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# MEHER BABA JOURNAL

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May 1940

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# MEHER BABA

## JOURNAL



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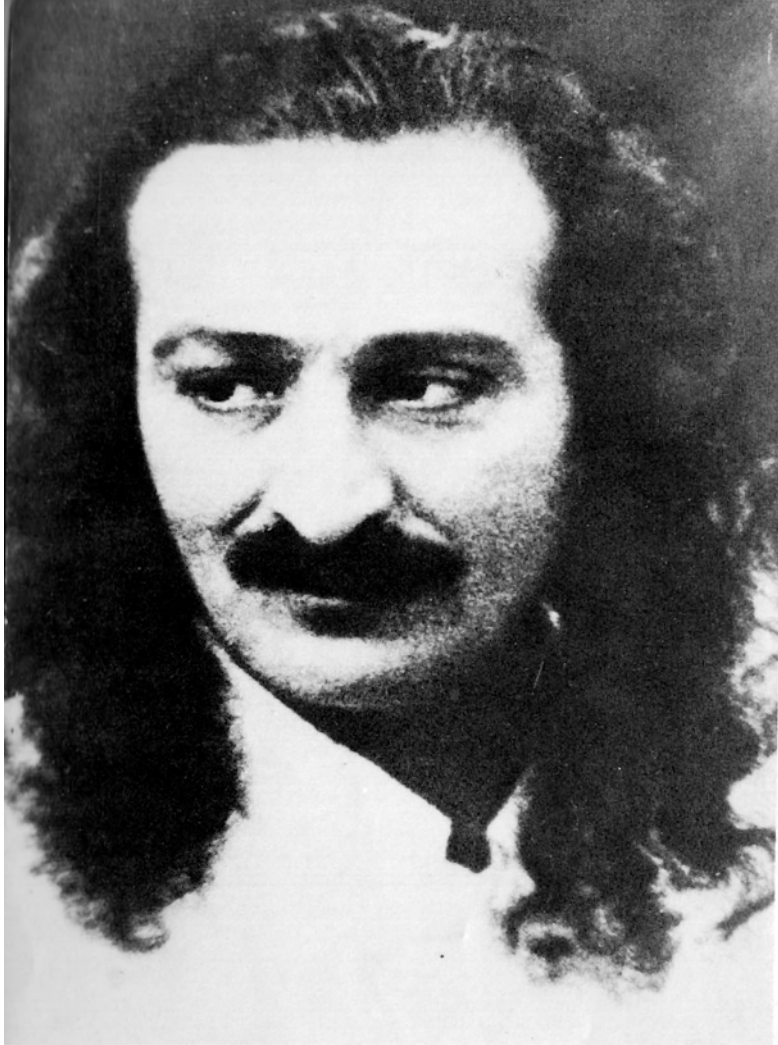
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“I have not come to teach but to awaken”  
—SHRI MEHER BABA



Shri Meher Baba

# MEHER BABA

## JOURNAL

VOL. 2

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### *Meher Baba* *on* *God-Realization*

TO arrive at true self-knowledge is to arrive at God-realization. God-realization is a unique state of consciousness. It is different from all the other states

**To Realize the  
Self is to Realize  
God**

of consciousness because all the other states of consciousness are experienced through the medium of the individual mind whereas the state of God-consciousness is in no way dependent upon the individual mind or any other medium. *A medium is necessary for knowing something other than one's own self: for knowing one's own self, no medium is necessary.* In fact, the association of consciousness with the mind is definitely a hindrance rather than a help for the attainment of realization. The individual mind is the seat of the ego or the consciousness of being isolated. It creates the limited individuality which at once feeds and is fed by the illusion of duality time and change. So, in order to know the self as it is, consciousness has to be completely freed from the limitation of the individual mind. In other words, the individual mind has to disappear but consciousness has to be retained.

Throughout the past life-history of the soul, its consciousness has grown with the individual mind and all the workings

of consciousness have proceeded against its background. *Consciousness has therefore come to be firmly embedded in the individual*

**Consciousness is Intertwined with the Mind** *mind: and it is inextricable from this setting with which it has been woven. The result is that*

*if the mind is in abeyance consciousness also disappears. The intertwining of the individual mind and consciousness is amply illustrated by the tendency to become unconscious when there is any effort to stop mental activity through meditation.*

The everyday phenomenon of going to sleep is not in its nature essentially different from the lull experienced during meditation; but it is slightly different in its *origin*. Since the

**Explanation of Sleep** *individual mind is continuously confronted by the world of duality it is involved in ceaseless conflict;*

*and when it is wearied by its unrelieved struggle it wants to lose its identity as a separate entity and go back to the Infinite.* It then recedes from the world of its own creation and experiences a lull; and this lull is also invariably accompanied by the cessation of consciousness.

The quiescence of mental activity in sleep entails the complete submerging of consciousness; but this cessation of mental life and conscious functioning is only temporary because *the*

**Resuming Wakefulness** *impressions which are stored in the mind goad it to renewed activity.* After some time, the

psychic stimuli of impressions are responsible for stirring the mind and reviving the conscious functioning which is carried through its medium. So, the period of sleep is followed by the period of wakefulness and the period of wakefulness is followed by the period of sleep according to the law of alternating activity and rest; but as long as the latent impressions in the mind are not completely undone there is no final annihilation of the individual mind or the emancipation of consciousness. In sleep the mind temporarily forgets its identity; but it does not finally lose its individual existence. And when the person is back to wakefulness from



sleep he finds himself subject to his old limitations. There is resurrection of consciousness; but it is still mindridden.

The limited mind is the soil in which the ego is securely rooted; and this ego perpetuates ignorance through the many illusions in which it is caught. The ego

**The Obstacle of the Ego** prevents the manifestation of the infinite knowledge which is already latent in the soul; and it is the most formidable obstacle in the

attainment of God. A Persian poem truly says, "It is extremely difficult to pierce through the veil of ignorance; for there is a rock on fire". Just as the flame of fire cannot rise very high if a rock is placed upon it, a desire to know one's own true nature cannot lead to the Truth as long as there is the burden of the ego on consciousness. *Success in finding oneself is rendered impossible by the continuation of the ego which persists throughout the journey of the soul.* In old age, the aching tooth continues to give untold trouble for months together because it does not get easily uprooted though it might have been moving within its socket for a considerable period of time: in the same way, the ego which might become feeble through love or penance is yet difficult to eradicate and persists till the very end. Though it becomes more and more loose as the soul advances on the Path, it remains till the last stage of the seventh plane.

Ego is the centre of all human activity; and the attempts of the ego to secure its own extinction might be compared with the attempt of a man to stand on his own shoulders. Just as the eye cannot

**The Difficulty of Overcoming the Ego** see itself, the ego is unable to end its own existence. All that it does in order to bring about self-

annihilation only goes to add to its own existence: *it flourishes on the very efforts directed against itself.* Thus it is unable to vanish altogether through its own desperate activity, though it succeeds in transforming its own nature. The vanishing of the ego is conditioned by the melting away of the limited mind which is its seat.

*The problem of God-realization is the problem of emancipating consciousness from the limitations of the mind.* When the individual mind is dissolved, the

**Parallel between  
Sleep and God-  
Realization**

whole universe which is relative to the mind vanishes into nothingness and consciousness is no longer tied to anything. Consciousness is now unlimited and unclouded by anything and serves the purpose of illuminating the state of the Infinite Reality. While immersed in the bliss of realization the soul is completely oblivious of sights or sounds or any other objects in the universe: and in this respect it is *like sound sleep*. But there are many important points of difference which distinguish God-realization from sound sleep. During sleep, the illusion of the universe vanishes since all consciousness is in abeyance: but there is no conscious experience of God since this requires the complete dissolution of the ego and the turning of full consciousness towards the Ultimate Reality. Occasionally when the continuity of deep sleep is interrupted by brief intervals, the soul may have the experience of retaining consciousness without being conscious of anything in particular. There is consciousness; but this consciousness is not of the universe. It is consciousness of *nothing*. Such experiences anticipate God-realization in which consciousness is completely freed from the illusion of the universe and manifests the infinite knowledge which was so far hidden by the ego.

In sleep, the individual mind continues to exist though it has forgotten everything including itself; and the latent impressions in the mind create a veil between

**Difference between  
Sleep and God-  
Realization**

the submerged consciousness and the Infinite Reality. Thus, *during sleep, consciousness is submerged in the shell of the individual mind; but it has not yet been able to emerge out of that shell*. So, though the soul has forgotten its separateness from God and actually attained unity with him, it is unconscious of this unity. *In God-realization, however, the mind does not merely forget itself but has (with all its impressions) actually lost its*

*identity*: and the consciousness which was hitherto associated with the individual mind is now freed from all its trammels and brought into direct contact and unity with the Ultimate Reality. Since there is now no veil between consciousness and the Ultimate Reality, it is fused with the Absolute and eternally abides in it as an inseparable aspect promoting an unending state of Infinite Knowledge and unlimited Bliss.

The manifestation of infinite knowledge and unlimited bliss in consciousness is, however, strictly confined to the soul who has attained God-realization.

**God-Realization is Personal** The Infinite Reality in the God-realized soul has the explicit knowledge of its own infinity;

but such explicit knowledge does not belong to the same reality in the unrealized soul, who is still subject to the illusion of the universe. If God-realization had not thus been a personal attainment of the soul, the entire universe would come to an end as soon as any one soul gets God-realization. However, this does not happen, because *God-realization is a personal state of consciousness belonging to the soul who has transcended the domain of the mind*. Other souls continue to remain in bondage and though they too are one day bound to have God-realization they can only have it by freeing their consciousness from the burden of the ego and the limitations of the individual mind. Thus the attainment of God-realization has a direct significance only for the soul who has emerged out of the time-process.

After the attainment of God-realization, *the soul discovers that it has always been the Infinite Reality which it now knows itself to be* and that its looking upon

**What was Latent in the Infinite becomes Manifest** itself as finite during the period of evolution and spiritual advancement was in fact an illusion. The soul also finds out that the infinite knowledge and bliss which it now

enjoys have also been latent in the Infinite Reality from the very beginning of time and that it merely became manifest at the moment of realization. Thus the God-realized person does not actually become something

different from what he was before realization. He remains what he was: and the only difference which realization makes in him is that *previously he did not consciously know his own true nature and now he knows it*. He knows that he has never been anything other than what he now knows himself to be and that what he has been through was but a *process of finding himself*.

The whole process of attaining God-realization is just *a game in which the beginning and the end are identical*. The attainment of realization is nevertheless

a distinct gain for the soul. There are two types of advantages. One type of advantage consists in *getting what he did not previously possess*. The other type of advantage consists in *realizing fully what we really are*. The value of God-realization is of the second type only. However, this creates an infinite difference in the soul which has God-realization and the soul which does not have God-realization. Though the soul which has God-realization does not have anything new which it did not in a sense already possess, its explicit knowledge of all that he really is, has been and will ever be, makes God-realization all-important. The soul which is not God-realized experiences itself as being finite and is constantly troubled by the opposites of the fleeting joys and sorrows; but the soul who has realization is lifted out of them and experiences *the Infinite Knowledge and the Unlimited bliss of being God-conscious*.

In God-realization, the soul drops its separate consciousness and transcends duality in the abiding knowledge of identity with the Infinite Reality; *the*

*shackles of limited individuality are broken; the world of shadows is at an end; the curtain of illusion is for ever drawn; the feverishness and the agonizing distress of the pursuits of limited consciousness are replaced by the tranquillity and bliss of Truth-consciousness; and the restlessness and fury of temporal existence are swallowed up in the peace and stillness of Eternity.*

#### **The Value of God-Realization**

# *Individuality and Value\**

## I

### IDEALISM IN MODERN WESTERN PHILOSOPHY

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

“The Self alone is real and Absolute.”—*Shri Meher Baba*.

IN the history of philosophy, the word 'Idealism' does not have any fixed meaning on which its exponents or critics might be said to have been agreed. Idealistic philosophy has proved so elastic in the hands of philosophers that it has given rise to widely different systems which come into conflict with each other owing to their divergent doctrines on many important questions. Some philosophers have refused to use the term. Bosanquet, for instance, speaks of his philosophy as being speculative instead of idealistic. There is not any particular full-fledged system of doctrines which

can exclusively call itself idealistic. At the same time it is possible to group together under that appellation a variety of systems animated by a common spirit and embodying certain fundamental tendencies.

