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AN ENGLISH MONTHLY

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AVATAR MEHER BABA

Editorial :

An Honest plea for Justice and Clarification of Issues

Since Beloved Baba left His mortal coil, it is past three long years and the valuable time and much needed energies of Baba-lovers and workers in the field of Baba-work and service to humanity in His Name, have been dissipated in activities of indiscriminate criticism and mutually pulling down. Though Baba-lovers, in general, talk of love and often chant the mottos like, "Let principle in work and honesty in life prevail" etc., and also repeat the Master's Prayer and the Prayer of Repentance, we regret to find that these are seldom put in practice in their daily lives and particularly in dealing with others or in judging them. This weakness of ours has become the bane of all progress in the field of Baba-work undertaken by us. The first casualty after Beloved Baba left His body seems to be Truth and mutual love. This statement may seem to be fantastic to many, but realities cannot be ignored for ever.

Best of our attempts to retrieve to our normal state and to seek guidance from elders in the field became eminent cause for distortion of facts and mean attribution of motives. It is true, as Beloved Baba said, that no one should say that he alone can do Baba-work. But the whole atmosphere seems to be vitiated with mutual disaffection and malicious propaganda against one another, perhaps, out of jealousy or hatred. We are forgetting the fact that we are dealing with human material and that there is a vast outside world which is looking at us and which is going to judge us by our own actions and not by our pretensions, however great and good they appear to be. Our claim that we are fortunate to associate ourselves with the Avatar of the Age falls flat before any of the realities now prevailing. Any amount of posing of piety will not help us. We will only be taken as blatant hypocrites by intelligent world around us. ·

We therefore, take this opportunity for self-introspection and re-thinking of our future programme of work, taking a firm stand on the principles of life and then talk to others about Beloved Baba, the Avatar of the Age, whom we honestly believe to have been with us as God in human form and who is NOW with us eternally, knowing every thing that we do or think. We are no exception to this and humbly pray to Him to bestow on us the courage to live up to the principles thus advocated by Him, for which we stand dedicated, so as to hold on to Him unto the last.

On this occasion, we wish to clarify some issues, of which we have been sadly mistaken by some, in spite of our clarifications made from time to time. Unfortunately, even elderly personalities in Baba-field of work, both in East and West, have been carried away, as it looks, by hear-say words and interpretations made by interested parties for their own purposes, particularly about the "Universal Centre" once proposed and later on dropped some time in August 1969. We do not propose to dig out the forgotten squabble once again but we would like to mention here that we were least responsible for the confusion, though we shared the responsibility in offering the opportunity for discussing in all fairness, the need of a Universal Organisation with a common understanding, in Baba-work, under the guidance of an able personality like Bro. Adi K. Irani or any other one for the purpose. And for this effort, we were utterly misunderstood and so we once again humbly draw our readers' attention to the clarifications made by us on this matter in our issues of Divya Vani of September and October 1969, which may be gone through without prejudice or favour and in the interests of justice to the Cause.

Another mostly misunderstood attitude of ours appears to be, unfortunately, about "The Avatar Meher Baba Trust, AHMEDNAGAR", because we refrained from joining sides or publish any news about the same. It is

indeed a very painful state of things that is prevailing, but we do keep our restraint and refrain from giving publicity to such news and appeals by concerned parties, though we value their stature and position in regards to their previous association with Beloved Baba and our esteem for them is great. In this respect, it is our honest endeavour to disassociate ourselves and keep aloof, whatever be our personal affinities to the personalities involved in the conflict, for, we value Truth in Baba-life as of utmost importance. The matter has been unfortunately, dragged to Court of Law and so, we believe, it became sub-judice in that respect. We also find that our contemporary Journals in Baba-field of Work also keep up that standard as well.

Further more, we are sorry to affirm that we are not in a position to know the realities of the matter and the personalities involved are too big for us to deal with. We were always cordial but firm, not to involve ourselves in the controversy but to remain absolutely neutral till the end, so as to do justice to ourselves and to Baba's Cause. We are confident that we are supported by all Baba-lovers in this respect and we expect the concerned parties to appreciate this. The pressure put forth on us has become too much, from a few big and small, Easterners and Westerners and has grown out of proportions too and hence this submission. Our very existence has been threatened by some, we regret to mention here, and we are constrained to appeal to one and all to be firm minded in Beloved Baba's Name and to be generous in judging us and do us justice in this matter. In Baba's Name and with all cordiality for all concerned, we beg the indulgence of all Members of Baba family, to keep an eye on the trend of events to come, and give us a chance to live up to our ideals and enable us to keep "DIVYA VANI" above these conflicts, so as to serve the Cause of Beloved Baba without fear or favour and to keep high and aglow the torch of His Message of Truth and Love and to follow the Way of life, He inculcated while He was with us in human body as God-Man.

Recently, we had occasion to meet the Revered Members of "Meherazad Mandali" and our dear Brother, Adi K. Irani and clarify our stand in this respect, to the best of our abilities and apprise them of the situation. We have done so with utmost regard to all persons involved in the affair as we honestly feel our inability to deal with the matter by ourselves, any further. We therefore request all concerned to keep us out of this and be kind enough not to drag us into the fray. May Beloved Baba Bless us with fortitude and grant us His Graceful protection to pull us out from this humiliating situation without surrendering our principles in His Cause and favour us in His Service with a life of purity and truthfulness. May He be pleased to allow us to serve His Cause, as ever, to the last breath of our lives, as our dear brother and colleague Late N. Dharma Rao has done!

And, just one more word about institutions, established by us by Baba's Blessings to serve His Cause, Viz., Meher Vihar, Meher Vihar Trust and Avatar Meher Baba Mission, which are dear to us and to all who really wish to serve Baba's Cause, for, all of them do stand for the propagation of Beloved Baba's Message of Love and Truth and provide opportunities to lovers and workers to do their best at all times. The "Mission" in particular, has been created by His Blessings to do some thing tangible in the name of Beloved Baba and our attempts to start a Residential School for Children and a Saranalaya for boys and girls at the earliest opportunity, we are glad to state, are taking shape by His Graceful Blessings. We therefore, once again, beg of all concerned not to try to drag us into any conflict, personal or otherwise, at this crucial juncture but give us all good-will and kind cooperation to the possible extent and do us justice in Baba's Name and refrain at least to do anything that would have adverse effect for His Cause and spoil the grace and image of ours in Baba-field of activity and our Way of Life.

May our Beloved Lord of Compassion be with us and protect us from all acts of disfiguring the magnanimous

outlook of the public and let us deserve His Graceful Blessings to serve Him, with the dignity and stature required for the Noble Cause! May this clarification of ours be taken with attention and earnestness it deserves and keep us all alert in our duty!

May Justice be done to the Cause which is dear and to which we are all dedicated and to Him, whom we believe as our Beloved Lord and the Avatar of the Age!

Jai ! Avatar Meher Baba ki Jai !!

Of all the great Avatars

By MAUD KENNEDY

Came Zoraster, ruler and priest
 blazing the torch of Truth
 You were the greatest!
 Came prince Rama; the fighter,
 perfect king in exile and Sita,
 patient and loving,
 You were the greatest!
 Came Krishna the flute-player,
 friend of Arjuna, bringer of
 pure innocent merriment
 and words of the GITA,
 You were the greatest!
 Came Gautama, Lord Buddha,
 the serene incarnation —
 desireless and blissful,
 You were the greatest!
 Came Mohommed, ruler of men
 and lover of women,
 the Sufi of Sufis,
 You were the greatest!
 Came Meher BABA, the Compassionate Father,
 Lover beyond description —
 The Silent Beloved,
 Of all the great Avatars
 You were the greatest!

MESSAGE GIVEN BY AVATAR MEHER BABA
On the Foundation Day of the Universal
Spiritual Centre at Byramangalam
(near Bangalore) 17th December 1939

The world is at War to-day.

It has engulfed all departments of life—political, economic, social and religious.

The instinct of self-preservation enhanced by fear and uncertainty of the future is aggressively active in the guise of various pseudonyms and catch-words,

Exclusiveness is parading as nationalism; self-interest is known as economics; fanaticism is synonymous with religion; libertinism is looked upon as social and moral freedom; and exploitation is termed politics.

This instinct of self-preservation is legitimate and natural with the lower order of life, in the scale of evolution. But when it expresses itself through man, it makes of him nothing more than a talking animal and as such he is yet a long way off from deserving the title, "the best of creation".

Is it anybody's fault if one finds himself on the right side of things or the wrong side of things? No! Every human being has come to serve and achieve a definite purpose, and, by playing his part to perfection, he automatically works out his own salvation.

There is this difference however. In the divine scheme of things, individuals or peoples when instead of progressing higher and onward are about to lapse into bestiality, it is suffering that rehabilitates them.

Spiritual Masters achieve for humanity this same resurrection much more easily and less painfully by not only preaching but translating into fulfilment the too familiar words, self-denial and the brotherhood of man, whose very beginning and whose ultimate end is LOVE.

The time for such a universal awakening is looming large in the near future, to meet which, the scheme of a *Universal Spiritual Centre is founded to-day*.

Mysore will surely realise at no distant date, its singular good fortune in possessing amongst many progressive features, the *Spiritual Capitol of the world* as well.

