

Civilisation or Chaos?

A Study of the present World Crisis in the Light of Eastern Metaphysics

By

I. H. Conybeare

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CIVILISATION OR CHAOS?

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Eastern Metaphysics.

BY
I. H. CONYBEARE



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"Whenever virtue is on the decline, and the resurgence of evil and injustice in the world is occurring, I the Avatar, take on human form. For the establishment of righteousness and the destruction of the evil doer, I am born from Age to Age."

—The Lord's Song.

This little book is humbly
and respectfully dedicated to
The Avatar Meher Baba.

I have come not to teach, but to awaken !" —Meher Baba.

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PREFACE

I must crave indulgence for being neither a scholar nor an authority on the profound subject matter of this book. Nevertheless, though only a student, I venture to claim an advantage over the learned doctors who argue ad infinitum over the various aspects of Truth. This advantage will become apparent to those who follow these pages with sufficient patience to digest the knowledge contained therein. This, needless to say, does not come from me; for I have attempted to explain the Laws of Life and their relation to the present World Crisis.

In my young days at Oxford, I would sometimes listen to my father[†] and his friends. One of their subjects was "Cornering the Absolute." However, I would always "come out by the same door as in I went": for how can Aristotelian metaphysics be reconciled with the Infinite Brahman? The medieval monk would know what he meant by *Cognosens fit cognitum*; as also did his Eastern brethren thousands of years before him, by *Brahma-vid-Bramaiva bhavati*. We might translate this "To know the Absolute is to become the Absolute!" For how can the finite know the Infinite, except by being in some manner like unto the Infinite? Some kind of Supreme Identity must be possible.

The Upanishads say: "Those who cultivate ignorance, enter into blind darkness, but into greater darkness do those end, who confine themselves to scientific knowledge." The profound truths and laws of life cannot be discovered in the British

[†] F. C. Conybeare. See Appendix

Museum or in scientists' laboratories. Few there be who can master the knowledge of the dynamics of the Path which leads to All-Wisdom and to the Ultimate Reality. According to the Hindu concept, there is the Infinite Brahman, who is called "THAT," for can we call something we do not know by a name, how apply a qualifying adjective? "THAT" exists beyond the compass of our limiting senses "The eye does not go thither," say the Upanishads, "nor speech, nor mind. We do not know The ignorant think that It lies within knowledge; the wise man knows It is beyond knowledge."

The relation of man to God has always been the subject of endless conjecture by the theologians of every Faith. But this problem can never be solved through the intellect, which is bound by the limitations of the human mind. Again, the Upanishads explain: "Not by instruction may this Supreme Self be gained, nor by intellect, nor by much scripture learning. Whomsoever He chooses, by such may He be gained, to such a One, this Supreme Self reveals His own Reality."

The Universe is built up on God's eternal and immutable laws, and when man puts himself in opposition to God and His Laws, he has created opposition to his own Higher Self and Divine Nature. It is then, when wholesale violation of His laws take place—as is happening today—that God again descends from the Infinite to take on human form as a recurring Divine Manifestation on earth: to win back man to Himself. Such a Man is an Avatar or Messiah. It is not commonly known that there are always Men on earth who are Truth-Incarnate, and therefore the fountain heads of all spiritual wisdom, being themselves All-Wisdom, All-Power and Divine Love. Such Men, after their death, are hailed as saviours of mankind. But during their lives, they are invariably misunderstood and often persecuted with inconceivable malignity. These men live and

work in silence, unheard and unsung, but in times of great crisis in human history, there is always One, the Avatar, who comes out into the world, and in emerging creates a great landmark in spiritual history. We have tried to explain the work of an Avatar and his connection with this Age; for through the general increase in modern knowledge, psychological and scientific, we have reached a certain stage that makes it necessary for men to be given a fresh concept of the Truth. Intelligent people are tired of religious chauvinism, and are moving rapidly away from worn-out traditions. At the same time all thinking people wish to know what the present world unrest is about and how it may end. They also want a new concept of life, of man and of God in harmony with modern thought.

There is an interesting fact connected with my father. Irritated by the attacks of the Church on Darwin and Huxley and the new scientific approach at the beginning of this century, he decided to write a book for the lay public. This retaliatory work, *Myth, Magic and Morals*, which he gave to the Rationalist Press, was a devastating attack on orthodox Christianity and played a considerable part in shaping the minds of the younger university generations towards rationalism. Later my father, a religious man at heart, regretted the destructive tendencies of that book. Finally he requested me to write a book on Christ's teachings in relation to modern thought. It did not seem possible at that time that I, brought up as a hard-bitten free-thinker, should ever be capable of writing a book of such a nature, especially as I was scarcely competent to answer the scholars in their own language! However, I am much indebted to my friend, the late Professor Canning Schiller, for starting me on my quest for Truth.

The shock of my father's death, adding to the sadness of losing so many Oxford comrades in the First World War, turned my attention to the deeper

truths, hitherto outside my ken. The more I learned the less I knew. One horizon after another opened up to my astonished and enquiring gaze. At last, after many years, I came to a Silent Haven, to discover that All-Knowledge was within myself! But that IT could only be revealed through the grace of a God-Realised Master! Now I patiently await the Day when the Silent One may come to unlock the gate to my own Treasure House!

It is now possible to pursue truth without the risk of being burned alive for heresy; but the shadow of a greater Inquisition, like the sword of Damocles, hangs over the heads of millions; men dare not express their opinions, even in the privacy of their room, for fear of listening ears and denouncing tongues. In the still free countries, it is recognised that intelligence should have the right to affirm or to deny all it deems fit; it must not be dominated or enslaved, either by politics or religion. Any denial of the right of intelligence to think spells regimentation and totalitarianism. We are writing for the unprejudiced few who keep eternally young because they are always learning. We do not seek to convince or to argue, but we are all worried and wondering what is going to happen. Man has taken up his tent-pegs and is on the march, and he knows not whither he is going. Let it be understood that this work only contains a superficial introduction to a vast subject on certain spiritual truths, on the inner nature of man and his relation to God. Such knowledge is as yet little known by direct experience, perception and realisation to the West, and is often merely conceptual gymnastics in the East.

Introduction

QUO VADIS?

Will the sun go down and the stars come out over a dead world? Will our planet become another moon?

This question has to be answered, and soon, for we are living in an apocalyptic and eschatological age.

Einstein has said that the annihilation of all life on earth has been made technically possible by the hydrogen bomb. Experts say that the bombs might kill forty million people in the first hour of a war. We do not need much imagination to know that a general disintegration of the earth's surface could follow such a catastrophe. Another war might be the end of this overcrowded civilisation and some think even of this world! Our intellectuals are making desperate efforts to diagnose the malady afflicting Homo Sapiens and find the cause of the world unrest. They write millions of words on the need for cultural understanding and humanity. Various schools of thought argue the philosophical and psychological implications of sociology. Numerous international bodies exist to promote mutual sympathy and co-operation. If we want to prevent global disintegration, we must have global integration; there must be one world or none! Indeed we might say that men's thoughts have stretched themselves since the time before the First World War, when Rudolf Steiner, speaking to an audience in Vienna, warned an unheeding world in the following memorable words: "To everyone looking with open eyes at what

is going on in the public life of the civilised world, it appears infected by a social tumour, a malignant social illness or cancer; and this illness within our economic and social life must express itself in a terrific disaster." We have now passed through two terrific disasters in the shape of Two World Wars. Must we pass through a Third World War? Intelligent people have not yet been able to keep pace in their thinking with the facts of the social and spiritual situations of our time. The Industrial Revolution has caused the collapse of the old social order. This has been replaced by generally disintegrating conditions and values in all ranks and walks of life in the Western World. Some modern thinkers even go as far as to say that we have to get rid of much connected with the past, no matter how worthy in itself, simply because of its tradition. Some think our civilisation is doomed, not because of its over-mechanisation and artificiality, but because man's intellectual equipment has outstripped his moral and spiritual development. They have felt, in fact, that unless some form of spiritual compensation can be found, civilisation cannot last, for misdirected scientific achievements will destroy it. What can this form of compensation be, which alone can save humanity? It is more than thirty years since I listened to the learned brotherhood on this topic. Brought up in the rationalist school, I suffered from no religious inhibitions, and so was free from any sectarian bias. Later, however, I began to search for *the spiritual compensation which must save mankind*. We have been told that a change of heart is necessary to produce a better-balanced type of humanity, more capable of dealing with the complex problems confronting it today. If there really is a way to save humanity, can any human agency find it? *Will not some form of Divine intervention be necessary?* Can we believe in such a possibility? That is to say, do we believe in Omnipotence, for no human agency can help us in a disaster of unlimited dimensions.

These are paralysing questions. Prehistoric civilisations, of which we know nothing, must have come and gone in the distant past. But the civilisations of recorded history have always revealed the spiritual conditioning of evolving consciousness throughout the ages, in music, literature, art and culture, as in the eternal verities in Egyptian symbolism, the arcanic inscrutability of the Sphinx, the inner realities of the Pyramids, the balanced philosophical mind of classical Greece expressed in the Acropolis, and the emotional transcendentalism of the Middle Ages portrayed in Gothic architecture. As we emerge from Victorian materialism and its complementary agnosticism, we observe that modern science, in an effort to pull reality to bits, is now exploring the imaginative and symbolical world of mathematics. Through Einstein and others we are learning that time and space are relative and interchangeable. Research into the atomic structure is revealing matter as a form of energy, so that the truly modern scientist is obliged to overhaul his previous concept of physics; and the more he looks into the reality of the universe, the more unreal does it become! Modern art, too, is symptomatic of the present chaotic conditions of thought in its endeavour to analyse reality by abstracting natural form and even to introduce the time element. The surrealist has also pressed Freudian analysis into the service of literature. One might say that much of contemporary art, drama, literature, poetry and music, and, above all, the sadistic film and the pornographic press show a breakaway from classical tradition in cynical effrontery, hideous distortion and psychiatric "shadows" revealing an intrinsic lack of inner integration. Life to-day is a discordant symphony, symbolising the chaotic thinking of a diseased civilisation. Meanwhile the barque of humanity appears to be drifting along the waters of life, to plunge downwards to the abyss of its doom. Now the unchanging East, entangled in the wilderness of its mythology, drowned in the ocean of its meta-

physical conjurations, has begun to awaken from its dreams, to add to the ever-widening circle of con-fusion. A great inner spiritual overturning stirs the cosmic cauldron as the soul of the planet expands in self-knowledge, bringing in its wake restlessness, revolution, world-wide sorrow, sickness, death and dissolution. Readers who are interested by the following pages can, if they will, study the new avenue of thought by following up the various sources alluded to; and those who want testimony can start in the search for the manifestation of the Eternal Divinity which exists everywhere and is in everything. Some great thinkers recognise the illusory nature of the universe and scientists incline more and more towards the concept of a Great Mind, a Supreme Architect behind the Cosmos, which might be described as His Thought. Some have suggested that the Creator seems, in some manner, to have a mind which resembles the human mind; we suggest the Universal Mind* might be thought of as an extension of human consciousness over unconsciousness. In other words, when the human mind has transcended its limitations, it becomes identified with the Universal Mind and shares its attributes.

This is the state of Perfection which the Self-Realised or God-Men of the East have attained; but orthodox Christianity can only hint at principalities and powers, hierarchies and celestial beings; we are not told more than that. The inner truths and inner realities of life have been lost, our ecclesiastical instructors do not know.

To find the real values of life, we must look to other dimensions than those ordinarily known to the Western World. We have to look to the higher levels of understanding, to the higher planes of existence, where the eternal truths of life take the place of the transient phantasmagoria of earthly experience. We must turn to the inner teachings of Zoroaster, Ram, Krishna, Buddha, Christ and Mohammed, and to the

* Universal Mind. See Appendix

writings of the saints and sages. According to esoteric wisdom, handed down through the miracles of spiritual life, we know there are seven distinct stages of perception, seven planes of consciousness: intellect, lower inspiration, intuition, insight, higher inspiration, illumination, and the Christ-consciousness.

