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May 1966

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the "Meher Vihar Trust"

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Monthly:

May 1966

D I V Y A V A N I
(DIVINE VOICE)

Editor:

SWAMI SATYA PRAKASH UDASEEN

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(Continued on 3rd cover page)

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May 1966

D I V Y A V A N I

(DIVINE VOICE)

AN ENGLISH MONTHLY
Devoted to Avatar Meher Baba & His Work

Editor:

SWAMI SATYA PRAKASH UDASEEN

Hon. Assistant Editor:

Shri L. Venkayya, B.Sc., LL.B., D.P.A.

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"Do not worry about anything. Keep thinking of Me constantly. I am the only One that exists, the only One that matters."

—MEHER BABA

Editorial:

TRUE LOVE

"True Love is unconquerable and irresistible and it goes on gathering power and spreading itself until eventually it transforms every one whom it touches" says Meher Baba, the Avatar of the Age. According to Him, God and Love are identical, and that one who has divine love has received God.

But then the question arises—how one can have this love? Beloved Baba says again: "...start learning to love God by loving those whom you cannot love. The more you remember others with kindness and generosity, the more you forget yourself, and when you completely forget yourself, you find God." It appears so simple but yet, it is indeed so very difficult to achieve. But Baba makes this more clear: "Love cannot be born of mere determination; through the exercise of will one can at best be dutiful ... it has to spring spontaneously from within and is in no way amenable to any form of inner force, and it can be awakened through love itself...Those who do not have it catch it from those who have it, a response which in itself is of the nature of love."

And so it is evident that even by determination one cannot acquire that quality of love, as that love has to spring without any application of either internal or external force and that it shall be born spontaneously from within as a natural response; and that it can only be awakened through love itself and those who do not have it catch it from those who have it. We do find this truth in a mother's love invoking such a response from her child, and also in Guru's love for his disciple, as in the case of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. It is indeed the Divine Love of the Avatar that can really awaken such love in response to His own Love for humanity. And now, we do find in our own lives such unconquerable and irresistible love emanating from our Beloved Baba, gathering power and spreading itself and eventually transforming every one whom it touches. We hope that those who had the good fortune to have His Darshan and the unique experience of love in His Divine presence, need no clarification and we are sure that the thrill and joy one had on such occasions will be sufficient to sustain the love thus awakened in him.

But Baba says further in this matter: "The sojourn of the self is a divine romance, in which the lover, who in the beginning is conscious of emptiness, frustration, superficiality, and the chains of bondage, attains an increasingly fuller expression of love and finally merges into the unity of the lover and the beloved in the supreme and eternal Truth of God as infinite love." He also warns us that true love is no game of the faint-hearted and the weak; and that it is born of strength and understanding. As our Compassionate Father He declares His identity as the Ancient One and the One residing in every heart and finally exhorts us thus: "So, long for one thing, be restless for one thing, long and wait for one thing, and that will kill the million other longings. Long for union with the Beloved!"

We are indeed singularly fortunate to have amongst us, at this juncture, God in human form who is none other than our Beloved Baba, who is Love Incarnate and Compassion personified and this is the best opportunity for all humanity, without distinction of caste, creed, religion or sex, to acquire True Love, in the most easiest and surest way, since He has come to awaken us and bestow the "True Love" for which we all aspire now. May we, by His Love-blessing seek His Grace by surrendering unto Him and trying to do our best, in all earnestness! May He bless us to hold fast to His daaman till the last breath of our lives! May He bless us with True Love, and ever lasting Bliss at His Lotus Feet! Jai Avatar Meher Baba ki Jai!

ATTENTION

Avatar Meher Baba wishes all His lovers to be informed that He wishes to remain undisturbed till end of 1967. During His stay *in* Poona (from April through June) Baba will not see anyone, except those whom He has called or will specifically call for His work. Please circulate this message among all His lovers in your locality.

—ADI K. IRANI

3-6-417, Post Office Street,
Himayatnagar, Hyderabad-29,
Dated 25th May, 1966.

Jai Baba!

The Meher Vihar Trust

An Appeal

It is already known to our dear readers that "Meher Vihar" the 'Abode' of Love and Peace and the "home" for the workers having whole-heartedly dedicated themselves, to Meher Baba, the Avatar of the Age, with absolute faith and complete surrender unto Him, agree to serve His Cause to the last breath of their lives, has been established by His Compassion and Love and with His kind permission on the 24th of August 1963. It has been registered as a Public Trust on the 24th August 1965, to be permanently situated at Hyderabad, the Capital City of Andhra Pradesh (India). Ever since its inception, every effort is being made for spreading His name and His message of Love and Truth, by way of publishing journals, books and other literature and also by holding public and private gatherings and sankeertans, etc., all over the country, and more particularly in Andhra. Though a humble beginning was made with a bilingual quarterly (English & Telugu) as early as 1961 July but now by Beloved Baba's Blessings and the kind coordination and help of all Baba-lovers, the English Monthly, "Divya Vani " and the Telugu Weekly "Meher Jyoti" have been firmly established. Besides the work of a Telugu Publication series by name "Meher Sudha Tarangini" is also being carried on since August '65. However it has been found impossible to carry on the printing, of our journals and books without inordinate delay in spite of our best efforts, ever since we have shifted to Hyderabad, for which we express our sincere apologies, to our dear readers.

No doubt, in this difficult task many a hurdle has been crossed by Beloved Baba's Grace and now we are very happy to inform our dear brothers and sisters that with Beloved Baba's kind permission and His Blessings we have undertaken to launch on a "Building Fund and Printing Works Special Donation" scheme so as to enable us to secure an area of about four or five acres of good land, with facilities of water etc., and establish a permanent 'abode' and also run a power press of our own to carry on the publication work with more promptness and neatness. Beloved Baba was pleased to permit Bro. Adi K. Irani to inaugurate this Special Scheme of Donations for the aforesaid cause, on the 7th of May '66, being the concluding day of the 72 days birthday celebrations. We are very grateful to all those who have been pleased to respond so spontaneously to our call and send in their love-contributions.

In order to enable one and all, whether rich or poor, to have his or her share of contribution for the establishment of this monumental edifice of Baba-love and be an active participant in His Cause, the system of issue of tickets of various denominations, viz., Rs. 1, 5, 10, 25, 50, 100, 500, and 1000 has been adopted so as to reach the target of a total collection of a Lakh of rupees net. It is our firm belief that every lover of Baba shall feel happy to associate himself or herself with the task of establishing this unique abode of the humble and dedicated workers of Beloved Baba, in the historical City of Hyderabad, which had been sanctified, many a time by His visits and stay during His Mast-Work and also during His Manonash period and thus won a special and significant position in Baba's inner work. It is our sincere hope that this humble "home" of a dedicated worker shall ever be the abode for every lover of Baba and by His Grace it shall be able to have a place in the loving hearts of all Baba-lovers.

We are happy to announce that we hope to have our own printing works by name "Meher Art Printers" by the 1st week of July '66 and the site will be fixed up for the Abode (Ashram) soon after sufficient funds are available for the purpose. It is also our earnest desire to complete the task of collection of

funds as 15th of August, '66. We therefore make this appeal to all our brothers and sisters in Baba-family, to send their generous contributions for the Cause, as early as is convenient to them and render us timely help for which act of love we shall be ever thankful. Those who desire to send their love-contributions may do so by Postal Money Orders or Bank Cheques on Andhra Bank Ltd., or State Bank of India (Hyderabad—A. P., India) to the under-signed and oblige.

With loving regards,

Yours fraternally,

Swami Satya Prakash Udaseen

Managing Trustee: The Meher Vihar Trust,
(3-6-417, Himayatnagar, Hyderabad-29., A. P., India)

An Appeal to our dear subscribers

The Subscription for 'Divya Vani' for the current year commencing from July, 1965 to June, 1966, which is payable in advance is yet to be received from many of our dear subscribers. Those, who have paid Rs. 8-00 for the Bi-monthly, Vol. 2, commencing from January, 1965, had already received 3 issues of the Bi-monthly and 4 issues of the Monthly by the end of Oct '65, subscription is therefore due from them from Nov '65, onwards. We would, therefore, request all our subscribers to kindly send the amounts due, immediately and help us to serve them in Beloved Baba's Cause. —Editor

* The Creation Habit

by Francis Brabazon

Creation is a woman, every body knows—
Gives God a lot of trouble, You'd wonder why He chose
To have her around, to have her around.

Must be cos He likes her, thinks she's mighty fine;
Must be cos He needs her for the old production line—
To keep things goin' and the business sound.

May be cos she is woman—He never knows how she blows,
Keeps God ever guessin' and always on His toes:
May be that is what He has found.

May be cos she is woman and knows just how to please—
That's when she's not fussin' or gone into deep-freeze,
Or to Everest's peak, or underground.

But sure God loves Creation—
look at all His children there are—

All us men and women and the most distant star:
And He likes havin' us all around.

* With the kind courtesy of the author, from
"Let Us The People Sing"

* **The Unity of all Life**

by Meher Baba

The Tragedy of Unthinking Strife

The world today is presenting the spectacle of man pitched against man. *Man has become a passive and helpless victim of an unthinking and ruthless machinery which is dragged on from the past through sheer inertia of the spirit.*

The Fact of Brotherhood

In the one undivided and indivisible Ocean of Life, you have, through ignorance, created the pernicious divisions based upon sex, race, nationality, religion or community; and you allow these self-created divisions to poison your heart and pervert your relationships. *You are already parts of one life and as such, brotherhood is not something which is to be brought into existence through laborious efforts, but is the supreme FACT, which claims your recognition and whole-hearted allegiance, as soon as you have the candidness and the courage to face the Truth. Slowly but surely must you imbibe this hard-won Truth at the feet of the Masters of Wisdom; slowly but surely must you shed prejudices and get disentangled from the superficial distinctions, created by identification with forms and names; slowly but surely must you tread the Path to the Formless and the Nameless One.*

The Diversity that does not divide

When you enthrone the Nameless One in your mind-heart, you do not necessarily put an end to the game of duality. You have to play your Divine Role in the drama of creation without being caught up in duality.

Restoration of unity does not imply the stamping out of all differences. In the world of forms, there always will be room for a rich diversity of expression; but when you understand the Truth illimitable, this diversity shall in no way be allowed to create a note of discord in the symphony of creation, but will

be taken up in that *creative harmony which reflects the ageless and the infinite spirit*. Out of this understanding, there shall spontaneously emerge *the spirit of tolerance which is different from apathy, of active appreciation, which is different from passive receptivity and of life, which is different from the entanglement of attachment*. The Unity of Life has to be experienced and expressed in the very midst of its diverse experiences.