I bless everyone of you, participants and non-participants, in the greatest scheme of spiritual regeneration the world has ever known and the foundation of which you have witnessed to-day.

This scheme of a Universal Spiritual Centre symbolises the character of my Divine Mission on earth.

I bless you.

Anecdotes and Mystical Experiences With Avatar Meher Baba

By ANONYMOUS

Although I am writing this article anonymously, there is no doubt in my mind that some of the readers of "Divya Vani" will recognize this writer. Either way it is unimportant. The purpose of this article is to re-establish and reinforce that Beloved Baba is The Highest of The High and the most recent incarnation of Avataric Consciousness. I first met Baba some twenty years ago. I travelled from New Jersey by car all night long with my wife to Myrtle Beach, S.C. My wife knew nothing or little about Beloved Baba. Today, some twenty years later, I venture to say she is a greater Baba Lover than this writer. If some one asked me the question, "Do you love Baba?" my answer would be "Who does not love Baba?" It is impossible not to love Baba. My meeting with Baba was momentous. I was ushered into the Barn at Meher Center by Delia DeLeon. As soon as my name was spoken, Baba immediately arose from His comfortable armchair and was waiting for me. I had plenty of preconceived and ignorant notions about A Master and Masters. My background was Theosophy and my belly was full of Masters and the total wreck of my life in following that particular Path. So I decided, I would look right into the eyes of Beloved Baba and find out for myself if Meher Baba was a Master, etc. As soon as I approached Him, He flung His Arms around me and the first thing I knew, I was weeping like a child. Baba was most pleased. He spelled out on the Alphabet Board (at that time he was still using the Board), "Tell him He loves Baba very much." I was quite pleased by this. Then Baba added, "But also tell him that Baba loves him very much". This delighted me even more. We had a brief interview during which we exchanged some general philosophic questions, and Baba's concluding remark was "I will see what God has in store for you. When I call

be ready to leave immediately." I was overjoyed. The next person ushered in, was my wife and she had a duplicate experience with Baba, a valid Darshan and Grace and since then she has never wavered from His Daaman for one single instant. It would be truthful to say, she has had more experience with Beloved Baba than the writer, mystically and externally. In the years 1956 and 1958 the writer had also very intimate contacts with the Beloved. My wife was pregnant in 1956 and in an interview at the Lagoon Cabin, Baba rubbed His Belly as if to say He understood completely Virginia's condition. Then, he said humorously—pointing at me—"He didn't do this, I did". Of course there was laughter all around. A few days later Baba had told some of His Lovers with regard to Virginia's pregnancy that "I searched all over the Universe before I selected this soul to come to them". On another occasion when we were in the Lagoon Cabin with a few others, Baba waited a while in Silence until all were there—and had gathered quietly, then He pointed to me and said, I love Virginia very much are you not jealous?" I only smiled. Again he asked the question. I merely smiled and said, "The more you love her the happier I am, the more she loves you, the happier I am". However Baba persisted in this line of questioning and said, "Are you sure you are not jealous?" With the last time, I did something somewhat dramatic. I rushed up past the people and threw myself down on the floor in front of Beloved Baba with arms outstretched, eyes closed, and shouted to Him, "Take my Life. Take it now—this instant—take it". Each time I spoke I raised myself to speak. Then I lay down again with arms outstretched. Three times I did this. A very solemn look and mien came over Baba's lovely countenance. The fourth time I raised myself to speak, I said simply, "ONLY IN EXCHANGE, FILL VIRGINIA'S HEART FULL OF HAPPPINESS". Baba very seriously and solemnly then spoke through His interpreter, "Baba knows everything. Baba knows that is not play-acting. People think that is play-acting but Baba knows better". He then made Virginia and myself

embrace in His Presence and immediately dismissed every one from the Lagoon Cabin. In 1958 again there were intimate contacts with Beloved Baba. On learning I was going to Myrtle Beach, I had written to Cecil B. de Mille, the late famous motion picture producer, that Baba had seen most of his latest work, "The Ten Commandments" and that Baba was quite complimentary of his effort here. While at Myrtle Beach, a letter from Mr. de Mille was forwarded to me speaking of his great appreciation and privilege of meeting Beloved Baba in His earlier visit to Hollywood where de Mille met Baba at "Pickfair", Mary Pickford's elaborate estate. I told Nariman about this, who immediately went into the Lagoon Cabin and told Baba. Baba immediately summoned me and I went in and read Mr. de Mille's contents which were most respectful and appreciative of Beloved Baba as an individual working for God in His Own Way. Baba then ordered me to read the letter out to the whole Group the next day. I felt very honoured to have the privilege of reading its contents of praise and appreciation for Baba. Baba was quite pleased with all of this. How infinite is the timing of God! On the mystical side, Baba showed me the end of the world, soon after I met him, in dream consciousness. Once, when things were not going well for me, I gave Baba "a piece of my mind", and the very day I mailed the letter, Baba came into dream consciousness. He was smoking an extremely large Turkish-type water pipe. The bowl was extraordinarily large and Baba was working very hard, extremely hard, puffing away at it. In other words, I had said to Baba in my anguished letter to Him, "Now put that in your pipe and smoke it", a common figure of speech. And Baba showed up in dream consciousness, doing exactly that. It was almost comical, except that it was really Grace from Baba. Baba knew I was HONEST in my argument and He honoured it in that way. God is absolutely just and as Baba is an expression of God Almighty—so He, too, is absolutely just. In October, 1971 Baba again appeared to me in dream consciousness with serious mien. He was somehow stamping His right leg. When I awoke, I could

not make much sense out of this. Some six weeks later, I fell off the roof of my house and during times of excruciating pain, I stamped my *right foot* in exactly the same way Baba did in dream consciousness. He is the KNOWER OF THE PAST, THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE and this was one incident in which He confirmed this Truth. I should also add, that in May, 1970, I went to England and introduced Baba and His Divine Love to a group called "The Universal Link". It is safe to say, they all fell in Love with Him. It was a beautiful experience and gratification for me for which I thank Baba with all my heart and soul. Another aspect of this Group which resides at Borup, Denmark is that, in their periodicals they have mentioned Baba as LIMITLESS LOVE. Several People from Denmark came to England at the time I introduced Baba to the English Segment of "The Universal Link" at that time in May, 1970. I should also mention that four days exactly after Baba dropped His Body, He appeared to me in dream consciousness and gave me a very important message. He was sitting across from me and said simply but seriously "I TRIED TO BE HONEST". Beloved Baba was, is and always will be Honest because He is Limitless Love and the greatest incarnation of that Avataric Limitless Love in modern times.

Jai Baba!

GLIMPSES

of

The God-Man Meher Baba

First Seclusion On Meherazad Hill

1947 — Part VI

By BAL NATU

Qabrestanwala, The Cheerful 'Socrates'.

Avatar Meher Baba's work with the *masts* shall remain inimitable and paramount in the spiritual history known to man. It was the Divine Love playing Servant through Meher Baba. He poured love and compassion in the hearts of those God-intoxicated souls and helped them to arrive at inner harmony, alive with creative expressions of Life. He kindled in them the higher faculties and released fresh energies. Countess Nadine Tolstoy wrote, "The heart awakening is the central key to spiritual evolution." And Meher Baba was the Master Awakener!

So, after a fortnight's stay at Meherazad, to continue His Divinely ordained work with the *masts*, Meher Baba journeyed to Ajmer, which He reached by 17th October, 1947. There, He contacted some *masts* including a *mastani* who was sitting under a sack awning near the station. Qullar Shah was a *mast* of the fifth plane. He was first brought to *mast ashram* in Ajmer, in 1939. At that time he used to reside in a tiny mausoleum (Qabar); so, he was known as Qabrestanwala. He used to drink the dirty water from the city drainage. The *masts* have flouted the basic precepts of hygiene but without its ill effects. Theirs is a different world, a different state of consciousness. Qabrestanwala was a short but stout person. From his facial appearance, Shri Baba nicknamed him as 'Socrates'. The sterling virtue of being free from any pretense made him

look cheerful and happy all the time. Prior to his first contact with Shri Baba, Kaka Baria had to crawl in that dark mausoleum to persuade him to get into a *tonga*. After reaching the *mast ashram*, he willingly stayed for a week. At the end, Shri Baba had to induce him to return to his tiny cell. By October, 1947 he had shifted his residence to a small mosque nearby. This time, the contact with this highly involved *mast* though for a short time was to Shri Baba's satisfaction.

Chacha, The Divinely Absorbed.

No one expected Shri Baba to forget Chacha during this visit to Ajmer. In the dirty hovel near that hallowed shrine of Khwaja Moeinuddin Chishti, Shri Baba wished to sit alone with Chacha, in silent conference. Chacha in his divinely absorbed state felt Meher Baba's personal presence and welcomed Him with his wondrous solemn eyes. Shri Baba gave him a cordial smile and the contact commenced. Chacha had a pleasant, clear voice. This time, in addition to the demand for *cha* (tea) he often asked for *pani* (water). He was so persistent about drinking water that Shri Baba had to instruct one of the *mandali*, to engage a special person to fetch water. At a stretch the contact lasted for four hours.