Idealism may be broadly defined as *a philosophy which attempts to understand man and the universe chiefly through the examination of the nature and the significance of ideas and ideals, of knowledge and value.*

It is characteristic of idealism to regard the relation between the subject and the object as a starting point of

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\* Under the title "Human Personality", a series of six articles (based upon Dr. Deshmukh's Thesis submitted to the University of London in 1933) appeared in the issues of this Journal from June 1939 to November 1939. This series of seven articles on "Individuality and Value" is also based upon and adapted from the same Thesis. From both these series, it may be gathered that the *free critical speculation in Modern Philosophy, from its own angle of approach, tends to approximate, in varying degrees, Shri Meher Baba's expositions concerning the eternal Theme of God and Man.*—The EDITOR.



philosophy and give in this relation a certain *primacy to the subject*. Descartes may be said to have founded Modern Idealism by his insistence on his dictum "Cogito ergo sum". In his conception of the subject as the only indubitable reality and as such a necessary starting point for philosophy, he initiated a tendency of thought which was carried further by successive idealist thinkers with new results.

In England, Berkeley gave an unique expression to this tendency by evolving a system of spiritual pluralism in which matter came to be displaced by mind-dependent ideas. The world of object is, on his view, entirely dependent on some mind—human or divine.

Berkeley arrived at this conclusion through the criticism of the representative theory of ideas. On this theory the individual was supposed to be enclosed within the circle of his own ideas. It was only through the medium of his ideas that he could have any access to the world of external reality. But if the separation of ideas and the objects to which they refer is once accepted in principle, the existence of objects

external to the individual becomes questionable since, ex-hypothesi, he has access only to his ideas. Berkeley, therefore, dropped the world of external objects altogether and maintained that the essence of the existence of things lies in their being perceived.

We cannot hope to prove anything of great consequence to philosophy by insisting that we cannot know anything to exist unless by that very act it enters our field of knowledge. This only means that the unknown thing cannot be proved to exist. So far as the actual dependence of the object on the mind is concerned, we do not seem to be able to prove anything conclusively. The doctrine, "esse is percipi" may be true although it cannot be proved to be true. But whether true or false it does not help us to understand the true significance either of the subject or of the object.

Owing to the failure of Berkeley to recognise the objectivity of knowledge, he could restore objectivity to his ideas only by reverting unconsciously to the representative theory of ideas which he him-

self attacked. Knowledge, in his view, was a result of the participation by the individual in the divine ideas. In knowledge the individual was supposed to participate in the mind of God. Being in the mind of God, ideas were not encased in the mind of any particular individual but were accessible to all individuals.

But although these ideas are supposed to exist in the mind of God, they do not exist by themselves. They are dependent on the mind of God for their existence. The only self-existing entities in the metaphysics of Berkeley are the spirits of finite individuals and God. Everything else is dependent on and derived from them. This idealistic principle of the primacy of the subject was, however, lost sight of in the system of Hume who carried the doctrine "*esse is percepi*" to its logical extreme by resolving the spirit itself into a mere bundle of ideas.

On the continent Idealism allied itself with rationalism and sought to counteract materialism. It is true that in Spinoza's pantheism the category of subject came to be replaced by the cate-

gory of substance, which swallowed the individuality of man and God. But the rights of the subject were emphasized again by Leibnitz, and Wolf even went so far as to attempt to deduce the world of objects from the laws of thought. We thus find in Wolf a logical fanaticism which exaggerates the importance of the mind at the expense of its objects. Kant, however, made the critical effort to adjust the rights of both.

Kant's critical idealism is built on the ruins of formalism and empiricism in their extreme forms. His main contribution to the study of the nature of the subject has been to emphasize the part played by the activity of the human mind in the construction of the objects of experience. He showed that no experience is possible apart from the function of the Unity of Apperception through the application of the categories of the Understanding to the sensuous manifold. And this Unity of Apperception is not abstract but synthetic, not an entity but a function which lives in the synthesis of the objects of experience. Yet it is the very condition of there being any

experience at all. This answered Hume and reinstated the subject.

Kant was, however, not equally successful in the attempt to reinstate the object. In spite of his uncompromising condemnation of subjectivism he himself gave the impression that the world of objects of experience is solely the work of the individual mind. He failed to emphasise the universality of the activity which creates the world of experience. Here Berkeley had the advantage of attributing the activity which creates the objective order not to any finite mind but to God. It has been said that "Kant should have allowed to the principle which is not within us more kinship with the intelligence which is; Berkeley to us more kinship with the intelligence which is not.\*

In his enthusiasm to emphasize the function of the individual mind in building the world of experience, Kant even went so far as to make the whole of know-

ledge a transcendental illusion. The distinction between the world of knowledge and an unknown reality behind it is a fundamental part of his philosophy. But as all agnosticism is a "bed-ridden compromise" he has driven to see some light on the nature of the noumenon by turning to the field of practical reason. He based his conclusions about the nature of reality, on the implication of practical life. He thus initiated a line of thought which seeks in value the clue to the nature of reality.†

In the later development of German philosophy the unknown reality behind the known phenomena was quietly dropped and attempt was made to substitute for it the Ego as an Act, as in Fichte's practical Idealism, or a blind Will as in Schopenhauer's system. It was, however, given to Hegel to take over the result of his predecessors and work out an

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\* "A comparison of Kant's Idealism with that of Berkeley". Annual Philosophical Lecture to the British Academy by H. W. B. Joseph, p. 20.

† Kant's clear-cut distinction between faith and knowledge was an outcome of his view that knowledge is true not of the noumena but only of the phenomena.

imposing system of Objective Idealism.

Hegel insists that the Absolute is not to be conceived as a substance but as a subject. It is an immanent reality which is self-conscious. It lives in the development of Nature and Mind, but it is at the same time self-complete. It is "the result together with its becoming". It is both an eternally self-realized and complete self-conscious whole and the principle immanent in the process of development, characteristic of natural and human history.

The Absolute of Hegel is not a mere subject. Mere subject and mere object are abstractions. Both presuppose each other and are only aspects of one whole. *The object is only an expression of the subject. The subject recognises itself in the object and comes to self-consciousness through it.*

All the manifestations of the spirit in Art, Morality, Religion or Philosophy are, therefore, data relevant for the study of the subject. Every experience reveals the nature of the spirit. It is, therefore, full of significance for the attempt to form a comprehen-

sive notion of the self-conscious subject.

Hegelianism has been a powerful influence in modern British philosophy. But at the same time Berkelianism, which sprang from the same soil, also remained an animating principle of thought. We can, thus, notice two tendencies of thought which have on the whole remained distinct. They give rise to two types of idealism.

The main difference between these two types has been clearly indicated by Hoernle. As he says, "the type which follows Berkeley throws emphasis on the problem of existence whereas the type which follows Hegel throws emphasis on the real nature of that which exists. The former builds its theory on the definition of existence. The latter strives to elicit a comprehensive view of the nature of the world as a whole from a reflective survey of all different forms of experience."\* The former culminates in some form of pluralism (theistic or atheistic) while the latter leads to some form of absolutism.

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\* *Idealism*, p. 146.

be prosecuted, rather than a concurrence in any definite results that have yet been attained by it”.

Inspired though these thinkers were by common idealistic principles it is but natural that they did not arrive at identical conclusions. While accepting self-consciousness as an ultimate category, Seth in his second series of Balfour Lectures, struck a discordant note with regard to some aspects of Hegelianism. His protest was mainly directed against the "identification of the human and the divine consciousness, or to put it more broadly, the unification of consciousness in a single self".\*

But the question of the nature of the individual was also taken up by another Idealistic school of thought whose chief exponents were Bradley and Bosanquet. This school was more closely allied with Hegelianism although it was

equally critical about some of its aspects. It sought to analyse the content of the consciousness of the individual and put it to the severe test of inclusiveness and consistency. Bradley employed his damaging dialectic to undermine the validity of the concept of the self as something ultimate, on the ground that it is riddled with contradictions. In his *Absolute*, therefore, all the finite selves are somehow transmuted. And it is in itself far from being anything like a self. In the metaphysics of Bosanquet the absolute is conceived as a kind of individual but it leaves no room for any finite individuals. It includes all finite individualities but they are so transmuted in its existence that they have no independent existence of their own. *The problem of individuality thus becomes the central problem in Modern Idealism.*

*(To be continued)*

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\**Hegelianism and Personality*, p. 215.



In T. H. Green we have one of the earliest and most prominent British Hegelians. In a review of John Gaird's philosophy of religion he says, "that there is one spiritual self-conscious being of which all that is real is the activity and the expression; that we are related to this spiritual being not merely as parts of the world which is its expression, but as partakers in some inchoate measure of the self-consciousness through which it at once distinguishes itself from the world; that this participation is the source of morality and religion; this we take to be the vital truth which Hegel had to teach."\*

It is, however, interesting to notice that along with his strongly pronounced Hegelianism, Green had a curious resemblance to Berkeley. Berkeley also held that real things are the expression of God's activity. For Green, however, God is not something essentially outside us and concealed behind his ideas. He is within us "communicating" his nature to us in Art, Morality, Philosophy and Religion.

Green followed Kant's lead in

rejecting the sensational atomism of Hume. He brought out clearly that instead of regarding self-consciousness as one term in the series of impressions which it connects we must regard it as being basal for knowledge as well as morality. He also rejected the naturalistic explanations of consciousness which make it only one of the events in a succession of natural events, because these explanations could not account for the consciousness of succession. The unifying spiritual principle of self-consciousness has to be equally present to all the terms of the succession and is, therefore, essentially out of time.

Soon after Green's death a number of philosophers (among them Seth, Haldane, Bosanquet and Sorely) published "Essays in Philosophical Criticism". The dominating idealistic tendency of these writers was symbolized by its dedication to the memory of Green, and was brought out by Edward Gaird in the preface. There he speaks of an agreement among them "as to the direction in which inquiry may most fruitfully

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\* *Works*, Vol. III, p. 146.

# *Sacred Verse in East and West*

BY WILL BACKETT (LONDON)

IN India, the birth of music was co-eval with the gods, and in the West the spiritual and material aims and aspirations of mankind have found expression in song, music and dance throughout the centuries. "Shiva" had under His special care, dancing, the drama and vocal and instrumental music, for all of which *Sangita* is the name throughout India. The dance of Shiva symbolises the rhythmic motion of the Universe; in the Old Testament of the Western scriptures, we read of the sacred dance before the Lord.

In times of religious revival, there has been great musical activity, as under Chaitanya's leadership and inspiration in India, when *Sankirtan* and *Nagarkirtan* were first started, as well as in an earlier century there, when in the West, Gregory the Great was developing music in Europe for religious purposes, and some of his influence continues to this day in such sacred music of the Churches. The traditional songs

of Tan Sen, the celebrated singer at the Court of Akbar, in the sixteenth century, are still maintained by direct descendents of his disciples in Rampur State to this day, and simple religious songs were cultivated by Tukaram, and other *Bhakti* (religious) leaders of the Mahratta land; everywhere in the villages, the lives of Rama, Sita, Savitri and the saints of the *Bhakti* movement are celebrated in song dramas, and in the West also, many religious revivalists in various sects of the Church have composed hymns which are still in use. Some thousands of these songs, expressing the aspiration of the soul, as the particular *shariat* (outward form and ceremony of religion) of the time and place, are in use in the English language alone, some borrowed from other languages, and some whose authorship is so remote as to be unknown. The work of well-known musicians, as anthems, with words from the Hebrew Prophets, psalms,

and New Testament, are also rendered in congregational worship.

The devotional life of religion, centres largely around the Great Ones who have from before the dawn of history, manifested the One Infinite Self in their own lives.

"If My servants ask thee about Me, lo I am near.

We are nearer to him than his own neck-vein.

In the earth are signs to those of real faith, and in your selves.

What do you not see?"

—(*Qoran*).

"Know Thyself", written high on the temple of Delphi, and the words of Marcus Aurelius: "Look within—within is the Fount of Life, and it will ever bubble up if thou wilt ever dig", show that the ancients knew that path to the Light, which this prayer also seeks:

"WESAK DAY PRAYER"

"Lord Buddha, on the Wesak Day

Inward I turn my eyes, to pray

That thou mayest blossom in my heart.

May all my actions be sincere,

Witnessing to Thy Presence, here;

Though silence is more dear to Thee

Yet may my words most truthful be,

And let my meditations rise  
Till I can see with Buddha eyes.

And since 'tis not enough to start

Treading the Path, give me, I pray,

The strength to battle every day

Till Thou hast blossomed in my heart."

—(Poems printed privately in London, 11-3-31, KIM TOLHURST).

Yet on this Path, the Guide is needed.

Yearning for the Living Master has been expressed by many of Shri Meher Baba's devotees:—

"O my Beloved, how shall I put into words my tremendous longing for Your Love?

Speechless do I become when my heart is all aflame with the yearning for Your Love.

Surely without You, this entire world is but an empty bubble, lasting for a while and devoid of meaning.

O my Beloved, for ever be it mine to be the most humble servant and devotee of your sacred Feet. "

—(DR. C. D. DESHMUKH, M.A. PH.D.).

This is the refrain in a well-known Western hymn:—

"O come to my heart Lord  
Jesus, there is room in my  
heart for Thee "

and those who have sung those words with others in church services, will recall the great upliftment all share with hearts united and thoughts attuned to Him.