The Inalienable Divinity of Man

There can be no arguing with the imperative claims of Divine Love; to deny love is to deny one's own true being; it is self-betrayal and complete extinction, which life is not prepared to accept. Sooner or later, man must look within, ponder deeply and search within his own heart for those factors which hold him down in spiritual thralldom; and sooner or later, he must break asunder the gnawing chains of separative thinking which keeps him away from the immense and limitless life of the spirit to which he is rightful heir. Then why not sooner, rather than later? Now is the time to cast off the veil of imagined duality and unreservedly surrender to the life of open and undisguised love which is pure and selfless and which knows no fear and needs. no apology. All life is one and all divisions are imaginary. Be ye established in this Eternal Truth which I bring.

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* WORK FOR THE SPIRITUAL FREEDOM OF HUMANITY

by Meher Baba

The Cry for Freedom

All over the world, the spirit of man is crying for Freedom. Love for Freedom and search for Freedom are the principal characteristics of humanity, *in all races and under all climes, in all countries and at all times, the watchword for the groping and struggling humanity has always been Freedom!* But there are very few persons, who really understand the full implications of true and unqualified Freedom; and there are many, who, in their partial understanding of the real conditions of Freedom, strive only for the attainment of that kind of existence, which gives them a sense of *relative* Freedom. Thus, *different persons long for different kinds of Freedom according to the different things, which they have come to value.*

Kinds of Freedom

Freedom of life is sought in all the different departments of life; and *this imperative demand for Freedom usually expresses itself by fastening upon some external conditions of the kind of existence, which people wish to lead.* Thus, those, who identify their being with their country, seek national or political Freedom; those who are animated by economic purposes, seek economic Freedom; those, who are inspired by religious aspirations of any kind seek Freedom of religion; and those, who are enthusiastic about any sociological or cultural ideology, seek Freedom of movement and Freedom of expression in respect of the ideals which they cherish and which they wish to propagate. But there are few who realise that the *basic* Freedom, which alone gives the stamp of true value upon any of these different kinds of relative Freedom, is Spiritual Freedom. *Even when all the*

* Reproduced from "Messages of Meher Baba"

external conditions of free life are completely fulfilled and guaranteed, the soul of man would still remain in woeful bondage if it has failed to realise spiritual Freedom.

The Limits of Freedom

All the different types of Freedom, which fasten upon some external conditions, must, in their very nature, exist within certain limits; for, the Freedom, which an individual or community or state seeks, must be consistent with *similar Freedom for other* individuals, communities or states. *National, economic, religious or cultural Freedom expresses itself in and by means of the duality of existence: it lives on duality and is sustained by duality: therefore, it has necessarily to be relative and limited and cannot be infinite.* It exists in varying *degrees*; and even when it is won through persistent effort, it cannot be a permanent attainment since the external conditions, which have once been secured, are not secured for ever, but are capable of deterioration in the course of time.

Spiritual Freedom Alone can be Unlimited

Only Spiritual Freedom is absolute and unlimited; and when it is won through persistent effort, it is secured for ever. For, though Spiritual Freedom can and does express itself in and through the duality of existence, it is grounded in the realisation of the inviolable unity of all life and is sustained by it. One important condition of Spiritual Freedom is freedom from all wanting. It is want that fetters life through attachment to the conditions, which would fulfil that want; if there is no want, there is no dependence or limitation. The soul is enslaved through wanting. *When the soul breaks asunder the shackles of wanting, it emancipates itself from its bondage to the bodies, mind and the ego.* This is the Spiritual Freedom, which brings with it the final realisation of the unity of all life and puts an end to all doubts and worries.

The Importance of Spiritual Freedom

It is only in Spiritual Freedom that one can have *abiding happiness and unimpaired self-knowledge*; it is only in Spiritual

Freedom that there arises the supreme certainty of Truth-realisation and it is only in Spiritual Freedom that there is the final ending of sorrow and limitation; and it is only in Spiritual Freedom that one can live for all, and yet be detached in the midst of all activities. Any other lesser type of freedom is comparable to a house which is built on sands; and any other lesser type of attainment is fraught with the fear of decay. Therefore, there is no gift greater than the gift of Spiritual Freedom, and there is no task more important than the task of helping others to have Spiritual Freedom. Those who have understood the supreme importance of Spiritual Freedom have not only to strive for it for themselves, but also to share the God-given duty of helping others to win it.

True Service

Those who are inspired by the spirit of selfless service are quick to render unto humanity all possible help through the provision of the necessities of life like clothes and shelter, food and medicine, education and other amenities of civilization: and in pursuance of the Path of Duty, they are not only prepared to fight for defending the weak against cruel aggression and oppression, but also to lay down their very lives for the sake of others. All these types of service are great and good; but from the ultimate point of view, the help, which secures Spiritual Freedom for humanity, surpasseth them all; and it is insuperable in importance.

The Way to Help Others in Attaining Spiritual Freedom

The way to help others in attaining Spiritual Freedom is far different from the way of rendering other types of help. To the hungry, you can provide food; and then they have only to eat it. To the naked, you can provide clothes; and they have only to wear them: and to the homeless you can provide houses; and they have only to dwell in them. But to those, who are in the agonies of spiritual bondage, there is no *ready-made provision*, which can give them immediate relief. *Spiritual Freedom has to be won by oneself for oneself, through watchful and unfailing war against the lower self and the lower desires.* Those, who would be the soldiers in the cause of Truth,

have to help all not only in launching upon the thrilling enterprise of attaining victory over oneself, but also in every step which they take towards that attainment; there is no other way of sharing their burden.

The Call

Ye my devotees, I have full confidence that you will share this burden. Many of you have, for years together, obeyed my orders and carried out my instructions, through faith in me and love for me; you have stuck to me and my Spiritual Cause through storm and stress and thick and thin; and now the time has come for you to offer all your services in my Mission of helping humanity to tread the Spiritual Path for realising God. The eternal Truth that God alone is real, has to be clearly understood and unreservedly accepted; and it has to be unequivocally expressed through words and deeds. *In the full realisation of the Truth, man shall attain Spiritual Freedom. No sacrifice is too big for setting man free from spiritual bondage and in helping him to inherit the Truth, which alone shall bring abiding peace to all and which alone will unfailingly sustain an unassailable sense of universal fellowship, cemented by the ungrudging love of all, for all, as expressions of the same reality.*

The Need for Special Instructions to Each

In this God-willed divinely-planned and predestined task of bringing Spiritual Freedom to humanity, you, my devotees, have to help me, even at the cost of life. In your duty of helping others to find God, you have to welcome every type of suffering and sacrifice. Those desiring specific instructions in the line of work most suitable to their individual circumstances may communicate with me.

The Light House

by P. G. Nandi, Jabalpur

Thou art, MEHER, like a big Lighthouse, standing all alone
In the Sea of worldly troubles and tribulations
Shedding continuous Light, through the deep darkness,
Warning souls against the hidden rocks of Temptations!

The ignorant souls are so enslaved by Desires
That they, led by Lust and Greed, continue to crave
For Power, Fame and Utopian Happiness
Only to end in deep despair, sombre and grave!

These minds, are encrusted with age-old impressions
Which create a veil 'tween Ego and Effulgent Light;
Conditioned by attachments, lack integral vision,
And Fail to make right choices and decide what's truly right!

The only way from this maze inter-woven by Desires
Is to surrender completely to the Master!
Ignorant soul, working from the centre of Truth
Becomes LIGHTHOUSE himself shedding Bliss and lustre!

BABA SAYS:

"I am not limited by this form. I use it like a garment to make Myself visible to you, and I communicate with you. Don't try to understand Me. My depth is unfathomable. Just love Me. I eternally enjoy the Christ-state of consciousness, and when I speak, I shall manifest My True Self. Besides giving a general push to the whole world, I shall lead all those who come to Me toward Light and Truth.

D I V Y A V A N I

(An English Monthly)

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THE MEHER VIHAR TRUST

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(A. P., India)

THE FRIEND

By Maud Kennedy, U. K.

Friend of all friends
Sweetness of the soul
Happiness of the free.
Love freely given
And constantly renewed,
Flowing tide of Love
In all directions.
He is the Self within,
The egoless one,
The undeceived,
The wakeful, the watcher
In the dark
While others sleep;
The ever free.

In one bound of joy
We recognise our true Love
And rush into His arms
To float in ecstasy;
Then we kneel
At His feet
And weep and weep
For with Him is more kindness
Understanding, sympathy
Forgiveness and patience
Than ever man imagined,
Yet little do we see,
His holy feet are on the earth
His head is in eternity.

Art and Perfection

By Dana Field, U. S. A.

William Blake said that Jesus and His disciples were all artists—above all Jesus as Beloved and the disciples as lovers of God. The Art or Yoga of Love leads to Union-in-Realization. The materials of this love are one's spiritual qualities in life—one becomes God-like in consciousness, "not just ideally in God's Image." Meher Baba says, "When one remains fully and completely resigned to the Divine Will of God, all service, sacrifice, solitude, seeking and surrenderance, merely symbolize one's love for God."

The God-Man shows His love in the perfect guidance—the greatest Art—of the lives of His disciples towards Truth, while they express their love for Him through identifying themselves with Him in all their thoughts, speech and actions. "Only Thou, not I." This is art, i.e., letting God act through us. The selflessness of love is the essence of art, without it there is no art. As Baba says, it was for love that the universe came into being. It is God's Drama. God is *the* Supreme Artist of Love because He loves Himself in all selves. God is Love, Lover and Beloved—all in One. The perfection of the disciples' love is the artwork of the Beloved. The disciple superimposes another personality, another Will over his lesser personality. Is this not the art of acting?

Art is unity, in which there is no division between disciple and Master. Art is order: love makes life orderly. Art is balance: love creates perfect inner equilibrium; peace and harmony. Art is joy: love is bliss. Art is beauty: love leads to beatitude, to the God-Man who is the perfection of beauty. Baba told His followers once, while at Meher Mount Ashram, "Now go out and see the view and try to love Baba through nature. This is all due to My love ... this whole creation, this nature, all the beauty you see, all came out of Me..." ("The Awakener", Vol. V, No. 2, p. 18) God is Artist-Creator.

How does the Perfect Master shape the disciple? The process was briefly explained by an inspired Baba-lover, "It is not what Baba gives but what He takes away." Like the sculptor or wood carver who reveals the form *hidden* in matter—"stripping off what it is not," as Meister Eckhart put it. The Master's concern is to hack away at the disciple's ego, to remove the bindings of impressioned consciousness and simultaneously the grace of His love reveals the Self. Destruction, the burning grounds, is of the bindings of each soul in the mind and heart of lovers of God. That is why suffering is involved in God-love apart from the sense of separation and longing for Union. Renunciation and surrenderance are not easily attained. The fire of Divine Love purifies the heart and destroys desires and attachments to illusion. Baba says, "It means turning one's heart and mind inside out, becoming empty and naked."