In Sufi terminology, Meher Baba once explained the spiritual state of a real *Majzoob* like Chacha's, in the following words: * "A true *Majzoob*—a God-merged soul on the seventh plane—is a *wali*; and also in the sense that he enjoys the blissful intoxication of a God-united soul, he is also a *mast*. A *Majzoob*, however, although he is automatically both a *wali* and a *mast*, is never a *salik*. In the *Majzoobiat* of the seventh plane, *waliyat* and *mast* are already there, but not *salik*, From another angle, *Majzoob-e-Kamil* passes from the sensations of flesh to the Reality of the Spirit. He enters Light to be Light Itself that He already was but now consciously *knows* It and merges in It; so He is called the God-merged. On

* The Wayfarers by Dr. Donkin.

the other hand, for discharging the Divine duty, the Sadguru—the Perfect Master, having become Light also has the consciousness of *Tribhuvan*—the entire creation of *Maya*, His own shadow."

Of the two seventh plane *Majzoobs*, mentioned by Meher Baba, one was Chacha and the other was Baba Shahabuddin of Bhat, whom Shri Baba contacted only once in July, 1943. After contacting His 'loving children', the *masts* in Ajmer, Shri Baba did His work with the poor. A group of poor persons was collected and Shri Baba gave each one some money as *prasad*, the external sign of an inner contact.

Recurrent Visits To Chambu Shah,

On 22nd October, 1947, Meher Baba accompanied by Baidul, Kaka and Eruch reached Baroda, to resume the contact with Chambu Shah. Meher Baba's visits to this particular *mast* indicated His patience and perseverance in accomplishing His spiritual work with such highly involved souls. Shri Baba used to cater to the whims and caprices of the *masts*, for He often remarked, "These are my dear children." Some of these children—the *masts*, were patient and obedient, some haughty and naughty. Meher Baba, however, showered His love equally upon them all. In the case of Chambu Shah, Shri Baba, like a loving mother, kept up all the appointments at particular hours as desired by that *mast*. Chambu Shah stayed in Motiwada, a part of Baroda. He was residing in the house of one of his devotees—a landlord. The *mast* was on the fifth plane. He was a *wali* and it was rather difficult to predict what these comrades of God i.e., *walis* would ask their Friend, the God-Man!

At the time of the contact on 22nd October, first Chambu Shah asked for cigarettes and tea. Then he had a whim to plead for clothes—a *lungi* and a shirt. When these were brought and given, strangely enough he took out a few clothes including a turban and requested Shri Baba to wear them at some other time. Then he looked

across Shri Baba's face and entreated Him to visit the house at 5 a.m. the next morning. A few *masts* had tried to evade Shri Baba's further contacts. but Chambu Shah was an exception. He invited the God-Man, with readiness to participate in His Universal work. When the Baba-party reached home, Shri Baba wore the clothes of Chambu Shah, for a while. How strange He must have appeared in that unusual dress!

Next morning, with Baidul and Eruch, Shri Baba visited Chambu Shah's residence at 5 a.m. as wished by him. But the *mast* would not let Shri Baba in, for the contact. Shri Baba had to tarry outside for an hour to get the *mast* in a good mood to receive Him. At the end of this second meeting Chambu Shah requested Shri Baba to drop in again at 2 p.m. So the same day Shri Baba sat alone with the *mast* for the third time. At the close of the contact Chambu Shah took fancy that Shri Baba should revisit him at 5 a.m. the next day. He also expressed a desire to have two more clothes—a *bandi* (a waist-coat) and a coat. Early next morning he seemed pleased to receive the clothes but wished that Baba should repeat His visit at 2 p.m. Baidul pleaded that Saheb (meaning Baba) had to leave Baroda but the *mast* insisted on his meeting with Shri Baba. Thus, from 22nd October to 25th October, 1947, the time—5 a.m. and 2 p.m., was reserved for visiting this uncommon *mast*.

On 25th October when the contact was over, Shri Baba sent Eruch to Chambu Shah to convey clearly that Shri Baba's work with him was over and that He had to leave Baroda. At this, Chambu Shah appeared pleased. His eyes blazed as he chuckled contentedly and said, "Give my greetings to Saheb (Baba)". Then to the surprise of Eruch the *mast* returned all the things he had asked and received from Shri Baba. While returning the new clothes he instructed Eruch to return them from where they were purchased. Chambu Shah's wish was literally carried out. The dirty clothes of Chambu Shah were put in a tin and carried to Meherazad as a prized possession. It is interes-

ting to note that at the commencement of one of the seclusions, Meher Baba specially put on these clothes for some time. Wonderful was Shri Baba's relationship with the *masts* and theirs with Him.

A Mast Under The Gunny Covering

At Baroda, a seeker named Narayan also had Shri Baba's contact. As any one would pause near him, the seeker used to repeat in a deep, full voice one and the same phrase, "sat bolo" (Speak the truth). This reminded the *mandali* of a very high *mast* named Ram Baba. He was contacted at Hardwar in 1941. Sitting naked on a heap of rubbish, he kept a skull by his side. He used to ask the visitors to spit in it and later he gulped the excretions! Mostly he was heard singing devotional songs in praise of Lord Ram. If any one stood near him, his only counsel would be, "Beta, bachan pal" (Boy, keep the promise). On 26th October, 1947, Shri Baba gave some money to a group of 30 persons and with this distribution the stay in Baroda was over.

On 28th October, Meher Baba with His disciples reached Ahmedabad. All the old contacts with the God-intoxicated souls were renewed. A new *mast* named Arab Shah was spotted out near Parsi Dharmshala. For a number of years this *mast* had not stepped down the platform on which he resided. Two strange things were noticed about him. Practically no one had seen his face. He always kept the entire body covered with a gunny cloth. Food as well as water was offered under the gunny covering. He was seen sitting on the platform throughout the day and night. He did not lie down to rest. Even in the sitting posture he had his sleep, if any. Meher Baba contacted him by night. After finishing His work of contacting the *masts* in the city, Shri Baba decided to spend the night on the railway platform. It was a noisy and disturbing place, as all railway platforms are, and the *mandali* had to practise the art of sleeping in a sitting posture like Arab Shah! Such discomforts did not affect them if they found Shri Baba's face

radiating satisfaction after contacting a *mast* of a high order. Early morning Shri Baba contacted Arab Shah again, offered him tea and left for His return trip to Baroda.

Return To Meherazad.

A Rest House at Baroda was reserved in advance. Ali Shah alias Bapji was brought there from Meherabad. Shri Baba sat alone in seclusion with this *jamali mast* for some hours, two times a day. After a few days, Bapji was sent back to Meherabad. By 16th November 1947 Shri Baba reached Meherazad (Pimpalgaon). During Baba's stay at Baroda and Ahmedabad an "All Well" telegram was sent to Him every day from Ahmednagar, conveying the welfare of the *mandali* at Meherazad. The two words of the telegram in a way helped the *mandali* to maintain their close association with Shri Baba.

Since November, Meher Baba was engaged in a special type of work. From Baroda. Adi Sr. was instructed before hand to keep Gyara's house ready for Shri Baba's stay, to serve as a rest room for the night. The house was quite close to Meherazad. On 7th November He visited the men *mandali* in the rooms outside the compound of the main building at Meherazad. The women *mandali* who lived inside were not allowed to see Him even from a distance. For them He was so close and yet so far!

The Film Project - "Avatar".

Since May, 1932, that marked Meher Baba's second visit to America, He showed great interest in having a film, revealing the spiritual truths. During the succeeding years He gave enough of His attention to those who were entrusted with this work. The Circle Production Inc. brought out two booklets (screen plays) but they were not published as they were not meant for circulation. The one 'How It All Happened' was written by Karl Vollmoeller. It was based on the ideas given by Meher Baba. The title

of the other booklet was "This Man David"*. It was penned by Karl Vollmoeller and H. S. Craft. The incidents from this screen-play were to be photographed according to the instructions from Meher Baba. I do not know whether or not Garret Forte from Hollywood who was the Producer of the famous pictures like 'The Invisible Man', 'Frankenstein' and 'The Last Patrol' was also taking part in this project. He was very closely connected with Meher Baba and His work. However, the distinguished Hollywood personality Gabriel Pascal, the Director of the renowned pictures like 'Pygmalion' and 'Cleopatra' had made a special trip from the States to Switzerland to discuss some important matters with Meher Baba, in connection with the film work. After 1935, it seems that, for over a decade there were no special efforts made in this direction.

Perhaps in 1946, Jean Adriel, the author of the book named Avatar—The Life Story of the Perfect Master

* As I read the booklet, the last paragraph of this screen-play which also was written under the instructions of Meher Baba, specially arrested my attention. The pertinent part of the text is given below:

"Today if you will come to Middlesville you will see the tree ask any one and they will tell you about this tree, the strange tale of how, just a few months ago, a Man (David) was lynched, and how the next day the branches of the tree shaped themselves into a profile of the face of DAVID LORD. And you will look up, and you will see the face, moulded by some Greater Sculptor....."