Surely we need the Christ-consciousness to guide civilisation out of its present impasse? We need to find Beings in whom such Christ-consciousness resides. If they existed in the past, they must exist in the present and in the future. Are there such Perfect Men? If so, then there must be some form of Divine intervention to prevent Homo Sapiens from utterly destroying himself? Esoteric knowledge and philosophy teach us that there are always such Great Masters on earth at all times. If that is so, then there must be a Divine plan, a purpose behind our creation, a Path for men to follow. We are witnessing, not the end of the world, but the end of an age. The Powers that Be, who direct the shape of things to come, do not intend that man should finish in a blinding, burning flash of his own creation.

We can believe that man's spiritual purpose is not yet finished, and that the disintegrating forces to which we have referred show the transitional nature of this period. Chaos and confusion have indeed to increase and the tide of destruction rise still higher, till the purifying and regenerative forces innate in man prevail. Even now we can discern in many directions that reconstructive agencies are at work to build the New Humanity. The coming change of heart will achieve the synthesis of man's intellectual and spiritual potentialities. The New Age will see a new culture, in art, music and every walk of life, for the uncertainties of the past will have disappeared, to be replaced by a glory and wealth of self-expression unsurpassed in human history. Science and mysticism will unite. East and West will have met. Man will have found himself and this will be the

Golden Age! Let us remember the lines on the Un-known
Warrior:

"Because you would not THINK we had to die . . .
. We died, and now you and others shall THINK and ghosts
will drive you on."

CIVILISATION OR CHAOS?

Chapter I

THE HIGHER CRITICISM

Great work was achieved in Comparative Religion in the first half of this century by scholars at Oxford and other universities. Such efforts must bear fruit in greater understanding between men of different faiths, for there are no less than seven great world religions, to say nothing of all the smaller divisions. But unity in the fundamentals can be found only in the hidden teachings behind all the Sacred Books. Here the scholars have failed because they do not know the inner pattern of the laws behind the order of things, whether so-called natural or divine. For there are two kinds of existence, the natural and the spiritual. They are distinct, but the spiritual interpenetrates the natural. Life in the biological and physical sense belongs to the natural sphere. Man belongs to both spheres; he is not merely interpenetrated by spirit, but is the organ of spirit, so that he is in the Kingdom of Nature and, at the same time, in the Kingdom of the Spirit.

I will give an example of what I mean. My father in his book said he endeavoured to get back to the historical Man of Nazareth and to penetrate the clouds of "strange and cabalistic interpretations with which divines from Paul onwards had hidden his true lineaments"—to get back behind these mists of theology to the "human heart" of Jesus, to get back

to his "human thought, human knowledge and human peculiarities of character." But my father, in his courageous attempt, failed to present a true portrait of Jesus, as he misunderstood the attributes of the Christ, that Jesus was both man and Christ, i.e., both man and God. He, being an agnostic, was unaware of what constituted the divine nature of Jesus, he knew little of man's inherent divinity, and that under certain circumstances he can become God-incarnate! In his endeavours to sift the chaff from the wheat, he missed some solid kernels of truth, but his negations could be, and were, in some cases, reconstructions; for, as he said in his preface: ". . . throughout history, throughout art, throughout science, through-out all experience, there are no negations which are not substitutions of a larger and deeper reality."* By his vigorous blasts of criticism he blew down the structure of theological illogicality. He also conclusively proved that Jesus was not the unique figure the Church would have us believe, thereby showing that there is a continuity of order in creation. In this manner he paved the way for a rational study of the superconscious states of man.

Once the academic mind applies itself seriously to the study of these unknown laws that prove the miraculous, it will be found there is nothing miraculous, only a lack of knowledge on our part as to what constitutes the miraculous. The scholars have, so they think, been able to show that much of the Old Testament is borrowed from earlier Assyrian myths, and they consider the great stories to be mostly of mythical origin. But Emmanuel Velikovsky has been able to show that some of these stories may have a background of fact. Take, for instance, the Flood; a really great cosmic catastrophe did take place; and Joshua's account of the sun and the moon standing still need not be considered a mere tale for the credulous. Velikovsky's book *Worlds in Collision*

* That real Christian, Albert Schweitzer, said: "All real progress in the world is in the last analysis produced by rationalism."

leads us to feel there is something behind all so-called myths and traditional beliefs.*

We are points of consciousness within a larger or cosmic consciousness, and, whether we focus inside or outside of ourselves, we can, at times, contact what Williams James called "that unclassified residuum." When we do experience this Force X, whether expectantly or unexpectedly, we are enabled to witness a peculiar manifestation of its energy in operation without appreciating its *modus operandi*. We cannot know much about it until we have obtained perfection in All Knowledge, but we do know that it has something to do with the Life Force and is the root belief of all savage and primitive races, as well as part of the beliefs of highly developed peoples. This helps to prove the fundamental unity of life and its laws, which govern us and creation. Just because events may take place that appear incompatible with the known laws of physics, there is no reason to refuse to believe the evidence of our senses, or to question our sanity or to have other people look at us askance. Let us rather recognise that our minds are so limited that we are unable to fathom such mysteries, for surely we should admit the existence of unknown laws of

* Egerton Sykes (*Everyman's Dictionary of Non-Classical Mythology*) writes that: "European myth has suffered greatly from the impact of Christianity. It is axiomatic that it is only in countries where the myths were actually put into writing before the arrival of missionaries that they retained any real value for the student. For example, the Edda of the Scandinavians was put into writing while the old religion still existed, and is therefore a most valuable source. The Arthurian Legends, on the other hand, were put into writing after the conversion of the Celts, and have so much extraneous matter introduced that it is difficult to detect underneath it all the stories of Gwydion and other early Celtic heroes, and to realise that the King Arthur who fought the Saxons and the heroes whose deeds make up the cycle of the Round Table probably never heard of each other.

"The same process is to be noted in the Teutonic versions of the Eddie poems, and particularly, in the Slavonic tales, where the art of writing was brought in by the missionaries and the original background of myth is almost lost. It is a tragic reflection that the zeal of the great ones of the Church has only had the effect of destroying the records of cultures that had existed for much longer before them than the present culture is likely to exist after them."

nature, and that science is but a continuous readjustment of theories to fit new facts. Thomas Huxley prayed: "God give me the strength to face a fact though it may slay me !" He also stated: "The improver of natural knowledge absolutely refuses to acknowledge authority as such. Every great advance in natural knowledge has involved the absolute rejection of authority." Might not this apply to other branches of knowledge?

Here we quote at length a letter from an Oxford Don, in reply to one of ours, asking if he could explain why there was so much lack of moral courage and intellectual honesty amongst the learned and scientific. He replied: "It is true, as you say, that 'Wise men may often become fools.' I think their folly may be generally traced to prejudice, conscious or unconscious. Consider, for instance, religious prejudice. A Catholic historian may be inclined to treat of an historical period in a way very different from an anti-Christian historian. Neither will be an objective historian, for each will tend to be blind to what he dislikes in the period. Thus each will tend, as you say, to 'balk' questions inconvenient to his particular theory, and 'having ears to hear, he hears not.' It seems to be the same with scientific prejudice. Anything running counter to science will seem, to the scientist, to be mere superstition, and, if he stays for a moment to consider it, he will end by conveniently forgetting it . . . with the exception of a few scientists, who are the more willing to examine unusual phenomena because these run counter to their theories, and who, like Richet and Lodge, are therefore intellectually honest and morally courageous. So, once more, psychologists are apt to deny any psychological phenomena which their theories exclude. In love with their own partial theories, they deny all truth to facts opposed to them, or blind their eyes to their existence. They resemble the French doctor, who conceived he had discovered a cure for every ailment. A patient of his dying, he was asked

how this could happen. 'Mais, mon ami,' he replied, 'il est mort guéri !'

Patristic scholars are puzzled at the similarities in the wisdom of Krishna, Buddha and Jesus. In fact, some extremely erudite writers have gone even so far in ingenious theories as to prove that the historic names of prophets and spiritual leaders of the distant past may be merely variations of ancient cults and myths, the originators of which probably never existed at all or have had their personalities merged with others. From this same standpoint, they complain that, whereas there have been enough documents of the past to give authentic and life-like portraits of the great men of antiquity—philosophers, politicians and military leaders—there are only the scantiest records of the life and origins of Jesus. In fairness to the scholars, it should be pointed out that, whereas there has always been mystery and secrecy surrounding the lives of the great spiritual leaders of ancient times, there has, on the other hand, generally been considerable material available for research into the lives of great popular personages, such as statesmen and military leaders. We surmise that the spiritual Masters of legendary times were just as reticent as the Masters of modern times; their work, as now, being concerned with hidden techniques, not expounded to the people. The Masters throughout the ages must have executed their mission more or less in obscurity, known only to the few, their intimate circle who worked with them. That is why so little is understood about Jesus; he merely followed the pattern of his predecessors, his work being along the inner spheres of consciousness, as those who study the ways of the Masters today can find for themselves. While invaluable work has been done by scholars applying historical methods of criticism to the New Testament and early Church History, they are nevertheless constantly puzzled by the various ambiguous passages. That is because arcane lore can never be explained except by initiates; thus savants are

unable to form correct impressions or estimates of the characters and motives of the great spiritual Masters of history.

There is also a very natural hostility towards mysticism and its sister, occultism. Knowledge of these subjects did more harm than good to the masses in the past, and undermined the authority of the churches, then the only centres of learning, since none but the monks could read and write. Bigotry and intolerance became seriously apparent in the Christian Church as early as the 2nd century, and in the 4th century the famous Alexandrian Library was totally destroyed by fire by the order of a Christian Emperor, Theodosius the Great, A.D. 389.* History shows that, even then, there were profound and irreconcilable differences in the Church, which divided Messianic Judaism from the later orthodoxy of the 4th century. There is no doubt that the later Church Councils sought to extirpate the Gnostic tradition. Here I will quote from the book, *Myth, Magic and Morals*, which is extremely significant to students of oriental philosophy interested in the dynamics of Self-Realisation, about which, incidentally, my father knew little. He writes: "*The Gnostic believers of the second, century figured the Christhood as a pre-existent heavenly aeon that had struck down from the highest through the many intermediate grades of being and entered Jesus at the Jordan.*" Gibbon in his work *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* attributes the Gnostic idea that the aeon or Emanation of the Deity could assume the appearance of a mortal (Chap. XX, Vol. 2) to the Gnostics having been influenced by the School of Plato. But, with all deference to Gibbon's immense and all-embracing erudition, we ask why it should have been necessary to go to the Platonic School: why not to the School of Jesus?

A (belief in the descent of the Spirit through the

* In all fairness to Theodosius it should be remembered that the Library had previously suffered from fire.

higher spheres of consciousness down to a man's normal consciousness has always existed in the East. But the Early Church Councils wanted to make Christianity essentially a Western religion, dominated and sponsored by Rome; it was therefore important to suppress all Eastern concepts.* For that reason, all the priceless manuscripts containing the kabalistic lore of Israel, the secret teachings of Egypt and India, perished along with the Gnostic tradition. In this manner the Church destroyed her own roots and beginnings.

It is also significant that as early as the second and third centuries the above interpretation of the Baptism in the Jordan was openly condemned as heretical by Rome, and was supplanted by the teaching that Jesus was born God; hence the insistence on the Virgin Birth legend. It is easy to appreciate Rome's reasons for this new doctrine; naturally, in her desire to present Jesus as a unique figure, she would resent any parallels or similarities in the history of other spiritual teachers; so, at all costs, it was important to avoid any Eastern interpretations to the effect *that all men could become God-incarnate!*

It appears that the Ebonites or Christians of Palestine also rejected the legend of the Virgin Birth, which some described as a pagan myth, modelled on that of Danae. They also clung to the assumption that Jesus *only attained divinity at the time of the Baptism*. Since they lived in Palestine they would naturally be more in touch with the life and circumstances of Jesus than was Rome.