The art of perfection as Baba expounds it, is not just to seek ecstasy or bliss, much less to seek pleasures, but it is also to accept suffering. Baba says: "To love God, one should think of God, long for God and suffer the fire of separation until such longing reaches its utmost limits and is quenched in Union. But one who obeys the Master—who is one with God—need not suffer, for in obedience there is the grace of the Master. Even obedience is not easy ... The best is just to remember Me and forget everything else, leave everything to Me. This is a complicated matter for those who are very interested in spirituality, but not for those who love Me. Try to remember Me, try to please Me, try to do as I wish. This is how you should live in the world; otherwise it is too complicated. Hafiz says, 'when I first began to love God, I thought that was the end of everything, that I had fathomed the ocean of love, but I was only on the beach.'" ("The Awakener," Vol. IX, Nos. 1-2, pp. 15-16)

Baba goes on to say that the Perfect Master teaches us that to find the Pearl of Realization we have to reach the bottom of the ocean, and He teaches us how to do it.

Summarizing some *Quawali* songs and a poem by Hafiz, Baba said to one of His lovers, "Don't worry." And "The lover does not complain." The worrying and complaining, even while accepting suffering, neutralize benefits accruing to the lover. This is that wonderful poem of Hafiz:

"Although you. have not received love's *guerdon*,
 One day this desert will become a garden—so *be not
 grieved*.
 Do not turn your heart away, nor expostulate
 Against the Beloved, but bear your present state—*and be
 not grieved*.
 Let this disgusted mind and troubled heart be stilled,
 One day desire for union will be fulfilled—so *be not
 grieved*.
 Behind the curtain a secret game is being played
 That you know not, so don't give up, nor be dismayed—
nor grieved.
 Once you have set out for the Beloved's abode
 Do not let mere stones and thorns turn you from the
 road—*nor be much grieved*.
 Maya will do her best to thwart your labour,
 But when you have a captain like Noah you will reach
 safe harbour—*so be not grieved*.
 Although the way is full of dangers and seems to have no
 end,
 There is an end to every beginning with this Friend—*so
 be not grieved*.
 When this Friend is the same as God, don't plague him
 with petitions,
 But suffer gladly love's rules, trials and conditions—and
be not grieved." (Ibid. p. 29)

This is also maturity, spiritual maturity. Children cannot accept suffering—they simply cannot be happy while at the same time something makes them miserable, because they lack understanding and control. The lover of God, who has taken seriously the above advice of a Perfect Master, realizes that egoism is immaturity and that to grow up spiritually is to get rid of it—a painful process. Hence Baba says that the lover becomes *daring*. The quest for union with the Divine Beloved becomes for him a

holy pilgrimage, a sacred battle. Alexander the Great had such admiration for the enemy that put up a good fight that sometimes rather than take reprisals he would reward them, after defeating them. The lover welcomes difficulties because he knows that is the Way to the Abode of the Beloved, as his faith is complete.

When a lover of Baba suffers it is sometimes also for Baba's divine Cause, taking on a mite of Baba's universal suffering. This suffering is superior to bliss, because it brings the grace necessary to destroy the impressions of ego-mind and leads directly to the goal of final Liberation, to more than bliss.

Obedience is a great art; for how can one obey when often he doesn't have the spiritual insight into what he is to do. The instructions, wishes and orders of the Master are often ambivalent and mutually contradictory. Very often much time elapses, before the situation referred to by the Master comes up, and by then His order has been forgotten—until too late! And again, the Master expects the love of the lover to reveal to him the will of the Beloved, in which case no order is given. True love gives the insight, as obedience helps to love.

The real lover of God does not flee suffering, whether it be physical or psychic. He does not rationalize, for that is fatal to love. He takes nothing for granted, and therefore he is always watchful, thankful and ever repentant.

Obedience is a spiritual kind of *Koan*, where not only the mind is baffled but also the will. To obey the Master perfectly is impossible. Hence there should be surrender—"Thy Will be done." It is the Art of what Baba terms "becoming dust."

Baba says that the bliss of the lover is in proportion to his prior suffering. As Baba has said the suffering is therefore often a blessing in disguise. Poverty avoids many temptations, and helps build moral fibre and fortitude. Explaining why the lover should not complain, Baba interpreted a *quawali* which was sung for Him. "The Beloved seems very callous. The lover has to stitch up his lips about it. This is what happens when you get that gift of Love from God. Thus, suffering is God's gift to man. The seventh-plane Biblical saint Zacharias sealed his lips," Baba continued, "although he was sawed from head to toe." (Ibid. p. 42) Baba has given us a number

of humorous illustrations to show that both happiness and misery, as well as all other emotions, are states of mind that can be controlled from within. Happiness is mistakenly considered the goal of life but Baba tells us that only when there is "no thought of self" can one reach "the highest state of love." When self is renounced, the true equipoise of desirelessness and self-effacement is attained. We take "God to be present in each and everyone."

When we have learned the Art of love for God, we can also practise the purest form of ethics, which Baba enumerates for us:

We feel for others in the way as we feel for our own dear ones.

Instead of seeing faults in others, we look within ourselves.

Instead of robbing others to help ourselves, we rob ourselves to help others.

We suffer in the sufferings of others and feel happy in the happiness of others.

Instead of worrying over our own misfortunes, we think of ourselves as more fortunate than many, many others.

We endure our lot with patience and contentment, accepting it as His Will.

We understand that the greatest act of devotion and worship to God is not to hurt or harm any of His beings.

God-realization is as impossible as for the ant to become an elephant, Baba says, and yet it happens through the grace of the Perfect Master.

St. Thomas, of the Christian Scholastic tradition, considered God as Supreme Artist; "giving form to every creature is by the Word of God." Coomaraswamy, describing Meister Eckhart's view of art, writes: "Aesthetic experience is compared to the seeing of a play, a play (Lila) played eternally before all creatures, where player and audience, sport and players,

are the same, their nature proceeding in itself, in clear conception and delight, or to an operation in which God and I are one, works wrought there being all living. This sharing of God's vision of himself in his 'work,' which in so far as we have an 'inkling' of it is what we mean by aesthetic experience, is likewise what we mean by Beauty as distinct from loveliness or liking, which have drawbacks in their opposites."*

Meher Baba says: "The form, beauty, music and bliss of the NAD (original divine sound of creation) is beyond description. It is one and the same Universal Being, God, who plays the different roles of stone, metal, vegetable, dumb animal and human being, and through the existence of each of them experiences His own gross and subtle manifestations. It is the same indivisible Being who, through the existence of a realized and spiritually perfect person, experiences His own Real State which is beyond the gross and subtle planes."

The Hindus especially, among Orientals, have a spiritual conception of art. In their pantheon, the God Shiva is Lord of Actors. The universe is the theatre of His action, the world process is His entertainment (Lila). It is perpetual dance, play, or game. Art is universal—each is an artist in the sense that he Lord is in him. Therefore whatever we do, be it creative or routine, should be for God, not for people or money or fame. We see dancers of India first do Arti, worship of Shiva, before the actual program.

Francis Brabazon, Baba's poet-disciple, was asked by Baba if this was possible: "Instead of blood, let the love of God flow through your veins." Francis replied, "Nothing is impossible when You say it." ("The Awakener", Vol. IX, Nos.1-2, p. 43)

Francis writes:

"Art is the act of God—the action of His *likeness* in our hearts: so that we wake from sleeping and begin to dream of thousands of Brightnesses and lovely Form, and our faces grow pale and our bodies thin with love. And we wake from dreaming and behold His lovely Face, and sleep within His breast and know His thought—and all the world

* A. K. Coomaraswamy, "The Transformation of Nature in Art," p.94.

is lost, well lost. And we wake again and know that He and I are One—were One and always shall be."*

Once one begins to see the Hand of the Beloved behind all happenings and circumstances, he learns to laugh. He sees how the Beloved's Love protects him and guides him. He laughs in delight at the wonder of Baba's Love, at the miracle of it manifested to him and through him, in so many hidden ways. Once Baba gives him a glimpse of His Real Self, his laughter becomes bliss: he becomes transformed in consciousness, while still remaining a gross-, subtle-, or mental-conscious person. It is the craftsmanship of one and the same Hand that dispenses grace and nature.

Our search for truth, goodness and beauty should lead us—as it did with Plato, to the Real Teacher and Real Art. All these are to be discovered in Meher Baba, that is, not merely intellectually but through spiritual experience granted by His grace. Princess Norina Matchabelli writes: "Meher Baba has attained unity with God in all His aspects. His creativity consists in awakening love in everyone. The darkened center of the 'I', or the ego-mind, functioning through speculative ideology, comes to be illumined with the Truth only if it is aglow with love. As Truth, the Master is the **Supreme Self Immutable, which is the One-in-all**. He is one with that Reality, **which is the ultimate Cause** behind all effects. In man, this Reality expresses itself as conscience, or the **moral order within**, giving directive guidance to all. The way to Truth is primary **action**, and not bare **speculation**. **God comes to all as the self-sustained Power and Light**. **In the world of duality, He affirms Himself as vibratory order of pure thought**. **As God-realized Truth-individual, the Master supervises the working of this directive order, which finds its manifestation through the multi-sided struggle for the Truth in ways unseen, or through cool, logical reasoning, or through the lucidity of higher intuitive experience.**" ("Fragments from a Spiritual Diary," pp. 24-25)

She also writes: "**Through the Divine Love that flows through Meher Baba perpetually, He transforms the consciousness of those**

* "Stay with God", p. 155.

who come to Him for liberation, that they may know through experience what the philosophers of all times have taught theoretically." (Ibid. p. 5)

The Princess was a famous actress, playing many times the role of Mary, mother of Christ, in the play "The Miracle." This talent was used by Baba in transmitting His thoughts through her mind directly when she brought His message of Love and Truth to Western audiences.

In passing, we might mention that the marvelous artistic creations of Zen Buddhist artists are not products of the mind but a result of attaining Prajna—seeing things essentially, beyond intellect. They "become" that which they depict, after years of meditation.

While the philosopher and theologian admire the tea set, the spiritual aspirant pours and drinks the tea: his thirst for God cannot be assuaged by esthetic, theoretical, symbolic, i.e., partial truth. This love of truth and loyalty to it has brought many, today, face to face with Truth and Love Incarnate, in the person of Meher Baba. They became active servants in His Divine Cause, or, as Francis Brabazon expressed it, using the simile for a saint, a pot with "wings and a spout flying and pouring." Meher Baba's definition of Perfection is the use of Reality in the midst of illusion—"My service is perfect freedom."