This reminds me of Lord Meher Baba's image—face with scarf across forehead, that appeared in Meherazad on the Audumbar tree, outside the window of Mehera's room. It was noticed by her one evening in July, 1969—a few months after the Avatar had dropped His body. The face is a natural formation in the bark untouched by hand and appears slightly raised as in a sculptured plaque. Once, while having a stroll in the "Garden of Allah" at Meherazad, Meher Baba specially pointed at this particular tree and remarked. "I like this tree", without disclosing any reason. In January, 1972 at the time of writing this foot-note, the image on the tree is as clear as it was in 1969, in spite of the natural changes taking place in the bark. Since the face first appeared on the tree-trunk, in place of the scarf across forehead, a crown has been prominently visible.

I have presented the facts to the readers. I leave it to them to feel the significance of these events in their fullness.

Meher Baba, with the help of Alexander Markey tried to work on this project. Later, she sent two versions of the MSS to India for Meher Baba's approval, along with the personal comments. In the winter of 1947, with reference to these two versions, Meher Baba sent the following cable to Jean Adriel, "You say first not acceptable to the West; *mandali* (we) say second not acceptable to the East. Therefore, write for the first and last time something that will be acceptable to both." The screen-play was written by Robert Claire in collaboration with Jean. "Avatar" was the suggested title of the film. Gabriel Pascal was then working on a project of bringing out a film based on one of the dramas by Bernard Shaw. Pascal wrote even to Shri Baba about this enterprise. Apart from this, in his letter dated 21st October, 1947, to Meher Baba, he expressed a wish to arrange the shooting of the film "Avatar" in Italy. The project, about this film however, was afterwards completely given up.

Meher Baba in His lifetime showed intense interest in different matters at different times. For the time being it seemed that nothing interested Him more than that particular phase of work. After some days, may be months or years, the said activity would be entirely put aside with perfect detachment. Meher Baba's main concern was not the outward working of the project which only served as a scaffolding to further His mission of spiritual awakening, through those who came in His contact by way of the project. Whatever He did, His attention was total and response most natural and hence perfect. The God-Man who gets enformed out of spiritual necessity quickens Life, in all its aspects.

Simple Significant Gesture.

Those were the days of petrol (gasoline) shortage in India. So Adi Sr., who stayed at Ahmednagar would visit Meherazad in his car, once a week, on each Sunday. On 23rd November, 1947, I had the chance of accompanying him to Meherazad. It was so very pleasant to be in that peace-

vibrating atmosphere again. Shri Baba was in the same room where I met Him a month ago. To say He looked beautiful would be to state too little. I found Him more radiant and graceful than I had imagined. I was instructed not to touch His person. This time, I presented Him two note-books. They contained Marathi translation of the questions answered by Shri Baba. These were published in a number of Meher Baba Journals. Meher Baba's Discourses were already translated in Marathi by Dr. C. D. Deshmukh and Mrs. Indumati Deshmukh. So, I chose to do this job. It was a sort of meditation on Shri Baba and His teachings. Shri Baba asked me to read a page from the note-book. The expression on His face showed, "Well tried". He asked me to hand over the note-books to Adi Sr. and that was the end of the matter and my interview with Him. I folded my hands to offer *namaskar*. He gave a pleasant smile and by way of a gesture put His three long delicate fingers on His heart. Unawares I said, "Yes, Baba" as if I understood what He meant.

As I stepped back I wondered what that simple gesture implied. Did Shri Baba mean that He ever resides in my heart? Or did He wish to console me that I had a place in His heart? Was it an indication that what matters is the language of the heart and not what I read out to Him? I was sure that the gesture was not to indicate just the lubb-dup of the heart—that most marvellous electromuscular pump, encased in the pericardium. Did the three fingers point out that He is in fact beyond the three bodies and the three worlds? At the same time, I felt that this would be a far-fetched connotation. One thing I gathered was that Meher Baba emphasized the importance of the purity of heart, the seat and the way of spirituality. I do not know why I said, "yes Baba" and yet He looked pleased at my madness! Any way the incident provides a good theme for meditation even to this day. Meher Baba's simple gestures have sometimes revealed the treasures hidden in the heart and His Silence the immensity of His Presence.

Seclusion On The Hill

By the beginning of December, 1947, preparations were being made for Meher Baba's work in seclusion on the Tembi Hill. This Hill stands behind the Baba-House in Meherazad. Sarosh Irani, one of Shri Baba's dearest disciples, was successful in securing the top of the Hill from the Government on a nominal rent and a long lease. Padri, the Engineer, was at work fixing the cement asbestos sheets on the top of the Hill. One hut was erected on the summit and the other on the lower shoulder. The roof was covered with Mangalore tiles. It was the month of December, a cold and windy season. It was incredible to find Shri Baba's delicate body withstanding so many uncomfortable seasons all for the Work He alone knew.

On 5th December evening, Shri Baba with a few of the *mandali* ascended the Hill. Ali Shah, the *mast*, was brought from Meherabad and was kept in the hut built on the shoulder. Shri Baba occupied the hut on the summit. A small tent was pitched for the *mandali*. From 6th to 16th December Shri Baba did His work in seclusion. He daily sat alone with Ali Shah for three hours in the morning. Most of the time He would be alone in His cabin. On 17th morning Shri Baba came down the Hill, His work with Ali Shah, however, continued for two more days and then the *mast* was sent back. This Hill is now known as Meher Baba's Seclusion Hill and has become a place of world pilgrimage. In December, 1951 the whole structure from the Hill was removed and it formed a single room in the Meherazad premises. Shri Baba stayed in it for some days, at the close of His New Life. Later, He asked Eruch to occupy that room.

Shri Baba Attends Correspondence.

In between His *mast*-work and seclusion periods whenever Shri Baba had a bit of leisure, He would attend to the letters and cables addressed to Him. To a few of His closer ones He gave instructions even about their day to day activities, including their visits and journeys. For

example He sent the following cable to Delia DeLeon in the West: "Only if you want to be in England return there; otherwise remain in Panama. Eternal love blessings, Baba". He directed Norina to send the following cable to Milda Charlton, "Come if you can, otherwise don't worry, Baba blesses you all the same. He is everywhere."

Shri Baba assured one of His devotees in the following words: "My love for you will ever be the same as was before." A contact with Meher Baba was a relationship with the movement of unconditional Love. One of Shri Baba's dear ones in the West who had stayed with Him in India wrote a letter to Him, expressing inability to visit Him. It seemed that the person was grieved over missing the chance of the Master's *sahavas*. Shri Baba's quick witted and consoling reply, poured through the following four lines:

"Your letter of love, gave both pleasure and pain.
 Joy, because you always remember me; you have always
 been mine.
 Pain, because physically you cannot with me remain;
 Nevertheless my Love in you always will shine."

The words from the Master have a unique quality of radiating His presence and serve as a medium of silent communion with Him.

It had been a long time since Shri Baba had met His devotees from nearby places like Poona and Bombay. There were many requests for *darshan* through letters and some sincere appeals made through the *mandali*. In response to these, Shri Baba consented to hold a small gathering at Meherabad in the last week of December, 1947. I had no idea about this programme. I casually wrote a letter informing Shri Baba about the ensuing ten days X'mas vacation of the school and few more lines which I do not recollect. To my surprise, on the sacred X'mas morning I received a postcard by express delivery. It was from Adi Sr. It brought

me the tidings of joy. Adi wrote—"Shri Baba was very happy to read your postcard..." The God-Man to read my letter, simply unbelievable. But in His matchless compassion impossible is made possible. Adi also wrote, "You alone may go to Meherabad to stay there for three days—29th, 30th and 31st Dec. 1947. Shri Baba will be there during these three days." You can well imagine my joy, for this has set me off on a chance to participate in an unexpected *sahavas* with Shri Baba. I felt, it was a passport to a different Land altogether. Needless to write that I availed myself of the opportunity, vouchsafed through that blessed postcard.

Heart-ache of A Lover:

This was my third visit to Meherabad, On 29th December, morning, I saw Shri Baba walking briskly towards the old Ashram building and then to His cabin. On way, a pair of luminous eyes met mine and I felt blessed. The work of the foundation of the new Ashram building, as is seen today at Meherabad, was being supervised by Kale Mama, one of the *mandali*. Many merry faces were moving about. To me, Meherabad wore a gay and festive appearance. Shri Baba in His cabin, called different persons. Some gave Him the report of their work and got further instructions from Him. There were some personal interviews also; for He was the compassionate Confidant in whom His devotees confided without reservations and fear. He was to them Father and Friend, Mother and Master, all in One. In the Hall, by late afternoon, a mattress was placed covered with a clean white sheet and a few cushions were placed by its side. Musical instruments—*tabla* and harmonium, were also placed by the wall. I learnt that Shri Baba was to visit the Hall to meet the new arrivals. When He entered the Hall, He looked preoccupied. Some offered their *pranams* to Him and a tired smile played over His face. He sat on the mattress and stretched His legs. At His signal the musical instruments began to give out some favourite notes and to the delight of us all the sadness on

Shri Baba's face disappeared. He looked refreshed and radiant. A local qawal named Babu sang some songs.