At Shri Meher Baba's birthday celebrations at Nasik in 1937, some of his Western devotees were present and heard one of India's great Singers, improvising for over an hour this theme to Krishna, which all hearts there could echo in the Presence of our Beloved Master:—

"O Beloved, go not to Thy  
great temple at Mathura,  
Nor to the house of the rich,  
where are great preparations,  
But come to the hut of the  
poor man,  
Who has nought to offer but  
a cup of cold water, and  
the love of his whole  
heart."

On another occasion at Meherabad after Baba had been explaining the *Gita* to some of Western disciples, he gave them the following Western Hymn to memorise and added:

"Everything in the *Gita* is expressed in these few lines by the Western mystic:—

"Take my life and let it be,  
Consecrated Lord to Thee,  
Take my moments and my  
days,  
Let them flow in ceaseless  
praise

Take my hands and let them  
move,  
At the impulse of Thy Love,  
Take my feet and let them be,  
Swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my voice and let me  
sing,  
Ever only, for my king,  
Take my lips and let them be  
Filled with with messages  
from Thee."

Take my silver and my gold,  
Not a mite would I withhold,  
Take my intellect and use,  
Every power as Thou shalt  
choose.

Take my will and make it  
Thine,  
It shall be no longer mine,  
Take my heart, it is Thine  
own,  
It shall be Thy royal throne.

Take my love, My Lord, I  
pour  
At Thy feet its treasure store,  
Take myself, and I will be,  
Ever, only, all for Thee".

—(FRANCIS RIDLEY HAVERGAL, 1874).

Such surrender is the object of all worship. Shri Meher Baba has written:

“Almost the whole humanity is concerned with *Bhakti Yoga*, which in simple words means the art of worship. But it must be understood in all its true aspects, and not merely in a narrow and shallow sense, in which the word is commonly used and interpreted. The profound worship based on the high ideals of philosophy and spirituality, and prompted by divine love, doubtless constitutes true *Bhakti Yoga* ... Nevertheless it may be said that the ritualistic worship which the masses of humanity confuse with religion, is *Bhakti Yoga* in its incipency or initial stage. ...The average man should follow his creed, whatever it be, in all sincerity, regardless of rewards to come, and with the only aim and object of:—

*I want nothing but you (God)*  
But when I say about following one's own creed, I mean that everyone should be free to base his worship on the religious ideals and methods that appeal to him most, and not that one should stop dead at believing or disbelieving in certain statements in a particular scripture about subjects that are generally

beyond the sphere of intellect. It is the act of worship from the heart, and not thoughts and beliefs that counts in the religious province.”

An Eastern Psalmist has sung:

“Seek refuge in the true illumination. For the Light of His Wisdom is Infinite.

Seek refuge in that which is beyond understanding.

Excellent is the Light of His clear Wisdom. Therefore is He called the

Buddha of Clear Shining.

Take refuge in the Mighty Consoler. Wheresoever His Mercy shineth throughout all the worlds, men rejoice in its gladdening Light.”\*

The note of self-surrender is expressed in East and West, in the same words:—

*“Thy will be done, O Lord and Master,*

*Thy Will be done, O my Purpose and Meaning.*

O Essence of my being, O Goal of my desire,

O my speech and my hints and gestures.

O All of my All, O my hearing and my sight.

O my whole and my element and my particle.”

—MANSUR HALLAJ.

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\* Buddhist Psalms “Wisdom of the East” Series translated from the Japanese.



"Renew my Will from day-  
to day,  
Blend it with Thine, and take  
away,  
All that now makes it hard to  
say:  
'Thy Will be done'."

—CHARLOTTE ELLIOTT.

When explaining six principle methods of meditation, Shri Meher Baba counselled those who are inclined to think on the personal aspect of the Lord, the Personal God, to sit in meditation with one's soul for one's companion in a quiet place, close the eyes, and then try to bring before one's mind the whole face of any prophet, God-incarnate or *Sadguru* of the past or present age, and concentrate on it as long as possible. There are hymns in our "Ancient and Modern" collection in the West which reflect that, as in these words:—

"Let me hew Thee, Lord a  
shrine,  
In this rocky heart of  
mine .....  
Close the door from sight  
and sound  
Of the busy world around.  
And in patient watch remain  
Till my Lord appear again."

—(*Ancient and Modern  
Hymns*, No. 105, v. 4).

To meditate upon the pictures of the Buddha, painted on silk and discovered by Sir Aurel Stein in the rock hewn sealed up temple caves in the hills of Western China, which can be seen in the British Museum, is to realize something of what the Psalmist sung of One whom he met in the flesh in far off days:—

"Even while He walked in  
this world, there issued  
from His body, rays of a  
golden shining.

Before the eyes of men He  
stood as the Bodhisattva  
of Wisdom, and yet more,  
as the Blessed One made  
flesh.

The Emperor and all his  
ministers, did homage unto  
Him, and the men of the  
chief city and of the far  
off countries."\*

It is recorded that St. Francis of Assisi, and St. Clare with others of their party were seated round their humble board at a meal, when he began to "discourse so sweetly of God, that the divine Grace descended upon them, and all were caught up in ecstasy; while thus rapt in God, the folk

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\* Buddhist Psalms "Wisdom of the East" Series translated from the Japanese.

of the country around saw the place where they were and the surrounding wood, lit up as it were on fire, which they ran in haste to quench. Coming closer they saw there was no fire at all, and entering they saw Francis and Clare and their company, in contemplation, rapt in God. Whereby they understood it was no earthly, but divine fire" ("St. Francis of Assisi" by RICHARD WHITWELL).

The Psalmist continues:—

"A chosen vessel of the  
Blessed One, that men  
might be saved, He was  
manifested in the world,  
And He opened wide the gate

He spread abroad the doctrine of the Holy Name, for the sake of all men's salvation. And thus had he done, not only then, but many times in ages gone by." \*

In the East, is He called "The Buddha of Divine Light" and we in the West acclaim "The Light of the World". The heart of the disciple delights to bestow names upon the Beloved who fills His thoughts day and night, and many such names appear in our hymns:—

"Thou King of Gentleness"

"Thou hidden Love of God"

"Rock of Ages", "Love of my Soul"

of Perfect Wisdom, having instructed mankind in the Holy Faith.

Of all rare things, it is the rarest that we should meet with the True Teacher,

Yet verily, the chain of doubt in the divine Mercy is the true cause of unending birth and death.

He issued forth from the mysterious Light, and His disciples beheld it.

In His eyes there was nought of disparity between the wise and them that know not, between the noble and the lowly born.

"Prince of Peace".

Others say:

"The Buddha of Everlasting Light"

"The Buddha of Radiant Wisdom"

"The Mighty Consoler", "The Infinite One".

Thousands of devotees worship Baba as God-man and journey thousands of miles in order to offer their homage and devotion. He himself says:

"I never wish to be called Redeemer, Saviour, Divine Majesty. The disciples through their love, faith and enthusiasm give such titles;

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\* Buddhist Psalms "Wisdom of the East" Series translated from the Japanese.

there are many who misunderstand me, who call me Satan, Devil, Anti-Christ; but to me it is all the same—I know who I am" (*"Questions and Answers"*, p. 42).

"He who is Infinite never resteth,  
For together with the Bodhi-sattvas of compassion and Pure Reason, He Iaboureth, that the souls of them that duly receive Him, may have salvation, enlightening them with the Light of His mercy."\*

The Psalmist best known in the West, in our scriptures gives many names to the Lord and a simple hymn will recall the "Good Shepherd" who leads His flock by "the still waters, He restoreth my soul". "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures" (Psalm of David, No. 23).

On one of Shri Meher Baba's early visits to the West we were walking over the hills with Him and a little lamb from amongst the flocks was put in his arms for a blessing, while we stood around that little group with the Mother sheep looking up at the Good Shepherd of our own age.

In the Presence of the Master, both the open book of nature, and the well worn *shariat* (forms ceremonial and dogma) of religion, have added meaning, as in the children's communion hymn:—

"Jesus, Thou art coming,  
Holy as Thou art.  
Thou, the God that made me,  
to my sinful heart.  
Jesus, I believe it, on Thy  
only word;  
Kneeling, I adore Thee, as  
my King and Lord.  
Put thy kind arms round me,  
feeble as I am,  
Thou art my Good Shepherd,  
I Thy little lamb;  
Since Thou comest, Jesus  
now to be my Guest.  
I will trust Thee always,  
Lord, for all the rest."  
—(*Westminster Hymnal*,  
No.160).

It is a happy experience to see children with the Master even though there be some standing by, who, as with Jesus, would seek to prevent, and then to hear His words: "Suffer the children to come unto me, for of such is the Kingdom of heaven." At Knightsbridge, in 1932, a private Indian concert was given in Baba's honour when He

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\* Buddhist Psalms "Wisdom of the East" Series translated from the Japanese.

was seen to embrace a little child,  
and afterwards someone who was  
there wrote:

"I saw Thee Lord, embrace a  
little child,  
And all my Soul was stirred  
with longing wild  
That I might also be a happy  
child,  
Enclosed within Thy Loving  
Heart so mild."

(WINFRED FORSTER. Private-  
ly printed in *Earthen Vessels*).

The Master's work on the inner  
planes is expressed in mystical  
terms in some hymns that awaken  
in hearts in tune with the Infinite,  
insight into the meaning of His  
sufferings:

"O wisest Love, that flesh  
and blood  
Which did in Adam fail.  
Should strive afresh against  
the foe,  
Should strive and should pre-  
vail.  
And that a higher gift than  
Grace  
Should flesh and blood  
refine,  
God's presence and His very  
Self,  
And Essence, All Divine.  
O generous Love, That He  
who smote  
In man for man the foe,  
The double agony in man  
For man should undergo.

And in the garden, secretly,  
And on the Cross, on high,  
Should teach His brethern,  
and inspire,  
To suffer and to die."

—(CARDINAL NEWMAN,  
*The Dream of Gerontius*).

In other hymns there are  
glimpses of the *Paramatman*,  
That which is behind All:—

"O Strength and Stay, uphol-  
ding all creation  
Who ever dost Thyself un-  
moved abide.  
Yet, day by day, the light, in  
due gradation,  
From hour to hour through  
all its changes guide."

(ST. AMBROSE, translated  
by Recs. Eilerton and Hort,  
1870, v. 1, Hymn 60,  
*Church Hymnal*).

An ancient Sanskrit prayer,  
uttered by the priest at the  
conclusion of an Indian village  
service, seeks to bring within  
the comprehension of the mind  
of man, that which the Western  
writer sang:—

"Higher than the highest  
heaven, deeper than the  
deepest sea,  
Lord at last, Thy love has  
conquered, grant me now  
my spirit's longing  
None of Self and all of  
Thee."

The Priest's prayer:—

"He holds the Universe in  
His grasp, yet He is  
handless,  
He is present everywhere,  
yet He has no feet;  
He is sightless, yet sees all.  
Tho' earless, all the heart-  
beats of men are audible  
to Him.  
Smaller than the smallest,  
taller than the tallest,  
Even the Himalayas are but  
a dwarf's leap besides  
Him.  
Yet that which hath hum-  
bled all,  
Is humble enough to dwell  
in your hearts."  
—(*My Brother's Face*, by  
MUKERJI).

In the West children's voices sing  
at their communion service:—

"Nature cannot hold Thee,  
Heaven is all too strait  
For Thy endless glory, and  
Thy royal State.  
Out beyond the shining of  
the Furthest star,  
Thou art ever stretching,  
infinitely far.  
Yet the hearts of children  
hold what worlds cannot,  
And the God of wonders,  
loves the lowly spot.  
—(*Westminster Hymnal*,  
No. 82, vv. 2-4).

The indwelling Lord manifests  
in many aspects. "From the stand-

point of the Creator, evolution is  
a divine sport, in which the  
Unconditioned tests the infinitude  
of His absolute knowledge, power  
and bliss, in the midst of all  
conditions".

—(Shri Meher Baba—*The  
Avatar in Meher Baba Journal*,  
November 1938).

The *Puranas* of Vishnu relate  
that while Krishna and Rama  
(Balrama) were playing together  
in a way beneficial to the world,  
as they assumed human characters  
and duties, Rama, mounted on the  
back of a disguised demon, whom  
he had not recognized, found  
himself being carried off, and  
called on Krishna for help.  
Krishna counselling His brother  
gives the world His teaching and  
"smiling", as the ancient record  
relates, "reminded Rama of his  
divine nature":—

"The heavens are Thy Head  
the waters are Thy body  
Earth is Thy feet. Thy  
mouth is Eternal Fire.  
The moon is Thy Mind, the  
wind Thy Breath.  
Thy arms and hands are the  
four regions of space.  
Thy incarnate person is glor-  
ified by all the Gods.  
No one but I knoweth Thy  
Divine Person.....  
Calling to memory who  
Thou art, O Being of  
illimitable Might, destroy  
of Thyself the demon."