The metaphysical basis for this conception of art in its various manifestations—beauty, truth, society—is contained in "*God-Speaks*," by Meher Baba. Man has infinite possibilities but, more important, he can experience and become the infinite, eternal Self. It is in so far as the Self, God, works through us that we create. "Subtract the mind and the eye is open to no purpose," said Eckhart. By the same token, without reference to the soul or Self all life is in vain.

The urgent inner need of the artist for expressing love-in-service connects him with his higher faculties of intuition, insight and inspiration, which derive from the subtle planes of consciousness, and it is this which spectators or audience feel and appreciate. Beauty is not intrinsic to the object d'art but

it is in the soul of the artist who communicates it to the beholder or listener. The art is an expression of one's highest consciousness, with no attachment to the results, as the **Gita** says. Not art for art's sake, for it must have a useful purpose—in response to a deeply felt need, as stated—but neither for gain and certainly, nor, for self-aggrandizement. The self-forgetfulness in art is a hint of what is required for God-realization, i.e., self-annihilation or destruction of ego-mind.

Baba devotes some attention to this special kind of forgetfulness (supplement to **God Speaks**): "The whole philosophy of approaching and realizing the Truth hinges on the question of what we may call forgetfulness (true or internal renunciation)... Thus one may renounce the world, but it is not so easy to forget it.

"Forgetfulness in this special sense thus explains the secret that lies behind all happiness, spiritual or otherwise, that human beings experience. The Sufi term for this forgetfulness is **bikhudi**, and it should not be mixed up—though it often is—with **bihoshi** (unconsciousness).

"Positive forgetfulness (conscious non-reaction to external stimuli, i.e., adverse as well as favourable and pleasurable circumstances), then, is the cure, and its steady cultivation develops in man that balance of mind which enables him to express such noble traits as charity, forgiveness, tolerance, selflessness, and service to others. One who is not equipped with this positive forgetfulness becomes a barometer of his surroundings. His poise is disturbed by the slightest whisper of praise or flattery, and by the faintest suggestion of slander or criticism, his mind is like a slender reed swayed by the lightest breeze of emotion. Such a man is perpetually at war with himself and knows no peace...

"Positive forgetfulness,* although it lies at the very root of happiness, is by no means easy to acquire. Once a man attain this state of mind, however, he rises above pain and pleasure; he

* These few pages should be read in their entirety. Baba shows also that remembrance, as the opposite, "is an attachment of the mind to a particular idea, person, thing or place ... Once it is understood that remembrance causes pain; it follows that the only cure is some kind of forgetfulness ... either positive or negative."

is master of himself. This forgetfulness, to be fully effective for spiritual life, must become permanent (Vairag), and such permanence is only acquired through constant practice during many lives. Some people, as a result of efforts towards forgetfulness in past lives, get spontaneous and temporary flashes of it in a later life, and it is such people who give to the world the best in poetry, art and philosophy, and who make the greatest discoveries in science.

"In such moments of true forgetfulness, there is a mental detachment from all material surroundings in which the poet allows his imagination to soar. An artist, when he gives form to an ideal in which he completely forgets himself and all irrelevant surroundings, creates a masterpiece. The best of philosophy is uttered when a man surveys the problem of life without reference to the ups and downs of his purely personal circumstances; and some of the greatest scientific discoveries have been made in this same frame of mind. Such manifestations of genuine spontaneity of forgetfulness are very rare indeed, and although it is said that poets, artists and philosophers are born and not made, these fleeting phases of real forgetfulness are the result of efforts made in past lives.

"...when a man acquires the true forgetfulness, he enters the spiritual kingdom and passes through different degrees of forgetfulness until the Goal is reached .. Forgetfulness of the world makes one a pilgrim (rahrav; sadhak); forgetfulness of the next world makes one a saint; forgetfulness of self means Realization;* and forgetfulness of forgetfulness is Perfection." (God Speaks, pp. 183-186)

We have mentioned that Zen artists take time to contemplate. So did the medieval monks, who had the necessary freedom from worldly worries in their cloistered life. Their mystical paintings and illuminated pages have a beauty of their

* Baba tells the story of the ardent lover of God, Kalyan, who sought the Darshan of the Perfect Master Janaka but when asked about his identity said, each time he returned, "I am a lover of God," or "I am the rich Kalyan," or "I am the miserable Kalyan." Finally a guard tipped him off to answer, "I don't know," and with that Janaka gave him his Nazar and he then knew himself to be one with God, consciously.

own. But in the West today isolation is a lost art. Hence Baba says: "For the West in particular, external renunciation is inadvisable and impracticable. It should be internal and of the mind from the start. One should live in the world, perform all legitimate duties and yet feel mentally detached from everything. One should be in the world but not of it. The Sufis say, "Dil ba yar, dast be kar" (The heart with God; the hands for work)." (Ibid. p. 180) Baba goes on to quote an example how to live in the world—women walking and conversing and gesticulating while balancing pitchers of water on their heads.

It is interesting that a noted scientist commented on the coincidence of the proximity of the date of Da Vinci's death and Newton's birth, and of his death and the birth of Galileo—the Titans of intellect who ushered in our scientific era. He believes that it was the same soul reincarnating to continue working out the fundamental laws of material science.

Genius, as Baba shows, is not a curious phenomenon of nature, or fortuitous, but earned cultural wealth from previous lives. This applies to art-appreciation as well as to artistic production—they are predominantly 'sattvic' individuals. In a society predominantly commercialized and intolerant of true spirituality, art is gross conscious: in a society where love and spiritual tradition form part of the culture, art is more subtle conscious. The former is true of the Occident, the latter of the Orient. It is from the subtle sphere that artistic energy derives, e.g., the "unstruck music" that Kabir speaks of—the Nad.

Meher Baba also stresses the need for balance of the material and spiritual, mind and heart, the practical and idealistic, because feelings and intellect are involved in the production of a work of beauty or art. Reality of experience is the basis of true art, not merely from the vague subconscious or disciplined talent, as is true today especially in the West. Art can uplift the generality of mankind—those of 'tamasik' and 'rajasik' make-up, their consciousness being awakened to truth-in-beauty even though it be imagination they use. Art gives meaning to life while at the same time it is practical and esthetic.

In this Avataric Incarnation, Meher Baba has shown interest in all forms of art as well as in sport. He Himself has participated, and has encouraged His lovers to do so. Arts and crafts, as well as sport, are a means of forgetfulness and require renunciation of self (Vairag.) Of course, the Avatar's reasons for concern with these things are quite different from ours, for He works on a universal scale.

Baba captured the newspaper headlines when He advised the Poona District cricketers who came for His Darshan and blessing, to play 'bright cricket.' Along with self-supreme surpassing effort which brings out hidden capacities and strength, and together with team work, one should have the humility, humor and objectivity to appreciate a fine play by any one, regardless whether he be team-mate or opponent. Baba described this spirit of sportsmanship to the All-India Cricket Team in the phrase "to shine." This holds true even though one loses the game. Skill, character, knowledge, intelligence, love and co-operation are a part of sportsmanship. Then, Baba says, "see the fun"—everyone has a good time—winners, losers and spectators, and all are spiritually uplifted.

Baba used to play cricket as a youth, and excelled in it. He once said, "Now I play My Divine Eternal Game, which includes cricket. It is good to excel in whatever one takes up, so long as with the excellence there is a feeling of humility, for this leads to love of God, and to love God as He should be loved is the best excellence the highest perfection." (53rd Family Letter, p. 4)

So in aiming for the goal in a game of sport or in other walks of life, one should also have a vision of the Goal of perfect love, which brings to an end the Lila of illusion and begins the Life in Eternity. By exerting ourselves—by doing, loving, meditating, serving above and beyond the usual, more than one would do normally—one eventually attracts the Nazar of a Perfect Master, who has the power to make him one with Himself in consciousness.

Baba trains His disciples, not so much in outstanding leadership, which is a dangerous art because it easily involves "egoism and egotism," but in the art of obedience and surrender

to the Divine Beloved. Baba depreciates the art of giving spiritual counsel unless one has **Adhikar**, authority: "A man becomes wise by practicing, not by preaching virtue. Ability in advising others about virtue is no proof of saintliness, nor is it a mark of wisdom." ("Sayings," p. 15) Never was this more appropriately said than for our own times, when there is so much misrepresentation of truth, and when people are so easily taken in by appearances of sanctity and virtue, due to the superficial life we lead.

Baba warns us not to acknowledge undeserved honors, and especially not to teach BABA to others unless we ourselves put Baba's Teaching into practice, and above all not to become Masters of sorts but first and foremost learn self-mastery. Baba's instructions are: "...engage yourselves in spreading My message of Love, and trying your utmost to live the life you ask others to live. You must **live** what you say, otherwise the best thing would be to keep your mouth shut. There can be no compromise. My lovers should be 100% honest in spreading My message of Love and Truth. Don't let any hypocrisy enter into it. Don't let jealousy or back-biting creep into it, or the thing will be spoiled ... Whatever work you do for Baba, do it honestly. Don't think **you** are doing the work—it is done by God's will." (53rd Family Letter, p. 4)

And we may be sure that Baba Himself is a 100% "All-rounder," as He calls Himself. When Baba gives an order like the above, His disciples sit up and take notice for, on the one hand Baba helps those who bestir themselves, and on the other hand it is **hazardous** to disregard that order; each disobedience, conscious or unconscious, carries with it its own punishment automatically, goading on the laggard. It is all part of Baba's great game of love: "Become Masters of the Art of Divine Love," He tells us.

A true work of art is no burden—"My yoke is light," nor does it bore the art fan, the reader, etc. There is the light touch, life, in it, as in the classical smile of Mona Lisa, for all the seriousness of the theme. Baba's smile is proverbial. This despite His continuous and infinite suffering, His vicarious physical and psychic suffering for the whole Creation. It is an "artless" smile that disarms one completely. It is the Smile of

supreme understanding, love, bliss, power and compassion. Who can fathom the meaning of **that** Smile? It is the same smile that Lord Buddha smiled when He held up a flower in silence, giving rise to the branch of Buddhism called Zen. It is the Smile of Absolute Silence, behind which is the Mystery of Mysteries. There is a picture of Baba smiling, His left foot resting on his right knee—while His shattered hip-bone was still healing. Beside such Art and Mastery all else we might create is artifice. We see Baba's smile when He is among children or playing with His animal pets. How can One who has an "infinite sense of humor" help smiling often? Sometimes it is the smile of Baba's "infinite Patience," and sometimes of apparent surprise. Baba asked a disciple to speak of his daily life, to bless it. He said he used to get up early (7-30) for work. Baba was impassive, though the disciple expected recognition. He continued, "I come home from work at 10:30 P.M." Baba looked surprised, asking, "Ten thirty?" "Yes," said the disciple. When he got home he realized that he used to come home at 9:30. It is Baba's "Infinite Knowledge" that brings a smile to His lips so often. Then again, Baba smiles when hurt by some remark—Once He smiled at a disciple who came for His Darshan from America. Stopping to view the Crown Jewels in London, he recalled the same brilliance had lit Baba's face. Another time when Baba was standing near this same disciple, He smilingly reproved him.

