' sake. We have exhausted ourselves in love emotion, and our love's motive is barren, cold, unsatisfied. The need in man to love more unselfishly is imperative.

We are stranded by established theological dogmas looking backwards on past Gods. Man is jealous, in competition of the Saviours of others. They create churches and religions to exploit individual devotion. Man's spiritual impulse has become sterile. Blinded and beaten by the outward sensationalism of life, and the mental creative tendency to exaggerate, man has lost the vision of simplicity of the heart.

We need to realize the Truth. We need to *see* impersonal devotion. We need to feel sincere kindness. We need to realize virtue without self-

satisfaction. We want to see true charity which is giving in full conscious accordance with the *knowing heart*. We need to see pure sacrifice which redeems. We have to learn how to render love for hate. We have to recognize the law's supreme pure work through the opposites. We have to recognize the mind's stagnant views of false and good. We want the free interpretation of good. The wonders of Divine Love have been brought down to us through the Gospels, but again and again mankind longs for the tangible example of that divine impulse of joy, like Krishna with His benign wonders of mercy, forgiveness, tolerance, and the selflessness of Jesus.

The reincarnation of the Love Master

of all time is alive amongst us. He is gradually unfolding in the immature heart of man, the divine immutable Grace of Love. Near Him, we, who come from all parts of the world, meet on the only un-prejudiced ground—the merciful Heart of the Beloved. This Universal Heart that expresses its divine existence through the vehicle of the unselfish Perfect Human we need to worship.

Shri Meher Baba professes and practises today, in eloquent silence, the awakening of the consciousness of the heart. The indivisible bond in man will be aware in *Being*. The new design in *Being* is to unite in the One Only God. Men, of all castes and all religions, will see the manifesting 'Only God' in the new conscious form in *Being*.

(*To be continued*)

SAYINGS OF SHRI MEHER BABA

God, the Real Beloved, is ever ready to enter your house, the mind, but He cannot, because it is occupied by your numberless unreal beloveds—desires, and there is no room for Him.

Poems

BY DINESHNANDINI CHORDIA

My estranged Lord ! What peace-offering should I bring to win
 Thee back to my bleeding heart ?

There is prowess in Thy body; dazzling lustre in Thine eyes;
 studied indifference in the sport to all else but for the
 burning quest of One, who is the breath of my breath,
 and the soul of my soul, and a strange
 passionlessness in Thy love.

But, there is eternal restlessness in my youth, a maddening
 attraction in my soul—ravishing beauty that may set
 the heart of the universe on fire, red roses in the
 apron of my sari.

Amrita, the drink of the gods, in my lips, dreams of a perfect
 union in my soul and the essence of Parijat, the
 flower that blossoms in the Nandan-garden of Indra
 in my love, which colours all my attitude to life.
 My testy Lover! What peace gifts would I bring to
 appease Thy wrath?

The mad world imagine Thee to be a shady sandal-wood tree
 from the far famed forest of scented Malabar and
 mistakes me for a creeper bearing dead sea-fruit.

But, if Thou art the Himalaya wearing the white crown of peace
 on Thy brow — I am the Ganges flowing forth from
 that abode of virgin snow, on the top of which Gauri
 (Shiva's wife) performed penance stern to have Shiva
 as her Lord.

If Thou art that the Ocean of renunciation, I am the nectar of
 Shanti (peace) that the gods and the demons churned
 out of it in days of yore.

If Thou art thousand petalled lotus that blossoms forth in the light
 of Brahma (Maker of the world), I am the sweet
 perfume that dwells within its bosom;

If Thou art Shiva, I am Shakti (power). If thou art Purush (God), I
 am Prakriti (nature). If Thou art Brahma, I am Maya
 (illusion).

And yet, the mad world imagines Thee to be a shady sandalwood
 tree from the far famed forest of scented Malabar and
 mistakes me for a creeper bearing dead sea-fruit.

Appreciation of Shri Meher Baba

BY PROF. FREDERIK KETTNER (NEW YORK)

I have met Shri Meher Baba only a few times. But gradually there has grown within me the glad certainty that in him is an intuitive power, and therefore a high spirit, that will help the progress of humanity and the merging of East and West.

Modern science has helped the average man gain comfort, but has fostered narrow-mindedness. Thus we admit the originators of spiritual sciences which will open human minds, so as to give souls their due share of happiness and bring forth that urge for positive soul-betterment which lies dormant in mankind. Modern sciences and spiritual sciences will carry on parallel to one another and form the track to world citizenship and to Peace.

The integration of mysticism, politics, ethics and economics into the new science of the life-eternal will originate a spiritual and ethical-social kind of engineering which will help to build bridges and thoroughfares between

man's soul to soul. Man must be helped to realize that the soul and the body, though entirely dissimilar, are equal, and that one is naught without the other. Separation of matter and spirit engenders the impulse for competition and war. The unification of matter and spirit in experience will bring the fruits of eternal liberty and peace.

No doubt Baba as a spiritual engineer will attain preeminence. The world needs not merely civil engineers but also engineers of divine civilization. There is oil in the earth which man obtains and utilizes through engineering. We must have engineers who can recall the vast store of energy buried in our remembrance primordial—that is, man's urge eternal to mutual happiness. Real, spiritual benefit cannot be derived from magnificent edifices—through gilded priests or stately rites—where words are the law. It can be derived from the active reality of incorporating these verbal ideals into every day factors, actions

and attainments. Only by bringing the eternal to its right place in our hour-to-hour existence will man come to a new realization of his own depths and capacities, and so attain the stature of a new man of freedom.

It is my hope that the time is near when Baba will speak, so that we may admire him not only for his mystical unique-ness but also for his example as a new and inspiring educator. Thus he will step into his proper place as an integrator of ethical-social reason with intuition into world-consciousness. His teachings, being based upon the idea of God, will bring the new conception of manlife—wisdom or bioso- phy— to be recognized as the foundation for practical work with truth. As, on the basis of the biological instinct, there is wide-spread and wholesale instruction for war, so shall we have in the biosophical or the higher urges in man the key to education for character and peace.

It is difficult to attain that true liberty under our present social order with the windows barred. But the sacred cravings of man can be directed to find, beneath

the profound truths of life, equality of wisdom, liberty of soul, fraternity in society.

I await, therefore, with deep interest the day when Baba's tongue shall give freely to the world the benefit of his deep understanding of truth and reality. It is certain that many among adults, and the foremost of youth, will greet with eager hearts and enfolding minds his teachings linking eternal reality and intuition. Young and old, who have not lost the breath of the inner simplicity of life, will come to venerate the flowing wisdom of this sage; and that spark will blaze up, to light civilization.

My hopes are that the language of a silent mind will be superceded very soon by the tongue of time and space— so that I may exchange direct thoughts with Baba rather than intuitive feeling. Then direct speech will enwrap us, our minds will mingle ardently and truth will spring renewed from the depths of our beings. We will work to make truth practically understood, so that life, based on the co-operation of those who whole-heartedly care for the highest in each other and share blessings and tribulations

equally, will have a new meaning. Spiritual freedom of the creative soul will become the highest authority. A spiritual Trust of Co-operation, made up of all those interested in giving guidance and alleviation of sorrow and despair to an ailing humanity would fulfil my highest hopes.

Although Baba's silence seems at first to be strange, it comes from his ingrained motive to give something with inspired purpose, something new for humanity's needs. No doubt Baba will emerge from his obscurity to be a sweet relief from this world of "takers". Then will we see the sharp distinction between these "takers" and superficialities and this giver of blessings; and his greatest gift will be his spiritual love and wisdom. Baba, who knows and is convinced that he reaches beyond good and evil, will teach how the God-consciousness can overcome the limited man-consciousness. As a *positive* superman he will show human beings how to make not a subhuman kind of living, but a super-human kind of life.