The same idea was held by the Armenians, who not only believed Jesus was anointed by the Spirit and became Christ, but also that John the Baptist ordained him by laying his hand on his head and imparting to him the triple dignity or grace of king, high priest

* Byzantium was the dominating influence until the end of the eighth century, when the Western Empire was created and together with the Pope split right away from Byzantium, which represented the Eastern part of Christendom, and tried to impose its decisions through the Oecumenical Council.

and prophet. In other words, John the Baptist, being a Perfect Master himself, enabled Jesus to realize His own Perfection. Such Perfect Men of the Christian faith, in medieval times, as St. Augustine, St. Francis Xavier, St. Francis of Assisi and St. Thomas Aquinas (who maintained the theory of predestination and efficacious grace) would naturally discourage belief in the Virgin Birth legends.* Scholars, finding common elements in myths at different periods, conclude that the later myths borrowed from the earlier, instead of seeking some connection between the myths which appear over and over again in religious history and show a definite pattern, in spite of contradictions and exaggerations. However, my father points out that there have been exact parallels to the traditional story of Jesus, for instance, he writes: ". . . and in the earlier Talmuds we have frequent references to the Bath Kol, as it was called. Thus in the Babylonian Talmud (Sanhedr. fol. xi. I) we read that when Hillel,* a rabbi and older contemporary of Jesus, was walking in Jericho, the Bath Kol bore witness he was one who, for his righteousness, merited the Holy Spirit should dwell within him. The Bath Kol once rendered in Jabneh the same testimony in favour of the child Samuel." Perhaps Hillel was a Perfect Master, and possibly one of the Magi or Five Sadgurus of that day (see chapter III on God-Realised Men); he might have been preparing the work connected with the inner scaffolding of the coming Messianic Period of Jesus as Avatar. My father goes on to point out that the story of Hillel was such an exact parallel to that of Jesus, that it has somewhat embarrassed orthodox divines, bound by their prejudices to regard everything related of Jesus in the Gospels as unique.

* The Virgin Birth legends date back to the early matriarchal system of life, and seem merely to refer to the results of ritual cohabitation, when the father remained unknown and the rank and inheritance came through the mother. (See Everyman's Dictionary of Non-Classical Mythology.)

* Hillel lived from 75 B.C. to A.D. 4.

Moreover he mentions that the legend of Zoroaster also offers a distinct parallel to the story of Jesus; for it is related that in Zoroaster's thirtieth year he was enlightened "by the descent upon him of the Vohu mano—i.e. the Good Thought or Spirit. He also appears to have overcome Ahriman (evil spirit) in much the same manner as Jesus did Satan in the Temptation.

We might mention that the Armenian Church to this day refuses to celebrate the Virgin Birth on December 25th, but keeps the Commemoration on January 6th, the defence for this usage being that Jesus was baptised by John exactly on his thirtieth birthday.

Volumes have been written on the Baptism of Jesus and his re-birth as God-Incarnate, and various interpretations have been attached to it by different sects of the Christian Faith, showing that there was much disagreement between early leaders of Christian thought as to its real meaning. My father's book, including his account of the various Birth legends, is very interesting on this particular subject: he goes on to say that in the outlying regions of Christendom, the idea of the baptismal regeneration of Jesus and of his adoption in the Jordan as the Son of God lived on for ages.

As late as the beginning of the ninth century, Elipandus of Toledo, the Primate of Spain, was condemned for holding it; the early Christian writers of Africa and Italy also persisted in entertaining the same idea; the Fratricelli, too, at a much later epoch, attributed the belief to their founder, St. Francis of Assisi. We venture to predict that this idea will again prevail as East and West come into line in modern religious thought.

A comparative study of Christian and Eastern ideas, even in quite orthodox versions of religion, will be found most striking. Let us give an example of

how an idea may be a true idea, because of its universal application; my father, in his chapter on the Baptism of Jesus, mentions that the fish was chosen as the symbol of Jesus, and that fish was also sacred or taboo all over ancient Syria. Jesus was the Great Fish and his followers were the little fish, as seen everywhere in the old Roman catacombs. But my father is puzzled as to the meaning of the symbol. He thought that "the early Christians, from fear of persecution or instinctive love of mystery, were prone to conceal under symbols the objects they revered . . ." Here let us explain the real meaning of the symbolical fish by transferring our attention to the Eastern concept of "fish-eyes." The term "fish eye" was applied to God as "the ever wakeful One," for it is known that fish never close their eyes in sleep. So when a man acquires "fish-eyes," it means that he has attained union with God, i.e. becomes God-Incarnate. Jesus, therefore, had "fish-eyes." It is known that the Masters do not sleep in the ordinary sense of the word. The Early Christians obviously knew what they meant when they alluded to Jesus as the Great Fish; it was a clever disguise. Tertullian of Carthage begins his defence of baptism with water against those who denied its need and utility, with the words: "We little fishes, following the example of our Fish (Ichthun) Jesus Christ, are born in the water, nor otherwise than by abiding in the water"—i.e. in the regenerate state—"are we in a state of salvation." Water in this sense meant Spirit, and the allusion to salvation signified the progress towards Self-Realisation. It must also be remembered that Jesus was looked upon by the Orient as the God of the New Era of the Zodiac, namely, Pisces, The Fish, which started at the time of his birth. To show another example of the unity of thought pervading religious ideas everywhere: the Eastern idea often depicts God as a figure with three heads, signifying "The One in Three," namely, the idea of Father, Mother and Son, the Logos or Trinity of Manifestation.

Gibbon's account, in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, of the Persecution of Heresy, the Schism of the Donatists, the Arian controversy, the troubles of Athanasius, the Valentinians and the Gnostics, etc., makes fascinating but melancholy reading, showing how soon after the death of Jesus the Church entered into a most distracted and critical stage in its history, during the second and third centuries. While the philosophers and educated circles of the Greek and Roman Schools could amicably discuss metaphysical subtleties, Christian zeal and Christian fanaticism unfortunately soon transformed all speculations into dangerous heresies, to be suppressed at all cost. As Gibbon says, "it became incumbent to believe and impious to doubt"! The most bitter wrangling of all seems to have been about the Triad or Trinity and other aspects of the Logos. Respective tenets were magnified by the acrimony of differences, and Christianity became the centre of agonised and bitter hatreds, the flames of religious discord spreading far and wide. To quote Gibbon's words: "Constantine easily believed that the heretics who presumed to dispute his opinions, or to oppose his commands, were guilty of the most absurd and criminal obstinacy; and that a seasonable application of moderate severities might save those unhappy men from the danger of everlasting damnation!" He goes on to say that influenced by the orthodox clergy, the sectaries existed under a cloud, and the conquest of the East was followed by an edict prohibiting the assemblies of the heretics and confiscating their public property. Imperial severity was particularly directed against the adherents of Paul of Samosata, the Montanists of Phrygia (who maintained an enthusiastic succession of prophecy); the Novations, who sternly rejected the temporal efficacy of repentance; the Marcionites and Valentinians, under whose leading banners the various Gnostics of Asia and Egypt had rallied, and perhaps the Manichaens, who had recently imported from Persia a more artful composition

of oriental and Christian theology. Gradually, as time went on, Gibbon has shown, all these various differences and the exacerbations which accompanied them became confirmed by creeds and confessions, disciplined by an all-embracing and powerful Church, and to help achieve this unity, it is small wonder that she found it incumbent to destroy the Alexandrian Library and embark on a policy of craft, cruelty and credulity, which was styled orthodoxy—yet the name of Jesus and of all the saints stood as a bond and symbol of love and brotherhood!

In the days of Jesus, a man wrote a book on skin or parchment scrolls, with the aid of quill and ink-horn. It is difficult to conceive how authoritative versions of books were ever written at all, or that such writings should have come down to us. The manuscripts were laboriously written, and each example had to be copied out afresh, the result being that copies soon departed from their originals, being added to, improved, re-written and re-cast by further writers, who had no objection to what we today would call plagiarism. In this fashion, as the years went by, books and more books were made out of the originals, and, as my father says in one of his chapters on the Gospel compilations: "Authors, if they did not appropriate the works of others entire, yet never hesitated to borrow incidents, episodes, descriptions of men's appearance and character, and to weave these loans into their own works. Thus a medieval biographer, writing a life of Charlemagne, would copy out the picture of an ancient Caesar, drawn by Suetonius eight centuries before, and make it do duty for his own hero, even as the later Ephesians, when they desired to honour the patriots of their age, would chisel the name of an ancient celebrity off his statue in the public square, and replace it with the name of the more modern town councillor."

My father believed that the sayings of Jesus were written down at an early date after his death in Aramaic, as a moral manual was needed by his followers,

but he, along with other patristic scholars, conclusively proved that the Gospels were not written down before 70 to 120 A.D., being compilations of earlier records. Then, again, the authors of the First and Third Gospels appropriated the text and matter of the Second Gospel, and the writer of the Fourth Gospel is unknown. This exploded the traditional view held at the end of the nineteenth century.

Recently, patristic scholars have found "hundreds of differences" between the wording of the more than two thousand years old Book of Isaiah (found, along with other priceless manuscripts of the same date, in twelve vases, in a cave in Palestine in 1947) and the King James version of the Bible. Hence the facility with which people have interpreted the Bible as they please, and they still do. It is difficult to know exactly what the Biblical prophets said when we have not got the original text, because it has been changed over and over again by different translators and writers, working after the manner my father has described. Still, it is very gratifying to know that the basic messages of the original writings of Isaiah do appear to have come down more or less intact.

The most important of all discoveries was the finding of a number of Coptic manuscripts near Luxor in Egypt in 1945. The writings in question had not seen the light of day for well over eighteen hundred years. They were found in an urn which had been buried in a Graeco-Roman cemetery, and date from about A.D. 150. It seems to us that all these precious documents were purposely concealed in the urn, probably by some initiate, in anticipation of their suppression by the Church, since all knowledge of the Gnostic tradition was destroyed wherever possible. Therefore may not these papyri, when translated, throw a great searchlight from antiquity on the hermetic teachings of Jesus; for the manuscripts do not appear to have been mutilated or altered in any way by successive Councils, thanks to their concealment

down the centuries. May we not anticipate that some of their doctrines will prove that Gnosis was identical with the Hindu tradition of the divinity of man? For Gnostic teachings originated in the East and show clearly that Gnosis for its initiates was not just a theory but a living experience.

One of these documents is of inestimable importance, the papyrus volume now entitled the "C. G. Jung Codex." Professor Henri-Charles Puech, of the College de France, is engaged in the work of translating these writings and he says that they are derived from the Valentinian Gnostic school. Such teachings had been lost and scholars only possessed heresiological evidence of a very fragmentary nature; hence the discovery is of tremendous importance and fills a long-felt gap in historical research. We have referred in detail to the Gospel of Truth in our chapter XII, as it is based on Gnosis or ultimate recognition of the self in God, and is similar to the Eastern concept of Self-Revelation, so long suppressed by Christian orthodoxy.

People inherit their religious beliefs without troubling to understand them. In any case, students of the Bible must be aware of the innumerable contradictions and unreliability of the Old Testament. But certainly in the New Testament, in spite of discrepancy and deliberate later interpolations, there are fewer contradictions and a much higher ethical approach, showing a distinct spiritual development since the days of Moses.* Then again mistakes are less frequent because of the high level of inspiration and because writers were dealing with events with which they themselves were familiar. But all thinking people must be aware of the questionable ethics of the Old Testament. Let us take at random one passage. In I. Samuel XV, 1-4, God is represented

* Moses lived about 1460 B.C., and after his death about four centuries lapsed before the events of his lifetime were inscribed.

