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MEHER BABA

JOURNAL



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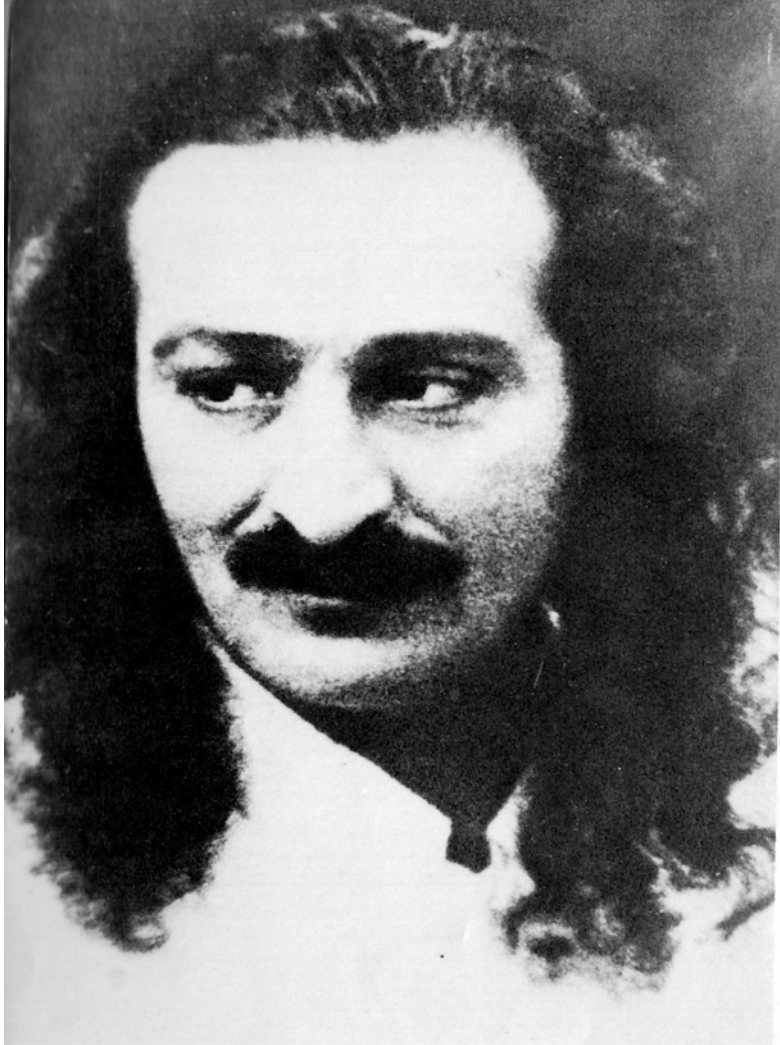
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“I have not come to teach but to awaken”
—SHRI MEHER BABA



Shri Meher Baba

MEHER BABA

JOURNAL

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Meher Baba *on* *The Types of Meditation*

Part I

THE NATURE OF MEDITATION AND ITS CONDITIONS

MEDITATION may be described as *the path which the individual cuts for himself, while trying to get beyond the limitations of the mind.* If a man who is caught up in the

**Meditation is the
Path forced by the
Individual while
Transcending the
Mind**

tangles of a thick forest tries to get into the open spaces, his efforts to break through the encircling impediments will leave behind him the marks of his journey; and the onlooker will, by the study of these marks, be able to describe the paths which he traversed in his attempt to come out into the open. The movements of the man, who comes out of the forest, are different in principle from the movements of the railway engine, which moves along the rails, already laid for the course, which it is to take. He is not following a ready made path; *the path comes to be inscribed after he has traversed it.* In the same way, the man, who finds himself drawn into deep meditations, is really grappling with the spiritual problems with which he is faced. He is not merely trying to adhere to a rigid line of movement, already existing in his mental make-up.

The development of meditation can, nevertheless, be *anticipated*, in outline, by those, who have a direct insight into the peculiar contours of the mind of the individual, just in the same way as

**The General Lines
of Meditation can
be anticipated**

a person, who has thorough acquaintance with the details of the constitution of the solidified crust of the earth, may, in general, expect the outburst of a volcano in one region rather than another. When the surging powers in the bowels of the earth are trying to burst out, they are bound to take the line of least resistance: and their actual passage will largely be dependent upon the nature of the surroundings, with which they are confronted. The difference between the volcanic forces and the spiritual urge is that the former are unconscious, while the latter is a conscious phenomenon. So, intelligence plays an important part in the course of meditation: and, *it is this intelligence, which is kindled by the Master by giving to the aspirant a few simple suggestions about what kinds of things he has to do or expect in his meditations.*

Meditation has often been misunderstood as being a mechanical process of *forcing* the mind upon some idea or object. Most people naturally have an aversion to

**Intelligent Medi-
tation is sustained
by Interest**

meditation, because they experience great difficulty in their attempts to coerce the mind in a particular direction, or pin it down to one particular thing. *Any purely mechanical handling of the mind is not only irksome but is ultimately bound to be unsuccessful.*

The first principle, which the aspirants, therefore, have to remember is that the mind can be controlled and directed in meditation *only according to the laws inherent in the make-up of the mind itself* and not by means of the application of any mechanical or semi-mechanical force.

Many persons who do not technically 'meditate' are oftentimes found to be deeply and intensely engrossed in systematic and clear thinking about some practical problem or

theoretical subject; and their mental process is, in a sense, very much like meditation, inasmuch as the mind is engrossed in intense thinking about a particular subject-matter to the exclusion of all other irrelevant things. Meditation is often easy and spontaneous in such mental processes, because the mind is dwelling upon an object in which it is interested and which it increasingly understands. But the spiritual tragedy about ordinary trains of thoughts is that they are not directed towards things that really matter. On the other hand, the object of meditation has always to be carefully selected, and must be *spiritually important*; it has to be some divine person or object, or some spiritually significant theme or Truth. But, in order to attain success in meditation, the mind must not only get interested in the divine subjects or truths, but must also begin by trying to *understand and appreciate them*. Such intelligent meditation is a natural process of the mind; and, since it avoids the monotonous rigidity and regularity of mechanical meditation, it becomes not only *spontaneous and inspiring, but easy and successful*.

Meditation would be distinguished from concentration. Meditation is the first stage of a process which gradually develops into concentration. *In concentration,*

Meditation and Concentration *the mind seeks to unite with its object by the process of fixing itself upon that object: whereas, meditation consists in thorough thinking about a particular object to the exclusion of every other thing.* In concentration, there is practically no movement of the mind; but in meditation the mind moves from one relevant idea to another relevant idea. In concentration, the mind merely dwells upon some *form* or a pithy and terse *formula*, without amplifying them through a succession of ideas; but, in meditation, the mind tries to understand and assimilate the object, by dwelling upon the diverse attributes of the form or the various implications of the formula. In concentration, as well as in meditation, there is the peaceful intermingling of love and longing for the divine object or principle, on which

the mind dwells; and, both these psychic activities are very different from the merely *mechanical* processes, which have rigid regularity and unrelieved monotony.

Persons, who are not gifted with the capacity of intense concentration, have to begin with meditation, whereas, for those who are gifted with the capacity of concentration, meditation is unnecessary. It is sufficient if they concentrate their minds on the mere form of a God-man or some simple formula like '*I am neither the gross body, nor the subtle body*¹ *nor the mental body*;² *I am Atman (soul)*'.

Meditation is essentially an individual matter in the sense that it is not for self-display in society but for one's own spiritual advancement. Utter isolation of the

Silence and seclusion are Helpful for Meditation

individual from the social surroundings is almost always conducive to the unhampered prosecution of meditation. The ancient *yogis* took to mountains and caves in search of complete seclusion. Great quiet and undisturbed silence are the necessities for attaining success in meditation; and these are easily available in the mountains or caves. However, it is not necessary for persons to go to mountains and caves in search of these conditions; even in the towns, a little care and trouble can secure for the aspirant the quiet, silence and seclusion which are necessary to facilitate and promote progress in the different forms of meditation.

The Presence of darkness or the closing of eyes is not absolutely necessary for meditation. If the aspirant is face to face with the object of meditation, he may

The Value of Darkness

have successful meditation, even when his eyes are open. But in most cases getting away from all gross sights is, like getting away from all gross sounds, conducive to intensive meditation. To secure complete external silence involves careful selection of the spot

¹ The subtle body is the seat of desires and vital forces.

² The mental body is the seat of the mind.

for meditation; but, one has only to close one's eyes in order to protect the mind from the disturbance of sights. Sometimes, when there is light, closing the eyes is not sufficient to ward off all visual stimulation; and then, it is advisable to start meditation in complete darkness. Darkness is normally one of the things that promote progress in meditation.

With regard to the posture, which is most helpful, there are no fixed rules. Any posture, which is comfortable and hygienically unobjectionable, may be

Posture for Meditation

adopted, so long as it does not induce sleep and contributes to the alertness of the mind. The posture should not involve any physical tension or pain; because, it then invites the attention of the mind to the body itself. The body should, therefore, be completely relaxed, as when going to sleep; but the usual position, which is accompanied by sleep should be avoided, because it has a tendency to induce sleep. When the body has assumed a convenient and suitable posture, it is helpful to turn one's attention to the head as the centre of the body. When the head is regarded as the centre, it is easier to forget the body and to withdraw one's attention from the body and fix it on the object of meditation.

It is desirable that the aspirant should stick to the same posture for each meditation. The previous associations, which the posture has with his

The Importance of fixing the Spot, Posture and Hour of Meditation

meditations, endow it with a special capacity to induce and facilitate similar meditations. When the body has assumed the chosen posture, it is, as it were, constantly under the subconscious suggestion that it must not any more obtrude upon consciousness and that it has to serve the purpose of meditation. Choosing the same spot and a fixed hour for meditation also has a salutary effect upon meditation because of their previous associations. Hence, the aspirant must be serious about resorting to an identical spot, posture and hour for the purposes of meditation. The choice of the spot also involves

consideration of the occult associations and possibilities of the spot. Special importance is attached to meditating in holy places or the spots, where the Masters have themselves lived or meditated.

The spot, posture and hour of meditation have all their relative importance, which varies according to the peculiarities and history of the individual. The Master, therefore, often gives, in respect of them, different instructions to each disciple to suit his individual case. However, in those cases, where meditation has become habitual through constant practice, adherence to a fixed spot, posture or time can be dispensed with; and, the aspirant can carry on his meditation at any time under any conditions. Even when he is walking he may be inwardly absorbed in his meditation.

Meditation should not be resorted to with a heavy heart, as if, it were like taking castor oil. One has got to be serious about meditation; but, this does not mean

**Meditation should
be a Joyous Enter-
prise**

that the aspirant must always look grave or melancholy. Sense of humour and cheerfulness not only do not interfere with the progress of meditation but actually contribute to it. Meditation should not be artificially turned into a distasteful and tiresome thing; *the aspirant should freely allow himself the natural joy, which is attendant upon successful meditation, without getting addicted to it.* Meditation should be something like a picnic on the higher planes. Like excursions into new and beautiful natural surroundings, meditation brings with it a *sense of enthusiasm, adventure, peace and exhilaration.* All thoughts of depression, fear or worry have to be completely cut out, if there is to be a really successful meditation.

Though meditation is essentially an individual matter, collective meditation has its own advantages. If different aspirants, who are in harmony with each other, take to the same line of meditation together, their thoughts have a

tendency to augment and strengthen each other; this is particularly noticeable when the disciples of the same

Master are collectively engaged in meditating upon their common Master. But, if the collective meditation of this

type is to yield its full advantage, each aspirant, who participates in the collective meditation, must be concerned with the course of his own meditation and not with what others in the same group are doing. Though he starts his meditation in the company of others, he has to forget all about it and get lost in the object of his meditation. He has to be entirely oblivious of the whole world, including his body; and, he has to be fully and exclusively cognisant of the object, which has been agreed upon by all, before the beginning of the meditation. When intelligently handled, collective meditation can prove to be of immense help to the *beginners*, although the advanced aspirants can carry on their meditation by themselves.