Then Shri Baba asked Dattu Mahendarjee who was assisting Adi Sr. in his office, to sing. After playing a few notes on the harmonium, Dattu looked at Shri Baba and tears freely rolled down his cheeks. Dattu was one of the boys from the Meher-Ashram. Shri Baba did not look pleased at this sentimental outburst. He remarked, "One should not shed tears even if the neck is to be cut off, and you are shedding tears in my presence! Outwardly, always look cheerful; inwardly if you so wish, you may shed tears even without a break!" Dattu tried to check himself and with a choked voice sang one of Fani's fine *ghazals*. It commenced with a line "Duniya kya meri bala jane!" (How will the world ever understand my heart-ache!). After describing the ecstasies and tortures of the heart, the poet conveyed at the end the following: "There was a time, Oh! Beloved, when I used to shed tears profusely, nay my heart ceaselessly bled at your remembrance. But now, what a pity, I have not the slightest pulse of love beating in my heart. The eyes crave to shed just a drop or two of tears for you but in vain!" Shri Baba seemed to appreciate the last two lines. He asked Dattu to stop singing and to repeat the text in Urdu of the last two lines. He remarked, "A lover of God has to go through so many incredible states." The Urdu *ghazals* have a quality of their own to express the ecstasies and heart-aches experienced by the lovers in their madness for the Divine Beloved. Meher Baba specially liked the *ghazals* composed by Ghalib, Jigar, Ashgar and a few others including Seemab and Dagh.

What Is Mind? What Is Heart?

The next morning, 30th December, I saw Mohammed the *mast*, half bent, engrossed in searching 'something' on the ground, with vacant eyes. He looked pleased at Dada's arrival (Mohammed always referred to Shri Baba as Dada). Shri Baba fondled him and a delightful expression lit his face. Mohammed had a standing inquiry with

Shri Baba. As he stammered to express his wish it was a struggle for him to push out the syllables that gagged his throat. The blocked words finally came out in the form of his usual request, "When will you take me to Falance (France)?" In the year 1937 Mohammed was taken to France and since then he had taken a fancy to revisit that country. On behalf of Baba, Baidul replied the question, "We have placed an order for a chartered ship. When it arrives on the Indian coast we shall sail out on our voyage to France." I was told that this same answer had been given so many times and every time Mohammed looked perfectly satisfied.

In the evening as we sat around Shri Baba, I do not recollect how the subject was raised; but Shri Baba put two questions to us all, "What is mind? What is heart?" It set us all at thinking. Some tried to express what they felt on the spur of the moment. Dr. Deshmukh, Dr. Nilu, Dr. Ghani, Adi Sr. and other *mandali* members tried to answer in their own ways. Shri Baba appreciated the replies and at the end He dictated the following from His alphabet board.

"Feelings at rest and thoughts at work is mind.

Thoughts at rest and feelings at work is heart."

Shri Baba did not wish to add any more words to this laconic remark. He looked at the gathering, smiled and put aside the board. It was a signal of no more discussion and that the subject was over. This reminded me of an incident, I read in Meher Baba Journal. * One morning Shri Baba casually put a question to the *mandali*, "Where is God?" And after getting their replies, He remarked, "God is where *you* are not: where *you* are God is not." In the informal meetings Shri Baba did not like to give long explanations. Perhaps, He expected us to discover for ourselves the deeper significance of His remarks. Personal findings have a greater bearing on our thinking and living. From Shri Baba's remark I gathered that the

* Meher Baba Journal September, 1949.

so called difference between mind and heart was to classify the functions of self consciousness, the impressed life of every individual.

The GHADI That Counts!

On the last day of the year there was a remarkable *qawali* programme. A *qawal* named Narsing from the State of Hyderabad gave a unique performance in the *darbar* of the God-Man, Meher Baba. With a style that was acutely his own and with meaningful refrains of *ghazals*, he entertained Shri Baba with a rare treat of vocal music Urdu and Persian. The sweet, soft blends of *ghazals* accompanied with the resonances of *tabla* (drum) and harmonium filled the atmosphere with a strange melodious charm. Narsing sang also some favourite airs to keep the spirit of the listeners who did not understand Urdu, fairly well. For persons like me, such a programme provided an opportunity to sit before the God-Man for hours. I felt happy, for I had Shri Baba to feast my eyes upon, to my heart's content. Shri Baba sometimes looked here and there at the assembly of His lovers with the shining pair of those powerful eyes and all seemed pinned under them.

At all the programmes, Shri Baba carried His tender humour with Him, everywhere. A wit or a pun would make us more intimate with His humanity. That day, some one brought to Shri Baba's notice, that as Narsing commenced his journey to Meherabad, he had lost a few of his belongings. To this the *qawal* added, "The last thing I lost was my *ghadi* (watch)." The word *ghadi* in Hindi has a double meaning—a watch or a moment. Shri Baba made a pun on this Hindi word and remarked to Narsing, "You have lost that *ghadi* (watch) but you have gained this *ghadi* (the moment, the opportunity to entertain the God-Man). Not that *ghadi* but this *ghadi* counts. That *ghadi* was quite insignificant but this *ghadi* holds immense significance. Time will reveal it. Don't worry but rejoice." However, Shri Baba arranged to pay

Narsing an additional sum for purchasing the lost belongings, over and above the remuneration fixed for this programme.

By late night, all the programmes of this 'get-together' were over. It was 11 p.m. and the buses were ready to take the visitors either to the station or to the town, I purposely hesitated to get into the bus but as they moved on, I felt that I had failed to follow Shri Baba's instruction to the letter. I was asked to stay at Meherabad till 31st Dec., 1947 and now I would be at Meherabad on 1st January, 1948. In a way I was disobeying Baba, So, I could not sleep but just weep. Mentally, I asked Shri Baba's forgiveness a number of times. It was fairly early when I saw Shri Baba, His head covered with a scarf, coming towards the old Ashram building. I approached Him in the middle of the way. I looked at Him in an appeal but could not speak. Shri Baba patted me and led me to a room. Somehow I managed to relate the lapse on my part. He gestured, "Now forget about it completely. I forgive you. But henceforth be careful in observing the instructions," As He conveyed this I noticed a bit of usual glow of sternness in His eyes along with the usual glow of compassion. In one's life with the Master, obedience matters most, was the lesson I learnt on that New Year's Day in the morning.

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(To be continued).

Meher Baba is Where I am not

By Shri K. K. RAMAKRISHNAN

Beloved of all hearts, Meher Baba had said, "self lost is God found." Means what? What is this self?

We are so identified with this 'self' that one finds it difficult to distinguish it in one's own being. When one says, 'I am so and so,' he is not normally conscious of the fact that he is referring to what is 'self.' But it implies that the person is aware of his separation from all other individual men and women. As a mark of identification in a world of innumerable individuals, it is just an expression of a fact. It is necessary too. It is in a life of our everyday activities we give expression to what is 'self.'

When a man prays to God, 'O! God give me this day my daily bread,' he expresses his desire to sustain his 'self' distinctly different from all other selves and God. When one says, 'this is my bread,' he means no other man or woman has any right to have that piece of bread which is considered 'mine', however hungry the other man or woman may be. This awareness of "I, Me, My and Mine" constitutes what is called 'self.' To lose one's self means to forget oneself—to forget this "I, Me My and Mine". How is it possible? It sounds strange to our ears. It appears to be impractical. To lose oneself or to forget oneself is impossible, and thus to find God is equally impossible and impractical. But if we carefully observe our everyday life there is a certain period of time in every twenty-four hours, when we are able invariably to forget ourselves. We forget our "I, Me, My, and Mine" when we are in sound sleep. Thus it is possible for one to live forgetting oneself—to live without the awareness of "I, Me, My and Mine." We are unconscious of our very existence then. Sleep in a way is like death. The only difference being that from sleep man gets up in the same body after some hours, but from death man doesn't get up in the same body.

Beloved Baba explains in the book! "The Secret of Sleep" that the sound sleep state of man is exactly the original state of the soul; man is one with God then; man goes back into his original state—the beyond state of God. It is because of this union with God (Infinite Power) that man gets up fresh with vigour and vitality from his sound sleep to continue his labours. It is only when one is able to forget oneself consciously as he is in his sound sleep state that he will find God. Not that God is found as an all powerful individual sitting up in the sky above, granting a heaven to all those who please him, and a hell to all those who displease him; not that God saves one from a rain storm allowing thousands of others to perish; not that God increases one's estate and earthly glories just because he cuts a fat calf as an offering; not that God is hidden within the four walls of a temple, Church, mosque or pagoda, who fulfills the various desires of devotees who burn some incense or candles before him. One who loses oneself finds God as one's own Self. When one is able to be conscious of his state in sound sleep he finds himself as God who resides in every heart that lives, and in everything that exists. Then he says, 'I am God' (Anal Haqra; Aham Brahmah Asmi). When such a man says 'I' his 'I' includes all the 'I's in the world, When he says 'I' he is aware of all men and creatures as his own self. If he ever prays he prays to teach others how to pray and his prayer will be

"O! God, Thy will be done in the life of all men
and creatures as it is in Thy Being.
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive our
debts
as we forget ourselves in our love for thee....."

In his prayer, give me turns into 'give us.' It is an inner transformation that takes place, a change of vision of life. The whole pattern of thinking changes. His words have a new power in them and a flavour of sweetness that sweetens the life of others around him. His hunger

is the hunger of all men and creatures. If he is fully fed, all are fed, and if all are fed, he is full.

Once Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was travelling in a country-craft along with a few of his disciples. They had no food with them and all were hungry. When they came by a village one of the disciples was sent to buy some sweet-meats. When this was brought the Master ate the whole lot to the surprise of all. But after a while each one felt as if he was sumptuously fed.