We have all kinds of schools and institutions instructing youth how to make

a living but few, if any, truly helping to make a happy life. Is our true destiny merely to struggle for existence? Baba would answer, "No". We prepare for a higher life. Man's aim must come to be the co-enjoyment of the absolute life-meaning, to be and to live in the consciousness of eternity in order to find the fountain of youth. Baba will become a challenge not only to the intellectualists, but also to the modern instructors who live more by bread than by the spirit of their innermost beings.

The history of humanity can be likened to a great drama, the central theme of which has been emphasized by the great world-thinkers and world-teachers in their loyal devotion to the cause of soul-liberation. These heroic liberators will never be forgotten. Their influence will flow outward like the energy of the waves of the "eternal" ocean. Indeed humanity has been struggling for thousands of years to come to that self-knowledge which is the first and greatest step toward self-liberation. It has already progressed from barbarism to a sort of civilization. But it has yet to learn to seek

the path leading from civilization to character-culture, if modern humanity is not to remain a civilized jungle.

No doubt, only the power of true intelligence will help to overcome the unwillingness of the self-nature to obey the higher consciousness. But, let us not forget that just as artificial flowers resemble real blooms without having any of the true natural beauty, so there can be knowledge without wisdom and the vigor of truth. But once man's living and divine self begins to function, he becomes conscious not only of the existence of a visible environment, but also of the invisible yet eternal reality of spirit. Unless we become more interested in the depths of our true natures, we cannot realize what man's aim in life is—what really makes life rich. And indeed—what does make life rich? There are those living souls who have the conviction that there is one force only which can do that, namely the love of God, or the wisdom of life. We need, therefore, more soul or "Mountain top" experience to be able to hold on to such a viewpoint. In order to

see life from this point of view, we must study it from the heights. And we know what to expect when we reach the tops of mountains—the drinking in of the rare atmosphere we find there. We must come in contact with rough roads, with almost unsurmountable difficulties, with innumerable trials.

Have not the great teachers in telling us of their experiences spoken of life on the mountain heights? Sometimes we listen and regard these reports of the summits of truth as mere stories or fantasies. Yet, there are a few who do believe in the reality of such experiences and who continue their own ascent. By continuing in this way, they finally come to realize that despair does not necessarily have to weigh down their hearts, that miseries and failures do not necessarily conquer them, because they can interpret life in terms of eternity. They learn that intangible forces inspire them, that higher minds begin to communicate with their minds. Then they discover that to be born and to die is neither the beginning nor the end, even though as human beings we must be born and die. They

realize that there is a "beyond the finite," and that human beings have to learn to express not only their physical nature, but also the infinite aspect of their lives.

Those who are not interested in self-expression are born merely to be slaves. Those, however, who know that the purpose of their existence is to express the reality of the infinite being, continue to strive towards harmony—harmony as the miraculous understanding of their relationship to the highest. They are conscious of the truth that there is not only a human heart, but a cosmic heart, which is the golden key to the kingdom of Light, Life, Love, Liberty and the Great Laughter. They realise that it is not enough to be interested merely in the superficial self. They realize that it is more important to discover something else. They realize that it is more important to discover something which we might call the Master Self.

Those who admire Baba for his qualities of spirit and character know from the inner man that his teachings have firm foundation in the divinity of

human nature. We must discriminate in such an extraordinary character, not between the animal and the mental tendencies, as in the average man, but between the mental and the divine capacities of man. We have the three stages in the progress of mankind—animality, humanity and divinity. Only the exceptional eliminate animality almost entirely. The real and true world-teachers come to remind us of the possibility of attaining the third stage of consciousness, the acme of human idealism becoming more aware of the divine or creative being than of the animal and mental desires and necessities. It is easier to turn our backs on such realities as Baba represents and remain negative. But there are many who think of Baba as a lover of God and man, who know that it is vitally important to understand the individual before it is possible to comprehend humanity *en masse*. Those who feel and live the divine kind of life in their spirit, body, mind and senses can find the way to express the practice of heaven on earth.

Baba's message, being the

expression of his character and spirit-motive, will differ fundamentally from the sermons of most so-called teachers who derive their motives from the personality-complex rather than from clarity of soul. As humanity lives more in the shadow than in the light of truth, we need the inspired Divinism of en-

lightened souls to lead us out of the quick-sands of barbarism and humanism. Who can doubt that we need a few giant spirits of the living truth who will help to develop the super-personal realities of mankind? Who can tell what the consequences of a new kind of character and peace education of the few will do for the whole welfare of mankind?

The Jeewanmukta Is Above Law*

BY DR. C. D. DESHMUKH, M. A., Ph D

The man in the street has a nebulous and oscillating attitude towards law, because he has not thought about its nature and has not arrived at self-knowledge. There are in him certain selfish and antisocial tendencies as well as a vague perception of the universal goal, and the conflict between these two is usually represented as the conflict between the individual and the law. But the situation is complicated by the fact that the external social law is often created merely by some frozen and blind tradition, or by the mechanical

application of some rigid and ill-fitting abstract principle, or by the chaotic accumulation of complex and unenlightened expectations of the people at large. Sometimes the social law is conducive to the fulfilment of life and sometimes it thwarts the spiritual progress of the individual. This explains why ordinarily the individual has no clearly defined attitude towards law. At times he respects it and at times he resents it. Sometimes he identifies the social law with right actions and sometimes he looks upon it as a limitation of his own freedom. This dual attitude

* One experiencing liberation in body.

to law is thus a common feature of the psychology of the 'plain' man.

The place and function of law in the life of an ordinary man has to be clearly understood before we can determine its scope. We shall then find that the life and the state of the *Jeewanmukta* belongs to a totally different order of being, and that it is therefore inappropriate to judge his actions and conduct by ordinary standards. The liberated soul is entirely beyond the sphere of law.

If we attribute the sanctity of the law to any external source, its authority becomes arbitrary and it has a tendency to deprive life of its spontaneity and freedom. If life has any intrinsic value of its own, its law will have to be sought for in life itself. The external law of the legislatures or of the conventions and expectations of society can, therefore, have claims upon the individual only in so far as it reflects objectively the inner law of reason. So its significance for the individual is conditional and relative. The same applies to rituals and ceremonies grounded in scriptures or tra-

dition. But the moral law laid down by the inner voice of conscience is believed to have absolute and unconditional claims to the allegiance and obedience of the individual. However, even in the moral sphere, this idea of the moral law applies only to ordinary persons in whom there is division and conflict between the rational and the anti-rational parts of the psyche. Among the philosophers Kant is the best exponent of this way of looking at the moral law, but even he anticipates the possibility of the Holy Will where the anti-rational part is absent and the idea of enforcing a law is on that account inapplicable.

From the above analysis it becomes clear that the external social law, as well as the internal moral law, can have use and value only to the imperfect individual who may at times need the pressure of social opinion or potent beliefs (called principles) for guiding his own life effectively. But a person whose mind is illumined and is eternally dwelling in the full effulgence of the light of Truth can have little use for these aids. He may occasionally prefer to be a

giver of laws to others for helping them towards the Highest Good, but he himself remains above the domain of law. For him perfect life is spontaneous and unimpeded expression of what *he is*. He is a law unto himself. He does not act according to external standard. He is one with the Ideal or the Goal and is therefore not responsible to any one except himself.

If we go deep into the metaphysical implications of the idea of law, we find that it requires a world where there are claims and counter claims, loyalties and duties of individuals in respect of each other, and which therefore presupposes the separate and independent existence of many selves. But the obligation of a law would be absolute only if the separateness of the finite souls is inviolable. However, the man who realizes the Truth, goes beyond the domain of duality and multiplicity, and he therefore completely transcends the scope of application of law. If he is one with all, how can he be permanently bound by any commitments to others or by any expectations which others may

have? His action and interaction with other individuals in the world will of course be such as will automatically bring the maximum good to those concerned. But he, in his unique state of consciousness, can hardly be expected to fetter his responses by the expectations and the considerations agitating in the minds of those who are still struggling in *Maya*.