In ordinary thinking, the uninterrupted flow of relevant trains of ideas is common; but, when the mind sets itself to systematic meditation, there is

inevitably a *reactionary*
The Arising of Dis- *tendency for irrelevant and*
turbing Thoughts *contrary thoughts to emerge*
and create disturbance. This is

the law of the mind: and, the aspirant should not be upset by the appearance, in consciousness, of many contrary and unwholesome thoughts, which had hitherto never made their appearance. *Meditation involves bringing the subconscious contents of the mind to the forefront of consciousness.* Like the conjurer, who summons into existence many strange and unexpected things, the process of meditation invites many absurd and unwanted thoughts. The aspirant must expect and be prepared for all these disturbing thoughts and should exercise inexhaustible *patience* with the unshakable confidence that all these disturbances will be ultimately overcome.

The last but not the least important condition of attaining

success in meditation is the adopting of the *right technique* in respect of the disturbing thoughts and

**The Technique of
Dealing with the
Disturbing Thoughts**

mental influences. It is no use wasting psychic energy by *directly* trying to combat and repress the disturbing thoughts.

Any such attempts involve giving further attention to the disturbing thoughts; and the disturbing thoughts feed upon the very attention, which is given to them for the purpose of repressing them, and get thereby further strengthened and confirmed in consciousness. The best thing is to ignore them and to turn to the object of meditation as early as possible, without attaching any undue importance to the disturbing factors. *By recognising the irrelevance and worthlessness of the disturbing thoughts and the relative value and importance of the object meditation, it becomes possible to leave the disturbing thoughts to themselves to die their natural death, through sheer neglect, and to make the mind permanently steady in the object of meditation.*

The Spiritual Mission of Shri Meher Baba from the Point of View of Comparative Religion

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

ALL the great world-religions of history have set themselves to the important task of awakening and releasing the divinity, which is latent in man. For this purpose the Prophets and the *Avatars* have held before humanity the high ideal of spiritual perfection emphasising such aspects of perfection, as were urgently needed by those, to whom they addressed themselves. The Truth, which the prophets imparted, has been always the same; but they have presented it, in their own way, and clothed in a terminology, which would be immediately understood and accepted by the people of their times.

However, the thread of unity, which runs through all the great world religions of history, can be seen by any one, who has an eye for the essentials. Some religions like that of Zoroastrianism and Buddhism have presented the

spiritual ideal in its *impersonal* aspect and other religions like Christianity and Islam have fastened upon the *personal* aspect of the Infinite Reality, which sustains the Universe, while Hinduism has emphasised *the fundamental and essential identity between man and the Infinite Reality*. But all these complementary aspects of man's position and destiny in this world; and Shri Meher Baba brings to us the *integral vision*, which enables us to see all religions in their truth and beauty.

Shri Meher Baba, who is born of a Zoroastrian family, has come into his own spiritual fullness of being, by his deep connection with two spiritual Masters, belonging to the Muslim and Hindu religions respectively. His own life-history proves that the Truth is beyond all sects, creeds or organised religions, which are

all shadows cast by different formulations of the one Truth. The Spiritual Work of Shri Meher Baba will, therefore, be non-sectarian and comprehensive in its scope; and *it will create not a new sect or religion but a fresh and direct perception of the Eternal and only Truth*, of which all the great world religions are revelations.

The work of Shri Meher Baba is carried not only in the external world but also in the *inner planes* of Reality. His inner working consists in contacting and inspiring all the spiritually advanced souls and preparing them for the universal work, which is ahead of him. For this purpose, he has to meet at least seventy-five per cent. of the spiritually advanced persons and co-ordinate their activities so as to secure maximum result in the realm of the spirit. Of particular importance is his work with the *Masts* (God-mad), who, on their spiritual Path, need further guidance and help, in order to get established in the final and creative poise of understanding, so that they become vehicles for efficient and impersonal dispensation of spiritual help to all, who need it.

Shri Meher Baba's work in the external world is also of immense importance for the future of humanity. So far, it has chiefly consisted of contacting genuine aspirants all over the world through his several tours in the East as well as in the West. He has been drawing to himself those persons, who will share his Universal Work after his *Manifestation*. *Through his inspiring contact with his Eastern and Western disciples, he is building up a foundation for the edifice of the New Humanity, which will be illumined by a sense of the unity of all life, and which will be animated by self-giving and creative love.* The achievement of this task means constructive work on a stupendous and unprecedented scale. As a part of this Universal Work, he has, with regard to India, a plan for establishing *twelve spiritual centres* in important places. Of these spiritual centres one of the most important ones shall be the *Universal Spiritual Centre* at Byramangala near Bangalore.

The Great Ones of history have all been intensely practical in their objective, which is to take humanity nearer its

divine goal, by imparting right understanding. Their teaching is, therefore, carefully adjusted to the needs and the capacities of those, who are going to be its direct recipients. They have never wasted their energies on barren speculation of purely theoretical importance; *their mission has been to give not a new theory but a new life-impulse to humanity as a whole.* The spiritual Mission of Shri Meher Baba has to be understood in the light of these facts, which have invariably characterised the life-work of those, who have been at the helm of spiritual progress, in the critical periods of human history.

Zarathustra sounded the trumpet call of duty by inviting man to side with the forces of Light in the perpetual battle, which they are waging with the forces of Darkness. Christ worked towards the redemption of humanity through his life of love and sacrifice, even at the cost of crucifixion at the hands of those, who misunderstood him. Shri Krishna revived the lost *Yoga* or the Supreme Art of Life, not only by his noble and all-sided teaching, but also by showering on his devotees a love, which was infin-

itely sweet and pure and strong. Mohomed brought to the world of strife a new zest for the ideal of unity and fraternity, Buddha turned the wheel of *Dhamma* (or Righteousness) through his enlightening and ennobling spiritual discourses, which, in their power, were so effective that they inspired the lives of millions of people. *And, now in our midst, is One, who has taken an Incarnation to fulfill and complete the spiritual work of all the Great Ones of history, and, who, by his central position in the spiritual hierarchy of the world, will, in his own way, not only draw to himself all the advanced souls, but will also by using them as channels for an outpouring of life, change the entire course of future human history.*

Shri Meher Baba's supreme method of helping the struggling humanity, in its onward march, is that of awakening the divinity in man by imparting direct perception of the Truth. *The beautiful and divine love, which flows from him, brings about the spiritual resurrection of all, who are its recipients; it is a pure blessing*

because it fills man with immortal sweetness and unbounded joy and quickens his Being with the fire that consumes all dross. Through the power of his noble example and comprehensive Teaching, he unfolds the best in man; and those, who taste of the pure waters of the eternal life, which he brings,

shall not only be themselves redeemed from a life of bondage, suffering and ignorance, but shall become instruments for the fulfilment of the Divine Plan, which is to bring to the whole of humanity, a new creative life of freedom and happiness and understanding.



Lecture at the Nagpur University

BY PRINCESS NORINA MATCHABELLI

THE NEED OF AN AWAKENER

ON February 18th, Princess Norina Matchabelli gave an Extension Lecture on behalf of the Nagpur University in the Convocation Hall, a summary of which is reproduced below.

Mr. T. J. Kedar, the Vice-Chancellor of the Nagpur University, presided at the lecture. After brief introductory remarks, he invited Dr. C. D. Deshmukh to introduce the lecturer. Dr. Deshmukh, while introducing the lecturer, said:—

"I congratulate the University for arranging a lecture on a topic which is of such absorbing interest and which has such living interest for us all. Sometimes the

universities have been interested in purely academic pursuits. The organising of a lecture which is so intimately connected with contemporary life, speaks for the fact that the Vice-Chancellor is very much alive to the pressing needs of the day.

Wrapped in their academic atmosphere, the learned ones have often kept strangely aloof from matters of burning interest. We are reminded of Christ's words to the *Pharisees*, who represented the learned class of his day. Christ's appeal was primarily to the simple folk, who were not sophisticated. The *Pharisees*

were too learned to be able to understand the simple but profound message of Christ. But when we find the learned ones responding to spiritual teaching, we have something which is very rare.

Princess Norina Matchabelli was very wealthy; but she lost all. Then she regained all and finally surrendered all at the spiritual call of Shri Meher Baba. This shows that there is no isolationism in the world of Culture and Truth and the Call of Spirituality is most imperative when it comes. When the Princess met Shri Meher Baba, all her life was transformed; for meeting the Master is entering into a new life. We want her to speak about her personal experience rather than give us abstract truths. What the world needs is not dry formulæ but experience. In the past, humanity has received help from the *Avatars* and the Prophets; and to-day in our midst we are again witnessing the descent of One, who is an Incarnation of Love and Truth. He is Shri Meher Baba."

After introductory remarks by Dr. C. D. Deshmukh, Princess Norina Matchabelli made an

inspiring speech and held up all spell-bound. She said:—

"In spite of all appearances to the contrary, the world is to-day in search of the Truth. Even the present chaos, for which there is no parallel in history, is just a part of the imperative search for that Truth, in which man shall realise the real meaning of life and final fulfilment. Search through chaos is misdirected; but it is not fruitless. The very suffering and destruction, which emerge through chaos, have to be instrumental in preparing man for THE NEW ORDER OF EXISTENCE, which has been prophesied by the *Avatars* and the Prophets.

The onward progress of human civilization has been throughout marked by *cycles*. Whenever spiritual understanding has been at its lowest ebb, humanity has witnessed the descent of One, who, through his vision and power, gives to the bewildered humanity *a fresh dispensation of the Ancient Truth*. We have such a One in our midst; he is SHRI MEHER BABA.

What humanity needs is not more teaching but experience.

That is why Shri Meher Baba says: "*I have come not to teach but to awaken.*" It is through spiritual awakening that man shall inherit and EXPERIENCE GOD. God has to be experienced not as some remote entity supremely indifferent to the affairs of our world, but as the very Life-principle, in which 'we live, and move and have our being'. You have *not* known God until you can see him at work through good and evil, through joy and sorrow and through all the other opposites of life; you have *not* known God, until you can feel His existence in all the stages of evolution and all the phases of human life; and you have *not* known God, until you can see him equally in the saint and the sinner. God has to be experienced not as some mysterious other, but as the only Reality, which is not only the creative power in Nature, Science, Art, Literature and Religion, but which is also *our very inmost Being*.

There are many, who to-day believe that what the world urgently needs is not the experience of God but bread. It is true that those, who are experiencing the pangs of hunger, will have no time to think

of God. But it is equally true that life is not all eating and drinking. In fact, even material problems cannot be solved without spiritual understanding, whereas all economic and political problems get automatically solved when there is spiritual understanding. It is the bread of UNDERSTANDING that the spirit of man most urgently needs; and it is for the dispensation of this UNDERSTANDING that Shri Meher Baba has come.

The root cause of the present chaos is self-interest in different forms. The chaos is bound to perpetuate itself as long as it is tackled superficially and mechanically. What is needed is a true sense of brotherhood and the spirit of service without expectation of any rewards. This implies realising the unity of all life. The understanding of the oneness of all Being is, however, possible only when there is the annihilation of the limited self. According to Shri Meher Baba, the secret of spirituality lies in the *elimination of the Ego*, with all its lesser desires.

Man has sought light and happiness through organised religions, sects, cults, creeds,

rituals and ceremonies. Shri Meher Baba does not attach much importance to any of these external things. The real essence of all world-religions lies in the Understanding, which they are meant to convey. Shri Meher Baba revitalises and harmonises all religions by imparting the right Understanding of true values. He does not give mere descriptions of the Truth-conscious state. *He is Truth Incarnate. He brings the Truth and has come to impart it to those, who are ready for it.* In the spiritual domain, an ounce of practice is worth more than a pound of theory; example is better than precept; and a God-man like Shri Meher Baba is a greater source of inspiration than thousands of books or theories.