One day, Jesus, the Christ, was amongst a multitude of people who came from far off places to meet him. They were hungry and tired. He sent some of his disciples to the city to buy bread. They bought a few loafs of bread, and a couple of fish. Jesus began distributing and hundreds of people were fed and they were happy and grateful. But he himself did not take any food that day.

We read or listen to such stories about the masters and we are impressed with the miraculous side, but we do not bother to inquire into the 'how and why' of such miracles performed by the masters. Every experience tends to modify or condition the human mind. This conditioned mind then craves for proof of divinity through the performance of miracles before one can accept God as God.

Sri Ramakrishna was one with God. He was a Perfect Master—a Man-God. Jesus was one with God. He was a God-Man. Sri Ramakrishna lost his self in his love for God and found God as his own Self—as the Self of all men and creatures. Jesus was one with God, His Father—the Father of all and he had no self as Jesus, the individual. The hunger of Ramakrishna was one with the hunger of all other selves around him, for he was in them all, not as we read and hear, but in actual living experience. So when he ate, all others felt as if they had eaten, though they had not really. Jesus had not eaten but when all others had their food, he too was full, because he was conscious of his unity with all life in existence. Thus God is another name for the UNITY OF ALL LIFE.

Ultimately everyone and everything is God, and that God, as Truth, can be realised through the Guru or the Master, said Meher Baba.

Meher Baba here points to us the Truth, and what is that Truth? The Truth is, that God is the indweller of everyone and everything. For most of us these are mere words, which convey nothing in particular. Our minds are conditioned by the concept that God is someone or something to fulfill our desires, to free us from our problems and to guard us from all dangers. A desire-prompted mind can never grasp what Meher Baba revealed. And this desire-prompted mind is the self in us all. Where this 'self' is, Meher Baba is not. To know, feel and experience Meher Baba, this 'self' has to go. Our attitude to Meher Baba and our approach to Meher Baba should undergo a radical change. One has to know Meher Baba as the indweller of one's own self. But one does not know him to be so. One does not feel him to be so. One does not experience him to be so. Why? Watch our minds. Vigilantly observe the operation of what we call our 'mind.' We will know why we do not know, feel and experience Meher Baba to be our indweller.

The awareness of God's all-pervasive and all penetrating existence can come to man through the grace of a Perfect Master. And this grace comes to one who gives oneself up in love for God, who effaces oneself in the service of God who resides in every heart. To realise God as Truth is to realise what one in Truth is. Now each one of us is what a desire-prompted mind makes one to be. This in truth each one of us is. When one gives this 'self' in love for God, the expression of which is to serve others with no thought of one's own comfort and conveniences, one finds God. A real seeker of truth does not calculate the benefits one may get in loving and serving. He plunges into the search. When a Perfect Master comes into one's life, the person loves the Master above everything else. Note the words, "when the Perfect Master comes into one's life," not when one goes to a Perfect Master seeking

health, wealth, children or a good job; not even when one goes to a Perfect Master seeking one's own salvation. When one seeks truth above everything else, when one loves God and longs for union with God alone (whatever the name and form of that God be) then the Perfect Master comes into one's life. The Perfect Master being God functioning as man, the lover's heart is instantaneously touched. The Perfect Master being Truth manifesting through a human vehicle, the seeker's seeking ceases the moment he meets the Master. All his seeking turns into a loving service to the Master. He longs to serve the Master and his joy lies in pleasing his Master by obeying him implicitly. All his thoughts are, so to say, centred on the Master, who, to him, is embodied Truth ... the living Truth. His eyes always thirst for the sight of the Master. His hands are restless in his service. His legs are on the move towards the feet of his beloved Master. His head bows down at every step with the thought of the Master. When the heart is full with the love for the Master, his mouth is shut, mind is stilled, and in this stillness of one's own self one realises one's own self as Truth, by the Grace of the Master. It means the aspirant is so lost in love for and service to the Master, that he finds the Master whom he was loving and serving to be none other than his own self.

Self lost is God found as one's own self. It is a long long journey. But one must make it, and continue to do so. With faith and confidence one must hold on to one's Master, obeying him every moment, in thought, word and deed. May we have that courage and confidence in Beloved Baba's Love.

JAI BABA !

SRI DHARMA RAO

(A pen picture by a Lover)

Sri Nettimi Dharma Rao was the son of Rao Saheb Nettimi Rama Murthy Naidu. He was born on December 18th, 1907. He was educated at Kallikota College, Berhampur and at the College of Engineering, Guindi, Madras. He secured first class in B.E., with the distinction of having obtained second rank in the University. He joined the Government service (Madras) in 1932, and was promoted to the cadre of Asst. Engineer in April, 1934. In the same year (25-5-1934) he married Sitalaxmi Devi, D/o Sri Gurrala Krishna Rao Naidu, an Advocate at Rajahmundry. Sri Dharma Rao was selected as District Board Engineer in 1942 by the M.P.S.C. He worked as P.A. to Superintending Engineer (Communications) at Guntur for sometime, before he took charge as D.B.E. in 1944. He became Divisional Engineer, Highways, in 1946, in which post he worked at several stations all over Andhra Pradesh. His notable achievements as an Engineer were very many. Among them were the bridges over Pennar in Anantapur District and River Bahuda in Chittoor District, and investigation and planning of Goutami and Vasista Bridges over Godavari river. Wherever he worked he took special interest in the Development of Roads. He executed the widening of National Highways in Chittoor and Srikakulam Districts. He planned and executed Tirumalai-Papanasanam Ghat Road in Chittoor District. He took up the challenging task of constructing a new road of more than thirty miles from Chintapalli to Sileru in Visakhapatnam District in dense forest and he did it in record time. He had the highest sense of duty and devotion to his work. He was very much liked by his superiors and co-workers for his sincerity and hard work.

After retirement from duty in 1964, he joined as General Manager for Vikram Industries at Bangalore and later worked also as a Resident Engineer in Industrial Development Consortium at Mandya (Mysore State) where

he was responsible for construction of a project of Acitate Factory. He finally reached Rajahmundry after working for some time in Balimela project in 1968, a joint venture of Andhra and Orissa Governments.

Sri Dharma Rao was a person with deep spiritual outlook from his childhood and lived with set principles of truth and honesty and selfless service. Faith in God was the very basis of his life. He came into contact with Avatar Meher Baba in 1952. Ever since that time, to the last breath of his life he worked with devotion and zeal to spread the message of Love and Truth as told and lived by Beloved Baba.

To mention a few selected instances of his services in contact with and dedication to Avatar Meher Baba, the following may be mentioned.

1952 November 7th, 8th, and 9th:

He went to Meherabad and was in Beloved Baba's sahas on 8-11-1952 at 8 A.M when Beloved Baba gave the Repentance Prayer to the World.

1953 January, 17th, 18th and 19th:

When Beloved Baba gave his first Darshan at (Andhra Pradesh) Tadepalligudem, Sri Dharma Rao was fortunate enough to be there, as one in charge of arrangements for Baba's Tour Programme in Andhra.

1953 January 22nd and 23rd:

When Beloved Baba was at Rajahmundry, Sri Dharma Rao took Baba in His Ford Car, himself at the steering, throughout the whole tour. Those were days of thrilling experience for him and for all other lovers of Andhra. On 23rd January 1953 at 8 A.M. Beloved Baba washed the feet of fifty six of his devotees among whom Sri Dharma Rao was one. At Navabharata Gurukulam of Rajahmundry Beloved Baba gave public Darshan and Baba visited Sri Dharma Rao's house also on that occasion. Beloved Baba visited the house of Sri G. Krishna Rao (Dharma Rao's father-in-law) also.

1953 January 25th, 26th, 27th, and 28th:

Beloved Baba was at Eluru (Andhra) in Katta Subba Rao's Gardens.

He gave a discourse as to how to recognise the Avatar. Sri Dharma Rao was present there.

1954 February 20th to March 4th:

Beloved Baba's Second Andhra tour, visiting Vijayawada, Guntur and other places finally reaching Kakinada—Again Sri Dharma Rao was fortunate to drive the Avatar of the Age in his own Car. This tour had been filmed too.

1954 September 28th and 30th:

Sri Dharma Rao went to Meherabad, from Chittoor where he was working, as Executive Engineer.

1954 November 11th to 17th:

He reached Ahmednagar from Chittoor and attended the Baba Sahavas.

1958 February 22nd to 26th:

From Chintapalli Sri Dharma Rao attended Meherabad Sahavas to which a gathering of more than 8,000 lovers of Baba also attended. Baba was decorated with a Crown and Sri Dharma Rao had the fortune to garland Baba on that occasion, when a photo was taken.

1958 July 9th and 10th:

Sri Dharma Rao attended Ahmednagar Darshan of Baba when Baba gave the Universal message.

1959 June 6th and 7th:

He attended Guruprasad Darshan programme of Seven days at Guruprasad, Poona. The design drawn by Sri Dharma Rao for construction of Meher Stan at Kovvur was approved by Baba.

1960 May 18th and 19th:

He attended Poona Darshan programme of Baba from Srikakulam.

1961 May 23rd and 24th:

He again attended Poona Darshan programme of Baba from Srikakulam.