Modern research in physics has shown that even in the material world the so-called determinism can at best be accepted as the probable expectations based on averages. But rigid and uniform determinism does not apply to the ultimate constituents of matter. Their behaviour is incapable of being anticipated with exactness. So in the last analysis, indetermination, rather than rigid determinism, is found to be the characteristic feature of the material world. According to modern science, therefore, spontaneity and freedom, i. e., *Lila** is at the heart of reality. And if this applies to the ultimate constituents of matter, it certainly applies to life and particularly to those manifestations of life where it is

* Spontaneity and freedom in action.

becoming conscious of itself. In this light the principle of *Lahar** which is so strongly pronounced in many of the saints and men of genius can be seen in its right perspective. If any one can exactly anticipate the actions and the moves of a Master, he will have to be a Master himself.

In fact the creativity of Masters is unbounded and their acts are often a surprise to others. This is not to say that the acts of a Master are without any purpose. They have a purpose, but the purpose of their actions is often too deep to be easily grasped by the ordinary minds. As the significance of these actions is often entirely beyond the reach of the imagination of ordinary persons, they are likely to look upon them as whims. But this is a mistake. The Master needs not and often has not time for giving explanation of his moves. Besides he has at his hands a good deal of data and work, the nature of which would not be properly understood by ordinary persons even if he took the trouble to explain it all.

Moreover what appears as *Lahar* may often be deliberately used by the Master, both as a test and as a training

of the disciple. This technique has wonderful results in the field of spiritual life, and it might be almost impossible to secure these results of spiritual value in any other way. One of the most difficult tasks with which the Master finds himself faced, is to help the disciples to free their minds from being too much attached to plans about the future. The perfect man has no desires and therefore is living in the *Eternal Now*. The activity of making plans is, in his case, a part of the outflow of his rich spontaneity of action, and is not like the ordinary man due to any desire to fulfil himself through some results in the future. Thus Lord Krishna says:

*"Na me Parthasti kartavyam
trishu lokeshu kinchana,
Nanavaptamavaptavyam
varta eva cha karmani."*

"O Partha! In all the three worlds there is nothing that I must of necessity do. There is nothing that I have not obtained; nor is there anything worth obtaining for me; and yet I live a life of action."

This life of freedom and fullness is utterly different from a life where there is constant

* Divine will. Ordinarily it means whim: vagary.

craving to get satisfaction through results in the future. If in the human plans there is this element of craving, or expectation of satisfaction, the mind is attached to those plans and is bound by them, even if they are plans about good actions. The liberated man is free from good as well as bad *sanskaras** and is, therefore, completely unattached to good as well as bad actions. There is no 'must' or 'ought' for him. Whatever he does is an expression of his sweet and unfettered Will or Grace. But ordinary men, and even the aspirants, are burdened by anxious plans about the future. Just as the ego can live upon the thought, "I have done this," it can also live upon the thought, "I shall do this, or I am going to do this." The disciples can be helped in dissolving this form of egoism or being trained by remaining detached from all plans about the future, and only by being required to submit themselves to the *Lahar* of the Master. Then whatever they do is for the sake of

the Master and because *he* wills it and not because they have in their limited wisdom decided to do so. As soon as the disciple grasps, in his own limited way, the significance of a plan, he has a tendency to get attached to the work itself, without reference to the Master, and his ego is likely to live upon the thought that he must do it. But if he trains himself to be ready to give up all his undertakings and expectations at the order of the Master, the *Lahar*, which cannot be predicted, becomes a potent means of keeping the disciple free from many *sanskaras* and even of actually freeing him from many *sanskaras*. These considerations may help the readers to see in their right perspective, many of the moves and actions of Shri Meher Baba, which on the first view might seem incomprehensible and baffling. His actions do not spring from any compulsions, inner or outer; they are the expressions of his Grace which is beyond the sphere of law.

* Impressions of all actions or thoughts, good or bad, on the mind.

Shri Upasani Maharaj's Visit To "Khushru Quarters"

BY ADI K. IRANI

It was the 16th of February 1936—Shri Meher Baba's 43rd birthday. As Baba had left Meherabad about a fortnight ago, there was no celebration, nor any visitors expected that would keep me at Meherabad. Hence I went as usual to "Khushru Quarters" in the city (Ahmednagar) to arrange for petty things concerning the Ashram at Meherabad, and also to see my mother Gulmai, who, since Baba's departure from Meherabad, was instructed to stay at home after a very long interval of her stay with Baba. Padri of our Mandali accompanied me. At midday, on finishing my errand, we were about to pull out of the "Khushru Quarters" in car, when suddenly I heard Padri exclaim, "Upasani Maharaj"!

Beside himself, there was none occupying the rear seat of the car that curved round mine and shot into the inside of the Sarosh Garage compound and

stood in front of our living quarters.

The stately personality of Maharaj stepped out of the car with a hand slung down as usual in the gunny-cloth apparel (his entire clothing for all seasons of the year) holding it, and the other free for the walking movement.

He walked straight into the room—"My own room" as he said to me later. It was the one Gulmai had requested him before to occupy, whenever he desired to do so, during his visits to Ahmednagar—an apartment set aside exclusively for the purpose of offering prayers and retiring in seclusion, containing, among the photos of Baba and Maharaj, one seat for Upasani Maharaj made out of gunny-cloth pieces and spread out on the floor in the shape of a settee—a vogue Gulmai introduced in our house since the first visit of Maharaj in 1921 to our old city residence where we lived prior to our shift to the present

"Khushru Quarters". The original pieces of the rough gunny-cloth, which Maharaj made use of on his first visit, have been treasured by Gulmai very carefully, as well as they could last. Right in front of the *Gadi* (seat) of Shri Upasani Maharaj, is Shri Meher Baba's wooden settee with his photograph prominently displayed.

On entering the room, Maharaj disposed of Mr. Wagh (his secretary) who had accompanied him to Ahmednagar with instructions to look after his affairs in the city and return to "Khushru Quarters" before evening.

As is usually the case, Maharaj occupies his seat immediately on his entry in his room, and allows himself to be saluted by those who happen to be on the spot. I was present, and having first unlaced my shoes, I entered the room, trying to approach Maharaj with soft, noiseless steps. To my amazement, I found him standing on the seat in quiet, meditative way. This very unusual spectacle was the first of its kind I had ever beheld. His hands were folded, and he uttered words of prayer looking strait into the eyes of Baba's picture placed on

the wooden settee. I was overwhelmed with the situation! It was extraordinarily wonderful. He continued muttering prayers for fully five minutes. During these moments of tense surprise I remained in speechless awe. I could hardly think what Maharaj *felt* and *saw* in Baba!

"I like this place very much," said he, after he finished the prayers.

"I like this photograph," pointing to the central picture of Baba.

"I like Merwan. He is great. He is unique."

"I bow before him. Let me pray in his presence."

"Please convey my salutations to him."

I stood all the while listening and subconsciously searching for a satisfactory explanation that would justify such an extraordinary attitude of Maharaj. Could it be Love? Yes. But how could Love of the Master, even for his disciple-in-chief, express itself in a reverential form? It is the disciple who always owes and shows respect and allegiance to his *Guru*. Could it be mere praise or devotion

"Give me a tray and a lamp. I want to perform *Arti* of Merwan today. You, Gulmai, tell Merwan that I had been here on his birthday, and that I prayed in front of his picture and also performed his *Arti*."

Gulmai fetched the ceremonial objects hastily and Maharaj began waving the tray round Baba's picture chanting *Mantras*.

I was dumbfounded! I had seen Maharaj eulogize Baba times without number. I had a vivid recollection of the occasion when Maharaj, for the first time in 1921 amidst a gathering of his devotees at Sakori, openly praised Shri Meher Baba, ascribing to him a state of spiritual perfection and knowledge, and concurrently sounding a note of warn-

ing to the *mandali* members of Shri Baba to look upon him as a person to be implicitly followed, obeyed and adhered to, through thick and thin. But never have I seen him (Maharaj) playing the role of a devotee of his disciple, paying respectful homage almost amounting to worship!