"In the time of Krishna, the people fought amongst themselves, jealousy and greed were predominant, and the true conceptions of spiritual life and of love, were lost sight of. Krishna based His teaching and example on love and pure innocent merriment, and thus the people were led happily towards the ideal of selfless love."—(Shri Meher Baba—*Questions and Answers*, No. 61, French Edition).

The elimination of the lower self, through the Master's Grace, while contemplating the work of nature, is the teaching, too, of the Western Hymn:—

"Lord, make these faithless hearts of ours,  
Such lessons learn from birds  
and flowers; Make them  
from self to cease" .....

(*Ancient and Modern*, 276, v. 5).

When 20 years old Madame Guyon, the French Mystic and Saint who lived in the reign of Louis 14th, met a Franciscan Brother who showed her that she was unsuccessfully seeking without, what could only be found within, and she then had this inner experience: "My heart was quite changed; God was there, for from that moment He has given me an experience of His presence in the soul, not merely as an object

intellectually perceived but as a thing really possessed. .... A state of confiding and affectionate rest in God existed without intellectual effort."

One of her poems reads:—

" O Blessedness, all bliss  
above  
When Thy pure Fires  
prevail;  
Love only teaches what is  
Love,  
All other lessons fail.  
We learn its name, but not  
its powers,  
Experience only makes it  
ours."

St. Alphonsus also sang:—

" O bello Dio, Signor del  
Paradiso,  
O God of loveliness,  
O Lord of Heaven above,  
How worthy to possess  
My heart's devoted love,  
So sweet Thy countenance,  
So gracious to behold,  
That one, one only glance,  
To me were bliss untold  
O Loveliness supreme,  
And Beauty infinite;  
O everflowing stream,  
And Ocean of Delight;  
O Life by which I live,  
My truest life above,  
To Thee alone I give  
My undivided love.

(Translated by Rev. E.  
VAUGHAN, C.S.S.R., *Westminster Hymnai*, 57, vv. 1 & 6).

The distinction between such experience and traditional knowledge is expressed by Maulana Rumi:—

"Traditional knowledge,  
when inspiration is available,  
Is like making ablutions with  
sand when water is near...  
Cleverness is as wind, raising  
storms of pride;  
Be foolish, so that your heart  
may be at peace;  
Not with the folly that  
doubles itself by vain  
babble,  
But with that arising from  
bewilderment at the Truth.  
Make sacrifice of reason to  
Love of 'The Friend'.  
True reason is to be found  
where He is."

There is a similar note in the Psalms of David, part of our Western Scriptures which are read or chanted at many public religious services:—

"O how I love Thy Law, it  
is my meditation all the  
day" (Ps. 119, v. 97).

"I opened wide my mouth and  
panted; for I longed for  
Thy commandment"  
(Ps. 119).

"Lord Thou hast been our  
dwelling place in all  
generations.

Before the mountains were  
brought forth, or ever the  
earth and the world were  
made.

Even from everlasting to  
everlasting, Thou art God"

(Ps. 90, vv. 1-2).

"Worship the Lord in the  
beauty of holiness".

(Ps. 29, v. 2).

"In Thee, O Lord, do I put my  
trust" (Ps. 31, v. 1.).

"Into Thine hand I commend  
my spirit. " (Ps. 31, v. 5).

Some of the Psalms record the troubles of the Jewish race, and of the psalmists' as well as of their aspirations, hopes and fears, which are strangely reminiscent of the present times; idolatry and superstition take new forms and the "self" asserts itself, but to all who suffer, wait, work, hope and fear, the words of Baba, in his Birthday Message to us in 1936 from Mysore bring hope and assurance:—

"Problems each individual has, petty problems of the world that have nothing but a passing influence or significance. But the greatest of all problems—the solution of this 'struggle of existence', this 'Riddle of Life', the problem of 'Self-realization' which includes all the petty problems of the world and humanity put together, remains unsolved for ages, until a Master takes up that mission and helps the suffering Humanity, in the meshes of *Maya* to be out of it."

Some further Sayings of Baba:—

"*Maya* does not mean this world and its affairs. The illusion that this world and its affairs are real, and of feeling happy or unhappy under certain conditions, is *Maya*.

God is real. *Maya* is unreal.

But God and *Maya* are so intermingled in each other that

you cannot grasp the one and give up the other.

In trying to get rid of *Maya*, one unknowingly gets away from God.

To realize God, one *has* to live in *Maya*, but remain detached from it."—(From *Meher Gazette*, Vol. 4, No. 2).



## *The Spark that Kindled the Flame*

BY DR. ABDUL GHANI MUNSIFF

HAZRAT MOHIYUDDIN IBNUL-ARABI (560-638 A.H.) relates that one of his kith and kin by name Yahya bin Yaghan was the king of Tilmsan. In his kingdom there lived a great soul known as Abu Abdulla Tonsi who having renounced the world was leading an ascetic life far removed from the haunts of men.

One day the king Yahya with his retinue happened to pass by the place, where Abu lived; and incidentally one of his men described to the king the saint and pointed to him his abode of seclusion. The king inquisitively headed his horse in that direction and finding himself before the

saint, bowed to him reverentially.

Being draped as he was with rich and costly garments, the king accosted the saint saying, "Sire, may I know if the worship of God is permissible in these clothes?" The saint laughed aloud in reply and on being pressed by the king to give the reason of his laughter, he explained, "I laughed at your lack of understanding. Your case is that of a dog who having feasted himself on a carcase is consequently besmeared with blood from top to toe and yet while urinating it takes particular good care to raise one leg aloft to save being polluted by stray drops. Your



belly is stuffed daily with things that are unlawful; you are overloaded with acts of atrocity and injustice to people and yet you are particular in the matter of knowing as to which manner of sartorial appearance is best pleasing to God."

The implied sarcasm in the words of the saint did not miss the mark. The meaning of the words cut deep into the heart of the king who instantaneously foreswore his throne and kingdom and decided to remain in the service of the saint who accepted him.

After three days of hospitality the saint reminded the king by saying, "a guest is welcome for three days. After this period his allowance may be said to be derived from the poor tax. You have got to work hereafter for your living. Here is a piece of rope; go to the forest; cut down

sell it in the market." The king firewood and Yahya willingly submitted to the orders. He began to bring loads of firewood from the jungles and from the price of their sale, he would keep just enough for his sustenance and the remainder he would give away to the poor.

To the end of his days Yahya plied this trade in the very city of which he was the king. People seeing him in this plight used to shed tears of pity and regret for him. If any one approached Abu Abdulla for his spiritual intercession in their worldly difficulties and desires the saint would invariably direct them to the ex-king saying, "it is better you induce Yahya to pray for you. His prayers for you will be more efficacious since he has renounced his kingship in favour of Godly life. Who knows I may have failed in such an ordeal?"



# *The Master Tells*

BY PRINCESS NORINA MATCHABELLI

“GOD is in everyone and it has to be made clear to everyone *through spiritual experience* that God in Use in us is the eternally new Real Religion of all times.”

“The real meaning of these words is that nothing can be done to make the world really and truly realize what is Truth than by giving them a deep show of life in trial, in quest, in profound *suffering*. When suffering has become so evident that nothing is any more possible than to capitulate to the individual state of helplessness then man will realize that he is in need of some one to help out of the intolerable condition.

Now that we understand the real meaning of this superficial reaction, that is the mental creation state in dual suffering, we come to see that we have in ourselves another possibility *to live free of this mental condition and that is by trying to find the indivisible state of Being that is within every human creature the inherent state of Divine*

*Order and Peace.*

Whatever we think and whatever we try to find through the ordinary thinking process does not create a higher outer design of living that makes us create a new condition. That what makes us create a new condition, is to real and true *want to find* the Divine Existence in which we are unself-conscious of *the unreal creation condition* of the finite existence. Nothing more is important than to see that it is doing the *external creation conscious co-operative design*, in *winning over this unsatisfied state* of the individual mind that has not yet *seen* the true real *possibility* of the Real Life. As it has to come *through ourselves* and as it has to be done within this human creature, it is important that we bring it to our conscious cognition—that it is of Use and of importance that we should *change in conscious reaction* to whatever is the individual finite life, with all

its tribulations and differentiations and difficulties. Nothing must be done to obscure this *clear individual* understanding in all of us, that we have no other way out of it than by doing the external effort to change our *lives as existence*; which is in us a *state* of pure winning will, aim, aspiration, *longing to find Truth*.

That Truth of which we have so much understanding, as being the fulfilment of our life in its spiritual sense, must not be misinterpreted by making it a merely *mental state of self-satisfaction* and tranquil external comfortable existence. That has nothing to do with the real Theme that is to *self realize within* that which is *right, real and unselfish*.

Now we come to the old quest of this dual theme of all our lives which is—*suffering. Nothing more is important than to be able to suffer and to be able to stand in it quiet, unaffected by the reaction which is purely mental.*

*No more do we suffer when we realize the intuition realized show within in mind—as the Being that is the realized inherent show of realized Divine Existence.*

What else do we need to make ourselves happy? What else do we need, to make ourselves *sure* that we *owe* the Supreme Good that is to be One, to be 'I'-God? No more of this is to be taught to the people in general nowadays. *All have understood that the Divine Existence is in them.* No one to-day in this hemisphere of the world is in doubt that God is within everyone. No one in the other hemisphere of the world is in doubt that we should have within the realization of us being Divine and omniscient and omnipotent. This is the difference between the two conceptions in this world of the mind where nothing is of Use to bring about a deep upheaval *to lead* the mental show of individual conception of what is the Divine Existence Within, *than to make it perform in itself its own upheaval.* That is to say, when we create within ourselves the *longing for God*, for Truth, we come to the *sure state to win and to act in accordance when we meet the divine Exponent of Truth.* This must be clear to all without difference of East and West ideas and conceptions, that no one is further away or nearer

to the sun when it is at its zenith. The sun shines even into all the hearts of men at this moment and at any moment when it is shining we must be turning our face towards its brighter Light and see that it hits us at *the point where we need to be exalted* and reassured of its warmth.

*It is not so important to be a spiritual aspirant but it is important to progress and to evolve. The scientific way of speaking is nowadays more than ever of use. It is all right to be used when it is used Within as the conscious existence of that which is operating in the intuition expansion as the super-conscious reaction of the indivisible existence as ' I ' as infinite indivisible Being. Nothing is of use to this mind that is insatiable in its pursuit for Truth realization, than to come to a point where it is realizing in itself.*

So the time is near when the deep true Stir is operating all over in this plane of the mind and everyone will get a bit of this Divine Mercy and will make use of it in the best way he himself can.

No one is more than that he himself wants to achieve. We

know this, we see this in every creation condition of realization order, and we see this in every real or unreal condition in the external life that in its own external way has to find the solution for the unfathomable mystery—that is Oneness of ' I ' in the 'Manyness' of the other I. *What is that 'Manyness'?* It is nothing but our wants and desires that take form within us and create insatiable trial and find no end in want and desire. To undo this condition of insatiable want and desire, man has to come to a clear situation in himself and that is to *see that he is insatiable and unsatisfied, that he has to have some sort of outer condition which is more of use to him than any other which he can or cannot find. That condition is unselfish design of living.* It is unselfish design of Being as it is unselfish design of pure order of existence. It is more than "one way to fulfil the Divine Goal which is the same for every one".

This be clear, and this be for all and forever an Order to life in general that this man named Meher Baba, who to some appears real and true and

good and to some bad, *has to be the Unselfish Guide* who makes us realize what we can in no way by our own means realize.

We lift ourselves into high order of imagination, self-intoxication and we lift ourselves above and beneath the divine self-realized order of Being but none of us comes to the point when he says to his own life that is insatiable in achieving in fulfilling that great scheme of self-realization, *that it is here in himself, in everyone*. That it is the Pure realized State of Being as Him the God-realized Guide who has come to make life in this cycle of evolution—*realize, that in Him as the God-Man*, the creation state of realization has reached its purest order in existence that is Divine, that is free, that is unself-conscious of its own existence; that comes in times and moments to us as the *deep unfathomable conscious Warning*. That deep Warning may or may not be in everyone a real sign to realize the God within, may or may not be the deep show of real reaction of the I as the Self in search of Oneness in manyness; may be or not the fulfilling realizing winning

design of life unself-conscious in the I as the finite existence; *be it whatever it is in its expansion, in its motion and in its Being existence—it has to come to a point of contact with the Divine Order at its due time. This due time is here now*. Leave it or take it, make use of it or react against it there is no possibility to escape the Truth when it takes shape and form in a human creature. This human creature now has its name and fame established in the two hemispheres of the world. It is Meher Baba who is opposed, who is scorned, who is slandered, who is reacted by the ignorant attitude of people and who is worshipped by the few.

Meher Baba says to his disciples: "Do not make further conscious or unconscious accusation to those who do not recognize me, or who do not want to come to see me. Be unselfish, be unattached to result and give the work its own way, leave it free and do not make further schemes or plans than—to let the work grow and have its way.