Man shall never get established in lasting peace by running away from life. But if he lives in the world, with inward detachment, he is free even while performing his worldly duty. The true understanding of life requires the inner renunciation of cravings and a *poise between the head and the heart*. The harmony between the intellect and the feeling will come only in

the Truth-state, which raises man to the order of unclouded Intuition. It involves *the surrenderance of the separative ego and the merging of the finite self into the Universal Self*, in which there is no duality. Realization of the Truth in the super-conscious state, secures an unobstructed release of creative life and action in the threefold world of Spirit, Mind and Matter.

If man is to inherit the Best, which is yet to be, he must have the humility to open himself to the Grace and the Divine Love, which the Masters shower on him. The problem of poverty and suffering is not going to be finally solved through sporadic expressions of religious pity. It can only be solved through *the attitude of LIVE AND LET LIVE and an atmosphere of Divine Love*, in which there is no distinction of ' I ' and ' You '. The Divine Love, which frees man from the fetters of limited life, is always a gift from the Masters of Wisdom. Those, who receive it, get purified in its fire become new. Shri Meher Baba will initiate man into the free, full and undivided life of the Spirit, by imparting the Truth. *The*

God-man, does not convey thought but the Truth, which he awakens in the individual through some deep INNER EXPERIENCE. Although the use of the present alphabet board, makes it easy for any one to communicate with Shri Meher Baba (except when he is in seclusion), he has been observing Silence for the last 15 years. The Avatars have often observed silence for several years and have broken it only when they wanted to manifest the Truth to the whole of Humanity. When Shri Meher Baba breaks his silence, at the time of his Manifestation, it will be a word of power that he utters. Through the worldwide transformation of consciousness, which he will cause, it will be possible for us to build THE NEW HUMANITY on the secure foundation of the TRUTH."

After the lecture, Mr. T. J. Kedar, the Vice-Chancellor of the University, said:—

"We are very thankful to the Princess for bringing to us the

Message of Meher Baba. It is in perfect harmony with our spiritual traditions of Maharashtra, as represented by the teachings of saints like Ramdas, Tukaram, Dnyandeo, Namdeo and Chaitanyaraj. The spiritual Message of Shri Meher Baba, which has been given to us by the Princess, shall be treasured by us. The West in particular needs it. We have to learn much from the West with regard to material life; but the West also has to learn much from the East."

After the closing of the lecture, the members of the audience received free copies of Shri Meher Baba's Message about THE NEW HUMANITY, The Seven Realities of Meher Baba's Teaching (in different languages) and a photo of Shri Meher Baba. The lecture aroused great interest not only of the intelligent and cultured people from Nagpur, but also of the local papers, which gave exhaustive reports about the lecture.



Incidents in the "Ramayana" and the "Odyssey"

BY WILL BACKETT (LONDON)

THE glimpses of the ancient world obtained in these two poems, reflect in some measure a different outlook upon life in East and West. It is described how Valmiki, the writer of the "Ramayana", "seeking deeper insight into the story which he had heard from the sage, Narada, took his seat according to *yoga* ritual and addressed himself to ponder on the subject, and no other."

It has long been the practice of artists and writers in the East to concentrate in this way upon the subject they wish to portray before commencing to reproduce it in material form, and in mediæval Europe, there were painters to whom was granted the open vision of the Christ, as the ecstasy of devotion filled their hearts, and tears flowed down their cheeks, sharing the Master's anguish while the picture grew upon the canvas for all to see His sufferings as they

had done. The scene that followed the return of Odysseus after 20 years absence, when he celebrated the reunion with his wife, is perhaps typical of the West as described by Homer when "the divine minstrel took the hollow harp and aroused in the assembled company the desire of sweet song, and of the happy dance. Then the great hall rang round them with the sound of the feet of dancing men and fair girdled women."

Inner development, in the case of Valmiki, enabled him "to behold Rama and his wife Sita, with members of their family, talking, bearing and forbearing, doing and undoing, as in real life, as clearly as one might see a fruit held in the palm of his hand. He perceived, not only what had been, but what was to come, as Brahma had promised he should, and then, only after concentrated meditation when the whole story lay like a

picture in his mind, he began to shape it into verse."

No such careful preparation preceded the wanderings of Odysseus, which the "Odyssey" recounts and he seemed to be hurled by a relentless fate from one misfortune to another. His *karma* brought upon him the enmity of Poseidon, the god of the sea, whose son Odysseus had blinded when escaping from imprisonment. Had he not boasted of the deed, and thus betrayed his identity to the monster, the latter would not have known who was his assailant, nor have secured his father's vengeance through which Odysseus was wrecked in a storm powerless to withstand Poseidon's wrath. Rama's control over the elements, described in the "Ramayana", shows that even on that plane the Master directs a spiritual upheaval, as in the outer affairs of mankind. Facing the east, he lay upon a couch of sacrificial grass "with praying hands towards the sea, resolving that the Ocean should yield, or he himself would die." "Then with his arrow from the mighty bow of Shiva which he wielded, he pierced the waters, awakening the mighty storms and

stirring the elemental beings of the sea; then drying up the waters where the arrow fell, a desert appeared which the Master blessed, and it became fruitful for the service of man. When Rama saw the city of Lanka where Sita was imprisoned by the demon Ravana, it appeared "towering up to pierce the heavens, wrought as it were of mind rather than matter." The magic barge of the Phæacians in which Odysseus made the last stage of his homeward voyage which ended his wanderings, is described as having "no pilot or rudder, but understanding the thoughts and intents of men, knowing the cities and fields of every people and swiftly traversing the gulf of salt sea, shrouded in mist and cloud, never in fear of wreck or ruin".

Both the city of Lanka, and the "magic barge" point to states of consciousness beyond the physical, in which Rama and Odysseus moved, the former with full and complete mastery, whereas Odysseus, we are told, was taken asleep and did not know when waking on land, where he had come.

Baba has emphasised the great difference between the

outlook of a Perfect Master and that of persons at different stages of the spiritual Path towards Perfection, which gives added significance to some of Rama's actions and reveals those of Odysseus in a new light. Both were faced with the same test, the bending of a bow which resisted the strength of others, but in the case of Odysseus, it was merely to reestablish his right to his kingdom and home after 20 years absence, whereas Rama revealed his mastery of the forces which the bow of Shiva symbolises, by wielding it, although it resisted the strength of gods and men alike. It has been given by Shiva to the gods who in turn gave it to the ancestors of Sita whose hand in marriage was bestowed upon Rama by her father because he had been able to bend it. It is further noticeable that the event in Odysseus' life occurred after his wanderings which are the subject of the *Odyssey*, whereas with Rama, it was at the outset of his work with Sita and other close members of his Circle of disciples. The symbolism of this is further indicated by the description of each event:—"The bow of Shiva

was brought forth upon an eight-wheeled cart, drawn by 5,000 tall men. Rama drew the bow easily from its case, and strove to bend it. It yielded easily, and he strung and drew it till at last it snapped in two with the sound of an earthquake or thunderclap, and the thousands of spectators were amazed and terrified."

Rama's mastery, without effort, of that which could only be moved by the united strength of an army, typifies the power of a perfect Being over the energy which animates mankind. In an interior sense, the bow of Shiva is Rama's own bow, for Rama is an incarnation of Vishnu who is one with Shiva and Brahma in the Hindu trinity; this identity, under different names, between Rama, Shiva and Brahma, shows the different aspects of the Avatar's work, and when Brahma is describing the infinite nature of Rama to gods and men in the "*Ramayana*", they are in reality listening to Rama's revelation of his own divinity. In the closing scene of the "*Ramayana*", Rama enters heaven as Vishnu, in the form of Vishnu himself.

The "Odyssey" describes that:—

"Odysseus caught up a swift arrow.... and laid it on the bridge of his bow, and held the notch and drew the string, even from the settle whereon he sat, and with straight aim shot the shaft and missed not one of the axes, beginning with first axe handle, and the bronze weighted shaft passed clean through and out at the last."

There were twelve double edged axes through which the arrow passed and the arrangement of them to make this possible has not been decided by scholars, but Homer's description is very clear upon the point. Possibly they were curved at the head, like the horns of a bull or cow, or crescent lying on its back, which were religious symbols of deep significance both in the ancient East and West, and in that aspect the deed of Odysseus would indicate that he had mastered certain aspects of the procreative force, which the "bull" symbolises, as a result of his sufferings during his wanderings, after which he shot the arrow in that way. The number "12" also has

a meaning, as it appears so often in the tales of the ancient heroes, and has reference to the spiritual constitution of man and the relationship between the Perfect Master and his Circle of close disciples, as propounded by Baba in a spiritual riddle in which he built up that number from the five elements of nature of which the human body is composed, *viz.*, "air, fire, earth, water and ether," and the seven planes which the mind crosses on the way to Perfection. The work of the Master is illustrated by these words of a Chinese philosopher:—

"Heavenly Tau is like the bending of a bow,

That which is high is bent downwards,

That which is low, is raised up,

That which is too much is lessened."*

At infinite cost to himself, as depicted in the "Ramayana," the Master utilises both the upward and downward tendencies in human nature, for the sufferings of Rama and those who work with him are

* Lao-Tse in the Tau-Teh-King.

due to the purifying of the dross in human nature entailed in the process of removing *sanskaras* from the mind, which Baba has shown, is effected by the Master's Love. In order to carry out his spiritual mission, the suffering is increased, but always there is the Bliss of the Divine in the face of such trials as Sita's through which his work is accomplished.

It may sometimes appear to onlookers that the Master's work is contradictory, but this is explained by the effect of this double process of raising and lowering, as in the bending of a bow, which gives greater force to his energy, Baba has said:—"The more the bow is bent the further the arrow flies." The bow of his divine Love is even now over the world, with the arrow that will reach the hearts of all when the time is ripe for his Manifestation to the race of mankind.

Baba has explained that three different routes have been "chalked out" leading to goal of Perfection, and the choice of each aspirant is decided by his natural aptitude and outlook, and on each route, different experiences or different aspects of the Highest are met with

while passing through the three principal stages, viz.:—

- (1) The "gross" or physical,
- (2) The astral or subtle,
- (3) The mental.

The three different routes which lead to the goal are:—

- (a) *Bhakti*, or devotion and love.
- (b) *Dnyan*, or wisdom.
- (c) *Karma* or action.

From the trend of events described in the "Odyssey", it would seem that Odysseus was following route (c) Action, and had reached certain early stages of the subtle or astral (2), in view of the nature of his experiences such as those in the underworld of departed spirits and in the paradise of the goddess nymph Calypso. The closing incident in the "Odyssey", when he shot the arrow as already related, and cleared his home of intruders, may be taken to indicate his stage of spiritual development as he resumed his old life once again after 20 years absence. With Rama, his mastery of the bow of Shiva marked him out as a Perfect Master at the outset, for his spiritual poise was undisturbed whatever happened, seeing that he was ever one

with that state of "Eternal Knowledge, Bliss, and Power of the Highest".

The spiritual Path is one in all ages, so that the sequence of events, such as the foregoing has a significance, as well as the events themselves.