How can He Who created this Tamasha, the Farce that is the creation, help but smile? As Baba smiles, He sometimes seems to be peering through the many planes, spheres and worlds. What is the repercussion of Baba's smile on other planes of consciousness? As Adi K. Irani, Baba's disciple and secretary says, "Who Knows?" Another disciple said that when Baba smiles or laughs when one has done well, He is garnering bliss for that one in perpetuity.

Whether Baba is smiling or serious there is always "a dragging sadness" in His face. Baba's eyes speak worlds.

As the Supreme Artist, Baba is the maker of artists. In 1934, at Zurich, interviews with Baba were arranged for many professional people and artists. To a clergyman (who questioned whether Baba's viewpoint of love was "consistent with

Christian dogma") Baba said, "You see this (pointing to a flower) as a flower; I see God in it." (Perfect Master, p. 251)

To a woman, who was a painter, Baba said, "I am also a painter. I paint the heart of people with colors of spirituality." (Ibid. p. 242).

To a fine man, an artist, who experienced many difficulties in life, Baba said: "There lies the 'fun of the game,' to face and encounter difficulty. If not, life becomes dull and monotonous. One can find spirituality only through opposition. One encountering opposition in life becomes enduring, determined, and unaffected like the wall that stands erect and unaffected against the continued strokes of the ball thrown against it. Art is divine. It can only be rightly expressed if opposed, to bring out the inner beauty." (Ibid. p. 245) Baba says, "...in God's work Maya always opposes, it is necessary. Just as illusion is necessary for the realization of God, so Maya's force in opposing God's work gives strength to the work. The greater the opposition from Maya, the better the result." ("The Awakener," Vol II, No. 3, p. 57) In fact Baba welcomes opposition and even creates it, for that very reason. Baba says that Christ's crucifixion was part of His own divine plan, hence "forgive them, for they know not what they do." Certainly art would have been the poorer had Christ not been crucified, and one is also inwardly enriched by the little crucifixions of one's own life, as Baba points out. Love is the source of creativity, Baba tells us, and love always involves some suffering.

To another woman-artist, Baba said, "I am also an artist, I have the whole world as My canvas. I paint souls..." (Ibid, p. 245)

To a Yoga-student of one, who claimed to be a leading master, and who inquired if he had a right to call himself that, Baba answered, "Everyone has a right to call himself what he likes. It is for others to accept or challenge it. It depends on his living, rather than his teachings." (Ibid. p. 253)

To a woman and her son, an actor, who inquired, "How can one achieve one's ambition?" Baba replied: "Art is one of the means through which the soul expresses itself, and inspires others. But to do that thoroughly, he must have his inner emotions aroused thoroughly. If you feel that something checks you from expressing yourself, then you have to do one thing, that is to adjust your mental attitude thus: Just before you do anything, think, 'I can and will express it thoroughly,' and every time you act you will find that you are more convinced. It is the mind that is closed. There are many actors, who, either through inferiority or through nervousness or dryness, feel that they cannot express their parts, and this negative feeling of the mind checks expressions. While acting, think you are one of the greatest actors of the world and try to express yourself thoroughly. I will help you spiritually. Just think you are the greatest actor." Baba appeared tower over him; he had an impression of much light around Baba's person, and a crushing power emanated from Him. The poor disciple made a hurried exit, excusing himself he knew not for what. Yet, Baba forgives. It was a "crushing" of impressions.

T. L. Vaswani, Professor of English and History, College of MIRA, in Poona invited Baba to give Darshan at St. Mira's High School. He had founded this institution on a spiritual basis. Introducing Baba, he said that three things in particular impressed him about the "Ancient One": "His silence, His simplicity, and His smile—these are His three gifts to us. I bow down to Him with love and humility in my heart... Beloved Baba's spiritual mother blessed Him and there is a beautiful smile on His face. He has blessed many hearts."

Since Baba is Silent, His smile is a means of communication and has to express many things. Baba tells wonderful jokes and loves to hear them told by others. Then He smiles a huge smile. It relieves, however slightly and momentarily, His infinite agony. He also has a roguish smile. Baba is not above playing a practical joke, as when He "swiped" the fountain pen from Dr. Deshmukh, who had come up for a second embrace, to the great amusement of some hundreds of Sahavasees. Baba once said "I am the Universal Thief (of hearts)." This is the art of the God-Man.

Baba smiles when He makes the sign for perfection, a circle with thumb and index finger. Often He smiles when folding His hands in the act of greeting. Sometimes Baba laughs heartily, as when a lady-devotee asked Him for powers—the last thing she needed. Another time His laughter was like that of a man in great pain but was being tickled: that was when a disciple had done a job selflessly but had botched it up in other ways. Once Baba appeared to a lover in a dream; a tear strangely mixed with joy and sorrow appeared as He pointed to the same disciple, who was working selflessly but with lack of love for the Beloved who loved him more than he could ever love even himself.

Baba's smile when embracing a Mast is something wonderful. Here the give and take of love is mutual, for these God-Intoxicated lovers are Baba's beloved Children. They are 'burning up with Divine Love which is a torture to them blissful agony.' It is Baba's Supreme Art to straighten out the tangled inner world which, due to lack of guidance by a Master, is incredibly complex.

Dante was describing Baba the Beloved, when he wrote: "O Light Eternal who only in Thyself abidest, only Thyself dost comprehend, and, of Thyself comprehended and Thyself comprehending, dost love and smile," and "What she appears when she smiles a little—so sweet and strange a miracle it is."

One of Baba's characteristics is His gracefulness. His language is simple and clear, which wonderfully expresses the profoundest thoughts. Baba's gestures and movements convey something of His inner beauty. Baba's sister, Mani, remarked about Baba's "beautiful hands." Once Baba took some dancing lessons from a famous teacher, who is His disciple. She remarked that she wished her other students could hold a pose as Baba did. Baba sometimes takes up one or another musical instrument and plays on it. It is said that He had a fine singing voice, by those who heard Baba prior to His assuming the Avataric state. He was the Manager of a travelling theatrical company, as a young man, during the period of His God-realized state, when He had not yet fully regained normal human consciousness. And not the least of Baba's perfections

is that He never makes a mistake! If He seems to err at times, one may be sure that he is being tested by Baba. Thus a newcomer was once taken in, when Baba was leading the group of Western men to a gate in Meherabad Ashram which, not being used any more, had a pad-lock on it. Baba thus exposes Himself to doubts and criticism, so that the newcomer goes through an inner struggle for faith in Baba's Godhood. Baba has been called the great surgeon of the ego. How expertly He operates on our egoism and egotism! It is due to Baba's infinite Knowledge. Baba is very photogenic; this too is part of His perfect artistry.

In 1954, Baba told the Western disciples visiting Him "I am the One Reality." (The Awakener, Vol. II, No. 3, p. 10) And, "Since Babajan kissed Me on the forehead*, I bow down to My own Self. Why?" One of the group answered, "Because there is nothing else to bow down to." Baba said, "That is My actual experience." (Ibid. p. 36)

When Baba took this group to Sakori, where He had spent seven years before Upasni Maharaj gave Him Divine Knowledge, He sat on the floor of their temple and repeated loudly, "I am the Ancient One." This was meant especially for the ears of a Western newcomer. Baba then gave Darshan in the room of one of the homes there. A Western newcomer climbed atop a bunk bed, like Nicodemus, who climbed a tree to get a view of Jesus as He passed in a crowd. When all had left, Baba gave this individual a long look, and lit up the inside of his head, which may have been the mind. It was a dim light, and had Baba not illumined the mind even that much, there would have been unrelieved darkness! What may have been good for Nicodemus to do did not hold good here, for nobody should sit above the God-Man, the Highest of the High, in a gathering. A Sufi poet expresses the essential point of this experience:

"Beware! say not, 'He is all-beautiful,
And we His lovers.' Thou art but the glass,
And He the face confronting, which casts

* With that kiss Hazrat Babajan gave Baba the Bliss of God-realization. Baba was then just 18.

Its image on the mirror. He alone
 Is manifest, and Thou in truth art hid
 ...If steadfastly
 Thou canst regard, thou wilt at length perceive
 He is the mirror also, He alike
 The Treasure and the Casket."

Contrast this with the **Gatha**, a saying in verse, of a Zen Master:

"**Bodhi** (WISDOM) is not like a tree,
 The smooth shining mirror is nowhere;
 There, as no mirror exists,
 How can dust gather on it?"

Baba has been called "The Light of the Universe" and of Himself Baba says, "I alone exist. Only God is real. There is nothing but God."

To an artist, Baba said, "I love artists, because through art one can express oneself."

The artist through Baba's interpreter: "Up till now, through ideas, he tried to find the source of ideas. Is there any other way to find the Divine? He has painted fine paintings for a church, and seeks a deeper insight.

Baba: "Yes, he has a right to understand. Art, when inspired with love, leads to higher realms. Love art, and that art will open for you the inner life. When you paint, you forget everything except your object. When you are greatly engrossed in it, you are lost in it; and when you are lost in it your ego diminishes; love infinite appears; and when love is created, God is attained. So you see how art can lead one to find Infinite God." (Perfect Master, p. 254)

A doctor and her sister asked, "How can one be a good doctor and use medical science best?" Baba replied: "It is simple. Through love. If you love your work, you can do it

with love, and anything that is done with love has perfect results. To be a good doctor, always have in mind that to you all patients, good or bad, big or small, are equal. Treat with as much care a beggar as you would a millionaire. It is simple and practical, and yet a good many doctors do not observe this simple rule. Only if a doctor realizes that One Infinite God is within all, then that doctor works like a saint. I am a doctor of souls. To me, good or bad, all are lovable; and I help each according to his need. But although it is simple for you to be a doctor, it is very difficult to practice it. So many things interfere—reputation, name, money, society, circumstances, and so on. Is it clear? You can be a good doctor if you keep this in mind. You are such a fine soul. I will help you." (Ibid. P. 255)

Dr. Conant, in defining a genuine professional had distinguished between a trade and a profession by saying that the former is frankly and primarily for "pecuniary gain" while the latter involved love for one's hardly acquired knowledge and art, in the service of others. This is an arbitrary division, although based on the situation as it exists in our society. Baba holds out the ideal of selfless and loving service to all, regardless of the nature of that service. Baba says: "You must keep before you the ideal of that spiritual culture which, once developed, imparts life and beauty to all undertakings—educational, technical, industrial, social, moral and political—and pierces through their differences to produce unity. This results in the development of the highest character in the life of a nation or individual." ('Listen Humanity', p. 180) And "To think that birth or profession is the basis for difference between men is to dream in the past and remain dead to the present. In those things which represent true value in human heritage, all men are equal." (Ibid. P. 181) And again, "Spirituality is not restricted to, nor can it be restricted by, anyone or anything, anywhere, at any time. It covers all life for all time, and it can easily be achieved through selfless service and that pure love which knows no bondage and seeks no boundary.—A mighty surge of this spirituality is about to sweep over the world."