Give me full co-operation of your head and heart and

imagination and see that you do it unself-consciously of its own *reactions and unattached to its good or bad results*. My ways of working cannot be measured; they are unfathomable and at the same time they are as clear and as unselfish as none can yet understand. My life has no end in

mercy. My life has no end in grace. My life has no end in good result. Let it all be, let it all come and appear and seem, show, result, or non-result—it is one huge Scheme that I am working for the good of the whole show. The show is to self-realize the One only Existence and that is God."



## *Question Baba Answers\**

BY A WESTERNER

*Ques.*—Why do the teachings of the *Avatars* differ from each other?

*Ans.*—The *Avatars* are the manifestation of the same divine element incarnate in this world at different times; therefore their teachings have to be adapted to the mentality of their epoch. At times the *Avatar* his teaching on the search of the personal God; and at another time, on the search of the impersonal aspect of God. At one time he will prohibit the eating of pigs meat, drinking of wine, or the eating of cows meat. It is like in a hospital where the

sick complain about their thirst. The doctor will prescribe tea or coffee in the morning, water or a refreshing fruit juice in the afternoon, and in the evening sour milk; then before sleeping hot milk. God, manifesting through the *Avatar* of different periods quenches the thirst of man in different ways. All human beings, whether consciously or unconsciously, have the same thirst for Truth.

*Ques.*—What does Shri Meher Baba think about life after death?

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\* These Questions and Answers have appeared in the French edition of *Questions and Answers* (Paris).

*Ans.*—The semi-subtle sphere is the chain that links the physical material world to the subtle plane. During our habitual dreams we make use of the subtle body and in a sub-conscious way we perceive sensations belonging to the physical material world. In certain conditions it is possible to make conscious use of the physical senses in such a way that we can contact the semi-subtle sphere. We can, through this fact, enter into communication with the spirits of the dead. These spirit communications have nothing to do with the spiritual life, nor with subtle spirit, nor with the spiritual planes. There is a vast difference between the subtle sphere and the semi-subtle sphere.

After death the spirits of human beings (except for those who have sufficiently progressed on the spiritual path and are beyond the fourth plane) reach the semi-subtle sphere. According to their *Sanskaras* they go to 'heaven' or to 'hell', and when they achieve the point they had to attain they can return to earth with a new body

(reincarnate), or otherwise they return to the semi-subtle sphere for a certain time. These spirits are, so to say, in the ante-chamber of the semi-subtle sphere and one can enter into contact with them through the means of spirit communication, whether they have achieved their period of joy or pain, and wait for a new rebirth, or whether they are on the point of going to 'Heaven' or 'hell'. The semi-subtle sphere, 'heaven' or 'hell', with their respective experiences have no reality, they are merely joys and pains experienced through the organs of the subtle body. It is advisable to attribute only relative importance to certain descriptions of life after death, although they may be exact. Spiritually evolved persons can communicate with high spirits, but it is preferable if they abstain. Human beings can never enter into communication with the high spirits who belong to the subtle, mental or spiritual planes, because even if they have to reincarnate, they do not sojourn in the ante-chamber of the semi-subtle sphere.



# *Resignation to Realization*

BY ADI K. IRANI

THE cause of all our joys and sufferings is because we are unable to disassociate ourselves with impressions gathered from pleasant or unpleasant circumstances we face in life. If in this regard we could only accomplish a feat of detachment, all the world's known wreckages of human life and morals would be foreign to us. Humanity would be less self-destructive and more God-worthy.

Weakness is with us and not in us. We have allowed ourselves to be befriended by it and have come to believe that its company and association is a *sine qua non* of our existence. By its prolonged nearness it has outgrown our sense of difference and has befooled us with the inevitable need of its presence. It is this impression that has such a profound hold on us and all our efforts toward a real happy life are frustrated.

To think we should come in contact with varieties of human

characters and circumstances and be entirely unaffected by their influence is least probable. To think that we can stand immune from all harmful influences we are reluctant to absorb, is least practicable. We can develop a subjective attitude of mind to keep at bay all outside invasions harmful to our character. This negative way of dealing with an adversary is a defensive measure ineffective for conquering the influence. It has another disadvantage. It creates a mental inhibition caused by not having known the nature of an encroaching influence. The impression that we have not experienced a certain thing, becomes vivid by the very fact of our avoiding it. A strong secret desire to know it, is formed and we deny ourselves the right to know it. The result is suppression of desires.

If we allowed suppressed desires to express themselves ill-timed and ill-marked, as



they invariably do, they would have a devastating effect upon the security and morals of men detrimental to spiritual growth. Continued to be suppressed, they develop a condition of unfulfilled desires sharpened by a knife of compulsory abstinence.

Is it therefore wise to experience all pleasures and pains as they come in order that their novelty or necessity may disappear from us completely? If that is possible, it would be unwise to renounce opportunities of experience afforded by societies and circumstances and make the best of what is available without the least thought of the morrow. It is not so. Everyone seeks pleasure and none wants to be distressed by pain. But in so doing they are driven into the mire of pain more and more from which it is very difficult to come out. Experience analysed in the light of ultimate happiness, has shown that pain parading as pleasure in its first appearance provides a bait for individual allurements. When the period of primary interest expires, a reaction sets in giving rise to a thirst for another pleasure. Every pleasure is followed by pain of a progressive intensity.

One argument of a seeker of true happiness is that, since a forced abstinence from pleasures causes suppression of desires, it is better to take advantage of all the bits of pleasure and be satiated by it, so that the novelty and necessity of it may completely disappear. This is practical but not fruitful. If the desires could be conquered by their fulfilment, there would be more number of desireless persons in the world than with desires. How many of us could come out unscathed from the experience of an indulged pleasure by disassociating ourselves completely from all the reminiscent impressions of it, may better be thought out by each for himself.

Disassociation with impressions of pain, and pleasure, is a wiser thing to practice to arrive at true happiness. It is to be done not by keeping aloof or escaping their impressions, but by facing them boldly and conquering their effects after experience. They may be allowed to be formed not to enslave you, but to be rejected forthwith. By doing so, you avoid a 'suppression' get an understanding of varied experiences and are immune

from their binding effect. This does not include indulgence of degraded pleasures or their ideas. To take life as it comes, to face events with the strength of mind and courage of heart and to overcome them by disassociating with their impressions completely, is the way out.

How many of us can do it? How many of us would feel contented at the mocking face of an inexperienced pleasure or refrain indulgence of it? Complexes and complications in human nature are too subtle to be promptly detected to ensure a correct move. Life is

full of hustle and worries and to organise movements in our nature, is much more difficult than to undertake a quiet resignation to the benevolent dictatorship of a *Man* who is beyond pain and pleasure. The pleasures of the world do not attract Him nor the regrets of their loss cause depression. For Him no pleasure is pleasure which is not a divine joy nor pain a pain that is caused but for its removal from the suffering humanity. His care and guidance of us is the most practical means of realizing true happiness.



### THE SAYING OF MEHER BABA

The highest divine knowledge is attained through love (which has in it the spiritual faculties, intuition, and inspiration), and is opposed to the intellectual faculty. It is love that makes one transcend the dominion of intellect and gain the state of complete self-annihilation. It is this state that ends in union with God.



# *Baba, Lord of All My Dreams*

BY JOSEPHINE ESTHER ROSS (U.S.A.)

Laughing o'er the mountains,  
Singing in the streams,  
Lo! He comes to me at last,  
The Lord of all my dreams.

Sparkling in the dew-drops,  
Glowing in the rose;  
Fragrance of sweet flowers  
Everywhere He goes.

Trembling up above me  
In the first, faint star,  
Baba, Lord of Beauty,  
Shining from afar.

Foam upon the sea wave,  
Silver of the rain,  
Baba, Lord of all my dreams,  
Come to me again.

Hold me in Thine arms  
And lift me to the sky;  
Dance with me upon a cloud  
As the wind goes by.

And when night hath fallen,  
Take me by the hand,  
Lead me up the Milky Way  
To God's enchanted land.

Where the mystic revels  
Of the Hosts of Light,  
Send soft echoes rolling  
Through the halls of night.

Where the mystic mountain  
Gleams beneath the snow,  
Girdled 'round with singing  
stars  
Crooning soft and low.

Where upon the mountain,  
Mantled in His Light,  
God Himself sits brooding  
O'er the vasty night.

Light of Love is streaming  
From His Holy face;  
His Compassion filling  
All that holy place.

Let me now approach Him  
On His mercy seat;  
Humbly bow in worship,  
At His holy feet.

And behold! a wonder!  
Silent and alone,  
Baba, Lord of Beauty  
Is seated on God's throne.

And my heart is opened  
To the mystery .....  
Baba, Lord of all my dreams,  
I yield at last to Thee.

# *Impressions*

BY MARY BACKETT (LONDON)

WE first met Baba at a friend's house in London. He was seated in a small room at the top of the house, surrounded by some close devotees. They did not hear me enter, but Baba sprang up, with the agility, power and grace that characterize all his movements, and came quickly forward. I was astonished and touched that he should rise to meet me, as I had intended to do homage as best I knew.

He looked at me earnestly and I at him, and I knew he was reading my very soul.

He then signed to me to sit beside him on the low couch or bed and took my hand with that gentle touch we all know so well.

Immediately I felt a great upliftment of consciousness, as I had never experienced with anyone before.

I had been searching and reading deeply for many years and knew that now I had found the Master, and that the long search was over.

I saw and felt his Divinity and the Divine Love which he so freely pours forth "to all who need and seek".

My whole being was raised and spiritualised, and filled with peace and joy.

He gave me more, far more, in the space of three minutes, than I had gained in thirty years of earnest seeking, or through others—because I experienced the tangible, definite gift of Grace and Divine Love that he bestowed, whereas others could only talk about it.

I had suffered much mental torture from the mentality of one who was with us in the room during this interview, but whilst I sat by Baba, the shrinking I had felt, vanished, and I felt only Love for that person.

I knew who Baba is. It was the great event of my life to meet Him.

The second meeting was again at this friend's house. A young friend was with me who saw Baba for the first time.

Knowing that he had seen hundreds of people since our last meeting some months before, I said nervously, "I expect you do not remember me?" Baba replied on his board, "I never forget".

The Indian devotee who was present, said "Baba never forgets", and smiled. How often since, have we been given ample proof of this. We saw Baba again at Margaret and Mabel's flat. Baba kept me near him for a long time—nearly the whole of that evening and I know that I received a tremendous uplift and help, being conscious of his great outpouring.

Baba, on this evening, to my unspeakable joy, relief and surprise, definitely took us under his own guidance.

An evening or two later, after an Indian concert at the Knightsbridge Hotel, when just leaving us, he stood before me, and suddenly became very tall in stature and from his eyes poured forth the Divine Love. I was bathed in it. I knew intuitively it was not for me, and sought anxiously for the interpretation of the wonderful experience. The words came clearly into my consciousness, "Feed my

my lambs". I felt sure, because of a previous request I had made to Baba on an earlier occasion that this was the right interpretation.

In one of the ancient gnostic gospels, there is an account of John following Jesus by stealth when the Lord went apart to pray. Peter and James called to John more than once to return, but he would not. He was behind Jesus and saw His stature become very great, and surrounded by light. Jesus rebuked John and took hold of his beard, and where He held it, John suffered great pain for a long time afterwards ....

We stayed with Baba several times in hotels, and each time were conscious of receiving his gift of Grace, and of being greatly and continuously helped in the times when we were apart.

We were also aware of his continual presence with us at all times, and of being drawn closer and closer and closer into his life, becoming more and more one with him, and this consciousness of ever-growing Union continues.

Baba came twice in our cottage in the country, and all who come there feel his

presence, and are greatly helped and uplifted. Even businessmen and people who not know Baba, or care much for spiritual things, speak of the "Peace" and feeling in the cottage. Some of the most wonderful experiences we have had, have been in watching Baba's ways of helping those who come to him for help. Such diverse people with such diverse troubles and needs. And to each he gives with surety and certainty—out of his Divine Wisdom and Love, what is needed.

Baba's great Work is to lead us to conscious Union with the One—that is, to Self-realization—the Christ Consciousness.

To see his life of Love and Divine Perfection is the greatest assurance and strength, and to watch the change of character in oneself and in others is the surest proof of his Work.

Twice Baba has bestowed a definite gift of Grace through gifts. Once, after I had made a request to him, he called me later to the car in which he was sitting, just leaving us all. Taking a single primrose with a long stalk from a bunch held by one of his devotees in the car, he held the stalk and let the

flower hang over the open window of the car. Three times he signed to me to come but I did not realize the sign, could be for me until the third. I went up to him, and he signed to me to take the primrose. My heart was full of wonder at such Grace. I knew it was the answer to my request, and consciously felt his Love and Power given for a definite purpose.

From Spain Baba sent me a small white stone and a sprig of herb, and as I held the stone I again was conscious of the gift of Grace sent with it, bathing one in its consciousness.