Still we should realize that we can learn much from the great stories of the Old Testament as they show a pattern — as if God were shaping the history of Israel.

as having ordered the massacre of the entire tribe of the Amalekites, including little children and even animals, for an offence committed by their ancestors four hundred years before when the Israelites were escaping from the land of Egypt.

The Old Testament also shows that some writers were hazy about the nature of God and the Devil, for if I. Chronicles XXI be compared with 2 Samuel XXIV, I, we even find different writers attributing the same action, in one case to the Devil and in the other case to God !

My brother and I were not allowed to read the Old Testament when we were children, and I remember a horrified peep in which I discovered that Jehovah enjoyed the "sweet savour" and "burnt offerings" of sacrificial animals in much the same manner as the gods of present-day savages are supposed to be propitiated by the blood and reek of their victims.

Nevertheless we have to remember that some of the great Masters and initiates who contributed to the Biblical records, had scientific knowledge only verified many centuries later. For example, the fact that the earth was round and not flat was known to Isaiah. "It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth." (Chap. XL, v. 22).

But do not forget that even at the end of the thirteenth century Marcion's influence remained so great that many thousands of "Cathars," as they were called, perished at the stake all over Europe for affirming that the Old Testament was inspired by an "evil Demiurge."* The Church burned these good people, but was so much shamed by their arguments that the Bible was withdrawn as much as possible from the laity. Later on, to quote again from Myth, Magic and Morals: "The so-called reformers of the sixteenth century, having divorced themselves from the unity of the Catholic Church, and being in quest

* Marcion was a converted Pagan of the second century, and, according my father, " the greatest anti-Semite of antiquity!"

of some authority upon which to base their teaching and discipline, tried to substitute the Bible for the Pope; and thousands of misguided people still imagine that the ends of piety are served by thrusting barbarous translations of the Pentateuch into the hands of savages. Educated Anglicans, however, are visibly uncomfortable about it, and realise it is hardly appropriate for their white-robed choirs of small boys to be chanting such vindictive imprecations as Psalm cxxxvii, which, to take a single example, contains :—

'O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed;
Happy shall he be that rewardeth thee As thou hast served
us.

Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth Thy little
ones Against the stones.'

(verses 8 & 9 according to the Revised Version)."

My father, when discussing the theological opinion of his time, which is still accepted to-day, that the Bible is a record of progressive revelations, goes on to ask: "But if the Bible triumphed long ago over other sacred literatures, just because of its intrinsic superiority, is not that fact a good reason to-day for cancelling in daily worship all passages redolent of the earliest and most barbarous stage of progressive revelation? The evil results of singing and reading out such literature in church and chapel must have impressed every student of the history of religion in Europe. For the persecutor has ever found in the precepts of Jahveh an armoury of cruel texts, justifying, by reason of their supposed divine authority, the worst excesses of religious fanaticism. The bibliolatry of the reformed Churches was even less humane in its result than the sacerdotalism of Rome."

Meanwhile official Christianity continues to flounder in a bog of ignorance and superstition. A Dean of St. Paul's wrote: "The Christian idea of God is hardly likely to be the religion of the future,

if its defenders feel obliged to ignore or minimise every acquisition of fresh knowledge." The orthodox churches, of no matter what faith, all seem to share the delusion that their dogmas are unique, although the inner construction or pattern of religion has always been identical, no matter how covered or glossed over by ritual and creeds. There can, by the nature of things, and the order of the Universe, be only *one form of spiritual development, once the aspirant has reached the Path towards Perfection*. How can we understand men without, first of all, appreciating the inner truths and inner realities of existence, the meaning of creation and the conditioning of the soul? If we discuss such matters with the scientist, he says this is not for him, but that we must turn to the philosophers. But what has philosophy done to turn the light on in the darkness? Academic dialectics, dominated by the intellect, have achieved little. As J. J. Van der Leeuw wrote in his book, *The Conquest of Illusion*: "The mystery of life is not a problem to be solved, it is a reality to be experienced." Philosophers do not, as a rule, express themselves clearly and their theories are often hidden under a mass of verbiage. If we read ancient, medieval, and even modern views of theologians and philosophers, we can well see how people have been led to believe in a mass of contradictions. The human mind, as long as it is under the spell of the *illusory nature of this universe, can never do more than make conjectures. It can never arrive at any definite conclusions*, and so the problems of Whence and Whither remain insoluble mysteries. Only when the mind has transcended its limitations, and man has become Perfect in all comprehension, can he arrive at Truth, which is beyond the scope of the intellect and brain. It is useless for academicians to discuss Truth without verifying the facts at their source, and these can only be found in an incarnation or personification of Truth, Satya-Haque, as it is called in the East; that is to say, in one known as a Perfect Master, Sadguru or Kutub.

Only now are the Hidden Teachings again beginning to spread, but, unfortunately, confused with much that is irrelevant and rubbish. It is not to be wondered that the scholar, ever mindful of his personal integrity, looks askance at esoteric wisdom and kabalistic formulae. This is for the anthropologist, says he! But here we should point out that the work of the anthropologist is concerned only with the crude and early stages of man's development, whereas mystical lore belongs to the return journey of man to his original Homeland, the domain of the Oversoul or Absolute God from whence he sprang. For this reason a mystic is a highly advanced man, on his way to complete the END journey of the soul back to Itself, as the Oversoul.

Chapter II

WHAT IS GOD?

If man is to be saved from his suicidal folly, in a world divided into two armed camps, some form of Divine intervention must take place, as we have already suggested. What can this be? It could only be a release of the Christ-consciousness, to change men's hearts and awaken them to a higher level of understanding. Thoughtful people, all over the world, feel they may be living in an avataric period, or messianic age. This means that a divine personality, in human form, should appear to save the world and to give a new dispensation of the eternal and only truth, namely, that God is love! It is thought that God must speak at the appointed hour, and the Word will again be made flesh!

What is an Avatar or Messiah? In India he is said to be God in human form, and is known by the Sufis as the Sahib-e-Zaman; that is to say, He is a Perfect Man, one who has the Christ-consciousness, Swayambdu Dnyan and the Haqiqat-Mohammedi, or by whatever name it is known. All this means one and the same Truth, i.e., oneness with God and oneness with man at one and the same time. This exalted position, according to Sufi and Vedantic tradition handed down through the ages, is always held by the Avatar or Prophet of God of the particular Age to which He manifests. The difference between the two aspects of the universal manifestation of Divinity is due to the need for greater or lesser stress to be laid on the Divinity or Fatherhood of the Avatar and the humanity or sonship of the Prophet at the

time when an old cycle is ending and a new cycle of time beginning. For example, Mohammed's pattern of life differs very distinctly from that of Jesus.

The belief that *man can become God-Incarnate*, namely, that God can become man, is as old as man himself and was certainly prevalent in ancient times, in the Greek play. *The Bacchae*, which opens with the return of Dionysus, the God, to the City of Thebes: "I am Dionysus the God, but I have changed my shape from divine to human, and now I am come to Thebes to visit the springs of Circe and the waters of Ismenus." *This idea is still understood in the East, but it has been forgotten in the West.* Paul said: "Know ye not that you are the temple of God and that the spirit of God dwells in you?" The formal Indian salutation shows the Eastern understanding of this idea. The raising and joining together of the palms of the hands (namaskar) is the act of paying homage to the divinity in man. The praying hands of the Christian are doubtless a reverential attitude adapted from the Hindu tradition, for the oldest religion in recorded history, in its pristine purity, always regarded man as the Temple of God.

Before we attempt to define the status of an Avatar, we will begin by some introductory remarks on the nature of man, "made in the image and likeness of God." The "Likeness of God" state can only be achieved by the Perfected Man. Such a Man is the clear channel through which the Infinite Spirit can flow, unrestricted by the mental limitations of ordinary man. A Perfected Man can also pass on this Infinite Power to others. This He does to those of his circle who are ready for advancement in consciousness which coincides with His own; that is to say, those who have reached the necessary stage of advanced spiritual development. In most forms of Eastern philosophy, it is held that man carries within him the sum total of all things; the eternal verities and principles of life which make him divine. But man

remains unaware of his divinity until awakened by One who already expresses full awareness of His own divinity. Jesus gave the same teaching when he said: "The Kingdom of God is within you." Undoubtedly some of the disciples of Jesus eventually became perfect themselves. They obviously discussed this question when they wondered who would be the greatest amongst them. For the Avatar always appoints a "spiritual chargeman" to carry on the work after his death.

Modern metaphysical wisdom suggests that God is within us, and that there is no limit to our possibilities. Eastern and Western mysticism has always taught the ultimate union of man with his Divine Soul, the Infinite Spirit, in the form of a spiritual re-birth. According to modern psychology, man is constantly striving to unite with his subconscious or feminine principle, and woman with her subconscious or masculine principle. Such a union would mean the birth of the Christ child, or, in other words, a perfectly integrated human being. A perfectly integrated man would be a Perfected Man.

Biological discoveries have found some scientists in agreement with occultists, who believe that a non-physical consciousness determines the structure of living organisms: also biologically, we are told, there is no evidence why man should not live for thousands of years. It is said that in India there are yogis* who have seen many centuries unroll before their ageless eyes. Our minds are rooted in the realm of mental and spiritual activity and our brain might be compared with the receiving sets we use to listen to broadcasts. But sometimes the broadcasts suggest a very different environment from the one we know, a spiritual clime, where such thoughts appear as "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

The researches of Sir Victor Horley on the human brain, along with those of other scientists have

* The Autobiography of a Yogi, by Paramhansa Yogananda.

shown that only a small section of the average brain appears to be in use. Science knows very little regarding the powers and possibilities of the human mind, for the brain remains always unexplored. As Alexis Carrell pointed out in *Man the Unknown*: "Science studies intensely man's liver, kidneys and all his physical functions, everything except the only important function, which is thought." Dr. Wilder Penfield of McGill University has done sensational work by means of electro-dynamics and has revealed that the brain is the seat of a centre of unimaginable complexity. His experiments make one wonder if the dormant brain cells only function in the head of One who has the Universal Mind. Professor Rhine of Duke University, U.S.A., is doing specific work on the human mind which has opened new avenues of research on the human brain. The Universal Consciousness is used by the Perfect Masters or Sadgurus, who are fully awakened men; since they are untrammelled by the limitations of their sensory functions, whereas ordinary men are only partially awake, as if a veil obscured their senses.

Bergson suggested in his work *Creative Evolution* that if the various innate propensities or instinctive forms of consciousness, prevailing along other lines of evolution than that of man, could be brought together or amalgamated with the human intellect, we might have a consciousness as wide as life; because the instinctive processes would then be articulate.

Bergson's "instinct" must not be confused with Spinoza's "intuition" or direct knowledge. Spinoza's *Ethics* is the link between philosophy and Christianity and his "amor dei intellectualis" is akin to Meher Baba's "Love".

Anthropologists like Frazer, in the *Golden Bough*, have described the age-old belief in an abstract force or Mana, which pervades the universe, and which is the motive power of all things—and the savage or primitive man believes by the control of this force, it

is possible to attune himself to nature, to the extent of sending vibrations reverberating through space or the universal framework of things, thereby attaining the divine powers attributed to the man-Gods of primitive society.

Of course it is not to be wondered that modern thinkers are apt to put reason, intellect and logic above all other methods of rationalisation since we have so recently emerged from ignorance and superstition ; but even materialistic philosophers like Bertrand Russell admit a certain validity for intuitive apprehension.