As we are approaching the universal divine drama in which Meher Baba declares he will play the leading part, it is interesting to see in the "Ramayana" also the setting for that same drama in an earlier age. The tragedy of the lives of Rama and Sita was brought home to the people by being enacted in their own lives. They participated in it through their *karma*, in the working out of which Rama effected the spiritual upheaval, through their challenge to her purity on the subject of marriage and parenthood, according to their standard of morality. Though Rama himself did not share their misjudgment of Sita, he used it in a way that brought them enlightenment and in the removal of their *sanskaras* through his divine Love, he was also effecting universal work for humanity, for

which greater aspect the immediate needs of Sita and the people who witnessed her sufferings, formed a centre. His own sufferings, combined with the supreme Bliss which never deserts the Master, serves his universal work and becomes a continual spiritual crucifixion throughout the whole of his life on earth which the physical crucifixion presents to the outer eyes of the world. Baba has given us this explanation, and there is much more in his article on the *Avatar** to illumine the old records of the life of Rama. He points out that the Master is not concerned with death, for he knows that man does not then cease to exist; "he is only concerned with concern". This is illustrated when Ravana was slain by Rama, who comforted his surviving brother with these words:—

"A hero slain in battle should not be mourned. Success in battle is not for ever; why shouldst thou grieve that one who put to flight Indra himself, should fall at last? Do thou rather perform his funeral rites. Take comfort too at this: with death our enmity is ended,

* *Meher Baba Journal*, Vol. I, No. 1 (November 1938).

and Ravana is as dear to me as thee."

All play their parts in the Master himself, whether as the people who murmured against Sita, saying that "if Rama took her back, they would pass over the misdoings of their wives, for subjects always follow the customs of their king", or as Sita, who came following Valmiki, with downcast glance and folded hands and falling tears, to be present before Rama and the people as Valmiki witnessed to her purity, and the status of her twin sons, born in exile. All in that great multitude, rose with a cry of welcome, and there was a great murmuring when they saw Sita, following Valmiki, like the Vedas following Brahma.

As the upheaval proceeded in all hearts, Rama knitted the multitude in one mighty spiritual embrace, for, silent and still though he appeared to be to them, he was in each as the One Infinite Life, Himself the players as well as the play and the great Onlooker. Then Valmiki spoke before the people and said to Rama:—

"O son of Dasaratha, albeit Sita is pure and doth follow the path of

Righteousness, thou didst renounce her because of the people's censure. Do thou now permit her to give testimony of her purity. And O Rama, I myself who follow truth, tell thee that these two children are thy twin sons. Also I swear before thee that if any sin be found in Sita, I will forego the fruits of all austerities I have practised for many thousand years."

It would seem that Valmiki was voicing the very inmost thoughts of Rama himself, and coming from the author of the "Ramayana" it would have greater effect thus in the great drama. The mental illusion which had its foundation in respect for marriage and parenthood both of which are fundamental in society, which Rama was dealing with interiorly, was thus dealt with exteriorly by Valmiki as the mouthpiece of the Master, adding one more element of power to the spiritual upheaval which Rama's handling of the whole situation achieved with the devotion and obedience of Sita. While voicing the truth that Rama wished should find expression, Valmiki was clearly responding to his own highest intuitions.

The elements of love, romance and adventure in this wonderful story, are yet subsidiary to the true theme, which they enhance; the central fact is that Sita's obedience is the ideal relationship with the Perfect Master that a disciple can achieve. Her own training proceeded from test to test, each more exacting than the last, until at her final justification "the gods cried out in praise of her, and all beings on earth and in the sky were filled with wonder and astonishment, so that *one mood for a single moment swayed all the Universe at once.*"

Such concentration by the multitude upon a single theme of universal moment offers the Master his supreme opportunity for outpouring his love, the flow of which

is then unimpeded by the varied emotions and thoughts that usually sway a number of persons. This does not imply mass hypnotism on his part, for it becomes a process of removing the sense of limitation that otherwise clouds the human mind and prevents the truth from being perceived. Baba himself frequents public places in East and West as part of his work, where he can contact masses of persons in every country following their own pursuits or concentrating on a single theme, as the plot of a play, or a national festival, and enhances the value of such events by making them the occasion of a spiritual outpouring, as Rama also used to do.



THE SAYING OF MEHER BABA

To attain to the state of the highest, three different routes have to be chalked out. They are Bhakti, Dnyan, and Karma (devotion, spiritual knowledge,* and service). The aspirant has to pass through three principal stages: they are the gross or physical, the subtle or astral, and the mind spheres.

* Dnyan or Real Knowledge is usually attained at the fruit of Meditation or Prayer.

*The Way of a Master**

BY "V" (BANGALORE)

WE have certain well marked and well defined characteristics of a Master given in various places in our literature, no less I suppose, than in the literature of other religions. In reply to Arjuna who asks, "What are the marks of the man, O Lord, who has risen above the three dispositions? What is his manner of life? And how does he rise above the dispositions?", the answer is given setting out the characteristics of such a person who has risen above the three dispositions; "He who sits like one unconcerned, unmoved by the dispositions, who remains firm and never wavers, knowing it is the dispositions that act," (*Bhagavad Gita* XIV 21 and 23). Again, Sri Sankaracharya in the *Vivekachudamani* sets out the way such masters react to their environment. "Sometimes a fool, sometimes a sage, sometimes possessed of regal splendour, sometimes wandering, sometimes

behaving like a motionless python, sometimes wearing a benignant expression, sometimes honoured, sometimes insulted, sometimes unknown; thus lives the man of realization, ever happy with supreme bliss." (542.)

Now there are two points of view from which the actions of a Master and his reactions to his environment can be looked at. One from his own point of view, and the other from that of the onlooker. For the Master himself, having realized his Oneness with Reality and the transience and illusoriness of many of our ills and pleasures, he takes no interest in activity as such. He is immersed in that Ocean of Bliss which is the end and from which nobody would like to withdraw even for a second. He is unconcerned therefore with our sense of values, with our notions of pleasure or happiness, with our anxieties and worries consequent on our emphasis

* Continued from January 1941 issue.

on wrong and illusory ends. And if he acts, he does so because "the body is moved 'hither and thither by the force of *Prana* just as it listeth. As a piece of wood is borne by the current to a high or low ground, so is his body carried on by the momentum of past actions to the varied experience of their fruits as they present themselves in due course." (*Vivekachudamani*, 549-550).

From the point of view of the onlooker on the other hand, he behaves without reason, without regard for the relation of cause and effect, without any regard to convention. He behaves like a child, a mad man, one without reason, without sense.

This is generally true of all great men, of people who are *Jivanmuktas*. By experience and by reasoning, our ancients have laid down these marks as indicative, subjectively and objectively, of a person who has reached the end of all human endeavour, who has reached *Nirvana*.

But, we must realize that such definitions, such watertight descriptions of a *Jivanmukta* like other generalisations, always admit of

exceptions. And the exceptions may be so many, so varied in character as not to admit of incorporation in the definition itself.

Human experience is as varied as there are human beings. Each in his own light the same set of circumstances may affect differently, and where the resulting experience is not merely one of Oneness with Reality but also the factum of the illusoriness of the present existing world and its events and incidents, we should expect that even among the Realized Masters there would be a certain degree of difference. Without going into the controversial topic of whether there can be a *Jivanmukta* at all, that is to say, whether a person who has really and completely realized himself can continue to exist in this world—some *Advaitins* holding that he cannot,—without going into this controversy, I would merely plead that in individual cases a certain amount of departure from the well marked out characteristics must not only be allowed but even expected.

In fact Mr. Tilak in his masterly treatise *The Gita Rahasya*, has expressed his opinion that the *Jivanmukta*

will continue to work for universal welfare and will not give up his altruistic activities. Sir P. S. Sivasamy Iyer, the eminent and learned Hindu scholar has also expressed his leaning to this view (Besant Memorial Lectures, 1940).

If we examine the basis for these conflicting views, we will see that there is really no controversy at all. The trouble arises because of looking at the same things from two points of view and ignoring that there are two points of view. In fact, I am of the opinion that the existence of these two points of view has been responsible not a little for the confusion that Hinduism in general and Hindu philosophy in particular has been suffering from. There is firstly, the standpoint of the every-day world, the point of view of the man in the street. From this point, certain things are actual; they are real. There is secondly, the stand taken by the realized soul, the point of view wherefrom nothing is real beyond the One and only Reality, wherefrom the world and its entire components are illusory and unreal. When people talk of things philosophical, they mix up ideas of both

kinds and land Hinduism in confusion and what is worse, in contradiction. It is of great importance to realize that there are two such points of view and that the same thing will appear differently when considered now in the one, now in the other light.

With reference to the present enquiry we must realize then that the *Jivanmukta* in union with Reality, at the time of his union with It, looks upon the world as illusory, as something seen or being seen in a dream. But the same *Jivanmukta* when he has lost touch or rather when he has come down to the level of every-day life, moves about and has his being in this world.

The question however, will still arise, whether a realized soul will ever cease to be that. In other words, whether he can come down to the level of this earth. One school would say that Realization is never complete as long as a man inhabits this earth because he cannot have complete identity, this ascent and descent being against it; that therefore there can be no *Jivanmukta* as such whom we can be aware of. This view would hold that a

person will be a *Mukta* only when he discards his body also. Another school would say that it is possible for a person to realize even while he is here, but that once he realizes and contacts Reality, he will never descend to lower levels and that it is his body which reacts because of his past actions which have attained fruition (*Prarabdha*) and which have got to work themselves out. That is why, they would say, his actions appear so eccentric and unreasonable, like that of a child or mad man. In both cases, of course, there can be no ascending or descending, in the first case because he is no longer with us, in the second because he never does.

Is there no third way? No reconciliation? From theory let us turn to facts, let us study some of our great men of history, of to-day.

We have firstly Lord Sri Krishna. He was not merely a *Mukta*, he was an *Avatar*. (The difference between the two, I consider, is really nothing if we look at it from the point of view of ultimate Reality, and only one of degree if we look at it from the point of view of this world.) Nevertheless he was a leader, and

took a great part in the activities of his times. Of him and his brother it is said, "the two brothers, although Lords of the universe, having descended upon earth, began to sport mutually with frolics beneficial to the world. Adopting *human* duties and assuming *human* character and engaged in *human* sports, they stayed about in the forest." (*Vishnu Purana*, Pt. V, Sec. IX.) In the same section a little later on, Lord Krishna addressing his brother says, "Suspending a while your *human* character, do what is right."

Then we have Janaka, philosopher King, who was admittedly an example of a *Jivanmukta*. He had a family life. He had a wife and child. He governed a large kingdom and governed it exceedingly well. Of him it is said even in the *Bhagavad Gita*, "It is by works alone that men like Janaka became blest." (III. 20.)

Coming nearer to our times, we have the Master Shri Meher Baba. It is now history how he realized himself very early in life, and lost all interest in, and touch with, the world. Gradually, he came back to us,

and now is in active sympathy with a large and ever-increasing band of humble and devoted disciples.

What do these facts teach? I would try to read theories always to include all facts; otherwise theories have no value. I would read in the present case the truth that whatever the general rule may be, whatever the general characteristics may be, they do admit of exceptions, they do allow a certain latitude. We are after all dealing with human beings, with sentient creatures and not with figures in mathematics or the parts of a machine.

Let us look at the whole picture a little differently. Let us view the whole universe as a vast assemblage of sentient creatures struggling towards a common goal. Some reach it sooner, some later, but reach it everyone must because it is their nature. The *Jivanmukta* is one such being who sentient has reached the common goal and realized his identity with the Oneness. Now it is possible that having reached the goal, he should lose all interest in this universe. From that eminent point he surveys the entire universe as an

illusory or rather unreal scheme of affairs in which the other sentient creatures are struggling with self-created troubles and problems of no ultimate importance. But knowing that each soul will have to work its way upwards, realizing that it is something purely personal, in the literal sense of the term, which makes for such realization, he loses all interest and continues to exist rapt in ecstasy till such time as the body falls to the ground and he becomes merged finally in the Oneness of all things.

Or possibly, when he reaches that eminent state, thoughts as such vanish because there is no difference between thinker, the object of thought and the relationship between the two, the act of thinking, and he ceases to be aware of anything except himself and the bliss of such awareness. It may be, that at that stage, even the awareness is not of himself but merely Awareness—*Sat-Chit-Anand* all rolled up together. It may possibly be that such awareness is fleeting or intermittent because he happens to be in this world and has to come down sometimes. It may be that at such

moments when he comes down to 'normality' the bliss of his previous experience has left a mark and made him feel that he must, by virtue of his unique position, try to make others also reach their goal sooner, quicker, easier.