This appreciative devotion of Maharaj, availing himself of the opportunity of Baba's birthday to run down from Sakori to Ahmednagar, especially as it were to give a spontaneous outpouring of his sentiments, cannot but be from an intuitive knowledge, that Baba, besides being an entire embodiment of Maharaj's Self, is in addition, the possessor of a potent power, of world-wide service and *spiritual domination*.

*Shri Meher Baba's Tour**

OF NINE DAYS THROUGH CENTRAL INDIA

BY PRINCESS NORINA MATCHABELLI

IN October 1937, while still in Europe, Baba called me and said, "We shall return soon to India, and there I

want you to join me on a trip through certain cities. I want you to see me at work there as you have seen me at work here."

* Extracts from the diary of the tour.

When Baba says to do a thing that is the moment when He wants it to be done; and when He wants it to be done, that is the time to do it. So it happens that He drew out the following itinerary of this nine days trip on the west coast and through Central India.

We are to leave "Meherabad" on December 20th 1937 and we stop at Talegaon, Bombay, Navasari and Nagpur, returning to "Meherabad" December 30th.

The trip is to be started on the days prescribed a long time ahead, on trains which Baba personally selects so as to reach the places in time, where He needs to be for His work.

On this nine days tour, Baba makes Himself available to man. He calls on man to be in readiness, whether He encircles the globe or designs, in no time, a huge extravagant expedition to the south of France, it is to call on man to stir the spiritual *want*, to renew in atmosphere the swinging *show* of Divine Love.

He gives appointments ahead to see X... on such a date, at a definite hour for a minute or two as the case may require. Once He took the most rapid express

through Europe, enduring the physical strain for eighteen hours ride to see, for a few moments, a child.... He goes to Talegaon to see two brothers. In Nagpur He is requested to see the masses. Whether it is to adjust small family troubles, or to advise a huge cosmopolitan assembly of men in search for Truth, or to hold alive for a few days longer a soul that has to transgress life, He stages His work in time. No matter the method and no matter the proportion of reward in visible *faith awakening*; no matter if He will be recognized, He is sure to want in them the Truth. He does in work, in life, in Being, the *awakening*; places and circumstances whichever suit His show.

Talegaon—the 20th December 1937. This little village is the first stop on our tour. There happens to be a short pause in activities, when Baba comes to my room and orders me to start writing my 'impressions' from the time we left "Meherabad," that same day in the morning. It is now afternoon.

Wherever Baba goes, He holds at first a general revision of the home, He walks from room to room, into the kitchen,

the servants' quarters, the stables, the garden. He takes in the people's troubles and small disputing worries, and if there is a cat or a dog, none are left out. His huge universal heart and hand must at once feel out the state of affairs of every one and every thing.

And so it happens that Baba designates for each of us the room where we are to spend the night. Walking along the terrace, Baba stops before the small entrance that has hanging over the door the insignia of "court room". He turns around and looks at me with a certain sense of humour showing me this tiniest court room in all the world, where Talegaon disposes of its rights and wrongs. This room has been turned into a bedroom for the occasion and Baba, with humourous delight, offers it to me for the night.

Before I describe the exquisite hospitality of these dear wonderful people, A...the Hon. Magistrate and Mrs. A...his wife, our perfect hostess, I will return to the initial start of our trip.

We leave "Meherabad" at 6:00 a. m. precise. The sun is quietly rising behind the distant hills of Chandbibi,

where lived the daring Mohamedan Queen in the past history of Ahmednagar.

Our road leads via Poona. We motor along the soft curving mountains I know so well, that encircle the distant horizon of 'Meherabad' and which we contemplate every evening in Baba's company at sunset. The atmosphere is still and blue at this early hour, and all seems to function right in its own experience. We pass white bundled figures, herding goats, lazy dogs, abandoned in their own struggle of life, lying around within the boundaries of a tiny village. Baba, looking at all these small lives in poor huts says, "How I love all these..."

We approach Poona. In the distance we recognize the landmark of the white towered Turf Club with its elegant gates, and we all make the wish to see Baba's childhood home! Baba willingly accepts the plan.

It is 8:00 a.m. when the car gently swings into a small lane and stops in front of a large, comfortable looking house. Adi, Baba's brother, accustomed to surprises, hearing

the familiar sound of the horn, walks out leisurely to greet us, holding in his deep emotion, humbly prostrating himself to the ground, takes *Darshana* from his Unique Brother.

Baba's mother, cheering us cordially from behind a curtain, apologises for not being dressed to play up to the occasion; but Baba, who times with measure unfathomable, does not wait. He rushes us out of the main house over to the other side of the lane, where, at the joining point of three streets, stands a smaller house—Baba's childhood home. The house apparently is not in use, although the windows and the shutters seem to be newly painted blue. With great animation Baba Himself opens the door. The inside is empty, the atmosphere clear, quiet and full of awe. There are two rooms on the ground floor. To one side of the entrance is a circular wall forming a bathing space where, "little Merwan" used to be given his ablutions, thus told us the mother who meanwhile has arrived.

Baba makes the following statement: "One day men from all parts of the

world will come on pilgrimage." And we shall witness then, as we do now, the miracle of His blessed life; the miracle is in Him a presage of divine order since age and time, but no one is the Pure One without the divine creation plan of martyrdom having been fulfilled to the *end-state*. So in childhood He was pure, real, good and unselfish always. Little Merwan was also full of energy and fire, giving fun and joy to all.

A small vertical stepladder leads to the upper floor. Baba shows us the way; we follow. We stand in a chamber-like space, crushed under its low ceiling. Here Baba used to spend those significant hours in anguish, waiting to descend to make Himself available to mankind as the Pure Human, as the divine experiment in its fulfilled order in BEING in Truth. Here He remained aloof in His divine selfless state in mind, still unself-conscious—and too often disturbed by good friends and members of the family—especially by His good mother who did not trust His unfathomable state, above mind, and wanted to keep Him the same as He was before, Merwan, her precious son...So

she tried to do her best to hold Him down, closer to her, by making Him eat specially well prepared earthly food. Baba, wistful in joking manner, wanting to make us acquainted with facts, describes how He used to hide the food, which was too heavy for Him to digest, by hiding it in an old drawer and then into His pocket at night time, when He would leave the house and deposit it somewhere in the street for hungry dogs to eat.

Overwhelmed by the atmosphere of many sacred memories we are carried away...feeling the conscious contact with Him present, He the Life, the God-realized Man. The Divine Theme seems vast against the trivial background of small facts. With sudden changing mood, Baba bids us quickly climb down and return to the main house.

Baba makes us walk through all the rooms which at present are occupied by his mother, Shirinmai, Adi, His younger brother and His brother Behram's family. The house is comfortable and roomy and neatly kept.

Baba is intensely amused. He wants to

show us more. We rush on to the courtyard... there is the famous well with its excellent water and the big tree that Baba recognizes as an old friend. The connecting smaller houses encircle this garden, and, at present, are occupied by strangers who all are very well acquainted with the saintliness of the place. At the other end Baba points to two doors carefully locked with huge chains and padlocks. Mother, who is a little anxious to dramatize the past of the adolescent God, says, "This was His prayer-chapel..." But Baba, interrupting her, discreet as usual, explains, "Here I have spent many hours in solitude, and in that room," pointing to the other door, "Gustadji (then His colleague, now His disciple) kept vigil."

We return to the main quarters; but before leaving the house, Baba pauses at the door way. He seems to be absorbed in His childhood memories and then suddenly says: "Here, when I was a small boy, I used to play wild games with my chums...." How those small fellows who, then in no way conscious of His Unfathomable Being, dared to touch Him in

their boyish crude manner, and experience in furious adversity their childish games. But how He loved them. How He, already then, although unconscious of His powers, was pouring *joy* and divine *Love*, and how, for all that he has been adored, beloved and intuitively followed. At that time Merwan was full of fun and mischief but knowing and wise; His word even then was accepted. People around used to listen to the charm of His voice with its incomparable sweetness.

The *unfathomable life* in Him drew from the Divine Source and created thrill of indivisible Love, unselfish affection and friendship in so many.