The relation of man to God has ever been the subject of endless conjecture by the theologians of all faiths. This relation can never be solved through the intellect alone, which is bound by the limitations of the human mind; but orthodox divines in general, while assuming that God is the Supreme Being, reject the idea that man can have what we might call direct knowledge of Him. In other words, they oppose the principle that man can be God or that God can become man. In everything there is a starting point, so why should man be an exception to a universal rule? One cannot get something from nothing. Without Creation and incidentally man, we would be quite unaware of God. Eckhardt knew, when he said: "God is at the centre of man." The Bhagavad Gita stated the same truth: "The Lord abideth in the hearts of all beings." The Koran asks: "And He is within you, why do you not see Him?" Man must have within him the creative force which created him in the first place. "Without Him was not anything made that is made". . . . "All is of God, and God is All in All." Such a power can know no curtailment, in no matter what sphere. One might say that God is only latently conscious in nature, and becomes fully conscious of Himself only in man's highest consciousness, which then is also divine. The great Masters of the past were believed to be God-incarnate by their followers, and we have the example of their chosen

disciples becoming God-Realised; that is to say, achieving the same state of supreme consciousness; even as men have always been made Perfect throughout the centuries and to-day. Paul must have understood this principle when he said: "I shall know, even as I am known." An Eastern saint once remarked that he did not know God till he was seventy, implying that he attained to God-realisation at that age.

The idea that God is outside and very far from poor humanity is seen in the ancient Christian conception of a distant God, seated in the heavens, sometimes with grim reminders of hell below. We see this idea in the works of the Primitives and Old Masters. This might have been just a naive transference of the patriarchal sovereignty of a Caesar. But now, with the passing of Royal prerogatives, a more modern concept of God, in conformity with modern thought, is coming into existence. Certainly, compared with the former Christian impression, the gentle intimate pictures of Krishna, with his flute and the cows, shows a deeper and more sympathetic treatment of God as He really is, within the hearts of us all.

Recurring avataric periods in history suggest the validity of the theory of reincarnation in Avatars, as well as in ordinary men. In the days when Jesus lived, the theory of reincarnation was widely accepted in the East, which may be the reason why Jesus did not stress that particular principle. To open-minded students there are hints in the Bible of a belief in former lives. Unfortunately, as the years roll by and as the death of a Master recedes into the distant past, his followers build up great superstructures of religious rituals, in which the Inner Realities and Inner Truths have been lost or forgotten, to be superseded by doctrine, ritual and dogma.

The Secret Truths have been taught in the Sacred Books of all ages, but they have been couched in symbolical language that could be understood only

by initiates. For example, the Sepher of Moses is said to contain three meanings: the simple, the figurative, and the hierarchic. Only those who could penetrate the last meaning would know that the Principles of Life really are contained in the Book of Genesis. Those who are satisfied with literal meanings and "the letter that killeth " can never know, no matter how great their scholarship.

Fabre d'Olivet, the French savant and initiate, who lived in the time of Napoleon and was author of *The Hebraic Tongue Restored*, a monumental work of learning, penetrated some of the secrets of Genesis and was able to demonstrate certain principles. The Pope of that time, objecting to miracles being performed outside the Church by a layman, influenced Napoleon to have d'Olivet banished, and he was forbidden to perform any more wonders!

An examination of the esoteric aspects of comparative religion reveals that there is an underlying Principle, which runs like a golden thread through the maze of the secret systems of thought. Here we are approaching the fundamental laws which govern humanity and incidentally the universe. To define the soul from what we will continue to call the esoteric approach, man consists of three main principles: Matter, Soul, and Spirit. The soul, in Reality, although perfect and eternal, should be regarded as a kind of intermediary which unites the physical bodies of man with his spiritual counterparts.

Inayat Khan defined the soul as God's consciousness in activity.

We know that God is a concept, which varies according to a man's degree of culture. People of today are sophisticated and analytical in their outlook, and if they think about the deeper aspects of the mind, they want to know precisely what is God? They are no longer content with the formulae of the Churches, whether Christian or not. Analytical psychology has done good work in unwittingly paving the way

for the foundations of a rationalistic study of the soul and its functions.

Christian mysticism acknowledges the main stages of the Path towards Perfection, and the Church calls these the Seven Heavens. Paul described how he was caught up into the Third Heaven. Mohammed described how he traversed the Path towards Perfection and experienced Meraj, i.e. The Seventh Heaven. Part of the way he rode on an animal called the Burrak, which symbolises the breath. The fact that the Burrak was only able to carry the Prophet a certain distance through the spheres indicates that "the breath" can assist only to a certain degree of attainment. The Burrak is the same creature as the Sphinx. It has the body of a horse with wings, and the face of a human being. The body represents the animal nature of man, and the head stands for the Divine Soul and Ultimate Perfectioning of Man.

There is a whole literature applying to the different faiths, in which the secret truths on the evolution of the nature of man have been taught from times immemorial, and those interested in the subject can read it for themselves. But one word of warning here: unless we can learn direct from a Perfect Master or those close to him, we can only get a partial and often incorrect view of the many-sided aspects of truth.

Some of the great Victorian writers and philosophers are gravely answerable for their part in influencing men towards present-day atheism. But those with less intellectual arrogance and more sense of responsibility, such as the psychologists of the Jung School, found that a knowledge of God and His laws was essential for the well-being of patients, and indeed for balanced mankind as well.

John Custance, in his remarkable and self-revealing testament, *Wisdom, Madness and Folly*, teaches us more of life by his "Theory of Actuality" than do the pedagogues of conventional thought. For those who have suffered from mental disturbance

and have been forced to wander in the nethermost regions of horror and fear, know that great mystics in their "Dark nights of the Soul" have shared analogous experiences, and also, with them, have reached great altitudes of bliss, belonging to the higher spheres of consciousness. In fact, men like Custance and Nyjinsky felt the nearness and wholeness of God when they experienced the whole universe as within themselves. They have a truer picture of life as a whole, whereas the normally sane deny unfamiliar parts, thus displaying ignorance of the deeper realities of life. As Custance writes: "We are, as it were, offshoots of an eternal Tree of Life, and if the psychologists tell us that our ideas of a future Heaven and a Paradise lost in the past are regressive yearnings for the peace of the womb, what is that but to say that a part of our nature harks back to that unity with the cell from which we have developed?" Custance also writes of the "strange flashes of insight " and wonders whether these states have any meaning. He says: "For my own part, I am always impelled to rationalise this with the idea of an infinite life beyond Time and Space, in which all things are possible and indeed all patterns are completed." It was his consciousness of relationship with God which at times helped him to conquer tendencies to depressive attacks.

Religious ecstasy sometimes appears to have a striking analogy with psychopathic states, and it is for the psychiatrists to study spiritual phenomena and the Path dynamics which accompany them. Instead, they are apt to deny validity and sense to psychopathic phenomena, simply because of their lack of cognition of the deeper aspects of the human mind. But fortunately Jung and others have influenced modern psychology to a deeper appreciation of the vast underlying fields of the subconscious.

Custance also makes the interesting observation "that mystical ecstatic or psychopathic experiences are due to the greater freedom given to instinctive or

unconscious factors. They thus provide some sort of more complete vision in the Bergsonian sense, which, in view of the limited nature and capacity of human consciousness, can only be obtained by excessive simplification and elimination of normal hindrances to rational consciousness and perception."

Readers, if they seek, will find there is common ground in mysticism between all the faiths; for example, there is even accord between Hinduism and orthodox Catholicism.*

The great Christian mystics of medieval times certainly knew that the human mind could be transcended. St. John-of-the-Cross, who was imprisoned at Toledo in the 16th Century, made the idea of transcendence very clear in some verses written after a state of high exaltation :—

"The man who truly there has come
Of his own Self must shed the guise
Of all he knew before the sum
Seems far beneath that wondrous prize:
And in this love he grows so wise
That he remains, though knowing naught,
Transcending knowledge with his thought.

"The farther that I climbed the height
The less I seemed to understand
The cloud so tenebrious and grand
That there illuminates the night—
For he who understands that sight
Remains for aye, though knowing naught,
Transcending knowledge with his thought.

"This wisdom without understanding
Is of so absolute a force

* See H. O. Mascarenhas' book. The Quintessence of Hinduism. (The Principal of St. Sebastian Goan High School, Bombay.) Dr. Mascarenhas begins his introduction "by stating on the authority of critical Catholic scholarship" on Hindu tradition, that it is "the most searching quest into the natural order of the Divine that the world has known." He also claims "there is unity, fundamental harmony, nay, basic identity between the metaphysical orthodoxy in Catholicism and Hinduism."

No wise man of whatever standing
Can ever stand against its course
Unless they tap its wondrous source,
To know so much, through knowing naught
They pass all knowledge with their thought.

"This summit all so steeply towers
And is of excellence so high
No human faculties or powers
Can ever to the top come nigh
Whoever with its steep could vie,
Though knowing nothing, would transcend
All thought, without end.

"If you would ask, what is its essence—
This summit of all sense and knowing:
It comes from the Divinest Presence—
The sudden sense of Him outflowing,
In His great clemency bestowing
The gift that leaves men knowing naught
Yet passing knowledge with their thought."*

Before reaching ultimate Perfection, St. Francis Xavier, described one of his revelations previous to his final initiation: "It seemed to me that a veil was lifted up before the eyes of the spirit, and that all the truths of human sciences, even those that I had not studied, became manifest to me by an infused knowledge, as was the case with Solomon. This state of intuition lasted about twenty-four hours, and then, as if the veil had fallen again, I found myself as ignorant as before."

St. Thomas Aquinas and many other Saints have testified to such illuminating experiences. Saint Augustine, also a Perfect Man, recognised the ageless unity of Truth when he said "That which is called Christianity existed among the ancients, and never ceased to exist from the beginning of the human race until Christ came in the flesh, at which time the true

* (Translation by Roy Campbell. Poems of St. John-of-the-Cross. The Harvill Press Ltd.)

religion which already existed began to be called Christianity."

Orthodox Christianity to-day, however, does not explain the occult constitution of man, so that the average Christian understands nothing of what might be called the anatomy of his soul. Freud tells us that the whole aim and object of Creation, which modern psychology is discovering more and more, is to enable us to bring the unconscious into the realm of the conscious. In this manner, when we have arrived at perfect integration, we shall eventually—in some life or other—be able to feel the bliss of Infinitude, and at the same time may experience the limitations of our own individual lives. That is the experience now of the Perfect Men, who have the dual state of consciousness of Heaven and Earth at one and the same time.

The Hindu criticism of Christianity is, that it does not explain to the laity the esoteric principles of life. For, unless, as Aurobindo has pointed out, there is a descent of a new power of consciousness, which will provide a new foundation and a lifting of the centre of consciousness above the mind, the Kingdom on earth can only be an ideal, not a fact realised in the general earth consciousness. He says: "To come to this Yoga merely with the idea of being a superman would be an act of vital egoism which would defeat its own object. Those who put this object in the front of their preoccupations invariably come to grief, spiritually and otherwise. The aim of this Yoga is, first, to enter into the divine consciousness by merging into it the separative ego (incidentally, in doing so one finds one's true individual self which is not the limited, vain and selfish human ego, but a portion of the Divine) and, secondly, to bring down the supramental consciousness on earth to transform mind, life, and body. All else can be only a result of these two aims, not the primary object of the Yoga."*

* Introduction to Section One, entitled Integral Yoga and Partial Spiritual Paths.

The process of spiritual evolution, which leads to the Ultimate Reality of Perfectioning of Being, takes millions of years, according to time and space, which *in Reality do not exist!* The expanding consciousness of the soul has evolved in precisely the same manner as the human skeleton and brain. The soul is in Reality, identical with the Oversoul or Universal consciousness, and shares all its attributes; but it is unconscious of its divinity, in much the same manner as a drop of water is unconscious of its identity with the ocean. In order to have consciousness of its divinity and its divine origin, the soul has to have a medium of expression, a point of consciousness and an environment. That is why Creation came into being. This was Duality, the split between consciousness and unconsciousness.