The same conscious feeling comes with every letter Baba sends, and is spoken of by numbers of those who receive a letter from him.

His wonderful Goodness in bringing us to India to be near him, has deepened still more our inner life and consciousness of Union with Him. It has also enabled us to see other phases of his work and to meet many of his Eastern disciples and devotees. To meet them has been an education in the way life should be lived. Selfless, natural, happy and filled only with the desire to serve

the Master they love and all those with whom they come in contact, their days are spent in loving active service.

Baba keeps all his devotees very busy. He has been very lenient in this respect with the Western group, who are not fully acclimatized.

His Love and Patience with our faults and shortcomings are unfailing.

During the years that we have known Baba, I have never seen him fail to handle any situation perfectly. Sudden circumstances have arisen, in which one who was not perfect, would have been nonplussed—or rather off guard would have shown impatience, want of control.

It has been the most wonderful thing to me to see his quiet working, often through stages that seem leading in quite the wrong direction, to bring about perfect results, often far beyond what one could have hoped or dreamed.

We know and believe He is the *Avatar* and the One for whom the world waits. Those who do not understand, clamour for him to speak—Baba has said in a letter, "All that is Real is given and

received in Silence."

His work for us and for all humanity is unceasing, and he scarcely rests even at night.

He is all in all to his devotees, and their great love and loyalty to him is a bitter pill to those who strive to turn them from him. We know that it is his Grace alone that keeps us true and steadfast.

We could never express what it has meant to meet Baba, and to belong to him. It is difficult to realize that there was a time when he was not consciously in our life.

His Divine Love enables us to face the faults in ourselves to be overcome by his help.

He is the *Divine Love itself* manifesting to us, and only those who have experienced the outpouring of his Love can have any idea of its power to bless, purify, and spiritualize the whole being.

Although dreams and visions are only on the plane of illusion Baba has said that in certain cases they are "glimpses of great experiences to follow."

Sometime before meeting Baba I dreamed I was in a small house of my own. My cousin came with her French companion, who had been always very jealous towards

myself and my sisters, but we embraced very affectionately, and I felt she had lost all that feeling. I left them sitting by the fireside, and went out by the French windows to the end of my little garden, and suddenly realized I was standing on the very edge of the world; there was nothing but an abyss of space infinite, beyond my feet. And right across the sky, in a reclining position was a great figure of the Christ. I gazed awe-struck, but with joy, and ran in to call my cousin and her friend. They came, but the feeling in the dream was so great that I awoke.

After a day of great stress, I had a waking vision, soon before meeting Baba. I was kneeling at the foot of the Cross. Jesus was upon it. A great burden was upon my shoulders, but it fell off and rolled down the hill. I thought it was like "Christian's experience in Pilgrim's Progress" I prayed earnestly for light and union with the One.

Then I was conscious that great drops of blood, like those on the coat of arms of Joseph of Arimathæa, were slowly falling on

my head. After a little, I realized that though this continued, my head did not feel wet. I wore a dress of soft violet colour, with a deeper himation like my present dress, and I turned my head very, very gently, to see if the drops were falling on the dress, but they were not.

Then I was raised in a kneeling position to the level of the Lord's face. And I said gently and reverently, "Lord, suffer me to minister to Thy needs." And I took from Him the crown of thorns, and in its place laid a wreath of healing leaves, long, pointed, and very soft. And with sponge I gently cleansed each wound. It needed but one movement of the sponge, and each was cleansed, and light shone in the wound.

And then all changed, and He was lying on a couch of stone within a cave or cell and I sat at the foot by Him. And I took ointment of no earthly stuff and gently bandaged both the hands and then the side, and his right foot, and rose to leave, but suddenly remembered the left foot was not done, and added this small service to the rest. He did



not speak or look at, me. There was soft light in the tomb.

The deep consciousness that came with this vision remained for days, and I was trembling and dazed. Why did I forget the left foot? It has always puzzled me much and I cannot find the answer. After seeing Baba for the first time, I had a waking vision it being in a small room. In the long wall of the room was a large oval hole as though a good part of the wall had been knocked out. The aperture disclosed open country. Before this opening, facing into the room, Baba sat raised and enthroned, simple and majestic. He wore the long brown coat He always wore on his first visit here, but it was all engoldened amongst

the brown. I took the corner of the coat, and kissed it and said with deep earnestness, "Lord, I desire to bring Light to others, but it must be Thy Light, for I have none of my own. Then he bent slightly forward and looked deep into my eyes, and I saw a long shaft of Light enfolded him, and passed beyond me too, where I knelt before him.

I followed it with my eyes up into the sky, where it ended in an eye, but the eye was of light. In its centre was an ocean gently heaving. This centre raised itself on the right side and turned partly over towards me like the crest of a wave. I prayed earnestly, "Oh Sun behind the Sun". I heard soft music during this experience.



### THE SAYING OF MEHER BABA

Divine Love causes its captive to forget his own individual existence by making him feel less and less bound by the trammels of human limitations on his onward march, till he reaches a point where he can raise himself to the realization of the highest in himself.



# *The Hierarchy of Saints*

BY DR. ABDUL GHANI MUNSIF

THE saints according to Sufis form an invisible hierarchy on whom depends the order of the worlds—known and unknown. They are divided into two main categories—the God-men (*Wahbi*) and the men-God (*Iktesabi*). The *Wahbi* class of saints are those who, any time during their life suddenly feel the divine call and are irresistibly drawn towards God ultimately to become one with Him. Of course, the instrumentality of a Master is indispensable but herein, it is the Master who invariably seeks them out and in course of time gives them their due, whether from worldly standards of eligibility to saintship, they are deserving or not.

These God-men on the strength of their past preparation enjoy the unique position of being 'Beloveds of God', whom the Divine Grace goes forward to meet and in the Sufi world this stage is known as *Darja-e-Mashooqiyat*.

The *Iktesabi* saints are those who deliberately renounce the

world in search of God and undergo willingly untold trials and hardships to reach the Goal, which very few realize. It is the Yogis (*Rahib*) in general who belong to this category and this stage is described by Sufis as *Darje-Ashaqi* in which the aspirant or the lover goes out to seek the Divine Beloved.

Commenting on this situation, Hazrat Mujaddad Alif Sani says, "Be it understood that it is invariably the prophets (*Nabi*) who are the chosen ones (*Mujtaba*) of God who draws them to Himself by the power of His Love—the dignity and authority implied in this situation is conferred upon them without their exerting themselves to attain the same.

For the seekers or aspirants to the nearness of God penance and austerities, trials and tribulations are quite indispensable. Aspiration (*Anabat*) is the *sine qua non* of discipleship and selection (*Ijteba*) is the characteristic of the ordained ones. The aspirants tread the path on their own

and suffer a good deal while the selected ones are cajoled and pampered into the goal of Self-realization".

In the above quotation the word prophet (*Nabi*) is used in the exclusive and restricted sense of a *Qutub* (axis) who is the supreme head of the spiritual hierarchy as will be explained hereunder. A Muslim Saint is known as *Wali* (plural—*Awaliya*) the root meaning of which is 'nearness' signifying kinship or protectorship. The self-experience and Gnosis of such a saint is called *Wilayat* which spiritually means seeing God through God, as distinguished from prophetship (*Nabuvvat*) which is seeing God through 'creation'.

According to Sufis, *Wilayat* (saintship) and *Nabuvvat* (prophetship) are both the attributes of a *Qutub*. When saintship (*Wilayat*) and prophetship (*Nabuvvat*) are combined in one individual, the former holds a superior position, because prophetship is a temporary attribute for the reason that every prophet was a prophet for a temporary period in his life-time. *Wilayat* which is privacy with God, is an attribute of the Absolute (*Zat*) and Eternal, and consequently

when *Nabuvvat* (prophetship) implying invitation to people, comes to an end the saintship (*Wilayat*) remains.

In a saint (*Wali*) when the attribute of *Nabuvvat* (prophetship) predominates and *Wilayat* (saintship) is held in abeyance, he is called prophet or an *Avatar*. Similarly when saintship (*Wilayat*) is uppermost and prophetship (*Nabuvvat*) lies dormant, the saint is known as a *Qutub*. Thus *Wilayat* can be without *Nabuvvat*, but *Nabuvvat* cannot be thought of without *Wilayat* being latent therein.

In common usage the term *Nabi* (prophet) and *Rasul* (messenger) are almost synonymous in meaning, but the Sufis reserve the latter term *Rasul* only for those prophets who claim to have brought to the world, the word of God—the revealed books. In the light of the above distinction, it may be said that a *Rasul* (messenger) is essentially a prophet but a prophet is not necessarily a *Rasul*, who approximates very nearly to what is meant by an *Avatar* amongst Hindus.

It must be noted that the term *Wali* (a friend of God) is

very indiscriminately used by the Muslims to describe generally all grades and stages of saintship, but in the light of the foregoing study the subtle distinction underlying the states of *Wilayat* and *Nabuvvat* and the direct and indirect methods of approach to Divine, Grace, it should not be very difficult to follow the functioning hierarchy of saints enumerated and classified hereunder.

As described by Hazrat Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri\* a *Wali* (friend of God) is one who constantly enjoys divine favours which make him immune to harm and protect him from the commission of sins. A prophet must necessarily always be sinless, but a *Wali* must be guarded against sins. There is this significant distinction between the two. A prophet is above sin, but a *Wali* has occasional lapses in which however he does not persist. A *Wali* is an embodiment of all virtues. He does not fail in the discharge of his duties towards the Creator and the created. The motive power of his actions is not hope and fear of good and bad

consequences. He does not think much of his individuality.

A *Wali* may be either known or unknown to the people. If unknown he does not seek fame. He does not care for this world or the next. Heaven and hell do not exist for him. He resigns himself to the Divine friendship and is engrossed in the Truth which is One.

The *Walis* are the special recipients of the Love of God. God chooses from amongst them a few to be the governors of His kingdom and the vehicles of His activities. They receive special favours and are liberated from the trammels and bindings of the desire-nature. They do not desire anything nor avoid anything. They have existed before now, they exist to-day and will continue to exist till the end of the world.

The *Walis* are the accredited Agents of God and serve as mediums for the dissemination of Truth and the propagation of the messages of the prophets that have been before them.

They consider miraculous powers as idols which as far as

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\* Vide *Maktubat-e-Sadi*, a series of hundred letters addressed to a disciple.

possible they avoid worshipping. If a *Wali* is content with the possession of the power of miracles, he impedes his further progress. If he refuses to exercise these powers, he automatically accelerates his progress towards Union with God. Herein lies the secret of true friendship. It consists in being dead set against any distractions however pleasureable except the Beloved. The indulgence in miracles connotes indifference to the Beloved and it means self-satisfaction by means of something other than Himself."

According to Hujwiri a most reputed and reliable authority on Sufism, there are 4,000 *Walis* (saints) who are not known to the world. They do not know one another and neither they are conscious of their spiritual stage. They always remain concealed from the world as well as veiled from themselves.

Besides the above number there are 300 *Akhyar* (the charitable or the benevolent) who solve the difficulties of the world and are the guards of the divine sanctuary. There are 40 *Abdal* (the substitutes); 17 *Abrar* (the liberated); 4 *Autad* (the supports) and 3 *Nuqaba*

(overseers) and 1 *Qutub* (the pole or axis) also called *Ghaus*, the redresser of grievances. All these know one another and are inter-dependent for the discharge of their respective duties.

Another authority (*Majma us-Saerin*) gives the number of *Walis* on duty (*Saheb-i-khidmat*) in the world to be 356. When one of them retires, another takes his place, so that there is never any diminution and the number 356 remains constant. The number 356 is made up of 300 plus 40 plus 7 plus 5 plus 3 plus 1. The one is the *Qutub* round whom the universe revolves as the world on its axis and he is responsible for the preservation of this world. When the *Qutub* retires, another takes his place immediately otherwise the world would fall to pieces. When the *Qutub* retires one of the 3 takes His place; one of the 5 fills up the gap in the 3, one of the 7 fills in the deficiency of the 5, one of the 40 supplies the deficit in the 7, one of the 300 makes up the shortage in the 40 and a man is recruited to the vacancy in the rank of the 300—so that the 356 are always functioning in the world without

a break and every spot on earth is supposed to be blessed by their auspicious feet. Their outer life is almost always similar to that of ordinary people and because of this it becomes very difficult for the world to know or understand them. Their subjective experience is that of constant Union with God. Divine Love, Friendship, and Mysteries are esoteric experiences which have no relationship with anything that is without. These functionaries of the spiritual world known as *Walis* are too strong to be hindered by earth, water, fire, air, plains and mountains. Being in the East, they can see and hear men in the West. They constantly move about in all directions—from the East to the West and West to the East. Nay, they can even go to and fro from the earth to the *Arsh* (the Divine Throne). Indeed their super-human powers are too astounding for words.