To a painter who wanted 'spiritual insight,' and who said, "I want a better opening for the expression of art, something spiritual," Baba said: "It will come. For the present, whatever you think appropriate for expressing your art, and when you feel something better to express, then automatically and by itself it will open out to you ... There is a painter in India. when we were both young he came to Me and showed Me his paintings. They were fantastic. Though I saw and knew they were not good, yet I said, 'It is good; go on.' After a year or so, he came back to Me and showed Me some more. They were marvellous. I said, 'Go on,' and today he is one of the greatest artists of the East. So whatever you feel like doing, go on doing. It will go on developing by itself. How do you like My painting? (The artist looked round when Baba pointed to the beautiful scenery outside.) All that is My painting."

Artist: "I wish I could paint a thousandth part of it."

Baba: "You will when you get the proper intuition. I will help you." (Perfect Master, 255-256)

To an historian of art, who wanted to know the solution to universal misery, selfishness and fear, Baba said: "The only possible means is the spiritual change of heart. That only will make people satisfied. For instance, why do people drink? Peasants who labour hard all day, when they come home after a day's work, drink for stimulation. But if they were to get something else instead, they would be satisfied with that, until their desire for stimulation disappeared. So, for the satisfaction of cravings created through desire and want, spiritual unfoldment is needed."

Questioner: "But how could spiritual unfoldment come when selfishness and desire are there deep-rooted?"

Baba: "That will be done by love. Love has such power as to unite all hearts."

To a well-known dancer, Baba said, "Dancing is good art if expressed rightly. It has divine qualities, and if properly

done it has wonderful effects. If done wrongly it has the opposite effect... I am happy to see you." (Ibid. p. 257)

We see throughout these conversations how Baba stresses the quality of the heart. Love is the touchstone of creative art. Suffering and obstacles, inner and outer, are necessary to arouse deeper feelings and emotions. Through pure motives and the desire to serve, one gets at the subtle source of art—intuition, inner vision and inspiration. This is the art that is worth cultivating and sacrificing for. It serves a higher purpose in one's life and in society.

In the Universal Drama of Life, the Self, manifested as the Avatar, is the Protagonist, while the perverted ego of man is the antagonist. In fact, all beings are but His own Form, His own Maya-bound selves. He is the Perfect Artist, the Ideal toward which human art strives. His Personality and Life are a model of art—perfection, beauty, grace and love in action in the service of others. The Living Christ uses nature as a means to an end, in accordance with the Divine Plan. His Art is the manifestation of the oneness of life and spirit, above good and evil.

In a statement which describes Baba's conception of Perfection (which Baba IS supremely), Baba says: "To penetrate into the essence of all being and to release the fragrance of that inner attainment for the sake of the guidance and benefit of others, by expressing in the world of forms, truth, love, purity, and beauty—this is the sole game which has any intrinsic and absolute worth. All other happenings, incidents and attainments—can, in themselves, have no lasting importance."

(to be continued)

The Flame of Life*

by Dorothy Levy, U.S.A.

In the beginning of life there is a spark
That grows into a burning flame in every heart.
There are as many flames, as there are names—
And in the fires of life there are many flames—
Hearts that are filled with dreams and desires
Some are seeking fame—others aspire—
To truth, and love, building greater fires
That sparkle, and glow, as the flames grow
Like good seeds we cultivate when we sow
To beautify the earth-flowers and plants that grow.
The fires of life—must dispel pain and strife
Giving joy and love—the purpose of life.
The flames will glow, as the waters flow—
Back to the Ocean (Love) we know—Baba*
As Mother nature—with each season makes a change—
We too, are but shedding cloaks and changing names.

*** My Homage To Sri Sri Meher Baba**

by Prof M. Chakravarti, M.A.

From the very beginning of her history, India has adored and idealised not soldiers and statesmen, not even poets and philosophers, not men of science and leaders of industry who influence the world by their deeds or by their words, but those rarer and more enlightened, whose greatness lies in what they are and not in what they do; men who have stamped infinity on the thought and life of the country, men who have realised the invisible forces of goodness in the world. To a world given to the pursuit of pleasure and power,—to a world given to the pursuit of wealth and glory, they declare the reality of the intangible world and the call of the spiritual life. Their self-possession and self-command, their strange deep wisdom, their exquisite courtesy, their humility and gentleness of their soul, their abounding humanity, proclaim that the destiny of man is to know himself and thereby further the universal life of which he is an integral element.

This ideal has dominated the religious landscape of India for over 4,000 years. If we wish to know the spirit of a religion which has had a long and continuous evolution, we cannot get at it by taking a cross-section of it at any one stage in an eclectic fashion. It is not to be found either in the earlier phases or in its later developments. Any historical process can be understood only by surveying the whole growth and grasping that inner meaning which is struggling for expression at every stage, though never expressed perfectly at any stage. This is the spirit which binds together the different stages of its history, which is present in the earliest as well as in the latest. Now—what is this meaning and what is this spiritual core of the concept of religion?

* From his Speech at Bengal Theosophical Society Hall, Calcutta, on 25-2-66.

With this background of Indian culture, I shall try to estimate the sayings and messages of Meher Baba, who is an Avatar to His disciples and a great spiritual leader to the rest. So far as His sayings and messages are concerned, I may say that He is not a system-builder like philosophers—not a teacher to students. He has come to this world not to teach anything new, not to prove that the Ultimate Reality is one or two or many. He is born not to interpret any philosophical doctrine like many other interpreters—not to be a priest or a clergyman or a Maulana. It is His negative side. What is He in His positive side?

To Meher Baba religion is a matter of realisation. Creeds and dogmas, words and symbols, have only instrumental values. Their function is to aid the growth of Spirit by supplying supports for a task that is strictly personal. The formless blaze of spiritual life cannot be expressed in human words. He who has seen the Real is lifted above all narrowness, relativities and contingencies. When we are anchored in Spirit we are released from a multitude of opinions. Authority is no longer a support.

The quintessence of Meher Baba's advices consists in a very simple word—'Love'. The more you will love—you will grow continuously. This love is not the peripheral excitement of the nerves but to discover the very foundation of life. When it is fully realised, it discovers that the Ultimate Reality is not only "Satyam", but 'Shivam' and 'Sundaram'. This vision of the oneness of 'LOVE' is the source of bliss in human soul. Religion needs forms and formalities at the initial stage, but when the final state is reached the jar is full to the brim without any bubbling sound.

Meher Baba says that He is not a historical personality who has birth and death—He is above birth and death. Again He says that He cannot deny His earthly existence as it is visible to senses.

"Although I take birth for all mankind, fortunate are those who love Me while I am still on earth."

He is invisible in the sense that He has no beginning nor an end. He is the beginningless beginning and endless end.

He does not ask anybody to give up his own religion. He only adds—"Sometimes remember Me—as you remember your dear and near ones." This remembrance will imperceptibly enlighten the aspirant and will bless him with fullness, completeness and luminosity. The "silence" as practised by Meher Baba since 1925 should not be mistaken for inertness.

The bondage which we feel in our practical life comes because of our tendency to seek a cause and finality in life. These tendencies are native with the unenlightened intellect. When the intellect is deconditioned and when it transcends space, time and causality, it is transformed into 'intuition', and the direct vision of Reality dawns. In intuitive insight, consciousness shines in its purest ray serene, because it is free from ignorance and because of delight in its splendour. It becomes free and delightful.

Meher Baba recognises the four states of consciousness as advocated by the Upanishads: waking (jagrata), dream (swapna), deep-sleep (susupti) and Turiya. In the first, the psyche works through the mind and senses. In dream, the psyche works through the mental vestiges. In deep-sleep, it is inactive due to inertia. In the fourth stage, the psychic being has the finest transparency and reveals to us the unique state of transcendence. The Self is exhibited in complete isolation from all psychic meditations. This is inconceivable to intellect, because intellect in conceiving it imposes upon it some conditions of its own. It eludes our grasp but it is the ever-present 'Now' without the projections into the past. In the waking and the dream, the psychic life works through time. In the deep-sleep and in Turiya, it has no reference to time.

I don't think that it will be irrelevant to quote here the following words of Madame Blavatsky:

"There is but One Eternal Truth, One Universal, Infinite and Changeless Spirit of Love, Truth and Wisdom,—Impersonal, and therefore bearing a different name with

every nation. One Light for all, in which the whole humanity lives and moves and has its being. Like the spectrum in optics giving multi-coloured and various rays, which are yet caused by one and the same sun, so theologies and sacerdotal systems are many. But the universal religion can only be one, if we accept the real, primitive meaning of the root of that word."

Meher Baba has given several messages of love, peace and brotherhood, which have universal spiritual significance. Spirituality is not a temporary feeling. It is an abiding settlement, a permanent possession, a feeling to overflow when the personality's emptying is complete. The shifting of the centre of gravity from the individual to the universal is perilous but joyous spiritual adventure.

Dr. Radhakrishnan maintains the same view when he says:

"Spiritualism is the core of a religion. An artist tastes spiritual delight in aesthetic experience. A mystic realises it in his flight from alone to the Alone. A musician feels the throb of the spiritual fervour in sonorous vibration. A Karma-yogi participates of the same spiritual journey by his disinterested and devoted service. None is less spiritual than others. The essence of religion lies in emphasising the spiritual aspect to elevate the soul and transform life preparing it to divine perfection. The more we know us in the process of self-realisation, the more we become sovereign over ourselves. We grow spontaneously without following a routine conformity or fixed code handed from the past. The more we rise in the scale of spiritual realisation the more conflicting forms or apparent diversities tend to disappear. All paths of ascent lead to the hill top. It is immaterial what approach we take. As the birds fly in the air, as the fishes swim in the sea leaving no trace behind, even so is the pathway traversed by the seeker of Truth."

Baba and His Message of Love*

by V. S. Sethuraman

Meher Baba is believed to be an Avatar, an incarnation of God, by those who have had rich spiritual experience and who have reached the 6th or the 7th plane. If some of us in the first or even lower levels call Him only as a "great person" we should be excused for our ignorance; but I want to stress that even Lord Krishna was considered only as a human being by the fond and ignorant shepherds and Gopis among whom He lived.