We know that everything came from something larger than itself, yet we are tempted to ask which came first, the hen or the egg? (Genesis tells us that the hen came first). At the back of all mythology, religion folk-lore and anthropology, no matter how primitive or polytheistic, students are aware that there is and has always been an inherent belief that there was a First Cause, one Great Invisible Formless Being, out of which all things grew; the Unmanifest from which came the Manifest. In many forms man has been taught that Heaven and Earth were once united, but somehow, we know not how, there came a division, out of which came our dual existence and our dual state of consciousness. This is Maya, or the Cosmic Illusion of Creation.* That is to say, the pair of opposites, positive and negative, good and bad, pain and pleasure, Yin and Yang. The allegory of Adam and Eve illustrates this point, even as the legend that the Lord of Heaven, Uranus, was dethroned by the Time Spirit, Saturn. All such myths and mythological legends have an inner significance, the meanings of which have either become distorted or lost.

* See Appendix, Maya.

From the Bible we learn that Adam was the First Man. He was called the First Man because he was also the first Self-Realised Man to play the role of Avatar on this planet. After Self-Realisation, he became aware of the mystery of Life, the Great Secret, that Heaven and Earth were One! Though disunited objectively and consciously, they were, nevertheless, united subjectively and unconsciously. For the human form is the highest evolved physical form, just as human consciousness is the highest consciousness, which only needs to be turned away from Duality to Unity or Oneness to achieve Self-Realisation.

Dr. le Comte du Nouy, the distinguished French physicist, whose book *Human Destiny* created such interest in America, postulated that a scientific interpretation of evolution arrives at the idea of God as a logical necessity, and so helps to pave the way for a future reconciliation between natural science and metaphysical religion. He writes: "But we must remember that we ignore and probably shall always ignore, everything of the relations between the mysterious and hypothetical universe created by our logic and genius, with the help of the elements furnished by the deforming mirror of our senses, and the real, silent, colorless universe." With all respect to the Professor, we venture to say that this statement applies to imperfect man only, for the Perfect Man has a clear and undeformed mirror of the senses. Until we can regard Reality as non-sensate, non-material Eternal Being, and life, including the ego, as an illusion or false condition which has to be transcended, we can never appreciate the true nature of man, or how he was made in God's image and likeness. But when he has transcended the limitations of the human mind, which belongs to his illusory consciousness or "false ego" (which is Maya), and has become Self-or-God-Realised, or God-Conscious, he will not ignore his relations with the Universe, but will *know* them.

A man who has attained Self-Realisation, or union with the Oversoul, and after that, and with that, has regained human consciousness, knows that time is a limited concept, belonging to his objective or evolutionary consciousness. Such a God-plus-man conscious state as we have just depicted can only be faintly reflected in the phantasmagoria of Creation. It is this ignorance of the Infinite Self within and without which constitutes Maya, which may be described as the belief in one's own false or illusory ego, as opposed to the Universal and Infinite Life of our Divine Ego. When the "false ego" is itself annihilated, or better to say, when the false ego is transformed into God-consciousness, then all earthly and heavenly dwellings are not vacated, they simply cease to exist, even as illusions, for we cannot measure the immeasurable. *"The unreal hath no being, the real never ceaseth to be. The limitations of both have been seen by the seers of first principles."* (Bhagavad Gita II, 16). The "seers" are Perfect Masters or God-Realised Beings. One cannot think of any division in the Soul, since the Spirit is indivisible, for the Spirit is in everything and is God, and whatever He may be or whatever He may not be, He is always infinitely indivisible, and thus we have to justify the reality of the world and at the same time the illusion of the world as compared with Truth.

A Perfect Master, Sadguru or Kutub as he is known in the East, is one who, by virtue of the evolution of the consciousness of his soul, has attained Perfection or Liberation from the round of births and deaths to which ordinary man is subject. But the Avatars and Sadgurus, out of compassion for humanity, reincarnate again and again, in their work of perfecting the human race. A Sadguru is one like the Avatar, who has also transcended Maya; that is, One who has finished with the limitations of his own or limited ego, and in being One with the consciousness of the Oversoul, enjoys all its attributes, such as Wisdom, Power, Knowledge and Divine Love.

There is but one goal for the soul, and that is Self-Realisation, which, in the words of a Moslem Master, Niaz Ahmed, is one and the same thing, i.e., "He who has found himself, O Niaz! His head is on his own feet in obeisance!"

Meher Baba says: "Perfection does not mean merely escaping from the Mayavic Law. Man to become God, is Perfection; but when man, after consciously becoming God, returns to gross consciousness as man, he has achieved the Supreme Perfection. Such a Perfect One is not only God, but lives the life of God as man. He is in Maya and simultaneously beyond it. He is amidst the law of Karma, but not bound by it. Whatever his actions, they are non-actions,* for the actions which bind ordinary man are not only non-binding when performed by a Perfect One, but are channels for his universal spiritual work of liberating mankind from the ignorance of Maya. The Perfect Ones are free from Freedom itself, and so are free even from the non-actions that they perform for their universal work."

* Non-actions. After God-Realisation neither action nor inaction limit the Infinite Consciousness, which remains infinite and unaffected by either action or non-action, which create "binding" or "unbinding" karma, before God-Realisation.

Chapter III

THE GOD-REALISED

As this chapter concerns mystics and mysticism in particular, we will begin by defining this very indefinite and much abused term. Coleridge gives an amusing but biting description, which answers certain types. When he was asked what he called mysticism* he replied: "When a man refers to inward feelings and experiences, of which Mankind at large are not conscious, as evidence of the truth of any opinion, such a Man I call a Mystic; and the grounding of any theory or belief on accidents or forces and the use of peculiar terms invented, or perverted from their original significance, for the purpose of expressing these idiosyncrasies and alleged facts of interior consciousness, I name Mysticism. Where the error consists simply in the Mystic attaching to these anomalies of his individual temperament the character of Reality, and in receiving them as permanent Truths, having the subsistence in the Divine Mind, though only revealed to himself alone, but entertains this persuasion without demanding or expecting the same faith in his neighbours, I should regard it as a species of enthusiasm, always, indeed, to be deprecated, but yet capable of co-existence with many excellent qualities of head and heart. But when the Mystic, by ambition, or still meaner passions, or (as sometimes is the case) by an uneasy and self-doubting state of mind that seeks confirmation in outward sympathy, is led to impose his faith, as a Duty, on mankind generally, and when, with such views, he asserts that the same experience would be vouchsafed, the

* Table Talk.

same truths revealed to *everyman*, but for his secret wickedness and unholy will—such a Mystic is a Fanatic, and, in certain states of the public mind, a dangerous Member of Society—and most so in those ages and countries in which Fanatics of elder standing are allowed to persecute the fresh competitor. For under these predictions. Mysticism, though originating in the singularities of an individual nature, and therefore essentially anomalous, is, nevertheless, highly contagious. It is apt to collect a swarm or cluster, circumfana, around the new Fana, and therefore merits the name of Fanaticism, or, as the Germans say, Schwärmerei, i.e. Swarm-making."

It is true that fanaticism is apt to be found amongst members of societies engaged in esoteric teachings, for their views tend to become crystallised by the limitations of the particular group to which they belong. Such schools of thought speak vaguely of the White Brotherhood and the Masters. At best, they will only have a hazy conjecture as to the identity of such Beings, and the contradictory teachings given out only bewilder and confuse the critically minded. It is not to be wondered that information concerning Real Masters is uncertain and vague, as the Great Ones do not court publicity, unless for a purpose. They live practically unknown to the world; they are venerated by those living near them as great saints, but nothing is known of their lives or their particular mission on earth, which is always performed on the inner planes of existence. Their intimate followers, save those who are illuminated or made Perfect, know little more than those farthest away from them. The Masters expect implicit obedience and devotion, which is given wholeheartedly by those who serve them.

Meher Baba has explained that only ONE out of millions of men obtains God-Realisation, and of every thousand made Perfect, only about six are women. As a man cannot reach the Seventh Plane except through the help of one who is already Perfect;

the actual proximity of the Master for enlightening the disciple is important, though not absolutely necessary. The great Saints of history were all made Perfect, though in Christian history *we are never told who made them so*; whereas such spiritual technique is not unknown in the East.

According to Meher Baba, a Master able to impart Self-Realisation to a disciple must be living. The Master can give God-Realisation by a touch, a look, or even just by thought-transference at a distance, without any physical contact. It should be emphasized here that men who remain alive after Self-Realisation, that is to say, who arrive at God-Realisation plus human-consciousness, are very rare. The great majority on obtaining Godhood give up their bodies. There is a story in connection with this. A Master was once so delighted with some disciple that he told him he would grant him whatsoever he might desire. The devotee immediately replied: "Make me like unto thee, O Master!" The Master answered "I will!" The man immediately died! His physical vehicle not being able to contain the Essence of God. He attained God-Realisation but did not regain his earthly or gross consciousness. Hence his death.

A God-Realised Man is different from other men because the Universal Mind knows all the secrets and mysteries of life. Such a Man is omniscient and omnipotent. For example, he knows what beings live on other planets. He can explain the phenomena we see in the skies. He can tell us, if he chooses, what the "Flying Saucers" are, and about the people using them and for what purpose they are being constructed.

The most noticeable feature of a Master is the serenity of his countenance; the unmistakable dignity and authority of his demeanour. One can but be impressed with the sense of one's own inferiority before him; being always aware of the presence

of an all-knowing, all-wise, loving Father, to whom all has been revealed. One feels that all petty characteristics, failures and sins, though known to him, have been overlooked. There is no uneasiness or self-consciousness, as would be the case if one thought that an ordinary individual had plumbed all one's weaknesses and mistakes. In our relationships with other people, we may unconsciously "play up" to them, exposing not our real personality, but what we like to think we are. With a Perfect Master we can be our own natural selves, for there is nothing that we are able to conceal. To such a One, our life is an open book. He knows our past, present and future as easily as he knows the past, present and future of the collective. We do not have to express our thoughts; he already knows them. He will answer a question before it has scarcely been formulated, much less spoken. All points of the compass are the same to him, all distances are equal, it matters not whether the person be present or thousands of miles away. To be the follower of such a One is to be under the direct guidance of God Himself. All those who are connected with such Men can testify, in diverse ways, as to the divinity of their nature, from facts actually perceived and experienced in life. The saying that no man is a hero to his valet does not apply to a Master. Those who attend him will always be aware of his divinity. They themselves are often astonished at the feats of endurance they may accomplish by their own actions as a result of the uplifting presence; for none can work for a Master and not be receptive to the celestial vibrations of such a spiritual power-house. It is said that when Gautama Buddha was in meditation, his disciples could bathe three miles away in the light of his Contemplation! There is a story of one who, wishing to rejoin the Buddha (who was on the other side of the river) started to walk across the water. As long as he was able to keep his mind centered on the Master, he walked easily, but the moment his mind wavered he began to sink. We remember how Peter, trying to emulate his

Master, Jesus, and walk on the waves, sank when he lost faith.

The Perfect Master can work on different planes of consciousness at one and the same time. Because of possessing the Universal Mind, he is simultaneously present in the mental, subtle and physical spheres of existence. This expanded state of Universal consciousness is incomprehensible to those who do not share it. When working with different individuals at different stages of development, a Master has to come down to their level, and even though he may be normally in his body, he can, nevertheless, continue to function in his different vehicles, and at the same time be aiding some highly advanced soul on the subtle or mental plane. The Master uses the appropriate vehicle which he requires at the moment, whether it be his spiritual, mental, subtle or physical body, as the medium for his work on the required plane of consciousness. The Master's spiritual help to the world is as much individual as collective; he can give Realisation and Illumination to his close followers, as we have already said. But he can also change completely the life of a stranger, for none are really strangers to a Master, since his Infinite Life is within us all. Only the divine personality can awaken in the individual the fire of Divine Love. This consumes in its flames the lesser desires of the mind, body and world, all of which have to be mentally relinquished before Perfection can be obtained or realised. By meditation on a Perfect Master, who is Divine and fully aware of his own divinity, the aspirant, who also is divine, but *unaware* of his own divinity, is ultimately led into full Self-Knowledge. This culminating experience generally takes place, as already mentioned, when the aspirant is about to give up his body in death. But when Self-Realisation takes place in the fullness of life, and the individual is able to return to ordinary consciousness, he becomes a God- or Self-Realised Man.