According to the modern authority, Hazrat Meher Baba—the silent Saint of Meherabad—there

are 7,000 *Walis* in the world and he allocates and distributes this number in and between the seven spiritual planes as follows:

*Planes*

One, between 1 & 2, between 2 & 3, between 3 & 4, between 4 & 5, between 5 & 6, between 6 & 7.....	5,600
Two.....	560
Three.....	560
Four.....	56
Five.....	56
Six.....	56
Seven.....	56
Sadgurus (Mukammil or the Perfect Ones).....	56
	<hr/> 7000

One from amongst the 56 perfect ones (*Sadgurus*) is a *Qutub* and at the beginning or end of a cycle which consists of a period of time from 700 to 1,400 years, this *Qutub* is known amongst the Hindus as an *Avatar*, and the Muslim world recognises Him as a *Mujaddid* (the Awakener).

(To be continued)



## *Those Who Follow the Master\**

COUNTESS NADINE TOLSTOY joined her Master Meher Baba in his first visit to America in 1931.

It was an answer to her ardent search for Truth and the climax of her life-time longing for the Ideal and its fulfilment *in life*. That longing was characteristic in all her life through all its various expressions, urging her to take up different activities and studies.

Born in Russia at the time of great ideals expressed in literature and idealistic movements in social life and the time of women's emancipation, she sought the answer to life's problem in intellectual, literary and artistic studies in the field of tangible human experiences of research and culture.

She entered the University in Petrograd where psychology, logic and philosophy seemed to offer some satisfaction to the quest of knowledge. But the theories being remote from real life contact, its progressive experience could not appease her inner dissatisfaction thus giving

no solution to the life problem in general, nor to her own active role of usefulness in life. Circumstances offered her an opportunity to leave the home City for altogether new unusual surroundings and work in a remote peasant village to teach the children and youth in school and to share with these who had so little of even the elementaries of culture and education. This contact with the alive needs of the youth of the village gave the first true satisfaction of selfless work, keeping her intensely occupied and opened to her the treasures concealed in the hearts of slavic race.

Health conditions and the desire to see the world led her to Switzerland offering to her at the same time the chance to continue her studies in the Lausanne University as well as her Piano studies. Later she entered the Moscow Conservatory, seeking the joy and beauty of art. Art seemed then to offer that "something" which the human heart is so anxious to experience and enjoy.

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\* A series of life-sketches of Meher Baba's disciples.

The mystical inclinations of her mother and some occult experiences in her mother's life as well as some of her own glimpses, have kept always the problem of life in a deeper and more spiritual perspective than the scientific and commonplace material world could. Agnosticism seemed at least the most honest to reason, leaving room to further search for Truth. Even the greatest geniuses of mind are caught in this vicious circle of basic human ignorance confined within their own limitations.

When the expectation of personal happiness reveals its tragic show of deception and futility, life turns its impersonal deeper side, marking the time for mature understanding and renunciation of selfishness. Not knowing where to turn and seek an unexpected sign of inner kind indicated to Countess Tolstoy a great change.

At that time Count Leo Tolstoy was in great fame, the leading figure and the great moral factor in life. His own great effort toward Truth and his love of Christ's teachings has stirred the highest aspirations in men toward the Ideal and Truth.

Having no personal contact with, nor expectation to meet Leo Tolstoy in person who was the example of *human* effort toward Truth and Love and having the irresistible beauty of Jesus as the inspiration on her path of life she was extremely amazed in experiencing a dream in which Leo Tolstoy appeared to her though he was at that time dead.

They both found themselves in a desert, on a hill they discovered a cave and deep into it they both began to crawl and dig with their hands. In the very depth of the cave Leo Tolstoy found a scroll, a manuscript in parchment rolled together. Without unfolding it he passes the scroll to her with solemn gesture. In great sacredness and devotion she takes it, as he was now standing outside the cave in the light of the dawn. She opens the script with a sense of awe and spiritual significance of the moment and she reads the big golden letters telling the words of eternal Truth, Love and Service. She felt the Truth of God, the Great Message of Christ and deep exaltation and fortitude spread its blessings. She felt that life has to unfold



its spiritual significance and to be lived for a greater purpose—through suffering.

In a few days again she saw him in dream: out of chaos, darkness and storm, he was imperatively pointing to her the way where huge waves in upheaval roared and stormed on the shore; torrents of rain and mud around threatened from all sides. Upward and above those horrors he called and ordered her to go. She obeyed and started the climb . . . up and out.

A third dream—a big boat guided by a figure *resembling* Leo Tolstoy was approaching the shore to take her along. Soon afterward by unexpected chance the son of Leo Tolstoy was to meet her at her friend's house and it was the man in the boat. Destiny plays its part, regardless of all difficulties and even resistance to its will . . . His request was to secure the engagement for the future marriage in America, where they both went in 1917. There she became an American citizen, never leaving the country until her trip to India, to the *Ashram*. of Meher Baba in 1936.

The Count and Countess lived the simple life and worked

together in their little estate in most beautiful hills, near the river, congenial in love of painting, literature, music and singing, finding rest from the artificial superficialities of life of the great New York City and its social activities. He was well known as a very talented and a popular writer, lecturer and poet. The entertaining opportunities of the wide social contacts and the feverish pulse of all life only enhanced the search of real existence, of real friends of Truth. New Channels opened, when she was brought in contact with some saints and teachers, *swamis* and *yogis* one after another. Hungry for spiritual enlightenment, to hasten the process, she sought short cuts in alluring studies of yogic methods. In spite of great inner comfort and inspiration of those studies in meditation, her ill-health and unsuitable type of certain of these methods led to such difficulties and complications that she was urged to discontinue those practices finding herself nowhere and with new problems to face. From now on her only hope was to meet the true Spiritual Guide who in

full authority could show the Way. In 1931 the day of meeting the Perfect Master Meher Baba ended her long prelude of trials in search for Light. A soul in real need is open to direct recognition of a Divine Guide.

Meher Baba was reading deep within her heart and hidden recesses of her being; she knew he *knows* and *can* help as none of the ordinary mortals. Divine compassion and Love reveals its miracle directly, preparing resurrection and spiritual transformation within. In his pure Aora of Light and Love she perceived the divine contact with the Pure Source and surrendered, humbly offering her life, her possessions, her will and service to the Master.

What was not given to Leo Tolstoy in his life and struggle for Light, was given to the son of Leo Tolstoy—Ilya Tolstoy, her husband, in a five-minute visit with Meher Baba. Touched to the depth of his heart. With tears in his eyes he left the Master with a softened heart. "It is the first time in my life that I meet a man who *has* Divine Love," said he after his meeting Baba. Before his death he experienced real spiritual transformation. A few weeks before his

death he said: "Body, mind all is crumbled down—*Love alone is unshakable*". He took along with him the supreme order expressed in the words of Meher Baba to him: "You *have* to take Love in your heart." Count Ilya Tolstoy died in peace for his wife's future knowing that she will join for life Meher Baba .

Shortly after the death of her husband Countess Tolstoy left America to join Meher Baba's Retreat at Nasik in India. Later again she joined the Master at the Meherabad *Ashram*, Ahmednagar, then followed him in the tour around India. After remaining in Bangalore a few months, she returned with the *Ashram* Group with Baba to Meherabad,

During her life in the *Ashrams* she worked in his Free Hospital for the poor, and later together with two Baba's disciples she was lecturing on the Spiritual Cause of Shri Meher Baba in several cities. She has also been given to translate the discourses of Baba and some other writings about him and is contributing articles of her impressions and experiences on spiritual Path and Baba's Universal Work, in *Meher Baba Journal*.

Recognizing in Baba the Greatest Master of this age, the alive Universal Centre of Light and Love Divine to guide

mankind out of darkness, her only hope and wish is to fulfil the orders of the Master in serving him and his Cause for Humanity.



## *When the Heart Speaks*

F. H. DADACHANJI

HERE are some more expressions of the heart spontaneously poured out in grateful acceptance of the Master's loving guidance and inner help:—

(4)

DEAR MASTER,

I have not yet met you.

But I write to thank you for your great loving kindness towards me each hour of my day.—E.L.

\* \* \*

(5)

DEAR MASTER,

Your mission in the physical earthly life has appealed to my soul through the medium of your heavenly countenance.

I will follow wheresoever you lead.—R.

\* \* \*

(6)

BELOVED MASTER,

You promised me help to get work. I have secured a job as....

I thanked you at once. Mrs. B. . . . has been most kind and arranged the interview by telephone. Please help me.... Give me strength and tact and help me to do the right thing and please them all . . . .

Blessings on all your works and doings.

Yours most gratefully,  
—M.T.

\* \* \*

(7)

BELOVED BABA,

This is to convey my deepest love to you and to tell you how I cherish the memory of your last visit to London.

It was a wonderful happiness: to be so near to you and as you said, I have been "greatly strengthened by the contact....."

I want all those whom I love to meet you lest they should be missing the great happiness I feel in loving you.

My Christmas greetings and  
love . . . —M. K.

\* \* \*

(8)

DEAR MASTER,

This seems such a small world just now! Here am I sitting in Mr. Backett's\* office in the heart of London—no place is so very much London as Trafalgar Square—and yet India seems so near. For here in this quiet place I can feel that quietness, a kind of succession of waves of *life*—that is so hidden in our busy everyday world. Yet I am but a "beginner". Still altho' I am a "stranger" it seems so natural to be writing to you for altho' I have only known of you consciously for a few weeks now—I have found in your words and my thoughts and meditations what I have strived to arrive at for years—to have done with servility to things as we think them to exist—to be *real* and let one's inward aspirations and consciousness *rule* life. I have sought to arrive in many ways—through my Christian reli-

gion, through poetry and beauty—reading and writing poetry—through sharing people's experiences and in my work . . . yet in none have I "arrived". I have still much to learn about you, much to eliminate from my present ideas and doubts—but I feel that you are teaching me. And I shall go on and on. I thank the Power that is in you.

Baba, I shall need help for the future. I have always planned to give my whole life for social Christian work in India—subject to the will of God, of course . . .

You have so much to think of and do. I wonder I ask you this—but I feel that you care so much for us all—known or unknown. I am not worrying about the future. I'm just hoping for the light to show up the right path.

My wishes are feeble compared with your *Self*—but I wish the *work* that *is you*—success and growth.

Yours sincerely,  
—E. P.

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\* The Circle Editorial Committee's Office in London conducted by Mr. Will Backett for literary and other work for Meher Baba group in the West.

# *Notes from My Diary*

F. H. DADACHANJI

BABA'S tour in Western India has now come to an end. He has returned to Meherabad, Ahmednagar, on the 3rd of May with the group of about 50 who toured with him.

The places visited by the Master and the party during this tour are Shimoga, Jog Falls, Karwar, Goa (Panjim), Amboli, Belgaum, Sakharpa, Mahabal-eshwar and Panchgani, and finally the "Happy Valley" about 11 miles from Ahmednagar, an ancient abode of Rama and his wanderings.

We shall deal with some of the interesting features of this tour, all along the Western Ghauts and the sea coast, its varied interests and significance, etc.

Establishing contacts with the *masts* (God-mad) and other spiritual *agents* as usual, side by side with the search for prospective sites for starting other centres in this picturesque part of the Western Coast seemed to be the object of Baba's tour.

The difficulties of touring with a Master under most trying conditions stand in strange contrast with the charm and beauty of some of the beauty spots visited. These are some of the many and varied experiences of the group which may be recounted later in this *Journal* by one of the Western disciples of the Master who accompanied him on this tour.

Meanwhile I will just mention a few details of the Master's visit to two places—Amboli and Belgaum—where I had the opportunity to join him.

## BABA'S VISIT AND STAY AT AMBOLI AND BELGAUM

One of the halts during the present tour of Baba and party was at *Amboli*, a quiet hill-station in the State of Sawantwadi known as the summer resort for Indian royalties and officials of the State. It is a quiet spot, about 2,500 feet above the sea-level, with beautiful scenery all along the ghaut-road, running between Amboli and the

capital town of the State, Sawantwadi. Moonlight during these days added much to the subtle charm of the typical scenery and a walk along the road on a moonlit night has a peculiar charm of its own. There are some interesting spots round about—*points* as they are popularly called on hill-stations in India and a walk or drive to these is pleasant and refreshing.

The arrangements made at Amboli for our big party were well-planned, though Belgaum was over 40 miles away and everything for the daily necessities of life had to be brought over from there. Baba's perfect host here was that popular figure amongst the Belgaum *sarafi* (banking) circle—Vishwanath Haldankar—a young Hindu devotee, with always a cheerful smile on his face and ever ready to serve the needs of the guests of whom he entertains many, due to his business and big family connections. Yet this group of Baba and his party was different from all he had ever entertained, not because of its number, nor because of its peculiar requirements, but because he had to be

the host of a Master. How well he tried and fulfilled his arduous duties could be judged from the fact that all were happy for the arrangements made at Amboli and then at Belgaum. It was his first experience to serve Baba and although he had none of those test experiences that Baba's closer ones have when serving him, the first nail of the hard test was softly driven by Baba in his own way during this period. This seemed to be his initiation and instead of unnerving him, made him all the more, alert, keen and careful to execute his task. It is one of the Master's typical ways to train those whom he wants to really work for him.