Again it is perfectly possible that the make-up of the universe is such that some persons are given a special mission. On the one hand they are able to contact Reality and derive Bliss, Power, Strength. On the other hand, they are for this very reason made to work for the uplift of their brethren by leading them up the easy path. In my article on "Why a Master" I tried to indicate how the need for a Master arises anew every time. It may be that such Masters are chosen and given a place in the scheme of things.

I am merely trying to indicate that the possibilities are enormous and that it profits us least to argue along any particular line and say, no realized soul can or would come back to the usual surroundings after once contacting Reality.

The real effect and the one sure effect of such realization would be

of course a deep renunciation, non-attachment to things worldly, to interests worldly, to values worldly. A realized soul will work not for his profit or gain, for he will have been enabled to assess values properly, to place the emphasis on the right object, the Real. He will have no ambitions, no aspirations, no longings. He has reached the *summum bonum*. To that extent and to that extent only we can go.

In the case of Shri Meher Baba, he wants no personal favours, no personal gain, no personal advancement. "I have come not (even) to teach but to awaken". He does not want even to be a teacher, because to be a teacher, implies a position superior to the person taught. I have come but to awaken. I have come to show you the path, the easy path. After all it is you and you alone who has to go up the path to reach the goal. It is your effort that will take you there. And what is that effort? It is an awakening, an awakening of your Self. I have realized, and I have realized the Bliss of *Ananda*, I have realized the Oneness of *Sat-Chit-Anand*. I could have very

well continued to be immersed in that Ocean of Bliss, in that state of forgetfulness, shall we say? But I have a mission, a duty. To me who has no duty, a duty still exists—paradoxical as it may appear. The duty is, if you will have it so, a self-imposed one. It is to awaken.

In some such words—my words are not merely inadequate, but perhaps not even quite accurate—but in some such words we can imagine a Realized Soul to argue, and take upon himself voluntarily the duty of awakening us to our Self.

We are creatures of this world. I for one, do not lay claim to be a realized soul, or even to be anywhere near it. It will be presumptuous, therefore, to try and think or even try to think as a Realized Person will. Much less is it proper for us to say that a Realized Soul must behave like this or like that, to say that he will take no interest at all in things concerning us.

Admitting even it is so,—I don't,—how much more majestic does that person appear who need not, but does take upon himself the duty of seeing, moving in the

midst of, feeling experiencing pain, suffering and misery, not because like us he has to, but merely out of his infinite sympathy and tenderness for us he has condescended to be with us, and move with us for our good, to awaken us.

In humility with gladness, and thankfulness in our hearts let us be grateful that such Realized souls continue to be in our midst, and try to teach by living precept and loving direction the Truth.

Let us not therefore try to postulate "the way of a Master". Let us have belief, faith, trust. Let us by complete surrender and complete faith try to work our way by ourselves as we have to, but helped, guided and led by Masters who have gone before us and *know*. What profits it to discuss or make up our minds about how a realized soul will behave? There is enough time to think about it when we reach that state ourselves. Shri Meher Baba is here with us. He has not started any creed or cult. He has not founded any school. He does not want any adherence to any particular philosophy or train of thought. With that Infinite

Mercy which comes only to a Realized Soul, with infinite sympathy and true understanding, he has taken upon himself the self-imposed duty, or the duty has been cast upon him or allotted to him, shall we say, of awakening us. Shall we not then take advantage of it? Shall we rather question, doubt, talk of this way and that, and say that no Master can ever come to us? Shall we go beyond the scheme of the universe itself, and determine and decide how it is constructed, and deny or even admit that the scheme either contains or does not contain provision for the emergence at regular intervals of Masters, of Realized Souls who, nevertheless,

continue to function in this world not for their benefit or uplift, but for the good of us all? It would surely be preposterous to even attempt to do so.

Let us then cease to question, to doubt. Let us rather become perfect disciples of a Perfect Master. Let our attempts be to attain Perfection in the limited sphere that is ours, that of disciple. Disciple not of a school or creed, as I said already, but merely disciple at the process of disciplining ourselves, and being shown the way to awaken ourselves. The way of the Master is the Master's. The way of the disciple is ours. Let us not transgress.



Sufi Thoughts

VERSIFICATION BY DR. ABDUL GHANI MUNSIFF

IMMORTALITY

The clue to life's riddle gave me Abul Hasan
That Soul ne'er dies with body's destruction.

Can the sun, continue being bright and effulgent,
By denying its rays, same in essence though dependent?

—IQBAL.



Questions Baba Answers*

Q.—If all the beautiful things we have known—moonlight, stars, music, the sound of the sea, the fragrance of flowers and little dreams—are *Maya*, what is there left to take their place when you sweep them out of our hearts and minds and leave only the concept of a very far-off and abstract goal—Realization? For until we are realized, it leaves us with nothing but emptiness—and very sad.

A.—Beauty—ugliness has relative existence. To one trudging along under a scorching sun, bare-footed, with an empty stomach, *Maya* outside won't look beautiful. The mood of the subject (the perceiver) invests the object (the perceived) with its own colouring.

The goal of realization does not necessarily imply for an average man denial of things good or bad. It only emphasises its relative worth. From the

heights of Realization, *Maya* would cease to exist—it was pure imagination. Even apart from the spiritual experience, the conception that you are in the world but not of the world would go a long way in dissipating sadness and the feeling of void—emptiness.

If one were to treat *sincerely and whole-heartedly* *Maya* as pure imagination, the resultant poise and non-identification with things external would automatically open up his internal fountain of Bliss and instead of feeling sad and empty, would enable him to live the perfect life of being in harmony with the Universe.

Q.—Shall we, who dare not entertain what, to us, is the presumptuous hope of attaining Realization at this point in our journey, finish this life with none of the small but beautiful things that we, as human beings, having been used to turn to for solace?

* These questions were asked by Mr. Garret Fort (Hollywood-California), a Western disciple of the Master, when he was in India in the year 1936.

A.—It all depends whether what you term as solace is elevating or degrading. Recourse to alcohol for drowning one's sorrows is the perverted form of solace. Solace afforded by things outside of you is synonymous with doping which gives a certain amount of relief or relaxation. Real and unalloyed solace is within you.

It is never presumptuous for anyone to hope for Realization. It is the goal of creation and the birth-right of humanity. Blessed are they who are prepared to assert that right in this very life.

Q.—You have said that to keep the love of your disciples for you unalloyed, you must humour the less noble aspects of their nature, such as pride, jealousy, etc. How great can their love be, if they have to be spiritually bribed to keep it alive and uppermost? And by fostering the very things, that should be destroyed, how can their progress be speeded up?

Doesn't this hold it back, make it more difficult all around?

A.—Upto a stage the love of disciples can never be said to be

perfect. The Beloved upto a point is constrained to humour the lovers (disciples) for the purpose of drawing them nearer. This nearness to the Beloved in turn fans the fire of Love, which no sooner achieves perfection, it automatically destroys in the lovers (disciples), the less noble aspects and traits of their nature.

Q.—What is meant by the phrase "Turning the key" which you so often utter? And what effect does it have on the lives of those to whom it is applied?

A.—Masters as a rule work and bring about results of a spiritual or material character in a natural way. On rare and important occasions however, they have to disregard the natural laws and bring about the desired result by psychic powers. A physician, for instance, does his best to feed a patient by way of mouth—a natural method. But when a patient is unable or refuses to take nutrition in the regular manner, the physician bent upon restoring his health, resorts to rectal feeding. This is what I mean by "Turning the key".



At My Master's Feet

BY C. V. SAMPATH AIYANGAR

FOR more than a decade the writer has sat at the feet of the Master—dear Shri Baba—and experienced what he had not for more than thirty years. The *Gita* and Theosophy moulded his character. His intellect developed, but the electric spark was still wanting. No sooner he met the Master in flesh and blood than he had an instinctive feeling that he got what he wanted, and a divine impulse that he should utilize it as a true *Karma Yogin*: Since then there has been a harmonious development of the head and heart.

The *Gita* taught him the most positive activity. Shri Meher Baba, the Great Actor, has *shown* him how to live.

"He that loveth not knoweth not God." It is not easy to understand this *mantram*. In the Perfect Master the writer found and understood love, the Lover and the Beloved.

The writer learnt that all those who are on the Path must obey the Divine Plan. Sometimes, we, in

our limitations, cannot understand Him: And it is most foolish to misunderstand Him and to misinterpret Him. It is only when we begin to try to do our duties impersonally, trusting Him, that we can understand Him. Humility is the test of discipleship. It is common knowledge that many did not understand Lord Jesus Christ. The reason is clear. Disinterested service is very difficult. "Follow me" was not therefore understood by the opulent haughty many. It was only a few that understood Him. So with the Lord Buddha. But Truth survives all onslaughts. The Roman and other Empires have vanished: But the Great Masters are in the spiritual Empire of all humble hearts.

So with Shri Meher Baba, the Perfect Master. Judas Iscariots there have been: Pride blinded them. They could not see with Him the land of milk and honey from the spiritual summit of Pisgah. With all humility the writer pities them.

He feels that there were special links between humble him and the Master in former lives. He has been doing His work. He feels that He has always been in him. He has made the writer *Sthithadheehi* (one of balanced mind)—a miracle indeed.

The writer was asked, "Could not your Master foresee the real nature of Judas Iscariots"? This is a silly question. The Master allows a person to utilize an opportunity which the latter might have earned. He must have had also a certain amount of bad *prarabdha Karma*, which made him fall away. His good *Karma* brought him near the Master, but his bad *Karma* separated him. But it cannot be said that the Master made a mistake: The pupil was trained *to the extent he deserved*, and there was no waste.

It is said that 'Love is the fulfilling of the Law'. Self-realization is our merging into the Divine Life. We should have the wisdom to understand it. And then our determination to work impersonally as the Master does, would take us very near the goal. This would be possible only for one who is filled with Love. It was unselfish Love

that has produced this phenomenal Universe, and without Love nothing spiritual is therefore possible. The disciples of Baba are being trained in daily life in this spiritual school of Love, and it is a miracle to see how they are knit together—men, women, children and animals—with the bonds of Love. The writer bears witness to the incontrovertible fact that many families have been able to grapple vigorously with their life problems with Baba's grace. And the writer himself, with Baba-Love-Tonic was metamorphosed into a new being.

The writer may be permitted to allude to one fact. *The Meher Message* was the first Journal that sent the Master's Message to the world. Then with the approval of the Master the writer continued to do that great work through the humble *Meher Gazette*, only with His Grace which transmuted a portion of his energy into achievement. The present Journal is the worthy successor of those two predecessors.

It is only when a disciple is ready he is accepted. He should not demand of the Master,

as a matter of right, anything he wants. He should learn what he wants. He should work unselfishly without a sceptical or over-credulous nature. He should carefully guard himself against the demon Pride, who will certainly bring about his fall. He should work with humility and *discrimination*. The Master will then help him. He will get what he deserves

at the proper moment. The writer can, from personal experience, assure spiritual aspirants that they can get the help they want only when they become one with the Master. The writer has surrendered himself to the *Sadguru* and has been doing His work to help the evolution of the Divine Plan: The result is in His Hands.



Master and Disciple

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

He draws a veil before His Face,
He will not let me see
The beauty of His Countenance:
His true Divinity.

He hides His Heart behind a cloud,
His wisdom from my sight,
Lest I be overcome by Love,
Or blinded by His Light.

But that pure Love He bears for me
Will lift me up to see
Behind illusion's shrouding veils
Eternal Verity.

And Oh! the love I bear for Him
Will pierce the mystery,
And I shall lose myself at last
In His Divinity.