There are two aspects of Divinity—the personal

and the impersonal. Both lie beyond the domain of duality, for, in relation to the impersonal aspect, God alone exists. There is no room left, even for the denial of nothingness! According to the personal aspect, the Universe exists, *but within the cosmic illusion of Maya*. Thus the existence of the Universe is both real and unreal at one and the same time. It is real as long as the higher realities of the divine Path to God remain undiscovered. The moment God appears in His full Glory, everything else vanishes. The question of Reality other than God cannot then arise.

The personal aspect of God is exemplified in *the living Perfect Man*, he who, while fully conscious of his impersonal aspect of Divinity, that is, of his union with the Infinite consciousness of the Oversoul, retains at the same time consciousness of creation in its objective externalisation as a divine personality in human form. In other words, when the impersonal aspect of Divinity assumes the personal aspect, we have the divine manifestation in human form, such as Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, and Mahommed. There have always been strange characters in history, such as Melchisedek, King of Salem, "who was without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life," and was called a "Priest of the Most High God." In fairly recent times we have the mysterious Comte St. Germain, described by Voltaire as "the man who knew everything." We do not know, but presume such characters may have been Perfect Men. In our present times, Ramakrishna, who died in 1886, was, so we are told, a Sadguru. He certainly knew that he had attained Perfection and gave evidence of the Universal Mind-consciousness. He would say he was a Nitya-Mukta, or eternally free, and an incarnation of God Himself. "The fruit of the pumpkin," he said, "comes out first, and then the flowers; so it is with the Nitya-Muktas, or those who are free for all eternity, but come down for the Good of others."*

* Ramakrishna, His Life and Sayings, by Prof. F. Maxmüller.

A very good illustration of the fundamental difference between the personal and impersonal aspect of Divinity may be seen in the following story. *You Must Believe It*,* by Dr. A. G. Munsiff, which we will quote verbatim: "Once a despotic king from Northern India, given to all sorts of whims and vagaries, ordered the court clowns, on a certain festive occasion, to play the part of a real live tiger. Failure to comply meant death, and the clowns knew the despot for what he was. They were at their wits' end. Every passing minute of the approaching time increased their anxiety and perplexity. One amongst the clowns, who was an advanced soul, observing their sorry plight, comforted his companions by saying: 'Don't worry. Let the time come; everything will be all right.' The stage was set; the durbar hall was gaily decorated; the king, in the best of oriental splendour, was seated on the golden throne, with his small son, the heir-apparent, by his side. Other notables and dignitaries packed the hall, keyed up to a high pitch of excitement, to witness the impossible performance."

After the preliminaries and side roles of the clowns, the important item of the day, the tiger, was announced. At a given signal, the particular clown leapt into the arena, metamorphosed into a live and real tiger!* The audience were dumbfounded and could hardly believe their eyes. Before they could recover themselves, the tiger made straight for the king's son, dragged him down and tore him to pieces. When the king realised that the prince was already dead, he ordered the clowns, on pain of death, that he (the prince) be restored to life. The clown who had played the tiger, said this was only possible if someone played the part of Christ realistically, and the only one, at the moment, capable of doing it was

* *Meher Journal*.

* Lycanthropy. The belief that men can change themselves into animals for a period of time, is widely held all over the world, ancient and modern. See *The Encyclopedia of Psychic Science*, by Dr. Nandor Fodor.

Shams-e-Tabriz, a God-mad person roaming about in the vicinity. Uttering this bit of information, the clown disappeared. Shams was traced and found. As he was known to be fond of music, he was lured to the king's palace on the promise of a musical feast. The king, very respectfully, beseeched the Saint to play the Christ for the sake of his son and heir. Shams agreed and kicked the dead body thrice, saying 'Qum-be-iznillah!' ('Rise in the name of God!') The prince showed no signs of returning life. Once again he kicked the dead body, and said angrily, 'Qum-be-Izni!' ('Rise by my order!'). The prince immediately came to life and everyone breathed a sigh of relief. The orthodox divines of the day, however, came to know of this miraculous incident and, regarding the utterance 'Rise by my order' ('Qum-be-Izni) as rank blasphemy, and unmindful of the Saint's spiritual status, Shams was skinned alive, but this is another story. The inquiring mind would be interested to know why 'Rise in the name of God' ('Qum-be-Iznillah') failed and Sham's personal order 'Rise by my order' ('Qum-be-Izni!') brought the dead prince to life. The term 'Allah' in Sufism signifies the impersonal aspect of God, which is All-Knowledge, All-Power, All-Bliss. This state is 'Absolute,' devoid of attributes, qualities, motives and actions.* Hence, the action or order of bringing the dead to life cannot be attributed to God—the Absolute, the Impersonal. Action, or the attribute of doing and undoing things, belongs to the Personal God—the Divine 'I' that is of the Sadguru or Kutub, the embodiment of all attributes. The Divine 'I' through Shams worked the miracle narrated above. One may also ask why the particular clown did not bring to life the prince, when he could become a tiger and kill him. The reason is that the clown, not having achieved Perfection, could not risk his spiritual downfall. The part of becoming a tiger was forced upon him by circumstances and was meant to save the lives of his companions. *There was no self working*

* The Absolute — see Appendix.

in it. The second act of raising the dead boy would have been deliberate, namely the asserting of his psychic (or false) ego. Hence he very wisely disappeared, leaving the job to be finished by the Perfect Master, Shams-e-Tabriz."

Shams was a Salik-Mazoob,* and probably quite impervious to being skinned alive! He belonged to the 13th Century, A.D.

According to what evidence there is in original texts on the historical Jesus, he did *not perform miracles in the name of the Impersonal God*, or, at any rate, did not baptise in God's name. The evidence we have for this is detailed in my father's book. He wrote that, in accordance with the "weighty evidence" of Eusebius, the historian, when Jesus baptised people, he did it "in my name!" Eusebius insists that *no more than those words stood in the original text*, and this ancient chronicler also maintained that the words, "baptising them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost" are a *later interpolation*. This also suggests that Eusebius may have been acquainted with the dynamics of Self-Realisation, and so this statement of his also helps to confirm the story about Shams not succeeding till he called in his *own name*. Jesus, also, had no need to call on the Impersonal God or Oversoul with no attributes or qualities. In the raising of Lazarus, Jesus is reputed as saying: "Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard me" and "I know that Thou hearest Me Always" (John, Ch. XI, vv. xli and xlii). This wording, in all probability, if we are to be consistent, was only one of the many later interpolations made by uninitiated Churchmen, for their ideas were not in accordance with the technique of the Perfect Men of the past, nor of the Masters of to-day, who should use the Divine "I" of the personified or Incamate-God when performing a miracle. The Church, in seeking always to obliterate the Eastern concept of

* Salik = Perfect Master.

man's *inherent divinity*, ended by confusing the man Jesus with the Impersonal God.

The following Sufi couplet is very revealing from the Eastern standpoint.

"Ba khuda masti kun-o
Ba awliya hoshiyer bash."

"With God the Absolute, do what you dare;
But in dealing with Saints, forsooth, beware!"

Aspirants who have reached a certain stage of spiritual development are sometimes apt to imagine themselves so advanced that they halt by the wayside, complacently sure in the belief that they now know nearly all, forgetting that there is always another horizon ahead of them; thus arrogance and self-delusion may impede their further progress, and they may also mislead others. The safest way for the selfless and earnest seeker after Truth, is to follow a Perfect Master, should he have the opportunity to do so and the privilege to be accepted as a devotee. Since the Master can make no mistakes, the aspirant will have the Master's protection from certain pitfalls and snares, which beset the path of all those in search of Truth. No general instructions can be laid down. The easiest way of triumphing over the "False Ego," or animal self, is to purify and deepen our love for humanity and the subhuman races; to widen continually the circles of those we love, and, above all, to do unto others as we would they should do unto us. Every individual has to work out his own salvation, to create his own path, and this is determined by the *sanskaras* (impressions) of his past lives, to say nothing of his present. As *sanskaras* touch directly on the problems of Good and Evil, we will quote a paragraph from *The Discourses of Meher Baba* on this subject: "When human consciousness is fully developed, we always find in it a preponderance of bad elements, since the subhuman stages of evolutionary consciousness have been operating under the limiting tendencies, such as lust, greed and anger.

The experiences and the actions which are sustained by such ego-centered tendencies have left their imprints, in the same manner as the cinematic film records the movements of actors. It is therefore easy to be bad and difficult to be good. Animal life, from which human consciousness emerges, is mostly determined by animal lust, animal greed, animal anger, etc. If all the accumulated sanskaras had been bad, and none good, the appearances of good tendencies in human consciousness would have been impossible. Though some of the animal sanskaras are good, most of them are bad, and so from the start human consciousness finds itself subject to the propelling force, which is mostly bad. Right from the beginning of human evolution, the problem of emancipation consists in cultivating good sanskaras, so that they might overlap and annul the accumulated bad sanskaras."

Omar Khayyam knew this when he wrote:

"The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back or cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it."

Spiritual development consists in the gradual emancipation of consciousness, this having been entangled in the bindings of sanskaras which have accumulated during the evolution of consciousness in past lives. A Perfect Master, who receives unstinted devotion and service from a devotee, is able to wipe out many of the sanskaras which impede his disciple's progress along the Path towards Self-Realisation. Religion, esoteric teachings, spiritual training, serve merely as the means to an end, and are only the beginning of the entrance to the Path, leading ultimately to Self-Realisation. The higher states of Illumination enable the aspirant to experience and to see things as they really are, stripped of the veils of illusion, which are the condition of Maya. Such a spiritually advanced person feels in harmony with everyone and everything, realising divinity in every phase of life.

All the great religious movements have begun from the bottom, through the mass-consciousness of the people, which explains why the Masters and the Avatars often seek to be with the people of the lowest orders, who are unconsciously influenced by the centrifugal force in the dynamic spiritual leader. For example, when a Master gives food and clothing to the poor, the result will be that the world will gain in economic and material welfare. When a Master washes the Untouchables, the insane and the lepers with his own hands, they will be spiritually and sometimes physically benefited and their future lives minimised. If a Master fasts, the result of fasting is felt by the whole Universe spiritually, for a Master's work is always for a spiritual end. If he observes silence, the same result is brought about; for the Universal Mind has infinite ways in its universal work. Whatever work a Master is doing, it reverberates throughout the Universe and produces reflex action. All outward actions of a Master are therefore inspired by some spiritual need in the Universe. It is impossible to understand, but a Master's work is in the manipulation of Maya; for Maya is the dominating factor in our illusory world, and a Master's peculiarities are intimately associated with his handling or "tricking" of Maya.

Societies and organisations have never succeeded in making people attain spiritual perfection. Here we are not referring to the religious Orders where man shines at his best, and we pay grateful tribute to the Catholic hospitals for their wonderful spiritual atmosphere and the selfless devotion of the nuns. It cannot be said that the followers of a Perfect Master are in any way immune from failings, but they are at least able to have unity in one respect, their common devotion to the Master. Unfortunately there is a strong tendency to judge a Master by his disciples, so that a closer acquaintance can cause disillusionment. It is a mistake to assume that the devotee of a Master should be an exceptional

person; in fact people wonder sometimes why a Master seems to choose rather ordinary people. Here we can remember that Jesus chose simple men; one of the charges levelled against him was that he did not have educated men round him. They also appear to have quarrelled amongst themselves. The men of Jesus were certainly not unusual till they obtained Self-Realisation.