1962 November 1st to 4th:

He attended Guruprasad Darshan Programme of Baba from Nandyala with family.

1963 June 9th to 16th:

He attended Baba Darshan Programme at Poona and had special Darshan of Baba.

1965 May 1st to 5th:

He attended Baba Darshan Programme at Poona with family and visited Meherabad and Meherazad. Group photos were taken on that occasion.

Until Sri Dharma Rao came into contact with Avatar Meher Baba, he was an ardent follower of Sri Sadguru Sai Baba of Shirdi and Sri Sadguru Upasani Maharaj of Sakori. Perhaps, it was his contact with the Sadgurus, who were the causes of God's advent as Avatar onto this world, that took him into the contact of the Avatar. However, once he came into contact with Baba, Sri Dharma Rao, having realised his goal, started working ceaselessly, to reach it. Just like his professional job which was the other side of his life, he took up the work of spreading Baba's Message of Love and Truth, with all sincerity, honesty, dedication, earnestness, and above all, unfaltering faith in the God-Man. He made himself an instrument to bring many people into Baba's Contact. Sri Dharma Rao was highly fortunate, perhaps, not only in this Birth, but for several past Births also, to have become a chosen instrument in the cause of the Avatar who descends on to this world once in more than 700 years.

There were innumerable occasions when his special services were made available. Srirangapatnam—Baba Premic Sammelan in 1961 on 9th and 10th of December was one of such happy occasions, ever memorable in the lives of those that participated in that function. He was an

ardent worker in Beloved Baba's Service and was associated in positions of responsibility, in the Avatar Meher Baba Andhra Centre, with Dr. Thota Dhanapathi Rao Garu, the life president of the Centre. Sri Dharma Rao was closely associated with Swami Satya Prakash Udaseen from the time of starting Divya Vani and publication of the special issue on the occasion of the inauguration of Mehersthan at Kovvur. He was a life member and a whole hearted supporter of Meher Vihar and took part in its manifold activities for a long time. He finally took charge of the Meher Vihar Trust as its Managing Trustee from 27th March 1969 until he breathed his last. He made this organisation an instrument for the services of Baba, and worked with utmost dedication and sincerity devoting his whole time to that work, as an absolutely honorary Managing Trustee, till his sudden demise on 16th of January 1972. His demise is an irreparable loss to the Trust and its activities. May beloved Baba Bless him with eternal Peace and Joy at His lotus feet.

J A I B A B A!

DIVYA VANI

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 3-6-417: Post Office Street
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INFINITE ONE

By DOROTHY L. LEVY

Jai Baba—Ki Jai—Beloved Happy Birthday!
By your Grace — February 25th — lovers will celebrate—
Many loved ones now have gone back to YOU ...
God-Man we do not forget—our Loving Father-
Mother we knew.
For us, Beloved Baba, there is nothing else –
Hopefully, someday to die to this physical-self.
Having been blessed to see You in Man-Form
while with us again on earth—
February 25th in this age given the date of Birth ...
Your Family around the world to you BELOVED sing
Jai Baba Ki Jai — Infinite CHRIST - AVATAR — praise
YOUR HOLY NAME ...
The ONE and ONLY GOD who IS the SELF in
every finite self—
The Ancient ONE—Highest of The High—ever the same ...

Sing, dance and be merry

By R. M. SAMER

Sing, sing the name of our Beloved Meher
With soft, sweet and melodious tone,
With unselfish love and heart pure,
To remain ever under His noble care.
Dance, dance to His musical rhythm,
To climb up cheerfully the spiritual steps,
To forget the self, to be with him,
In heavenly abode for eternal rest.
Be merry, be merry under His fold,
Under all trials and odds,
Make Him ever our companion bold,
Like scent, spread His fragrance Love to all.

News & Notes:

SPECIAL MESSAGES

**For the 78th Birthday Function of Avatar Meher
Baba Celebrated at Hyderabad (Andhra) under the
auspices of the Avatar Meher Baba Mission &
Meher Vihar (Reg.) Association:**

Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai !!! Meherazad, 22-2-'72
Jai Baba!

Our Very dear Brothers and Sisters in Baba-love, All
Meherazad Mandali join you in celebrating the Beloved Lord's
78th Birthday at Hyderabad. They share in your joy and in
your loving efforts to remember Him who is our Lord and
Beloved Avatar.

May Beloved Avatar Meher Baba's Love-Blessings be on
you all !

Yours lovingly,
ERUCH.

Greetings and best wishes from all Lovers of Avatar
Meher Baba in Bengal (West Bengal & Bangla Desh) on the
Occasion of the Functions organised by Avatar Meher Baba
mission and Meher Vihar Association on 21st, 22nd, 23rd,
24th and 25th February:

We shall all be present with you in Thought and Spirit and
participate in the same and share the Love blessings of God.

Wish all the meetings and Functions success by His grace.

A. C. S. CHARI, B.A., B.L.,
ADVOCATE, CALCUTTA HIGH COURT.

Celebrations of 78th Birthday of Avatar Meher Baba all over the Country:

HYDERABAD,

Beloved Baba's 78th Birthday was duly celebrated with grand success for 78 days, at different places in the twin cities under the auspices of Avatar Meher Baba Mission and Meher Vihar (Regd) Association from 10th December to 25th February, 1972. The last 5 days were celebrated at (Meher Vihar) 3-6-417 Post Office Street, Himayatnagar, Hyderabad - 29. Sri M. S. Koteswaran, Director, Tagore Home, inaugurated the Meher Vihar Functions on the 21st February 1972.

Beloved Baba's 78th Birthday was celebrated with great splendour and enthusiasm at several other places like Machilipatnam, Challapalli, Allagadda, Dowlaiswaram, Anantapuram, Tadepalligudem, Vijayawada, Kovvuru, Poona, Bombay, and New Delhi and reports of the Celebrations are still pouring in.

AHMEDNAGAR:

"We have celebrated Avatar Meher Baba's 78th Birth Anniversary as usual. On 24-2-1972, throughout the night Bhajan was performed and exactly at 5 A.M. on 25-2-72, 'Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai' was shouted for 7 times. Then Prayers were recited and Aarti was given to Baba. Thereafter Prasad distribution was done until 9 P.M. About 5,000 people attended to take PRASAD. The celebration was a grand success.

V. R. BADE, LL.B (Pleader)

VISAKHAPATNAM:

The 78th Birthday function of Avatar Meher Baba was celebrated in "Meher Nilayam" at Gandhigram in a most befitting manner. On 24-2-72 the Nama sankirtan was started in the Nilayam at 6 p.m. and was continued up to 5 a.m. on 25-2-72. Parvardigar Prayer, and Repentance Prayer were recited. At 5 A.M. sharp, the Aarti was given to the Lord of Love, Meher Baba.

On 25-2-72 at 6-30 P.M. a public meeting was arranged in "Meher Nilayam". Sri S. Sudarsanam, Manager, Hindustan Shipyard presided over the meeting. Sri Chitra Narasingarao who was the Chief guest spoke and briefly explained the essence of evolution so clearly explained by Beloved Baba in his unique book "God-speaks". He read out, from the notes prepared by him, certain specific portions which highlight the Avataric exposition on the subject of the universe, which itself is His own creation. This was followed by a more illuminating and pragmatic speech delivered by Sri Lakshminadha Rao, (Principal-Tenali) on the Love aspect of Baba. He urged all, to live as a true Baba-lover, fulfilling or at least trying to fulfill His desire in their day to day lives. "Then alone", he added, "one can experience the unforgettable sweetness of love—Live to love".

At the outset, Sri T. N. Ratho, Vice-President of Visakhapatnam Centre, welcomed the guests and explained briefly about the construction of "Meher Nilayam". He also added that the Meher Nilayam Committee intended very soon to construct within the precincts of Meher Nilayam a Free Homoeo Gem and Teletherapy dispensary as a Servicing unit, adjunct to the Prayer-hall. Presently this dispensary is already functioning in a private house.

Sri Sudarsanam, in his concluding remarks explained how he learnt about Baba. The doctrine of Love preached by Baba particularly drew him nearer to Baba. He compared Baba's Love preachings and acts to those of Jesus, Christ whom he loved being a true christian.

The celebrations ended with Aarti given by Sri P. V. Ramanarao, Secretary of this Centre, followed by the distribution of Prasad.

Large number of God-lovers attended the function and the Meher Nilayam with all its created splendour projected such a scenic beauty at the foot-hill of the Eastern ghats that a Baba lover possibly would become reminiscent of his presence at Meherabad and Meherazad. One should only visit this Meher Nilayam to believe all that was said above. The aspect of unity in diversity and the manifestation of Love are symbolically depicted in its structure and environment. This centre would welcome all to witness this Baba's Centre-hall.

Jai Baba!

BOMBAY:

The 78th Birth Anniversary of Avatar Meher Baba was celebrated by Baba lovers of Bombay on Friday, 25th February 1972.

"Meher Hall" was gaily decorated and illuminated the night before and at 5 a.m. all who had gathered there in His Love commenced the Birthday celebrations with loud shouts of AVATAR MEHER BABA KI JAI. This was followed by Parvardigar prayer and the prayer of Repentance, and then Aarti to Baba. Shri Keshavram Panchal then unfurled Beloved Baba's Flag of seven colours. The Birthday cake was cut and the song. "Happy Birthday" was sung by a few Baba lovers. Then a good number of English Baba songs were sung by the group and lastly English Aarti.