Baba's arrival and departure is always quick, but deep in its effect. We are ordered to leave, and without special ceremony, we wave good-bye through the window of the car and speed off to Talegaon, our next halt. Baba arrives at Talegaon, as the *executive modern factor in Being-Order of Truth*, who comes to work facts of truth."

(to be continued)

News About The Master

F. H. DADACHANJI

SHRI MEHER BABA'S WORK IN THE WEST

The greatest reformers of life through-out all time have tried to bring about the blending of East and West to create a family of humanity. The new man will be understanding in the acceptance of his differences of traditions and conceptions of life, exchang-

ing the modern mental culture of the West with the true spiritual life in the East.

After strenuous work in India for about fifteen years in preparing his Eastern group of disciples, Shri Meher Baba came for the first time to the West in 1931, and laid the foundation of the *new phase* of his work when he gathered

around him some of the Western intimate group of disciples and planted the seed of spirituality in the lives of hundreds whom he contacted in Europe and the United States. In his own words: "*I have not come to teach but to awaken,*" Shri Meher Baba qualified his spiritual mission in the world. In fact, he has come to awaken in the heart of man the true experience of spirituality.

THE WEST IS BROUGHT TO THE EAST

In 1937, after these years of *longing* and severe tests of the disciples, the Master drew them from the West to India. A group of about twenty resided at 'The Meher Retreat' in Nasik, which had been specially established for them.

In a discourse to the group in Nasik, Baba explained the meaning and purpose of this particular phase of his spiritual training as follows:

"The Infinite embraces all expressions of life. Spirituality does not need renunciation of worldly activities. It means the internal renunciation of mundane desires. Mere ascetism does not lead to spirituality. Perfection can not be per-

fection if it shrinks from the dual expressions of nature and tries to escape from en-tanglements. It must assert its dominion over all illusions, however attractive and however powerful. A Perfect Being functions with complete detachment in the midst of the most intensive activity and in contact with all forms of life. Divinity includes all that is beautiful and gracious. Every one of you has to help in my work according to your individual capacity, and you have to be in touch with the world in accordance with the work that lies in store for you. I will teach you how to move in the world, yet be at all times in inward communion with me as the Infinite Being. You will have to experience both the comforts of Nasik and the discomforts of 'Meherabad'* — and be detached from each."

These men and women who came to Nasik are individuals of different nations and religions; people whose ties of life have the same weight that all ties in life have; who have professions and duties in life; who, leaving behind their families, have unconditionally accepted Shri Meher Baba's school

* Meher Baba's colony near Ahmednagar

of life-spiritual that is based on experience and practice of the divine theme. Shri Meher Baba teaches without intellectual method. He awakens in the heart of man the innate divine being that reveals spiritual virtues which man has to practise in life; these spiritual virtues are unselfconscious goodness, selfless service and love impersonal.

The fruits of this ideal training will be known to the world one day when these sincere seekers will fully mature in spirituality and return to work in different spheres of activities in the world, participating in the Master's mission for the spiritual upliftment of humanity.

After eight months of personal training at Nasik, Shri Meher Baba dissolved the group, sending them back into ordinary life to put into practice that which has been revealed to them.

THE EAST GOES TO THE WEST

In August 1937, Baba renewed this phase of exchanging East and West, but *vice versa*, by bringing his close group of the specially trained Eastern disciples for a visit to the Western group in Europe.

His Western disciples prepared for his coming, and selected as a central location an international place—Cannes, France. A remarkable peculiarity of Baba's free method to work is the fact that wherever he moves, he takes with him his spiritual 'baggage' which does not consist of possessions but of disciples—those working elements who are trained to live everywhere, in all situations, as impersonal mediums of his directing will. A feature quite unusual was Mohamed, the 'God-mad man'. This man, whose spiritual advancement is exceptional, is the principal inmate of the 'Mad Ashram' in "Meherabad". The Master of late has kept him near wherever he moves, and so he was also brought to Cannes. Further more it may be noted that the small group of Eastern women, who accompanied Baba to the West, have, for over six years, lived a life of strictest discipline in absolute seclusion. For years they have never seen men; neither heard their voice; they never have walked beyond the boundaries of the Ashram on-the-Hill. They are kept aloof and away from Baba's external activities. These

women, although modern in culture and customs as individuals, have unconditionally accepted for years the severe training of humility, doing any kind of manual work and have passed through severest tests which one would hardly believe human nature could endure. It may also be explained that this special training is the reverse of the life of his *mandali*,* who practise in the outer world what might be termed 'Herculean' tasks. The interesting fact is that this seclusion for the Eastern women was maintained in the strictest manner throughout the voyage and also during their stay in the West on the property at Cannes, despite the innumerable difficulties caused by the inevitable formalities of travel and other complications arising from many circumstances. It must be noted that this seclusion should not be mistaken for *Purdah* custom, such as Mohamedan ladies with their veils and habits are wont to observe but it constitutes a spiritual training temporarily practised until such time as the Master will have them share publicly in the greater unfoldment of his spiritual plan in outer life. All this demonstrates how Shri

Meher Baba's spiritual work, however difficult, is carried out unhampered and without any consideration of conveniences, places and surroundings.

SHRI MEHER BABA'S WORK IN CANNES

During the three months at Cannes, innumerable people came to meet Shri Baba from all over France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, England and the United States as far as Hollywood. Among these people, over an hundred had the privilege to live a few days under the Master's roof and rejoice in the benign atmosphere of his Spiritual Being.

RETURN TO INDIA

On the return journey to India, in November 1937 aboard the S.S. "Circassia", an interesting incident occurred, which was related by one of the Westerners accompanying Baba, as follows:—

"A beautiful incident happened on the ship. When we were leaving the shore at Marseilles, Baba glanced over the people on board and said that *one soul* would be found among the many. He gave me the order that I should not

* Group of select men disciples

speak to any passenger on board until a certain day, and then I would know. I. P., a lady from Transvaal, happened to be on the same boat. Before leaving England, she had made the wish to find God, in Tibet. She had that longing for years. Her husband did not demur in her extravagant wish and granted that the family make the detour via India on their way to South Africa. However in Marseilles, the child and the husband are taken seriously ill and the plan to go to Tibet has to be given up. She felt indeed very sad, but not hopeless.

"One afternoon while walking on the upper deck, where it chanced all our cabins were, she suddenly feels unusually restless and hears the *inner guidance voice*: 'You will find here that which you desire.' At that moment, a group of passengers had asked to interview me about the Perfect Master on board. For this, Baba had just given me permission. While I was speaking on the lower deck to this group, I. P. hears my voice from the upper deck. She feels irresistibly drawn and joins our group

below. Her first understanding came when she heard the name of Shri Meher Baba. His name was known to her and she begged me to arrange an interview which Baba granted at once. I.P. was drawn to Baba. The divine within her was touched and awakened. She felt belonging to the same Cause. During the short voyage we were almost inseparable. The boat being delayed three days, gave us time to draw closer. She is the *soul* Baba knew would have to come."

Ever since the Master's return from Europe in November 1937, he resided at "Meherabad" near Ahmednagar with his intimate groups. Three of his Western disciples who came with him, joined the Eastern group of women in the Ashram-on-the-Hill. Two more arrived in February from America. The rest of the group, the *mandali*, as usual stayed in the old quarters below along the road. Not far from there, behind the well, is the special place reserved for the Ashram for the 'God-mad' men. A special article describing this unique institution appears in this issue.

Many hundreds among Shri Meher Baba's followers and admirers came throughout the year to "Meherabad" for *Darshana* of their beloved Master and to maintain alive the close contact. Baba says: "The real thing is to feel, experience and realize the One Infinite Consciousness—and that is possible only through Love inspired by contact with a Perfect Master. Without that contact, none has attained perfection."