Spiritual Anecdotes

BY DELIA DELEON (ENGLAND)

MOHOMED, the great Prophet of Islam like all spiritual teachers, through his love and humanity, often turned an enemy into an ardent disciple. The following story illustrates this point :

Sleeping one day under a palm tree Mohamed awoke suddenly to find an enemy named Duthur standing over him with a drawn sword.

"O Mohamed, who is there now to save thee"? cried the man.

"God" answered Mohamed.

Duthur dropped his sword. Mohamed seized it, and cried in turn:

"O Duthur, who is there now to save thee."

"No one," replied Duthur.

"Then learn from me to be merciful", said Mohamed, and handed him back the weapon. Duthur became one of his firmest friends.

(FROM COSHAM'S ETHICS OF
THE GREAT RELIGIONS)

* * *

When Charles, the brother of

John Wesley, used to say, "If the Lord would give me wings I would fly", John Wesley replied, "If the Lord bid me fly, I would trust Him for the wings."

* * *

A story of Baso and the Master Nangsku Yejo (Nan Yusa Huaijang, 677-774). From "Studies in Zen Buddhism" by Suzuki:—

When at Demboin, Baso used to sit cross-legged all day and meditate. His Master saw him and asked, "What seekest thou here thus sitting crosslegged?"

Baso answered, "My desire is to become a Buddha".

Thereupon the Master Nangsku Yejo took up a piece of brick and began to polish it hard on the stone nearby.

"What workest thou on so, my Master?" asked Baso.

"I am trying to turn this into a mirror."

"No amount of polishing will make a mirror of brick, Sir."

"If so, no amount of sitting

cross-legged as thou doest will make thee a Buddha", said the Master.

"What shall I have to do then"?

"It is like driving a cart; when it moveth not, wilt thou whip the cart or the ox"?

Baso made no answer.

The Master continued, "Wilt thou practise this sitting cross-legged in order to attain *Dhyana* or to attain Buddhahood? If it is *Dhyana*, *Dhyana* does not consist in sitting or lying. If it is Buddhahood, the Buddha has no fixed forms, as he has no abiding place anywhere. No one can take hold of him, nor can he be let go. If thou seekest Buddhahood by this sitting cross-legged, thou murderest him. So long as thou freest thyself not from sitting so, thou never comest to the Truth".

* * *

St. Francis of Assisi, one of the greatest lovers of Christ, believed in a life of poverty. The following story illustrates his complete renunciation:—

St. Francis, with brother Masseo as his companion took the road that led to the land of France. Coming one day to a town, sore hungered

they went according to the rule, begging their bread for the love of God. St. Francis seeing that brother Masseo's pieces of bread were more and finer and larger than his own, rejoiced with great joy and said, "O Brother Masseo, we are not worthy of such vast treasure", and when he repeated many times these self-same words, brother Masseo made answer, "Father, how can one speak of treasure where there is such poverty, and lack of all things whereof there is need? Here is no cloth, nor knife, nor plate, nor porringer, nor house, nor table, nor man-servant, nor maid-servant."

Quoeth St. Francis, "And this it is that I account vast treasure, wherein is nothing at all prepared by human hands, but whatsoe'er we have is given by God's own providence as manifestly doeth appear in the bread that we have begged, in the table of stone so fine, and in the fount so clear; wherefore I will that we pray unto God that He make us to love with all our heart the treasure of holy poverty which is so noble, that thereunto did God Himself become a servitor."

Adapted from "Fioretti de San Francesco"—(Translation by T.W. Arnold).

* * *

Praised be my Lord God with all His creatures; and especially our brother the sun, who brings us the day, and who brings us the light; fair is he and shining with a very great splendour; O Lord, to us he signifies thee!

Praised be my Lord for our sister the moon, and for the stars, the which He has set clear and lovely in heaven.

Praised be my Lord for our brother the wind, and for air and cloud, calm and all weather, by the which thou upholdest in life all creatures.

Praised be my Lord for our sister water, who is very service-

able unto us, and humble, and precious, and clean.

Praised be my Lord for our brother fire, through whom Thou givest us light in the darkness; and he is bright and pleasant, and very mighty and strong.

Praised be my Lord for our mother the earth, the which doth sustain us and keep us, and bringeth forth diverse fruits, and flowers of many colours and grass.

Praised be my Lord for all those who pardon one another for His love's sake, and who endure weakness and tribulation.

Blessed are they who peaceably shall endure, for Thou, O most Highest, shall give them a crown.

—ST. FRANCIS.

(Extract from "Canticle of the Creatures." 13th Century).



*Those Who Follow the Master**

DR. WILLIAM DONKIN, M.B.B.S. (London), born in London in 1911, the youngest son, with a twin sister 3 hours older than himself, went through the usual preparatory and public school education. After school, instead of going to the university, he worked for 9 months as a labourer in a factory, thereafter entering a firm of merchants in London, where he acquired a limited experience of commercial life.

It was during the eighteen months spent in a London office that his outlook on life turned in a new direction. He began to suffer the adolescent longing to find a solution to the world's misery, and to its personal counterpart—his own discontent.

Thus he read widely—Philosophy, Spiritualism, Theosophy, Eastern Religions, etc., following the tracks of most Westerners who find themselves spiritually atheists.

At the age of 20 he left his office

life, and in company with a friend of his own age, crossed the Sahara Desert on camel back. This journey of some 1,800 miles was made in the summer months, really most unsuitable for desert exploration. After 4 months they reached Kano in Nigeria, whence they returned to England.

Six months later, the desire to become a doctor, which had been half expressed since his school days, bore fruit in a decision to adopt a medical career. Thus in 1933 he entered St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, and became a qualified doctor in 1939.

It was during his early days as a medical student that Dr. William Donkin first met Meher Baba. The Master, in his first two contacts with him in London, wrought one of those personal miracles, so overpowering to those who have known them, yet so unconvincing and vague when described to anyone to whom such an experience has never

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

been given. In short, Baba seemed to him to be God Himself. This was not a vision, but a certainty such as a blind man experiences when he handles a book, which he knows to be a book, though he can neither see it, nor read its contents.

Dr. William Donkin still however hesitated before definitely surrendering himself to Meher Baba, as he felt that even so real an experience needed the test of time to gauge its value. But time strengthened the conviction, so that he later gave himself unconditionally to Baba.

Meher Baba ordered him to come to India as soon as he became a qualified doctor, and in July 1939 he joined the *mandali*, and began to share their life of

daily service to Baba. Since he came to India, his principal duties have been to assist Dr. Nilkanth Godse in treating the sick, to enlarge his knowledge of surgery specially at Baba's order, and to drive Baba's private touring bus during the tours that Baba and some of his group make from time to time.

At the time of writing, Dr. William Donkin has just been called for War service in the Indian Medical Service, and though anxious to help his country in the present War, he feels reluctant to leave Baba even temporarily, whom he has come to know and love during the eighteen months he has been with him in India.



THE SAYING OF MEHER BABA

It is unnecessary to lay down hard and fast rules regarding the posture in meditation. The sitting posture,* which you find most convenient, should be adopted. But once it is adopted you must stick to it and sit in the same way daily.



* Or kneeling posture.

*Twenty Years with Meher Baba**

BY DR. ABDUL GHANI MUNSIFF

MEHERABAD PHASE

THE little village of Arangaon, about five miles distant from Ahmednagar (Bombay Presidency), came to be known as Meherabad after Meher Baba's name on account of his long association and activities at the place with a band of willing disciples. In spite of the frequent break-up and demolition of the settlement at Meherabad, necessitated by Baba's oft-recurring journeys and travels and short sojourns in different parts of India, it assumed to itself the dignity of being looked upon as the headquarters of Meher Baba's activities.

In fact Meherabad has made history in the matter of being utilized by Meher Baba and his disciples as a sort of a jumping off ground for ceaseless and intense spiritual work in India and abroad. It may be said to have acquired to itself the unique honour and impor-

tance of being the first centre of Meher Baba's spiritual activities on the material plane, inaugurated by him till now. But at the same time, in the eyes of those concerned, Meherabad marks a definite stage in the esoteric training of his disciples.

To those who have lived through that period, Meherabad Phase represents the following prominent features of Meher Baba's activities, *viz.*—

(1) His fasts, seclusions and other austerities in which the *mandali* were often called upon to participate.

(2) His journeys and sojourns in different parts of India and Persia.

(3) Premashram, Babajan High School Hospital and dispensaries at Meherabad.

(4) His vow of silence, commencing from 10th July 1926.

(5) Visits to Europe, England and America and world tours.

* Continued from January 1941 issue.

(6) The Western disciples coming over to live with him in India (1936).

(7) The Mad-Mast Contacts.

The detailed description and account of this long and varied phase has already been recorded by the biographers* of Meher Baba. Herein it is intended to review this period from the standpoint of the *mandali* and to assess the quality and quantity of their preparation and training for a spiritual life under the direct guidance and personal contact of a Perfect Master like Meher Baba. For the disciples concerned, this period may be styled as the preparatory stage for them with Meher Baba emerging as an uncompromising task-master and strict disciplinarian, surprisingly unlike the one they were used to at Poona and *Manzil-e-Meem* (Bombay).

Very often questions are asked by well-meaning people with regard to actual working conditions obtaining in the various *Ashrams* run under the auspices of Meher Baba and the outstanding peculiarity and significance of the esoteric train-

ing of the disciples. The answers usually given evidently do not satisfy the questioner and such an one if only a curiosity-monger, is easily discouraged if not scared.

The truth of the situation is that there is nothing approaching the mystical about the *Ashrams* of Meher Baba and nothing ascetic in the make-up of his disciples. One fails to find here the atmosphere generally associated with spiritual *Ashrams* in the East and India in particular and the inmates in this case perform duties to all intents and purposes comprising selfless and benevolent services to mankind.

Ashram life in India is generally associated with strict dietary discipline and physical and mental austerities such as Meditation and Yoga practices in some form or the other. More so, such an atmosphere is expected of institutions blessed with the physical presence of a spiritual Master. An outsider in my opinion ought to be held excused if he feels dissatisfied when trying to take stock of things in the short span of a few hours or

* "The Perfect Master," by C. B. Purdom, London.

even a few weeks. Such a visitor drawn by the spiritual reputation of Meher Baba finding nothing approaching his pre-conceived notions of what an *Ashram* should be like, is very easily tempted to think loudly about it. More often than not it has been observed that these so-called seekers after Truth and Knowledge, come to the institutions of Meher Baba, more with the attitude and demeanour of self-appointed inspectors than true aspirants.

It is the conclusive experience of most of his seasoned disciples that it is a sheer impossibility to understand Meher Baba and his working even after years of association with him. In the light of this rather disconcerting knowledge, any hasty conclusions on the part of a chance visitor are pardonable; and the disciples in this case deserve sympathy for not being able to parade the stock in trade of recognised *Ashrams*.

It is said of a school teacher that he was in the habit of preserving the specimen handwriting of every new pupil on the first day of his arrival, and if after a time anyone from amongst them happened to

complain of no progress in the matter, the teacher would produce the first day's specimen copy and leave the pupil to judge for himself whether or not any progress has been made, invariably with convincing results. Such is the case with Meher Baba's *Ashram* and his disciples. To the outside world Meher Baba may be just a spiritual claimant, one amongst many in the East; and his disciples to a superficial observer are as matter-of-fact and mundane, engaged in non-descript activities, apparently belying the spiritual life they are supposed to lead.

Looking back over twenty years, I can now confidently describe and assess the extremely subtle manner of Meher Baba's unorthodox working and the superhuman tact and forbearance shown by him in the training of his disciples—a phase hitherto not properly gauged and understood by the outside world. Like the teacher referred to above, the Master is now in a position to tell the disciples to see for themselves any spiritual change wrought within them, and the disciples subjectively alive to the colossal

reclamation within them, can never bring themselves to say otherwise.