Shri Dara Katrak, Vice President of the Avatar Meher Baba Bombay Centre, welcomed all Baba lovers in his short address and Shri Eruch Patel spoke just a few words to commemorate the occasion. Many Baba bhajans were sung by the Centre's Bhajan Mandali and the early morning programme ended with Baba's Aarti. Birthday

cake was given as prasad to all and everyone greeted the other wishing Happy Baba Birthday.

In the evening, from 6-15 p.m., a public function was held at the Sunderbai Hall, and since it was announced in News Papers that Baba films will be screened, a good crowd had gathered. The programme was started with Baba bhajans and after Beloved Baba's photo was garlanded and the prayers were recited, a short performance of English Baba songs was given by young Baba lovers. Shri Eruch Patel in a brief speech, explained the significance of Beloved Baba's Birthday and His Universal Work.

Kumari Lata Limaye, a Baba lover from Poona was specially invited and she sang many gazals which she, as a very young girl, used to sing before Beloved Baba. She ended her programme with Beloved Baba's Aarti. The highlight of the programme was the screening of films and everybody enjoyed very much the 1937 film on Beloved Baba in Nasik and Beloved Baba's visit to Myrtle Beach Centre.

ANANTAPUR:

78th Birthday Anniversary of Avatar Meher Baba was celebrated by Avatar Meher Baba centre, Anantapur in Prakash Nagar at the residence of Bro. V. M. Aswathanarayana.

Lovers gathered early in the morning. Aarti was given to Baba at 5 a.m. Sankeertan was sung by Bro. Ramasastry. Bro N. Appala Swami explained some of the discourses of Meher Baba. Sri D. V. Sinha, Assistant Radio Engineer, Anantapur and some elite of the town were also present at the morning function.

Poor feeding was done from morning to noon.

At the public meeting held at 6.30 p.m. Bro. Ramasastry opened the Session with his delightful sankeertans which were followed by narration of the life sketch of Meher Baba, His discourses and some of his experiences with Meher Baba by Bro. N. Appalaswamy. Bro. Paidi Venkatesulu

Dt. Public Relations officer explained the Avatarhood of Meher Baba and his experiences when he had the Darshan of Baba in 1963 at "Guruprasad", Poona. He explained about "how to love God" and "how to develop Bhakthi", by giving certain quotations and hymns. He concluded by emphasizing that God can never be understood with mere human intellect unless He is loved the way He ought to be loved.

Bro. J. R. Sastry, Head of the Auto-mobile Engineering Polytechnic, Anantapur, explained his experience with Baba.

Bro. N. Appalaswamy thanked all the lovers who gathered on the occasion and wished them the Love of Baba. He specially thanked the speakers who spoke on the occasion; Bro. Venkataramana for making excellent lighting and mike arrangements for the function and Bro. Aswathanarayana for providing accommodation for the function and for providing manual help for poor feeding.

Aarti was given to Baba by Bro. Paidi Venkatesulu. The day's programme concluded with the distribution of prasad to all the lovers who gathered at the meeting.

ALLAGADDA, Kurnool Dt. (A.P.)

Beloved Baba's 78th Birth Day was celebrated at Allagadda, Kurnool Dt., A.P, at the house of Sri N. V. Narasaiah, M.A., Lecturer, Govt. Junior College in a manner befitting the Avatar of the Age. Precisely at 4-30 A.M. on the 25th February, the programme commenced with Sankirtan and at 4-48 A.M. the Master's Prayer was recited by Sri N. V. Narasaiah in English, Sri B. Srinivasulu Naidu in Telugu and Sri K. Raghuram, M.Sc., in Hindi. Silence was observed for five minutes by all present. Aarti was given at 5 A.M. sharp.

The portrait of Beloved Baba was garlanded by Sri D.N.P. Sarma, M.A., B.T. Principal, Govt. Junior College, after which he eulogized the importance of Avatarhood and the special significance of the advent of the Avatar of

the Age, Meher Baba. The last Birth Day Message given by Beloved Baba in 1969 was read out and explained by Sri K.V. Suryanarayana. Sri B. Lakshmana Raju M.A., Lecturer in Telugu spoke on Baba's Call and the Universal Message.

At 6 A.M. the seven coloured flag was hoisted by Sri D.S.R.A. Sarma, Supervisor, Parry Fertilisers and its significance was explained by Sri K. V. Suryanarayana. After the Repentance Prayer in English by Sri Narasaiah, in Telugu by Sri B. Srinivasulu Naidu and in Hindi by Sri A. Umakantaiah, Aarti was given to Baba.

Prasad and refreshments were served to all the one hundred and odd that attended. The function came to a close with three cheers to the Avatar.

The public meeting held at the local Kanyaka Parameswari Hall, commenced at 6-00 P.M. with Sankirtan up to 6-30 P.M. when the Master's Prayer was recited by Sri N. V. Narasaiah in English and Sri K. V. Suryanarayana in Telugu. The president of the function Sri K. P. Venugopal, B.A., L.L.B., Munsif-Magistrate garlanded Baba's portrait and in the course of his speech touched upon the Avataric mission of Baba, the importance of His message of Love and Universal Brotherhood and the need to spread His message to all the four corners in the prevailing chaotic state of affairs. His address in English was translated into Telugu by Sri K. V. Suryanarayana. Sri B. Srinivasulu Naidu spoke on Baba's work with the masts giving out illustrations from "The Way Farers" by Dr. Donkin. Next, Sri K. V. Suryanarayana spoke on the Avatarhood of Beloved Baba.

Repentance Prayer was said in English and Telugu by Sri Narasaiah and Sri Srinivasulu Naidu respectively and a vote of thanks was proposed by Sri N. V. Narasaiah. After Aarti, Prasad was distributed along with Baba's picture cards and book-lets containing His short life-sketch and prayers.

The function came to a successful close with shouts of Avatar Meher Baba ki Jai at 8-40 P.M. More than two hundred people attended.

Messages wishing the function a success were received from Meherazad Mandali through Shri Eruch, Sarva Sri Kutumba Sastri (Ahmednagar), Swami Satya Prakash Udaseen, N. Bhimasankaram (Hyderabad), Y. Manikyala Rao (Vijayawada), S. Prayaga Rao, M. Com. (Cuddapah) and Ch. Satyanarayana (Alamuru).

Presidential address by Sri. K. P. Venugopal, B.A., L.L.B., Munsiff-Magistrate, Allagadda, Kurnool Dt (A. P.):

"We have all gathered here to day to celebrate the 78th Birthday of Avatar Meher Baba. It is our good fortune that the Saviour of Humanity was born in our country at Poona, on this day of the year 1894. He was named Merwan Sheriarjee Irani. God-realisation came to him while still studying in the college. The two of the Perfect Masters under whom he attained spiritual perfection were Hazrat Baba Jan and Upasani Maharaj. Meher Baba also started a spiritual mission to train His disciples who first gave Him the name "MEHER BABA", which means "COMPASSIONATE FATHER". Apart from the training centre, He also founded a hospital and created shelters for the poor, where there was no distinction of caste, creed or religion. He travelled widely in the West, where He gathered innumerable disciples. Meher Baba's preachings are so simple that one could easily understand and follow them. He does not belong to any religion. On the other hand, His teachings are a synthesis of all the great religions. To put it in His own words, He said "I have come not to teach but to awaken".

The central theme of Meher Baba's message is "Universal Brotherhood". His unique motto is "Mastery in Servitude" and the emblem contains the symbols of all religions. He drives home the fact that there is only one Father for all humanity.

Meher Baba gives some very easy ways how we can love God. We should share in the sufferings of the others, we must have contentment, we must lead a pure and simple life, we must be honest and true to ourselves. Baba says, if we follow these simple precepts, we love God.

Though Meher Baba discarded His physical body, He eternally lives in the hearts of millions of His followers. If only His message of Universal Brotherhood is spread and followed in every nook and corner of the world, there would be less bitterness and hatred, which we now see all around. The world would then be a better place to live in. Let us resolve to do our best in spreading His message.

There are some eminent speakers for this evening. Along with you, I would like to be benefited by their speeches. I once again thank you all for giving me this opportunity of joining you in celebrating Meher Baba's 78th birth day."

THE AWAKENER

P. O. Box 1081 Berkely, Calif – 94701 U.S.A.

One year's Subscription for 'The Awakener' a Quarterly Magazine devoted to Avatar Meher Baba, is \$4.00 (for four issues) including postage.

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I, Swami Satya Prakash Udaseen, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

(Sd.) Swami Satya Prakash Udaseen,
Signature of Publisher

Dated: 1-3-72



1. I belong to no religion. Every religion belongs to me. My religion is love.
2. I am the divine beloved that loves you more than you can ever love yourself.
3. I am the Lord of Love and Servant of My lover.
4. Let *Principle* in work and *honesty* in life prevail.
5. One penny extracted, in My name, without true basis is dishonesty and will be the cause of *millions of births*.
6. Think well of those who think ill of you.
7. If you truly and in all faith accept your Baba as the Highest of the High, it behooves you to lay down your life at His feet.

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