Baba does not always advocate external *renunciation* and has, among his followers in India and also among those left behind in the West, many carrying on various trades and professions, and leading the worldly life with their families, like the masses; but with the marked difference, that while the masses, who are not under the direct guidance of a Perfect Master, are ignorant of the purpose and goal of life and drift hither and thither, enslaved in *Maya*, considering life in the body and the world as the only conscious existence, these followers, under the direct guidance and care of a Perfect Master like Shri Meher Baba, are awakened to a deeper understanding, and become conscious of the fact that

life is merely a dream, that it is only a transient existence, hence acquiring the sense of higher values of life, they become indifferent to life's *Mayavik* pleasures and do not attach themselves to sense reactions and selfish experiences, but take it all as a passing phase they have to grow through, in order to achieve within the state of real Liberation.

THE NINE DAYS TOUR WITH A PARTY OF NINE

In December 1937, Baba went on a tour to Talegaon, Bombay, Navsari and Nagpur. Some very interesting and significant incidents occurred during these visits, especially at Nagpur and Navsari. A detailed serial account of these important events during the tour has been written by a Westerner, Princess Matchabelli, who accompanied the party. The article commences in this issue entitled "Shri Meher Baba's Tour Of Nine Days Through Central India."

SHRI MEHER BABA'S 44TH BIRTHDAY

Baba's 44th birthday this year was celebrated on the 18th

of February at "Meherabad," when there was a large gathering of several hundred who came from all over India. The feature of this year's celebration was a separate arrangement whereby the secluded group of ladies celebrated for the first time the *Love feast* in their own quarters on the Hill, together with the many women who came from afar. Arrangements were made for an hundred of these women guests to stay for three days on the Hill. The general public celebrated the birthday in the *mandali* quarters below. The Westerners, together with the Eastern women guests, participated in both these celebrations. The entire function was characteristic for its cosmopolitan atmosphere and observance devoid of ceremonial formalities, but spontaneous and rare in expression of true Love between the Master and his devotees, forming a bond so close, one can only qualify it as that of a beloved father with his children. This experience, destined only to those who enter into the spirit of pure love and devotion, has remained ever unforgettable. Living proof of Baba's compassion was the feeding of

the five thousand poor and destitute, and also the distribution of *ladus* (sweets) to all with his own hands. From sunrise to sunset, a stream of humanity, needful in body and soul, was drawn to receive his *Prasad* or gift with a blessing.

THE SHIFT TO PANCHGANI

In the middle of March 1938, Baba transferred his quarters temporarily from "Meherabad" to Panchgani for the summer season, until the middle of June. This hill station is about 5,000 feet above the sea level, sixty miles from Poona. It has a very cool and bracing climate even during the summer. It was partly for the Westerners who have been staying with him, and particularly for the work he wanted to do there, that this shift to Panchgani was thought of. The tropical heat of "Meherabad" during summer would have been unbearable for the Westerners and might have created physical complications, detrimental to the spiritual progress which is the main objective of their coming to India to live with Baba. Exposing a tender plant, used to cool climates, abruptly to extreme heat of a tropical

summer, would indeed crush its growth, but handling it delicately with the tender care of a fond gardener, it would grow into a tree, and then stand all climates and weather, all storms by itself. The main object therefore of Baba's visit and stay in Panchgani, was as usual for his work, mostly *internal*, difficult to grasp with our limited minds. A large bungalow was hired for the season on a very secluded hillside just on the verge of Tiger Valley. Here all the ladies of the group, Eastern as well as Western, stayed together.

None of the male members, as usual, was allowed access even to its precinct. Half a dozen members of the *mandali* stayed further away in a small outhouse, to look after the necessary arrangements of the daily life of the group, and to attend to the routine work consisting mainly of the extensive communication kept up regularly with the numerous devotees living in India and abroad.

After allotting comfortable rooms and space to everybody in the main bungalow, Baba selected for himself the store-room attached to a kitchen, apparently

unused for a long time and actually in a state of ruin, with very low ceiling and no opening except a cracking wooden door. But this soon was transformed into a spotless cabin for his use. A small annex was reserved for the 'God-mad' man Mohamed. Baba's usual programme of varied activities thus continued the same and was carried out as intensively as usual. He had definitely issued instructions to keep his stay at Panchgani absolutely private as he wanted to work in seclusion and undisturbed. But all powerful though the Masters are, they cannot resist the call of Love or the desire of the devotee for *Darshana* actuated by sincere love and spiritual need; and for these rare exceptions, allowance was given once every week in the *mandali* quarters. Devotees in India would ill afford missing the golden opportunity of having the Master's *Darshana*. For this privilege, which they consider a blessing in their lives, they walk hundreds of miles or travel in great discomfort.

Baba in the past used to come to Panchgani. In 1930, he stayed there in grass huts

with his *mandali* of over twenty men, for about two months. During this period he had a special cave carved out and constructed on the top of the famous Tiger Valley, in which he, himself, retired in seclusion and also kept half a dozen of his disciples in retirement and seclusion with him in the vicinity of the cave in small huts. All were on fast, living only on milk. Simultaneously, he kept seven others of his disciples in seclusion at different places in "Meherabad". Many others as well, living outside in the world, volunteered to fast with the Master, partaking only of milk for forty days. After his own retirement in seclusion, Baba sent some of his intimate disciples to stay in his cave for different periods, ranging from forty days to six months, on fast, at times on milk and on special occasions, living only on water for forty days. This cave ever since has been a holy place of pilgrimage for those who hold such abodes of spiritual Masters as sacred. Even those, who came to this hill-station for a holiday and visited this cave, wonder how in this spot, haunted by panthers and leopards, for which the

valley is a playground, one could retire in seclusion and stay alone during dark nights, without firearms or even a lamp. Except for the villagers who live in the small village far down in the valley, none of the outsiders would even venture to be in the surroundings after dusk.

Two of Baba's Western disciples also have recently stayed in this cave for short periods—an American disciple, Garrett Fort, the well-known scenario writer from Hollywood, in March 1937; and this summer an American lady disciple, Elizabeth C. Patterson. An extract of her experience is given as follows:

AN EXPERIENCE IN A CAVE OVERHANGING TIGER VALLEY

"In all earnestness, I asked Baba if I might spend a night in the cave and he promised me, yes, but that he would set the time. Weeks later, I reminded him and he only smiled: 'Do you wish to go now, or wait until it is the right time?' At last one day, the sixth of May 1938, he told me that I should go to the cave, and remain for exactly twelve hours. Baba and the lady disciples accom-

panied me to the cave on this spiritual adventure, and at 6 p.m. exactly, Baba locked me in, giving me the key inside. The last thing I remembered before everyone left me shut in alone for the night, was Baba's hand extended through the iron bars, resting upon my head as if in blessing. The moment after all had disappeared, around of the bend of the path, there was profound stillness. Fleeting thoughts passed through my mind, but these I controlled as Baba had instructed me that I should concentrate throughout the night and not sleep, unless I could not keep my eyes open any longer. According to Baba's instructions, I lit a lantern exactly at ten minutes before seven and then lay down.

Once I heard heavy thuds, like steps, approaching on the path and I waited anxiously for someone to appear, but the sound, although close, passed away and probably was a cow or a buffalo which had been grazing on the mountainside. Four stars in the shape of a kite, which resembled the Southern Cross, stood out in the sky more vividly than the rest. I remembered looking at

my watch to find it was not far from midnight. Determined to remain awake, I continued to think of Baba. Unexpectedly a shock, like electricity, passed through my body from head to foot, feeling it particularly along the spine. It continued in waves of varying currents and became so strong, two or three times, that it seemed to lift me—as would a rush of wind. Soon I felt swinging into space, the bedding unevenly swaying beneath me. I felt that if only I could remain on it, as on a 'magic carpet', I would be carried safely; but it rocked so much that I then remembered to call out Baba's name and immediately the 'troubled waters' were stilled. Coming out of a kind of daze, I found my arms folded across me, as they cross the arms of the dead, and they were so numb that it took a while before I could move them. Whatever the state was, which I passed through, I was *consciously unconscious* during it....