The idea of Love is the central theme of all Baba's teachings. No doubt this message of Love is as old as humanity itself. But the time has come when it has to be re-emphasized and revitalised. Baba has stated it in a way in which others have not done: "God does not listen to the language of the mind and its routine meditations, etc." He only listens to the language of the heart, "the silent devotion to the Beloved". "God is to be loved and not feared." These statements are like beacon lights to the modern man who is too self-centred and selfish to think of and love others or God.

When Baba says "The aim of life is to love God", He has summarised His great message of Love. Because such noble and pure love, which is the mission of any seeker, leads to the complete surrender of the self to the will of God, It "culminates in the perfect obedience or supreme resignation to the will and wish of the Beloved". This self-surrender is the message of Vaishnavism in India, but, Baba's message of love takes us one step beyond that, because Vaishnavism recognises the duality of God and man, the universal spirit and the individual soul.

But Baba says that the end of such a pure and selfless love for God will be "Union with God". Just as a drop of

* A brief summary of his speech on 28th Feb '66 at Madanapalle.

water on the lotus leaf is anxious to roll down and become one with the entire expanse of water in the pool, the individual soul aims at the **bliss of union with God** through the ascent or the spiral of love.

We should all be grateful to Baba for this great message of hope and peace to mankind at a time when selfishness and materialism seem to destroy the very roots of culture and faith.

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—Editor & Publisher.

News in Brief

72nd Birthday Celebrations of Avatar Meher Baba

Avatar Meher Baba Jabalpur Centre:

At Jabalpur, Beloved Baba's birthday celebrations commenced with 'Akhand Nam Kirtan' on 22nd Feb '66 in the Centre's hall at Raja Sagar's residence, which continued till 24th night. Most of the Baba-lovers kept awake throughout the night offering prayers and performing Sankirtan. On 25th, exactly at 5 a.m. 'arti' was given to Baba by about 200 lovers present on the occasion, which was followed by 'Prabhat Feri' (Procession). In the evening, a public meeting was held in a specially erected 'Shamiana' at the residence of Sri Y. L. Muniraj, which was attended by about 400 persons. Sri R. L. Sharma presided and Sri R. P. Pankhraj, Sri A. K. Hazra, Sri R. Upadhyaya and Sri Meherdas addressed the gathering on different aspects of Baba's life and His messages. The same day, another meeting was held at the residence of Sri P. G. Nandi in Wright Town.

During March and April '66, several meetings were held at different places in the City, to celebrate Baba's birthday, which were attended by hundreds of persons. Baba's film was also shown at some of the meetings. To the meeting arranged by Sri Shyamsundarji of Jat Sarvodaya Kala Mandal on 19th March, Baba sent a special message in Hindi. On 20th, a grand meeting was arranged in the City Bengali Club Hall, which was presided over by Sri Girija Nandan Dube, Principal, Jabalpur Vidyapeeth. Sri Abdul Majid Khan of Chhattarpur, who was the main speaker, declared unequivocally that Baba is the Avatar of the Age and appealed to the audience to love Baba and be the recipients of His all consuming Divine Love. Sri Girijanandan Dube in his presidential speech, said, "Meher Baba is the living embodiment of all divine qualities (of which we read in Vedas and Shastras) of love, beauty, compassion, knowledge, power and bliss." Since He has given again the

oft-repeated call "Come all unto Me", he appealed that it is time that we become wise and surrender our all, good as well as bad, to Him in response to His call and establish a link with Him, who is love incarnate. The entire programme was covered by AIR Jabalpur, to be relayed later in their 'Pradeshik Samachar Darshan' programme. Baba's American Sahavas film was also shown on the occasion, which left an indelible impression on the hearts of the large audience.

Baba-lovers of Rampur arranged a special public meeting in the Electricity Board Colony on 15th April '66, under the presidentship of Sri Girijanandan Dube. Sri R. L. Sharma, Sri A. K. Hazra, Sri R. Upadhyaya and Sri P. G. Nandi addressed the gathering on different aspects of Baba's life and His philosophy. On 17th, they staged a drama "Prem Mahima" written by Sri Bhau Kalchuri at the City Bengali Club Hall, which lasted for more than three hours. The concluding function was arranged by Sri Amiya Kumar Hazra, M.A., at his residence on 24th April, when particular stress was laid on the need to become real lovers and trusted workers of Beloved Baba, by assimilating Baba's Messages of Love and Truth in every day life.

Avatar Meher Baba Centre, Pathardi (Ahmednagar Dt.):

Sri V. R. Bade, LL. B., Pleader and editor "Lokmat" and other Baba-lovers of Pathardi, had arranged Beloved Baba's birthday celebrations on 25th Feb '66 in the entire taluka, in a unique way. With the loving co-operation of hundreds of teachers, celebrations could be arranged in about 11 high schools scattered in more than hundred villages, thus providing an opportunity to about 500 teachers and nearly 20,000 children, to hear Baba's Name and His messages. It was a unique day for the school going children in the entire taluka, to participate in the celebrations. It was undoubtedly Baba's inner guidance, which could secure the willingness of the Asst. Inspector of the Education Dept., Sri Khirode, Taluka Head Master and also of the Sabhapati of Taluka Panchayat. The programme to be followed on the occasion at the respective schools was chalked out, necessary pamphlets in Marathi, containing Master's Prayer, Baba's 72nd birthday Message as also His message to the children in 'Nanhi Duniya' at Dehra Dun,

Repentance Prayer, etc., to be read were got printed along with a special letter of request to the teachers, and kept ready well in advance. While the meeting of the primary teachers arranged to welcome the Sabhapati and Upasabhapati of the taluka panchayat was in progress, Sri Chilka, Asst. Inspector and Sri Babuji Ahvad, M.L.A., referred to Beloved Baba and stressed the need to celebrate His birthday in the respective schools and also made an appeal to the teachers to be the channels for carrying His holy Name to the school children. The entire programme to be followed on 25th was explained by Sri V. R. Bade and a special request was made to the teachers to take with them the necessary pamphlets, Baba's photo and sufficient quantity of 'lemon drops' for distribution as prasad. It was also arranged that the local leaders and workers in the respective places should attend the functions as chief guests. It was reported that with Beloved Baba's grace, the programme was carried out at almost all the places on 25th Feb '66 and thus thousands of children had an opportunity to participate in the birthday celebrations of the living Avatar.

Aligarh:

At Aligarh, Pt. Bhudev Sharma, Sri Todi Singh and other Baba-lovers celebrated Baba's birthday on 25th Feb '66. In this connection, Dr. C. D. Deshmukh from Nagpur visited Aligarh and addressed a number of meetings, arranged specially for the purpose. Dr. C. D. Deshmukh gave a talk on Baba's philosophy in the Post Graduate Department of Hindi (Aligarh University), on 1st March. Prof. Harbanslal Sharma presided on the occasion and Sri Abdul Majeed Khan also addressed the gathering. At the instance of Sri Y. D. Khan, Registrar of Aligarh University, Dr. Deshmukh addressed another meeting on 3rd March, in the Department of Philosophy, under the presidentship of Prof. Jamal Khan. Dr. Deshmukh gave talks on Baba's life and His messages in Maheshwari College, Paliwal College and the Girls Inter College, which were presided over by the respective Principals. He also addressed a gathering at the residence of Sri 'Neeraj', poet-philosopher.

VIJAYAWADA:

At Vijayawada, the beloved Baba's 72nd birthday celebrations commenced on 25th Feb '66 and were concluded on 27th March '66. On 25th, the celebrations commenced with 'Prabhat Pheri' from 3-00 a.m. In the evening, a grand procession with Baba's beautiful cut-out picture placed in a decorated jeep was taken out from Meher Centre, through the important streets of Vijayawada to the Municipal Auditorium, the venue for the public meeting. The procession was headed by the Reserve Police band, Nadaswaram party led by Sri Subbarayana , etc. All the lovers of the place, including ladies and children participated in the procession. Sri Neelamraju Venkata Seshaiyah, Editor 'Andhra Prabha', the leading telugu daily in Andhra Pradesh inaugurated the meeting, and Dr. H. P. Bharucha who specially arrived from Navsari for the occasion delivered his first talk on Baba's life. He gave a series of talks on the following days on Baba's Silence and Suffering and His Message of Love and Truth. He also spoke on 'God Speaks' which was very much appreciated. Sri Annapragda Lakshminarayana, Head of the Commerce Dept., of the local Govt. College rendered Dr. Bharucha's speech into Telugu. Baba's films were also shown on these days. On the last day, i.e., 1st March '66, Dr. Bharucha released the telugu version of 'Meher Vani' translated by Sri A. Lakshminarayana.

In commemoration of the 72nd birthday, Baba's booth was opened in the Industrial Exhibition on 6-3-1966. The booth was beautifully decorated with Baba's cut-out pictures. Copies of The Universal Message, Baba's life sketch and photos were freely distributed to several thousands of persons, who visited the exhibition, which ended on 27th March '66.

Avatar Meher Baba Chittoor Centre:

At Chittoor, Baba's 72nd birthday was celebrated from 25th Feb '66 to 28th Feb '66, in a manner befitting the Avatar of the age. The Avatar Meher Baba Chittoor Centre which has been revived by Beloved Baba's grace on Vijayadasami day of 1965, has been slowly gathering new lovers into Baba's fold. In order to give adequate publicity to the programme, a large

number of cloth banners were displayed across street junctions and all important roads in the town and about 200 wall posters were also exhibited at all suitable places in the town. The lovers in Chittoor had a most thrilling experience on 24th morning, when they received the telegram from Ahmednagar conveying Beloved Baba's Love Blessings to all the lovers. The report from Chittoor Centre reads as follows:

"To drive home to every one of us, that Baba is in our very hearts, and knows everything about us, Our Lord of Lords has made us receive His Divine Blessings on the morning of 24th itself, even before we ever intimated even formally about our celebrations. The time of issue of the telegram at Ahmednagar conveying His Divine Love Blessings, was exactly the same when our printed invitations to Him have been put in the Tapal box at the Post Office at Chittoor town. Only Baba knows the loving feelings of His dear lovers at this end and we are all grateful at this wonderful way of letting His grace fall on us. This encouraged and put new life and vigour in the activity of everyone."