Apparently, Baba's visit to Amholi had nothing particular in view except to offer a refreshing halt to his group during the long summer tour; but from the developments that took place, it seemed it had a definite purpose.

On the way along the roadside, the Master saw a *mast* whom the average person might have mistaken for a beggar in rags. The *mast* asked the car to be stopped, and when Baba came out of

the car, the *mast* immediately prostrated himself before the Master whom he seemed to recognise the One he had searched for years, and said so. He was taken along and remained with the Master during the stay at Amboli. The very next day after the party's arrival at Amboli, a messenger from the present Ranisaheb (ruling queen) of Sawantwadi, who had just arrived at Amboli for the summer, called on for inquiry if the Master was available for *darshana*. The Ranisaheb had known about Baba from her late husband who had given 'permission for a cave to be constructed on his property in the "Tiger Valley" in Panchgani. She had therefore read and heard much about the Master but had not yet met him in person and desired naturally to avail herself of this opportunity of the Master's visit to her State, though private and unannounced, and pay him her respects with her family. It was no authoritative call or demand of a ruling queen but a very mild inquiry made in the spirit of humility and devotion of a truly spiritual person who just wished

to pay her respects to a saint or a Master and bespoke the understanding and character of one who, although all-in-all in her State as the ruling queen, had yet the very rare quality of humility and devotion towards saintly persons. It was all the more creditable since it came from one who was highly cultured, who had visited the West and had modern tastes and habits, who drove her own car and was fond of sports and shooting, etc. Baba recognised her spiritual qualities and in spite of his strict principle of not allowing any visitors during the tour which was absolutely private, he granted permission for *darshana* that she desired. The Ranisaheb is the widowed queen of the State of Sawantwadi, and ably conducts the administration of the State herself, as her son is a minor and still studying. The present Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda is her brother.

The Ranisaheb came at the appointed hour next afternoon with her three daughters and her retinue. She seemed to feel very happy in meeting Baba, even for the few moments allowed, during which she had the occasion to

personally realise much of what she heard and read.

From the cocoanuts laid at the Master's feet, Baba picked up one and gave it to one of her daughters 'to be preserved', and told her 'not to worry' and that everything would be well. The offering of cocoanuts, it might be explained, is considered auspicious and one of the best signs of cordiality, relationship and perfect understanding between the parties concerned, especially on auspicious occasions. Offering these to saints or Masters is a sign of humility and surrender, the coconut being symbolised as the head of the person offering. But the return of this simple yet precious gift by a saint or a Master to the person offering, with his blessings, is taken as an act of special consideration and grace. This apparently small gesture of Baba gave the queen the first insight into Baba's understanding of her thoughts. Both herself and her daughter who had received the *prasad* (gracious gift) from the Master, well understood its purpose and significance.

The next day, Baba and his group of Eastern and Western

disciples were all invited to tea by the queen in her bungalow on the edge of a cliff commanding beautiful scenery. This was another occasion for herself and the family to contact the Master.

There were many who desired to avail themselves of this opportunity to have *darshana* of the Master who had so unexpectedly arrived there. They were all allowed to pay their respects at the time of his departure, when there was a good rush of the town folks to have the Master's *darshana*.

\* \* \*

Baba's next halt was at Belgaum, where the Ranisaheb's bungalow was placed at the disposal of the party. It is situated about three miles away from the city proper in quiet environments, as always preferred by the Master. He stayed here for two days. The queen also came here to pay her respects to the Master.

\* \* \*

After two days' stay at Sakharpa (Ratnagiri District), one day at Mahabaleshwar and one day at Panchgani (both in Satara District) Baba and party arrived at Ahmednagar on the morning of April



29th and stopped during the day with the *Satha* family, the old disciples of the Master, whose love, devotion and contact with the Master always make him and his group feel quite at home.

In the evening, the Master and party left for the "Happy Valley" where they stayed for four days and arrived at Meherabad on the 3rd of May. The Master's colony of Meherabad, near Ahmednagar, has now once again been buzzing with activities all around.

\*       \*       \*

On the 1st of May, a telephone message from Poona brought the shocking news of the sudden and accidental death of one of the Master's earliest disciples—Behram Faridun Irani, popularly known amongst the Master's group as *Buvasab*. A short life-sketch and his contact with the Master is published at the end of these notes.

The following circular was immediately sent round to all the members of the Master's *mandali* residing in different places:—

"Before leaving Bangalore, Baba told all male and female *mandali* that during the period of

War, two of his great disciples—either one male and one female or both males—will leave the body, and on the 1st of this month, our *mandali* member *Buvasab* (Behram Faridun Irani) has left the body and united with Baba in soul.

Now one more of his nearest disciples will have similar union with Baba before the end of the War.

On *Wednesday the 8th of May*, in memory of *Buvasab*'s deep spiritual connection with Baba, Baba himself and his *mandali* will all fast during the day, taking only tea in the morning, and breaking the fast after sunset same evening. Water is allowed.

On that day, Baba will feed the poor—about 100—with his own hands.

Please inform all concerned."

In accordance with this special order, the Master's group in different places and the entire *mandali* in Meherabad and Bangalore observed a fast on *Wednesday the 8th May*. Baba also distributed food and sweets to the poor in Meherabad with his own hands on that day.

\*       \*       \*

## NEW SITES FOR CENTRES

Baba wishes to open 12 Centres in India before he speaks. Of these, 6 are already established—at Meherabad (Ahmednagar), Toka, Nasik, Madras, Byramangala near Bangalore and Mandla in Central Provinces.

For the remaining 6, suitable sites in different parts of the country are to be selected. One of the Master's objects of the last tour was to look for these. He seems to have a liking for Karwar and Belgaum and has given a hint to start one somewhere in Karwar if a suitable site is available. Negotiations are already going on for a probable site in Belgaum. Other prospective sites are in consideration.

## BYRAMANGALA

The construction work of the two blocks of the Byramangala Centre proceeds well ahead. One of these is expected to be ready by the end of June; the other probably two months later.

## MANDLA

A small structure of a special design on this site on the banks of the Narbada in Central Provinces has been erected. Further information about this Centre will be given later.

\*       \*       \*

## BABA RETIRES IN SECLUSION

In the beginning of June, Baba intends to retire in seclusion for two months, either in Meherabad or in a cave or on a mountain elsewhere.



# *In Memoriam*

A WORTHY DISCIPLE

IN the month of November last, Baba had declared to his group in Bangalore that before the end of the War, two of his most intimate disciples will have to leave the body—either a male and a female or both males.

In spite of these clear words of the Master, the group had a rude shock on the 1st of May when they heard of a fatal motor accident and the sudden demise of Behram Faridun Irani, better known in Baba's group as "Buvasab". The Master's disciples, trained to a life of shocks and surprises, are immune to such sad occurrences that ordinarily upset the worldly-minded, yet the breaking of this news first fell like a stunning blow even to the seasoned disciples. Such a healthy and robust young man like the late Buvasab was the last and the least expected to have thus passed off, so suddenly, so unexpectedly, not because he was so young—only about 45—and very strong and robust, but because he had a very deep and intimate connection

with Baba even before Baba's Realization.

A friend and a partner in business with Merwan, as Baba was then known, before he became God-realized, Behram was the *first* to accept Baba as a Master, the first to surrender to him in the truest sense and spirit not only with his well-earned money and savings but with a supreme spirit of selfless service which he rendered for years, untiringly and lovingly.

Ever since the formation of Baba's first *mandali* in Poona during the periods of his camping and establishing *ashrams* in Meherabad, Toka, Nasik, as also during all his travels in India and Persia up till 1930, Buvasab gave Baba a whole-hearted company and a splendid stand of a true disciple, through hardest tests and trials—rendering unfailing and remarkable service for years in the discharge of his most trying and arduous duties as the managing head of Baba's *mandali*, looking into every detail of the *ashram* life in

strict accordance with the Master's principles and injunctions.

With practically no education during his childhood, his ability to cope with all practical problems of life was unusual. Buvasab had a special business acumen and a quick sense of grasping and understanding things and entering into details, a remarkable knack of tackling men and situations which richly deserved the distinctive designation of a "barrister" conferred on him by Baba in one of his humorous moods.

As the Superintendent in charge of Baba's first *ashram*—the Meherashram—started for the boys with a boarding school in 1927, he was endowed with a special title of "Buvasab", a reverential term applied to wise and saintly persons. It was more in this name of *Buvasab* that he was subsequently known to all the *mandali* and even to others, rather than in his own family name of Behramji.

Those who know Baba and the hard tests of a life of strict discipline in his *ashram* would readily admit that it needs a great heart and a most daring spirit

prepared to wager life that could stand the trials of a life under a spiritual Master like Baba. Buvasab's standing, therefore, for 15 long years in service to Baba and his sacred Cause for the spiritual uplift of humanity as the managing head of the *mandali* and the Superintendent in charge of his *ashrams* at Meherabad, Toka, Nasik, etc., speaks in itself of his unfailing love, of his inflexible faith, his enduring patience and a supreme spirit of forbearance and fortitude to stand all trials. Indeed he had his shortcomings too as all human beings have, but these pale into insignificance before his sterling qualities of absolute surrenderance, sacrifice and suffering for his Master. How Buvasab bore the brunt of the difficult situations created by Baba when he brings out one's weaknesses and hammers them mercilessly till they are completely subdued, had been everyday experiences of the *ashramites*.

Ever since Baba dismantled his *ashram* at Meherabad and commenced his tours to the West from 1931 and Buvasab was left behind, he felt the

separation after 15 years of close contact without a break. Baba therefore advised him to go into worldly life and activities again yet remain detached from worldly temptations. Strict celibacy was the special injunction enforced. He restarted business which he extended extensively in different branches. During this period however, he used to see Baba at intervals at will and also whenever called.

While on his usual daily morning round on his motor-bicycle on a road quite clear of traffic, he rushed straight into a car that shot suddenly from the side crossing, was thrown over and died *instantaneously* as a result of the concussion of brain.

His death removes from Meher Baba's *mandali* a veteran disciple, whose spirit of tolerance, forbearance, and selfless service were exemplary as were his faith and love for the beloved Master. Apart from deep spiritual connection of the past lives, for an absolutely uneducated and uncultured man of

Buvasab's type to have developed these rare qualities and lived a life of strictest discipline under a Master needs an influence that is very deep and divine and brings about a transformation of sinners into saints—the divine grace and personal contact of a Master of Divinity and Perfection.

Coming as a shock to all who knew him and loved for his goodness and obliging nature, there were many who mourned his premature death, especially his close relatives.

For those who shared as comrades in his spiritual life under the Master, although they all as human beings do feel the loss of a brother-in-faith, the greatest consolation lies, in the fact that Buvasab did richly deserve the heart-felt words of appreciation from the Master:—

"As one of my nearest and dearest disciples, he unconsciously when alive was One with me and now that he has left the body, he consciously enjoys that blessed Union with me."

## Register of Editorial Alterations Vol. 2, issue 7

- Page 387, para 1, line 3, change mindridden to mind-ridden (add hyphen)
- Page 387, para 2, line 10, change on fire to on the fire
- Page 390, para 3, line 10, change tranquillity to tranquility
- Page 394, col 1, para 2, line 21, change not.\* to not.”\* (add end-quote)
- Page 396, col 1, para 1, line 12, change incohate to inchoate
- Page 397, col 2, para 1, line 25, change im to in
- Page 398, col 1, para 1, line 2, change co-eval to coeval
- Page 402, col 1, para 1, line 1, change day- to day (delete hyphen)
- Page 405, col 2, para 1, line 3, change brethern to brethren
- Page 407, col 2, para 3, line 18, change love. to love.” (add end-quote)
- Page 418, col 2, para 2, line 12, change ‘suppression’ to ‘suppression,’ (add comma)
- Page 423, col 2, para 1, line 4, change sign, to sign (delete comma)
- Page 426, col 2, para 1, line 6, change own. to own.” (add end-quote)
- Page 429, col 1, para 1, line 8, change Divine, to Divine (delete comma)
- Page 429, col 1, para 1, line 10, change hierchy to hierarchy
- Page 430, col 1, para 1, line 11, change pleasureable to pleasurable
- Page 432, col 2, para 1, line 18, change slavic to Slavic
- Page 433, col 1, para 2, line 8, change seek to seek, (add comma)
- Page 433, col 2, para 2, line 9, change jesture. to gesture.
- Page 435, col 1, para 2, line 9, change Aora to Aura
- Page 444, col 1, para 2, line 10, change occurences to occurrences
- Page 445, col 2, para 1, line 12, change inflinching to unflinching