"A seeming sense of time passed when I was aroused by the cheery sound of voices, which I recognized to be those of my friends. They appeared inside the cavern and called to

me that it was five o'clock, and they had been sent to summon me. I remembered Baba telling me not to leave the cave until 6:00 a. m. sharp, and this seemed conflicting. As I was wondering what to do, the thought came to me that I had better do what Baba himself had told me. At that moment, Baba glimmeringly *appeared* in the entrance and light flooded the cave with unusual brightness. He smilingly answered my mental inquiry by saying: 'Do as I said; leave only at six.' Some hours later, opening my eyes and looking at my watch, I found it was nearing six o'clock and I rose to leave the cave. I felt fresh and invigorated—daylight was faintly penetrating the cave. After returning home to the bungalow I asked Baba: 'Was I dreaming?' Baba replied: 'No, it was more like a daze; you were neither awake nor asleep. You actually experienced these things physically.' Then I inquired: 'Was it symbolic?' Baba answered: 'Yes, in the future, you will know in detail its full meaning.'"

THE FUTURE INTERNATIONAL SPIRITUAL CENTRE IN INDIA

Shri Meher Baba's stay at Panchgani was interrupted by short visits to Bangalore and Belgaum.

Of late, the Master has been contemplating the establishment of an International Spiritual Centre somewhere in India in a place ideally suited for such work, both spiritually and materially, with connections for all his world-wide activities.

The very keen interest of H. H. the Maharaja of Mysore and his able Dewan, Sir Mirza Ismail, in promoting the cultural development of the State has achieved the result which has earned for it the distinction of "the Model State" in India.

This seems to be the reason why the Master had Mysore State primarily in mind and stayed there for six months, in 1936, to make certain observations. Quite in keeping with the cultural tradition and hospitality of the State, spontaneous co-operation in this plan of the Master's was offered by the Dewan and by Mr. V. Subramania Iyer (the Ex-Registrar of the Mysore University and private tutor to H. H. the Maharaja), also by other officials of the State. Some very interesting sites

were, in April 1938, suggested by Sir Mirza, and the Master repeated his trip to Bangalore, to view them. Shri Meher Baba seemed to like some of these sites for spiritual reasons.

Later, in June, for the same purpose, upon the suggestion of some of his disciples, the Master visited Belgaum.

The possibility of finding a suitable place for the proposed Centre, in H.E.H. the Nizam's dominions, was also discussed by some of the Master's disciples. The proposition was considered by Shri Meher Baba because this region of the Hyderabad State is highly spiritual, besides offering the advantage of proximity to "Meherabad", Ahmednagar.

THE RETURN HOME

In the middle of June, Baba returned from Panchgani to Ahmednagar with the group, and stayed provisionally in a bungalow in the Cantonment area, till the end of August, since the Ashram quarters on the Hill at "Meherabad" were undergoing changes and extensions, to make room for the new Westerners and additional Easterners to come.

Baba, and his group, left Ahmednagar to take residence at "Meherabad" on the 25th of August 1938, where He has remained since. A special article on "Meherabad", its history and the inauguration of the new buildings, together with photographs will appear shortly.

Baba

BY COUNTESS NADINE TOLSTOY

He stands above all multitudes of men,
 Translucid mystery in all his Being!
His charm lures irresistibly all hearts and even beasts.
 The ever changing facets in the mirror of His Face
Reflect all throbs and motions of this world.
 Like ocean waves they ripple only on the surface
With depths concealed beyond the reach of human eye.
 His Beauty no human can possess and even not approach.
He glows the Grace of God,
 He glows His Grace at Will.
The 'pure' renounced of all desire and self-will
 Alone can see His sacred Face !
Divine and human blend in Him
 In perfect harmony of One !
In Him God-Self enjoys Himself,
 In Him the 'knowing' is God's Knowing;
His Heart unlocked by Grace of God
 Gives Love for sake of Love.
In purity of His unselfish Being
 He is all three in perfect Union of the One—
Love, Lover and Beloved.
 Free, happy, powerful and knowing
He is to give and guide,
 He is to call to glorious heights,
He is to shine as God alive
 And lift the calling hearts from down below.
He is to lead them upward, homeward
 To bring them straight into His Heart.

Shovq

BY ABDUL KAREEM ABDULLA

Imagine a firing squad lined in front of a blindfolded victim and the order "Fire" is rapped out. Simultaneous with the loud cracks, one of the hearers will crumple down into oblivion.

Think of two loving hearts and the ecstasy, the thrills and the feeling of "flying high into the clouds" that a whispered "darling" can produce.

Take the polished "no" that a job hunter gets for the hundredth time, after knocking about from place to place for months together, in spite of being prepared to do any odd job; or the polite "yes" of a doctor to the query of an anxious mother whether her only ailing child is in serious danger, and we find each word has a world of its own under the relative circumstances.

There are also words that often stand for inexpressible depths and heights of meaning, even when shorn of such dreams and visions.

The most easily understood and absolutely the least understood word in

currency is God. Gousali Shah Qalander, a great Master, has aptly described God to be so easy to understand that every child knows Him, and so difficult to know that numberless heroes have sacrificed their very lives in the pursuit thereof.

Like a child, the world at the peak of the present so-called civilization knows God only to be thought of at the fag-end of the day after playing with bombs, machine guns, torpedoes and poison gas. But a child has no full-stop to its knowledge, like people of almost every class and creed these days who know God so well and completely that, if the art of spirituality is ridiculed, the science of mysticism is mocked. Matters are made worse by some sincere but arm-chair amateurs when spirituality is confused with spiritualism and mysticism is muddled into mystery.

Mysticism is more to be believed in and experienced than understood and explained and spirituality has to be lived

and practised in every walk of life.

In the world of reality amidst this dream of a creation, personal experience and individual realization alone can lead to Truth and, therefore, words have necessarily to be appreciated on the touchstone of painstaking perception.

Even some ordinary words in every language express extraordinary ideas under particular usage and need more than many sentences to bring into relief the true significance thereof in another language. "Shovq" is one such word in the Urdu language of the Mohamedans in India. Ordinarily, it means "liking for". But in relation to mysticism, it has a greater significance and a world of meaning about it. When used in connection with spiritual subjects, "Shovq" can well be said to express "early enthusiasm", "deep attraction", "the flush of spiritual happiness", the "pleasure of initiation", "intense longing", and so on. The greatest importance of the word in such cases lies in that it stands for the very first stage of one's spiritual unfoldment.

Whether the stage of 'Shovq' results

out of intellectual convictions or emotional experiences, through outside influence or self-hypnosis, those who have passed through this stage can have no two opinions, that it is something really very grand!

New vistas of thought and feelings, indescribable flights of imagination, a novel angularity of perception, are but a few of the aspects of the change that takes place in one's outlook on life. Unimportant things present problems of prime importance, the prattle of a baby conveys spiritual truths, inanimate objects bear out messages of the first magnitude.

And where this happens under the direct influence of a Master, in nine cases out of ten, strange signs and scenes are witnessed and novel incidents take place automatically and independently without any thought, intention or idea on the part of the person concerned.

A Master not infrequently skips over many or all stages or states in advancing anyone on the spiritual path. Even God-realization can be given in the twinkling of an eye, as

was done by Hazrat Babajan of Poona in the case of Baba.

All the same, many of Baba's devotees have had the stage of "Shovq". I remember the year 1921-22 when Baba first began collecting his group.

With all my wits about me, quite cognisant of my surroundings, without finding any-thing wrong with the senses of seeing and hearing, the experience of death I once had all of a sudden, in broad day light one afternoon, made me actually feel two separate existences at one and the same time, so much so that, the same evening I confided the matter to Khaksahib. I selected him deliberately, knowing that others would laugh at me or think I was out of my senses. I asked him to do me a favour. "Of course anything that I can, tell me," replied Khaksahib. Then with all the seriousness that I could demand, I questioned, "Will you tell me if I am alive or dead?" What I wanted from him was a straight simple but a serious confirmation one way or the other, to enable me to reconcile myself to the peculiar state I was experiencing for so

many hours. It was also natural for Khaksahib to smile, pat my back and ask me to go and take rest. Although it is now sixteen years, to this day I feel sure that it was no hallucination or delusion of any kind.