The world upto now is only aware of a few outstanding events and activities in Meher Baba's spiritual career of the past twenty years or more. The establishment of *Ashrams* at different places with the concomitant features—the schools, hospitals and other philanthropic activities, the later abolition of a few of them, his itineraries in India and his foreign travels, represent some of the facts and events known to everybody. But no one, except the crystalized *mandali* who have been with him through thick and thin, knows anything about the esoteric side of Meher Baba's working during this period. The relatively secondary aspect of it—the *Ashrams*, schools and hospitals, have never been the end in itself, but they happened to be the means to an end, which is nothing but the fulfilment of his divine mission in life—the spiritual awakening of humanity.

In the present enlightened age, in spite of its material outlook and scientific ego, the spiritual activity of a Perfect Master like

Meher Baba could not long remain unrecognised. The publicity accorded to Meher Baba by the Press, has aroused the sedate element in the world to evince a lot of interest in him. Thousands of people have approached him till now, but the sorry part of it is that majority of them have invariably sought the information as to the ability of Meher Baba to work miracles, as also concrete instances of persons receiving material or spiritual benefit from him.

The world unhappily judges a man from results achieved and not from the ordeals and struggles leading to the same. It is universally recognised in the spiritual domain that the greatness of a Master lies in bringing about results in the ordinary way, almost always in conformity with natural laws. From the highest standpoint of spirituality, Masters all over the world have emphatically denounced the use of shock tactics—miracles, which are only resorted to by imperfect beings and those of low spiritual calibre. How pregnant with meaning is Meher Baba's remark when he said, "Greatness of Mohomed

is not *Ka'ba* (the place of pilgrimage at Mecca), but *Karbala* (the place of martyrdom of the Prophet's grandsons in the cause of Truth)." The greatest miracle that Meher Baba intends presenting to the world is the spiritual transformation or regeneration of his disciples, towards which end he has been exerting for more than twenty years. The world has very little knowledge about this particular esoteric phase of his activity, which is likely to prove an eye-opener to them when it becomes a realized fact. To me, the promised Manifestation of Meher Baba connotes a definite and almost a final stage of his spiritual working, synchronising with the completion of the process of the spiritual training of his disciples through whom he is likely to work for the rehabilitation of humanity throughout the world.

Meher Baba's spiritual greatness consists in being too ordinary, and this characteristic in him makes him an enigma even to his most intimate disciples. He has been repeatedly heard to remark that Realization can be imparted to anybody he desires, in the twinkling of an eye, but the grounding

process is necessary for achieving authority to help others spiritually. And to bring about this desired result, which only Perfect Masters are capable of doing, the spiritual awakening in disciples and aspirants of the Path, is sought to be brought about in conformity with natural laws. This process necessarily entails a long period of novitiate in the service of the Master, with all the attendant mental tortures; suspense, disappointment, longing, which varied phases and experiences according to Meher Baba, are much more valuable than the goal itself.

This indeed is the real miracle that is being wrought by Meher Baba in the case of his disciples, and it is purely a question of time when the adepts in the process of making under his spiritual care and guidance will provide an irrefutable testimony to the spiritual greatness of the Master than all the miracles that he may be credited with.

Since the real mission in life of Meher Baba consists in the spiritual awakening of those deserving and desiring, reasonably the estimate and appre-

ciation of his work is not to be based on the number of *Ashrams*, schools and hospitals he may have at any given time. These are of secondary importance and when the purpose behind them is served, they are liable to be scrapped any minute as has been the case so often before.

In spite of the almost complete absence of any exoteric formula and teaching, how Meher Baba has gradually and subtly moulded the disciples for a life of renunciation, resignation and selfless service, is a matter the recipients of his grace can only understand and feel. It is the Meherabad phase, undoubtedly, that is associated in the memory of his disciples as being the most crucial period of their spiritual training.

This phase according to them, is remarkable for affording sufficient scope for the exercise of all the four *yogas*, *vis.*, *Karma*, *Bhakti*, *Raj* and *Dnyan*, according to each one's aptitude and ability. A comparison here with life in *Manzil-e-Meem* would go to show how subtly the disciples were led into a life of self-discipline and self-

denial at Meherabad. The comfortable life of *Manzil-e-Meem* had become a thing of the past, a dream to be forgotten. The menu consisted of plain rice and *dal* for lunch, and bread and vegetable for dinner. Even this simple menu very often underwent drastic curtailment, for some reason or the other, as a result of which, the *mandali* had to subsist for long periods on one meal a day and milkless tea. The sectarian scheme in the matter of cooking and eating food observed heretofore, was abandoned at Meherabad, and a cosmopolitan atmosphere was introduced. Meher Baba having achieved the task at *Manzil-e-Meem*, of drawing in the net for his disciples and finding them safely landed in the area of his influence, gradually and subtly developed into a hard task-master, so much so that the vagaries of his moods and temperament at this period could have put to shame any weather forecast by the meteorological department. The slightest laxity in duty and the breaking of a simple order would invite corporeal punishment which was never so very poignantly felt by the defaulters concerned as

when Meher Baba occasionally ordered himself to be caned for the faults of others.

Like *Manzil-e-Meem*, Meher Baba here continued giving baths to the boys of the depressed class and even the lepers, with the help of the *mandali*. Physical and manual labour of some kind or other was imposed on all the inmates there with the avowed object of improving the grounds and repairs to dilapidated buildings. For a few months the daily programme of grinding corns with the help of stone grinders manipulated by the hand, was indulged in by Baba, and sometimes a few of the *mandali* were also allotted that task.

Meher Baba has a happy knack of doing things by himself, particularly the physical ordeals and penances (if they can be called so), the *mandali* helplessly playing the accessory thereto. Many would offer themselves to share if possible his spiritual tribulations and sufferings, symptomatic of which were his frequent fasts, seclusions and other physical austerities, but these loving offers were invariably turned down by the

Master with an assurance that he only knew what was best for them all. The disciples were enjoined to carry out his orders conscientiously, and to stick to him at all costs leaving the result entirely in his hands.

This aspect of the question left nothing else for the *mandali* to do, except to go through the daily round of monotonous routine duty and work. After pondering over the question for a good length of time, the *mandali* has ultimately arrived at the conclusion that Meher Baba wants them to eliminate themselves altogether by living in him and thinking in him.

Meher Baba throughout this phase has taken great pains to bring home to the disciples concerned, the importance of complete surrenderance to the Master. The whole trend and process of his training was directed to achieve this desired result. The disciples, in course of time, automatically realized the situation that it would be wise of them if they never allowed their minds to argue and reason out the orders of the *Guru* who knows too well what is best for the aspirant.

According to Baba, the disciple who allows his mind full play, creates nothing but difficulties for himself without materially altering the issue involved. When the mind of the disciple ceases to function, the Divine Will of the Master takes possession of it and works through it. Although in the beginning, this condition of the mind is terribly annoying, it attunes itself after a time to the dictates of the master-mind whereby the disciple is eventually endowed with that poise, self-sufficiency and contentment—a sure sign of the Divine Bliss to come. When Christ said, "Leave all and come unto me", he not only meant the world and its affairs, but also the mental paraphernalia.

So far as the *mandali* is concerned, the tours and short sojourns to places like Toka, Nasik, Karachi, Quetta., Persia, etc., provided just a wee bit of a diversion as a result of new circumstances and surroundings, but so far as the disciplinary life with Baba was concerned, it meant for them just the change over of the side of pain and nothing more.

The concluding period of the

Meherabad phase is connected with Meher Baba's *mad-mast* activities, inaugurated at Rahuri (1936) and it has since then been actively carried through and pursued by Baba and his disciples throughout the length and breadth of India. The reason behind this activity and its spiritual significance has been dealt with by me in my article "The Mad Ashram" (*vide* November 1938 issue).

The present phase of Meher Baba's activities, with the Westerners playing a prominent role therein, has entered a very definite stage constructive in character, and is much wider in scope than heretofore. Meher Baba's mode of address and attention which was till now concerned with his immediate disciples and individual aspirants, is to-day very aggressively diverted to the world at large. In place of the temporary *Ashrams* and secluded activities studiously shunning publicity of any kind, his working is assuming decidedly concrete and permanent features like the Byramangala Universal *Spiritual Centre* near Bangalore, and other

similar ones in the course of construction in different parts of India. This universal character of Meher Baba's work at the moment is defi-

nitely taking a tangible shape, and it is hoped the world will realize the magnitude of his Spiritual Mission much sooner than expected.



When the Heart Speaks

F. H. DADACHANJI

Expressions of the heart spontaneously poured out in grateful acceptance of the Master's Grace, loving guidance and inner help, gathered from letters to the Master

(30)
Kent (England),
28th January 1935.

DEAR MASTER,

Again I send you loving greetings on the occasion of your birthday.

When at our last meeting, I confessed to you of my arrogance at a previous meeting and you so lovingly and forgivingly shook your head, it was then that my heart turned in full allegiance to you. I feel indeed that it is a divine love that stretches out to us burdened and sad humanity and I thank you for it with all my loving heart. Please help that my understanding

grows and may I be permitted to meet you again.

Many times my friend, M.B., helps me to see things clearer when I am in difficulties.....

My wish is to come nearer in love and understanding. Would you, please, help me in this?

With loving greetings, your devoted follower,

—E.R.

* * *

(31)

Another visitor to the "Old Oak Cottage"—*the house blessed by the Master*, in a letter addressed to Mrs. B., writes:—

"I thank you both so much for the lovely time you gave me

I know when I started out in the morning, I was on a journey of love and happiness. It was indeed a happy day for me. I found rest for body and mind

I think the Master wanted us to find rest and peace. So he sent the wind and rain.

I felt calm and satisfied. My worries fell from me like my coat the moment I stepped into your lovely room. I feel I have renewed strength and feel I can face all my troubles with a peaceful mind

With my very dear love and grateful thanks, dear Mr. and Mrs. B., for a very happy day, I shall look forward to seeing you again one day in your dear little house of Galilee. One could almost hear the words 'Peace be unto you all'."

* * *

(32)

*London,
22nd February 1935.*

DEAR BABA,

Now that your birthday celebrations are over, may I tell you of the happy experiences on Feb. 18.

How one thought of the many dear friends in India and elsewhere, whose love and devotion would be kindled afresh on that day! And the blessed consciousness of Divine Love in one's own heart as one lived again the brief yet wondrous moments spent with you last year, and just put out one's hands and felt your strong yet gentle clasp again, and a might inflow of that love which passeth all understanding.

So one goes forth full of thankfulness, with fresh courage and vision for service, for truly your dear love makes all things new.

Yours devotedly,
—H



Notes from My Diary

F. H. DADACHANJI

IN spite of Meher Baba's seclusion and quiet life in Jaipur, February, the month of his birthday, happened to be very eventful from the standpoint of the Master's spiritual work and contacts here and at Nagpur. Besides the two local enthusiasts for the cause of the Master already referred to in our last issue, many more interesting and loving contacts have been established amongst sincere aspirants of the place through the agency of two of his disciples who were deputed to see people and interview them for the purpose of explaining to them his life mission and teachings. This arrangement was necessitated by the Master's seclusion and the consequent non-contacts with the outside world.

The two public lectures delivered by Princess Norina Matchabelli at Jaipur and Nagpur, during this month, have been remarkable for the interest they aroused amongst true aspirants and the intelligentsia of the place, as evidenced

by the keen desire of the public in general to know more about the life and teachings of Meher Baba, which the lecturer tried to meet successfully, in keeping with the circumstances.

The presence of Baba with the cosmopolitan party accompanying him, in the gay city of Jaipur, coupled with the fact of their strict aloofness from the outside world, roused a good deal of interest and curiosity amongst the populace, and gave rise to various speculations and rumours in the town. It was a happy surprise for the people of Jaipur to learn from Princess Norina's first public lecture on the 12th February there that it was Meher Baba and his party that were happily amongst them.