On 25th early morning, gathered all Baba lovers at the Centre premises and after devotional songs, exactly at 5-00 a.m, Beloved Baba's portrait was unveiled by Sri M. Narasimha Rao, Dist. Agricultural Officer, signifying the birth of the Avatar. After Arti and Prayers and messages being read, Sri P. Ramalinga Reddy, President, Gangadaranellore Panchayat Samiti a new lover unfurled seven coloured Baba's flag. After breakfast, a procession was taken out through the main streets of the town, covering about six miles. Later at 'Tapovanam' about 350 poor including about 150 lepers were served with sumptuous food and sweets amidst cries of 'Avatar Meher Baba ki Jai'. In the evening programme arranged at the Centre, Sri Telaprole Munuswamy Bhagavatulu, who had come into contact with Baba through Sri N. Dharma Rao, more than a decade ago, gave a performance in 'Harikatha' style on Baba's life, written by himself, which was very much appreciated.

On the next day morning also, a procession with Baba's portraits was taken out to cover the remaining parts of the town, covering about 8 miles distance on foot. In the evening,

Sri Balagopala Bhaskararaju and party from Tadepalligudem, gave a 'Burrakatha' performance before a large audience. On 27th, was arranged continuous 'Bhajan' programme from 8-00 a. m. to 8-00 p m. And the following day, another 'Burrakatha' performance by Sri Bhaskararaju and party was arranged in another locality of the town. There was a very large gathering, many having come even from the surrounding villages to hear the fascinating story of Meher Baba, the Avatar of the Age and His Message of Love and Truth. Sri M. B. G. Sastry, Executive Engineer, Sri M. Narsimha Rao, Special Dist. Agricultural Officer, Sri R. Ramanatha Sastry, Asst. Director of Industries, Sri B. V. Subrahmanyam and Sri A. B. Gopalan, Supervisors, Zilla Parishad, Sri M R. Chandra, Editor of telugu weekly "Palleseema", Sri A. G. Nagaraja, Editor of telugu weekly "Kalachakram" and several other Baba-lovers have spared no efforts in spreading Baba's Name and Messages in Chittoor.

Avatar Meher Baba Madanapalle Centre:

At Madanapalle, the birth place of Sri J. Krishnamurthy, one of the greatest thinkers of the world and the first headquarters of the Theosophical University under the leadership of Dr. Annie Besant, Beloved Baba's 72nd birthday was celebrated from 27th Feb. to 1st March '66 by Sri G. V. Naidu and several other Baba-lovers, with great enthusiasm and devotion. The celebrations commenced with flag hoisting by Sri B. S. N. Sarma, Retd. Post Master and procession with Baba's photo seated in a well decorated chariot, followed by hundreds of school children and important elite of the town. The main function on 27th morning was inaugurated by Sri T. N. Nagireddy, Chairman, Zilla Parishad, Chittoor and was presided over by Sri N. V. Papanna Gupta. Sri M. B. G. Sastri, Executive Engineer who was the main speaker dealt with Baba's Avatarhood and the philosophical import of His teachings. A booklet in telugu, containing Baba's life sketch and important sayings along with Baba's photo was distributed free to all the persons gathered on the occasion. With poor feeding to about 500 persons, the day's programme concluded with 'Burrakatha' performance by Sri B. Bhaskara Raju and party.

The second day's function was presided over by Sri P. Ramachandran, M.A., Principal, B. T. College, who said that Meher Baba seeks to enfold us in God's love. For, it is only through love of God that we can conquer our egoism and ignorance and attain true peace and bliss. Sri V. S. Sethuraman, M.A., Professor of Economics, who was the main speaker, said that the idea of love is the central theme of all Baba's teachings and that pure and selfless love for God alone would lead to the union of the individual soul with the God. (A brief summary of his speech is published elsewhere in this issue.) Smt. Parvatamma, spoke on the occasion on 'Devotion and Love' in relation to Baba's teachings. In the end, Sangeetha Vidushi Srimati Revati Ratnaswamy entertained the audience with her melodious devotional songs.

On the last day, Sri T. N. Raghunatha Reddy, B. Sc., Proprietor, M/s Madanapalle Motors, presided over the function, and Sri Anjaneya Sarma, M.A., Head of the Telugu Dept., B. T. College, who was the main speaker declared unequivocally that Baba is the incarnation of God. Speaking about Baba's Silence, he said, "In 'Puras' it is written that God assumed the form of Dakshinamurthy to clear the innumerable doubts of the sages. By the time sages had the vision of Dakshinamurthy, in silence alone, all their doubts disappeared. Similarly it has been the experience of many a devotee of Beloved Baba that all his doubts disappear in His Silence. He appealed to the audience to have unstinted faith in Baba, who is the very embodiment of 'love'. The celebrations concluded with music performance by Sangeeta Vidwan Sri D. Pasupathi, Professor of Vocal Music, Sri Venkateshwara Music College, Tirupathi and Sangeeta Siromani Smt. Jaya Pasupathi, B.A. Besides many other devotees, Sri G. V. Narsimhulu Chetty and Sri V. B. Chinna Kesavacharlu under the guidance of Sri G. V. Naidu have spared no efforts to make the functions successful.

Mehersthan, Kovvur:

At Kovvur, Baba's birthday celebrations were held from 25th to 28th Feb '66. After usual prayers and arti on 25th morning, a big procession with Baba's large portrait placed in a

decorated temple chariot followed by band, bhajan party and hundreds of lovers went round the town amidst cries of 'Avatar Meher Baba ki Jai'. In the evening, Sri P. Suryanarayana Deekshita Bhagavatar rendered Baba's life in 'Harikatha' style composed by himself for more than four hours before an audience of 4 to 5 thousand persons. On 26th, Sri B. Purushottam, M.A., from Bapatla spoke on Baba and His Avataric Mission and Sri Y. Brahmanandam, winner of the Rashirapathi Award, entertained the huge gathering with Meher Gitavali sung in classical style and other devotional songs. The next day, Sri T. S. K Sastry, Sri M Butchilingappa Sastry and Sri K. Subramanya Sastry spoke on various aspects of Baba's life and His Messages. Besides Baba Sankirtan by sisters Nagamani and Prameela of Eluru, there was 'Burrakatha' on Baba's life by Sri M. Appa Rao and party from Korukonda. Smt. Rattamma, wife of late Sri Koduri Krishna Rao and her son Sri Prasad had arranged as usual poor feeding for more than a thousand persons also distributed clothes to 72 men and women. On 28th, the Mehersthan function was held under the presidentship of Sri T. S. Kutumba Sastry. Sri Sivudu Siva Rao, Sri Ala Salthiraju, Sri E. Sathiraju were among the speakers on the occasion. The celebrations concluded with the enactment of a drama in telugu adopted from 'Quest' by Mr. Francis Brabazon.

Avatar Meher Baba Srikakulam Centre:

At Srikakulam, Baba's birthday celebrations commenced on 25th Feb '66 early morning with 'Nagarasankirtan', Prayers and Arti. In the evening, the public meeting was held under the presidentship of Sri B. R. Chalapathi Rao, B.Sc., LL.B., Dist. & Sessions Judge and Sri K. Subba Rao, B.A, B.L. Advocate and Sri P. Ramachandran, Head of Civil Engineering Dept., Govt. Polytechnic, addressed the gathering. The next day function was presided over by Sri R. Lakshminarsimham Dora, Ex-Speaker, Andhra Legislative Assembly and Sri M. Rama Rao, and Sri Y. Sreenivasa Rao, Lecturer were the speakers.

town. On 2nd March '66, Sri B. A. Das and party from Ramachandrapuram gave a 'Burrakatha' performance on Baba's life and His mission. In this connection, a series of talks on the Avatarhood of Baba and the theme of creation and its purpose as contained in 'God Speaks' by Sri M. Butchilingappa Sastry was arranged from 8th to 11th March '66, in order to spread Baba's Name and His Message of love and Truth.

Avatar Meher Baba Challapalli Centre:

The Challapalli Centre arranged Beloved Baba's birthday celebrations from 25th to 27th Feb '66, in a specially erected pandal, in which many devotees have participated. During these days, Sri. D. Brahmayya Chowdary, Sri G. V. Brahmayya Naidu and Sri K. V. Narayana Rao and Dr. Sankara Srirama Rao delivered talks on different aspects of Baba's Messages. Sri Kasturi Venkataratnam and party gave a 'Burrakatha' performance on Baba's life and Sri A. Vishwantha Bhagavatar rendered Baba's life story in "Harikatha" style. In this connection, Dr. H. P. Bharucha visited Challapalli on 3rd March and gave a talk on 'God Speaks' in English, which was translated into Telugu by Sri Bh. V. Ramana Rao, B.A., B.Ed, Secretary of the Centre. Most of the educated and elite of the town attended the meeting and were very much impressed. Sri. S. R. Y. Ramakrishna Prasad Bahadur, B.A. (Hons.), B.L., has contributed much for the success of the celebrations, at this place.

Avatar Meher Baba Jinnur Centre:

At Jinnur, Beloved Baba's birthday was celebrated on 25th Feb '66. As usual, the celebrations commenced with Sankirtan, Bhajans and Arti in the morning. Sri B. L. Narsaraju, Secretary of the Centre spoke on Baba's life. Sri K. Venkat Rao, recited poems on Baba, which were composed by himself. In the evening, a procession was taken out and the public meeting was held in the premises of the local High School, under the presidentship of Sri P. Kanakabhushanam, M.A., B.Ed., Head Master. Sri B. L. N. Raju was the main speaker on the occasion.

Avatar Meher Baba Malkipuram Centre:

Baba-lovers at Malkipuram celebrated Beloved Baba's birthday in a different manner. With the kind co-operation of Sri Mangena Satyanarayanamurthy, they secured a tractor, decorated it nicely with coloured papers, etc. and placed a beautiful big size Baba's cut-out picture and went through many villages in the Razole Taluk from 7-00 a.m. to 6-00 p.m., halting at different places and doing Sankirtan and giving talks on Baba's life and His Messages. In adopting this unique way, they could spread Beloved's Name on this sacred day to thousands of people in the remotest corners of the villages in the taluk.

Bheemunipatnam:

At Bheemunipatnam, Beloved Baba's birthday was celebrated from 25th Feb. to 7th May '66, with daily prayers and Sankirtan by different lovers at different places. On the first day and the last day, the functions were arranged at the Centre from early morning till midnight and on the remaining days, the functions were arranged at the residences of the lovers. On one of these days, i.e. on 10th April, poor feeding for about 1500 persons including children was arranged, out of the contributions of Baba-lovers. On this occasion, the following telegram was received from Beloved Baba:

"Your poor feeding programme feeds Me with love of My lovers at Bheemunipatnam and makes Me very happy. My Love and Blessings to you and all the lovers who participated."

On some of the days, the celebrations were held in the neighbouring villages also. An important event, which needs mention is that Sri Yogananda Swamiji, who is an ardent devotee of Jagadamba had arranged Baba's birthday function at his Ashram on 22nd April and also instructed many others to celebrate the holy day. He also attended functions at many of these places.

(Continued from 2nd cover page)

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