The more the intensity and the depth of the "Shovq", the greater the chances of reaching the goal as well as getting away from the goal. This paradox is due invariably to the fact that the duration of the stage of "Shovq" is often short lived. On the other hand, the period of undergoing discipline, putting in service, maintaining personal contact with a Master, or awaiting the right moment, is indefinite and generally results in the readjustment of all hopes and expectations based on "Shovq" itself.

Naturally, the reaction has to be borne with the patience of Job and a steadfast perseverance in hope and faith by those who are not ripe enough to get on the next stage or attain the ultimate goal quickly. Amongst these latter, some are likely to overestimate "Shovq" and smart under the subsequent disillusionment of great spiritual advancement; while those who unfortunately

feel "Shovq" as a proof of self-sufficiency look forward to quicker illumination as a matter of course, and therein lies the greatest danger of a setback. Both overestimation and self-sufficiency must be guarded against, which once attained, the goal is but a quest-

ion of time. It is irrevocable Destiny.

The Perfect Master, if one is fortunate to have one, eliminates the danger of retrogression and stabilizes the aspirant on the path by subtly leading him through the stage of "Shovq" to *resignation*.

*Sufi Thoughts**

VERSIFICATION BY DR. ABDUL GHANI MUNSIF

*Baz-a baz-a her anche kardi baz-a;
Gar kafiro gabro but parasti baz-a.
Ean dargahay ma dargahay naomeedi neest;
Sad bar agar toba shikasti baz-a.*

Return, return, oh, long lost soul;
Despite your follies, return to your goal.
Heathen, Pharisee, idol-worshipper
Whate'er you've sown I am the reaper.
Wind up all cares and to Me do repair;
My abode is not the abode of despair.
Resolves, on and thousand, you may have broken,
You belong to ME, you can ne'er be forsaken.

* English versification of a Persian quatrain.

Shri Meher Baba

AN INTERVIEW

BY DR. P.S. RAMNATHAN, Prof. of Philosophy, King Edward College

There are several factors helpful and necessary for the spiritual progress of an individual. Of these contact and communion with great souls (who have passed through certain higher experiences which are not vouchsafed to ordinary mortals) is one. The ancients, therefore, rightly emphasized the necessity and importance of personal guidance of a spiritual aspirant by a *Guru* or Master. The rationalistic outlook of the present age has rightly become circumspect about the presentations of many who pose as Masters. But if this caution is overdone many an enlightened soul, who is in a position to uplift and ennoble the true aspirants, may go unrecognized to the detriment of the spiritual advance of the age. The true Masters are not desirous of gaining recognition for themselves, but are content to abide by the maxim, *seek and ye shall find*. Not to be misled by

pseudo saints, and at the same time, not to miss true greatness when it is present, is therefore an important matter which confronts the modern man.

It sometimes happens that one gets the unique opportunity to come into contact with a genuine personality advanced in spiritual evolution and, when such good fortune befalls one, it behoves him to share his experience with those who are like him in the quest of the higher things of life. It is in that spirit, I write the following lines.

Last December, in response to the kind invitation of a friend who is also a great admirer and devotee of Shri Meher Baba, I went to Nagpur to have the *Darshana* and the first-hand experience of the Teacher. It was a sight to see the demonstration of the simple faith with which a vast concourse of people gathered round the precincts and residence of Shri Meher Baba, hoping to get redress from their

sufferings and misfortunes or seeking fulfilment of their ambitions and desires. They felt that by close proximity to the physical presence of the *Guru* they would get their wishes realized through the exercise of his spiritual powers. Watching the never-ending rows of people who came and touched his feet for his blessings one could not help feeling that the devotees felt their burden and misery lessened by the friendly attitude and cheerful expression written largely on Baba's face. Even a rationalist has no justification to deny to the simple folk this solace, even it be temporary.

Besides getting two interviews in Baba's retiring room, where only a few select disciples were present, I also spent considerable time with him at the time of granting blessings, or at the time of *Bhajan* and *Arti*, during the course of his three days in Nagpur. The amount of physical strain that he had to undergo to get through his daily routine was indeed appalling. Still Baba went through it all with perfect composure and ease without showing the slightest sign of

fatigue or listlessness. It was truly a telling demonstration of the conquest of the spirit over body.

The never-failing expression of radiant joy on his face permeated the whole atmosphere lifting off the burdens of misery of the people who thronged around him. In his presence one could not help being struck with the spirit of common brotherhood that knit together the huge throng of people into one compact group without distinction of high or low. Whatever may be the psychological explanation of this phenomenon, there is no denying the unmistakable effect of his personality on the whole gathering. There was no awe or submission to a sense of mystery; on the other hand, it was an atmosphere of ineffable joy, peace and love all around. The quiet expression and the gentle smile, with a streak of sadness visible only to the discerning eye, seemed to indicate Baba's fellowship with the suffering humanity; and there was on his face a note of optimism that the oppressing clouds will pass away with the dawn of spiritual light in the hearts of men.

Shri Meher Baba has been observing silence for several years. But his silence is more significant than words could be. When one approached Baba he felt that silence is indeed golden and more eloquent than speech. It seemed as though Baba had adopted this method of silent communion lest words by their exclusiveness should create barriers between him and the devotees. The ocean of feeling surging in his heart would not be barricaded by articulate words! Concepts limit thought and focus our attention on narrow channels. Such fixed and exclusive moulds may indeed be necessary for specific purposes; but an all comprehensive spirit, with its spontaneity and freedom is better expressed by silence. Even as we find in daily life, words fail when the heart is full.

Shri Meher Baba also impressed me with his intellectual depth and clarity. In the second interview I asked him what I regard as the question of questions concerning man's life and destiny. I requested him to enlighten me on the problem of salvation by expounding the true relation of the individual to the

whole. The question was whether the final destiny of the individual could be realized apart from the universal. Without a moment's delay Baba touched his finger-board with inward assurance that what he was communicating was obvious and transparently clear, and the following is the purport of the interview.

Q. "Has the individual any destiny apart from the whole of which he is a part? Is it right for the individual to seek private salvation? His fulfilment consists in losing himself in the whole and living for it; and it seems that he can never be anything more than a part of the whole."

A. "When we think of the individual we at once grasp it as something limited, so it cannot be identical with the unlimited whole. You are right in saying that the individual must lose himself in the whole, but the matter does not end there. We may compare the individual to the drop, and the whole to the ocean. The drop is separate from the ocean and again merges into it. What then is the purpose of its being separated if it is merely to merge itself again in the way

in which it was originally merged? Evolution would be fruitless if we end where we started. The individual has to retain his individuality and realize his unity with the whole consciously. Thus Christ realizes God as Christ. You realize God as yourself. It is a personal realization."

Q. "Is there any technique of realizing the goal apart from the total process of life itself? Are we right in giving more importance to Knowledge (*Dnyana*)

than to Action (*Karma*)?"

A. "All Paths are really one. Karma yoga, when rightly interpreted, is right. There is no *Dnyana* without *Karma* and there is no *Karma* without *Dnyana*."

To conclude, the extraordinary charm of his personality, the joy and love radiating from his face transfiguring all those who came before him, his intellectual acumen and the utter absence of self-consciousness—all these have tended to make me cherish my visit to him as a treasured memory.

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Corrections made to online edition

Page 2 - paragraph 1, line 2 - “experience” changed to “experiences”

Page 7 – Paragraph 1, line 3 - “Avatar’s “ changed to “*Avatar’s*”

Page 9 – Paragraph 1, line 19 - “espe-cially” to “especially”

Page 16 – Column 1, Paragraph 1, line 14 - period added after Acharyas

Page 36 – Column 1, line 1 – “servant’s” changed to “servants”

Paragraph 4, line 1 – “6-00 a.m.” changed to “6:00 a.m.”

Page 49 – Column 1, line 4 – “6-00” a.m. changed to “6:00 a.m.”

Page 52 - Column 2, Paragraph 2, line 12 – “worst” changed to “worse”

Page 57 – Column 1, line 12 “became” changed to “become”