The spontaneous arrangements for the public lectures delivered by Princess Norina at Jaipur and Nagpur, and the splendid response thereto, affords a glimpse into the subtle working of the Master

when he is out to create a certain type of atmosphere in places and surroundings best suited for the furtherance of his spiritual work and plans. The impressions and personal experiences recorded here-before of Messrs. Agrawal and Nair, are proofs positive of the Master's working, whenever and wherever he deems it necessary to create a spiritual atmosphere in response to the sincerity of the surroundings. The two worthies mentioned above, in collaboration with a Mohomedan representative of the Muslim element there, arranged a second lecture for Princess Norina Matchabelli, in the open park of museum grounds in Ramnivas Gardens—Jaipur. In pursuance of the desire of the conveners of the meeting and the public attending it, Princess Norina delivered a very inspiring lecture, dwelling at length on the life and teachings of Meher Baba. According to the local version and opinion, the lecture was a great success being attended by over a thousand of Jaipur public of all classes and creeds, rarely witnessed before.

Mr. Agrawal, Advocate, introduced the lecturer of the day in

choice words spoken in Hindi, and Mr. Shah Alimuddin Ahmed, the Muslim Advocate, gave a surprisingly learned exposition of the Princess' speech in Hindi language in terms of his Sufi knowledge of the subject. It was a revelation for the audience to know a little of the life-story of the lecturer of the day as to how a cultured Princess from the Western world had readily renounced her all, and had dedicated her life at the sacred altar of Love and selfless service towards humanity under the grace and guidance of a spiritual Master in Meher Baba. Princess Norina's account of the contact with the greatest living Master of the age, and the consequent revolutionary change in the outlook of her life, was a spiritual treat to the listeners not to be easily forgotten. After the chairman inspired by the speeches of the day, had beautifully summed up the day's function, literature as to Meher Baba's life and teachings, was distributed to the gathering.

At the invitation of the Nagpur University, Princess Norina on 18th February 1941,

delivered another lecture at Nagpur, when Mr. T. J. Kedar, the Vice-Chancellor of the Nagpur University, presided. Dr. C. D. Deshmukh, M.A., Ph.D., in introducing the lecturer to the audience, recounted in brief the revolutionary transformation of her life and ideals after contacting the Master Meher Baba. Having surrendered her all materially and mentally, she was at the moment leading a life of utter renunciation and selfless service of humanity guided and inspired by the Master. He also said that the Princess had everything that wealth, an enviable position a Western society could offer, but she felt all along to have missed something the soul craved for. In the West she had contacted many Eastern *Swamis* and *Gurus*, but none came up to her expectation in the matter of satisfying that unspeakable urge of the soul which goes to make life complete. She got what she was after from Meher Baba, who has been instrumental in evoking the highest and best in her, and she has since then been serving the cause of the Master towards the universal spiritual uplift of mankind for which noble and altruistic pur-

pose she has come over to India in the year 1936.

By her overflowing heart, inspired mind and her fluid tongue, Princess Norina commanded a pin-drop silence amongst the audience throughout the 45 minutes of her lecture. She appeared to the listeners the very picture of the voice of the soul that fought for something real in life, and having found it after years of struggle and strife was inviting others still groping in the dark and running after shadows to reach for the Bliss so near at hand in the Divine personality of Meher Baba in whom she herself had realized her ideal. She fervently appealed to all to drink at the fountain-head of spirituality of living Masters like Meher Baba of whom India should legitimately be proud. It is these torch-bearers of humanity, she concluded, who give us the proper understanding of life, and make it worth living. Through their living example of serving mankind and crucifixion at the altar of Truth, they inspire others to selfless deeds and divine research. (A fuller account of

this speech is published on page 266 of this number.)

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The publicity that the "*Nagpur Times*", the "*Hitavada*" and other papers gave to this lecture and to the life and teachings of Meher Baba considering the tremendous pressure on space in these times of war news is truly appreciable.

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In response to sincere requests of many people interested in Meher Baba's life and teachings, the Princess delayed her departure from Nagpur for a day, and gave many heart-to-heart talks to ardent seekers of Truth, about the spiritual greatness of the Master she was fortunate in contacting, embellishing her discourses by an account of her own experiences and similar instances of spiritual regeneration wrought in the lives of others through the grace and guidance of the Master.

* * *

After the lecture in Jaipur, crowds came daily to see the Princess, and if it was possible, to have the Master's

darshan. But this was not to be, as the Master was in strict seclusion, although the visitors expressed their eagerness to have just a glimpse of him even from a distance for which they were prepared to wait for hours.

Under the circumstances, it could well be imagined how the news of the departure of the Master and his group from Jaipur by the end of February, caused great concern and sorrow to the people. Being denied the opportunity of paying respects to the Master personally after learning of his spiritual greatness, together with the uncertainty of his second visit to Jaipur in future, the people felt keenly disappointed finding him so near and yet so far. Loving inquiries pouring in constantly thereafter, are evidence of the fact as to how the spiritual presence of a Master enthuses people around him to forget for the time being their immediate world of petty-mindedness and to think of higher things that matter, in spite of themselves.

At the request of those interested in his work and desiring to perpetuate the memory of his stay in Jaipur, the project

of a spiritual centre, for the spiritual and material benefit of the needy ones, was ratified and blessed by the Master. The scheme when fully evolved, will serve as the first spiritual centre in Rajputana (Details later).

On 25th morning (February), Meher Baba and party left Jaipur by motor road for Quetta. A few of the group members including Chatti Bawa left by rail the same night. With 30 people forming the party, the selection by the Master of a circuitous road route with the certain prospect of negotiating five river (Indus) crossings and the indifferent state of desert tracks open to dacoities, may set strangers athinking. But to the disciples, it has reasons of mobile disciplinarian ordeals for the participants and for Baba, it perhaps meant the fulfilling of the spiritual needs incidental to his presence at places *en route*. It is beyond the comprehension of a layman, to assess the meaning of his movements, determined as they are, by spiritual reasons of his own, unless one sees him at work by being in his company.

* * *

AROUND AND ACROSS INDIA

Just prior to leaving for Quetta as stated above, Meher Baba with only three disciples accompanying him, took another long tour around and across India, in the month of February, covering over 5,000 miles in less than 15 days and visiting places like Delhi, Lucknow, Benares (Kashi), Calcutta, Puri, Ramnad and Chanda. At all these places he bathed, clothed and fed the poor. To have traversed the whole distance in about a fortnight's time, is no doubt a remarkable feat of endurance when it is taken into consideration that the party travelled III class in over-crowded compartments by nights only and working by day at places of halts mentioned. One meal a day was the food regime observed and this too could not be availed of satisfactorily owing to lack of facilities. The most acute phase of travel hardships was reached in the journey to Ramnad, and it may best be described in the words of a disciple who went through it:—

"On the morning of 12th February I was overjoyed to receive a telegram from Baba

ordering me to meet Him with my Vauxhall car somewhere near Madras. At the appointed time and place I had the pleasure of His *darshan* after about 10 months, but was denied the inner satisfaction of offering my prostrations to Him, as Baba bade me to remember that He was in seclusion and obeisance in any form from disciples was taboo for the year ending with 31st July.

From a basket of fruits which I carried for Him from Bangalore, Baba ate some (He ate only fruits in this journey), and distributed a quantity of it to those with Him ordering us to partake of our meals before we left for Ramnad. The restrictions governing the year's fasting programme, were at His behest, relaxed during His company. We left by car for Ramnad at 1 P.M. More than once Baba remarked that I should be extra careful in driving, as there was a possibility of some mishap if I was rash on the road curves. The very manner of His repetition of this caution and hints, convinced me that the journey would be safe. It was safe-going notwithstanding the strain of long

and continuous hours of driving.

I can hardly express the joy within myself, driving Baba after a lapse of 18 months and the first time in my new Vauxhall. Villupuram was negotiated very comfortably and here tea was offered me by Baba as many times as I needed it. It was the least expected and a surprising treat for me. The cups of tea no doubt gave me a nerve-stimuli, but none so invigorating as the dynamic presence of Baba in the car.

The depressing memory of my stay at Bangalore ever since Baba's departure April 1940—a long, tiresome and soul-enervating period the like of which I never experienced before—faded into nothingness before the radiance of His sunny smile, His familiar gestures and His loving remarks by means of the alphabet board. He said: "You are lucky to be with me on my birthday driving me in the car, in my important errand of contacting the most important of *Masts* in India. He is the king of all the *Masts* and my touching him will determine an important stage

of my *Mast*-contacting phase so far".

This Mohomedan *Mast* in question is 115 years old and is held in reverence by thousands of people—Hindus and Muslims alike. He lives 10 miles away from Ramnad at Kalikere, and visits Ceylon occasionally. It is reported that, year before last when he visited Colombo, the crowd around the train in which he was to return, was so dense that there were some casualties.

Continued driving brought us to Trichinopoly at about 9 o'clock at night where I refilled the tank with gasoline. In spite of the road itinerary procured from the Automobile Association of Southern India, we had some difficulty after night-fall in feeling our way towards Madura *via* Dindigul.

Madura was reached by midnight. The place looked deserted owing to the recent Hindu-Muslim riots. We managed the services of a guide whom we left at a village 10 miles away from Madura whence he returned by train. Although the road from Madura onwards is bad,

the cool breeze of a moonlit night would have lulled any one into a pleasant sleep. Sleep for me, however, was out of question in the pleasant and sweet company of Baba. Every thought he conveyed and every gesture he made, kept me wide awake towards Him, unmindful of the pot-holes and deep furrows over which I was skipping along towards Ramnad. It was past midnight and we whisked through and passed by village after village; still we could discern no signs of Ramnad looming up on the horizon before us. Baba at this stage hinted for a possible dak bungalow and one was located with great difficulty in a small town some 25 miles this side of Ramnad. The watchman was absent and the doors were locked. Baba slept on the verandah with A.B., near him, and J.K., and myself in the car. Going to sleep at 3-30 A.M., the next morning at 6 A.M., we left for Ramnad, and reaching it, drove on further to Kalikere.

The road from Ramnad to Kalkiere is narrow and rugged with embankments on both sides. A dilapidated bridge

connects the town with the village. This necessitated the occupants alighting from the car including Baba, and I somehow managed to negotiate the dangerous bridge safely. Baba enjoyed seeing this feat performed by the car in my hands, and soon we were in Kalikere. A.B., alone accompanied

Baba to see the *Mast*. There was a large crowd of children and grown-ups around the *Mast* in question. A.B., with great difficulty and tact kept the crowd away, while Baba had a ten minutes *tete-a-tete* with the *Mast*, feeding him a few morsels in the meanwhile.

The return journey of 391 miles was done the same day."



THE SAYING OF MEHER BABA

There is no length of time which can be called too long for meditation, and every hour of the night and the day is suitable; but the best period of meditation is the early hours of the morning, 4 to 7 a.m.



Register of Editorial Alterations Vol. 3, issue 5

- Page 259, para 3, line 10, change salutary to salutary
- Page 262, para 1, line 15, change object to object of
- Page 263, col 2, para 2, line 2, change Zorastrian to Zoroastrian
- Page 267, col 2, para 1, line 1, change held up to held
- Page 271, col 1, para 2, line 9, change ecstasy to ecstasy
- Page 278, footnote, change at to as
- Page 279, col 2, para 2, line 9, change transcience to transience
- Page 283, col 2, para 1, line 12, change ecstasy to ecstasy
- Page 287, col 1, para 1, line 4, change out to our
- Page 288, col 1, para 5, line 1, change upto to up to
- Page 288, col 2, para 1, line 1, change upto to up to
- Page 293, col 2, para 2, line 1, change Quoeth to Quotest
- Page 297, col 2, para 6, line 1, change 1926 to 1925
- Page 300, col 1, para 2, line 1, change upto to up to
- Page 301, col 2, para 1, line 10, change peirod to period
- Page 304, col 1, para 1, line 3, change difculties to difficulties
- Page 310, col 1, para 3, line 10, change discources to discourses