Easterners, by reason of their inherited capacity for service and devotion to saints, make better disciples, as a rule, than Westerners, who are subject to the neurotic tendencies of the West. As a Master is liable to criticism and misunderstanding for his apparent lack of disciplinary action on occasions, those unaccustomed to the inner technique and workings of a Master should remember that if a Master continues outward contact with the person who has laid himself open to criticism, there is always a reason for this. One explanation may be that the Master knows there was a previous spiritual connection in former lives. This factor should always be taken into consideration by those puzzled or distressed over disciples who do not set the example expected of them as devotees of a Master.

To be a follower of a Perfect Master does not enable one to escape suffering or privation; a real Master is indifferent to worldly goods and the comforts of life, and expects his followers to be the same. In fact, close devotees can go through incredible hardships, especially if they are men associated directly with the Master's routine work. A Master generally works with the poorest of the poor, the downtrodden, the oppressed, and those on the lowest level of privation and suffering. His ways are often hard and simple; his clothes may give him the appearance of a beggar, as in the case of Sai Baba. On the other hand, there have been a few Masters who were Princes or rich men. The Master, not being attached to wealth, generally has no possessions, no property, no securities, stocks or shares, but as he has to live

and maintain the work, the disciples contribute what they can towards the common good.

It is thought that the terrible privations suffered by Masters and their close followers in the past were mainly due to the inherent spiritual laws which govern humanity, and that by their vicarious sufferings, they have contributed to the spiritual uplift of mankind. The reactions of a Master, that is to say, of the divine and human elements in him, are difficult to understand or explain. The physical needs of a Master are, to a certain extent, the same as those of ordinary individuals, though he can undergo long fasts and other trials of endurance which ordinary persons would consider super-human. A Master treats his body as the instrument through which he manifests; he has to keep it healthy and strong, for the universal work which he has to do often takes great toll of the body. At times he may seem to be enjoying himself, but whatever he does is necessitated by his spiritual workings and motives, and he has none of the desires or wants which afflict ordinary humanity. Through him the will of God flows in flawless purity of expression, passing direct from the spiritual body into physical expression, for the corporeal and incorporeal are blended in perfect harmony. For the Master, the superconscious spiritual state is the normal plane of being, and the ordinary man cannot share this state till he himself becomes as perfect as the Master.

To-day, more than ever, the world needs real religion and real philosophy, and the work of the Masters is to help kindle the divine spark, which is in every one of us, and which has to grow into the purifying flame of complete regeneration. There is no doubt that the Orient has always been the source of all spiritual wisdom and enlightenment. It is little understood in the West, for instance, that we all do attain infinitude every night in really sound sleep, for, in deep sleep, all problems about "I, you, and we" end with Time and Space, which are the ingredients

of our illusionary awakening from Godhood every morning!

Meher Baba once, when explaining his state of God-consciousness, said: "Just as matter does not exist in your dreams, so it does not exist for me when I am awake. What you experience in your sound sleep with regard to matter, a God-Realised man experiences in the waking state. My waking state is real, yours is false. When you realise God you will see this for yourself, provided you regain consciousness of the gross world."

Meher Baba has explained the above state more fully in his *Discourses* from which we will now quote: In the case of the Perfect Master, the conquest of the unconscious by the conscious is final and permanent, and therefore his state of self-knowledge is continuous and unbroken, and remains the same at all times without diminution. From this you can see the Perfect Master never sleeps, in the ordinary sense of the word. When he rests his body he experiences no gap in his consciousness."

"In the state of Perfection, full consciousness becomes consummate by the disappearance of all obstacles to illumination. He becomes illumination itself. As long as a person remains under the sway of duality and looks on the manifoldness of experience as being true and final, he has not traversed the domain of ignorance. In the state of final understanding a person realises that the Infinite, which is one without a second, is the only Reality."

"The Infinite pervades and includes all existence, leaving nothing as its rival. The person who has such realisation has attained to the highest state of consciousness. This state of full consciousness, which is the fruit of evolution, is retained, but the limitation of sanskaras and desires are completely transcended. The limited individuality, which is the creation of ignorance, is transformed into the Divine individuality, which is unlimited."

"The illimitable consciousness of the Universal Soul becomes individualised in this focus, without giving rise to any form of illusion. The person is free from all self-centred desires, and he becomes the medium for the spontaneous flow of the supreme and Universal Will, which expresses divinity."

"Individuality, therefore, becomes limitless by the disappearance of ignorance; as it is unimpaired by the separateness of Maya, and unentangled by its duality, it enjoys the state of liberation, in which there is objectless awareness, pure being and unclouded joy. Such a person has no longer any of the illusions which perplex and bewilder man. In one sense, he is dead. The personal ego, which is the source of the sense of separateness, has been for ever annihilated, but, in another sense, he is alive for evermore, with unconquerable love and eternal bliss. He has infinite power and wisdom, and the whole universe is, to him, a field for his spiritual work of perfecting mankind."

This state of consciousness described by Meher Baba, is the same state that Jesus and other Perfect Men have experienced. Jesus most emphatically never considered himself to be the only Perfect Man or the only son of God. So far as we know from the fragments of his sayings, he was always telling his followers to be "perfect". . . "to go and do likewise". . . and "greater things shall ye do." He taught that the goal of humanity was to be perfect, even as our Father in Heaven is Perfect!" The Father being God, the Oversoul, the Ultimate Reality, or whatever one prefers to call it.

Once a man has experienced even a glimpse of the Infinite Spirit and the peace that passeth all understanding, he will live, but with the aim to make such a state of illumination permanent. There is the story by Bhagwan Hamsa in *The Holy Mountain*, in which he tells of his pilgrimage to see the Lord (to unite with his Divine Soul) or die. He climbed up to the frozen

lake of Gaurikund, twenty thousand feet above the sea; there he stayed for three nights and three days. It was to be death or Realisation for him. He was without food or shelter in the icy and snow-covered wilderness. The initiation of the Self, the Infinite Self, took place. Bhagwan wrote of it: "I found myself reflected everywhere in the whole Universe! It was one harmony . . . full of Wisdom, Infinite Love perennial, and Bliss Eternal!"

Chapter IV

CYCLES AND CIRCLES

Thinkers like William James and others have postulated the possibility of a plurality of Cosmic Beings who execute the purpose of the universe. This agrees with the hidden tradition that there are always five Great Masters on earth who guide the destinies of mankind. The Sufis refer to these Sadgurus as Panjatan (the five bodies) though to-day the Moslem laity restrict the term to Mohammed* and his immediate successors.

According to tradition, behind the great forces operating in the world stand these Five Perfect Masters who act as the governing Body and direct and control the powers in evidence. There are also altogether, including these Five Masters, Fifty-six God-Realised Ones and Seven Most Advanced Souls.† It is thought that the Seven Most Advanced Souls are unknown to the world. For example, there is a beautiful story told of one of these great souls by Shailah Sharfuddin Maneri, who was known in India in the 14th Century A.D. as "Master of the World." He related how the Arabian Prophet, on hearing of the death of a certain slave called Helal, insisted upon being led to the dead body. When the corpse was eventually traced, lying uncared for in a stable, Mohammed said: "Helal, thy body lies on this earth, but thy soul is with the Lord!" He then explained to the somewhat astonished onlookers, that there are always

* Mohammed — see Appendix.

† Readers interested in the ways of Sufi Masters and their circles, should read Dr. Nicolson's *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*.

Seven Very Advanced Men in every age who support the world by their blessings and that Helal was the leading one!*" In the New Testament it is recorded that the Twelve were led to appoint "Seven men of honest record."

On authority of Meher Baba we hear the same to-day, that there are, besides the fifty-six God-Realised Ones, always the Seven Advanced Souls present on earth, showing the importance of the number Seven in the Divine Plan. These Fifty-six are One in consciousness but out of them only the Five Perfect Masters live and work separately in spite of being inwardly known to one another. Apart from these, there are of course, many advanced souls; some details of the various types are given in the Appendix. We have not seen any reference to the Fifty-six, except in one English book—Garnett's book on Turkish Magic and Mysticism—though no doubt, the Fifty-six are referred to in non-Christian books. It should be explained that most of these God-Realised Ones are what the Sufis call "Majzoobs," i.e. the "Living Dead," for in spite of eating, sleeping, talking and moving about like other men, they are free from all illusions of duality, including their own bodily existence, therefore "mad" in the eyes of the world.

Few amongst the Fifty-six are Jivan-Muktas, Azad-e-Mutlaque, or the "Living Liberated," such as the Sadgurus, who are both God-conscious and Creation-conscious, therefore "sane" in the eyes of the world.

In Avatic periods, the Fifty-Sixth God-Realised Master, as the Avatar, takes his place at the supreme head of the Hierarchy. These God-Realised Men are ONE with the Oversoul. This enables them to be present and conscious in every finite mind and they can respond to the call of all, that is to say they are in all, with all and yet beyond all.

* For further details see Appendix.

They can advance individuals from the gross sphere of consciousness to the Subtle plane, and from the Subtle plane to the Mental plane. Their concern is not with the individual alone, but to give a general push to the spiritual impulse which affects the whole Universe. These Perfect Masters are the suns of the spiritual world; their innumerable rays can penetrate the heart of every individual existence. Though these Godmen experience the misery and suffering caused by the ignorance and limitations of humanity under the thrall of Maya, at the same time they are always aware of the Infinite Bliss, Anand or Mussarrat of the Oversoul. We have attempted already to describe this dual state of consciousness and there is no need to enlarge further on the God-State which is in any case unimaginable to all who do not share it.

Avataric periods in history might be likened to nature's spring-time; they bring a new release, a new quickening of the Spirit. In this Age, the Eleventh Age, a tremendous influx of the regenerative and reconstructive powers should recharge the stagnant consciousness of mankind, producing a physical, mental and spiritual rebirth. This should blossom forth into the Golden Age, in which the higher qualities of man prevail, bringing peace, harmony and brotherhood on earth. This age of the intellect or reason, will be recharged by intuitive perception, bringing better balance and poise. Such recurring creative cosmic impulses always take the shape of a Universal Divine Manifestation of God in personal form, who is the pivot point of the liberating forces. This is always the Fifty-sixth Sadguru, as alluded to above. The Avatar manifests by his incarnation at the junction of the end and beginning of a new cycle of time. Each cycle lasts either about seven hundred years or about fourteen hundred years, the cycle being made up of Eleven ages in all. It is an interesting fact that Armistice Day in England took place at the Eleventh hour of the Eleventh day of the Eleventh month of the year 1918. The number Eleven has

great significance from the numerological standpoint, for it is one of the principal numbers used by the Masters; just as the number Seven is the key number behind all Creation, the number Eleven is said by some numerologists to be the "Master number," and signifies the end of one dispensation and the *commencement* of another. The end of the First World War therefore suggests that we then entered into a new phase of preparation for the New Dispensation.

Each age lasts about seventy to one-hundred-and-twenty-five years, but its duration, like that of the cycle, depends on the material, ethical and universal circumstances of that particular epoch. For example, if a cycle lasted for seven hundred years, then about fifty years of dynamic regeneration should follow the Avataric manifestation of that particular period. But if the cycle of time extends for some fourteen hundred years, then about a hundred years of active spirituality and prosperity should follow that particular Manifestation. Mohammed was the Avatar of his particular age fourteen hundred years ago, and, according to Islamic calculations, the manifestation of Iman Mahdi is now some thirty years overdue, for fulfilment was promised during the first one-third of the 14th century of the Mohammedan era. We would suggest that Iman Mahdi is already here, but will remain unknown until it is time for the Manifestation to take place, not only to the Moslems, but to the people of all Faiths. The Koran deprecated the idea that Jesus was a unique figure when it said: "Jesus is no other than a servant whom God favoured with the gift of prophecy and appointed him for an example . . . and he shall be a sign of the approach of the last hour." Mohammed knew that the present cycle was to cover the longer period of about fourteen hundred years, and also the need for the periodic regeneration of the inner forces of Nature. Once, when addressing his immediate followers, he said, amongst other things, that God would raise a man amongst them

on the eve of every century, for the reformation of religious thought.

During the last thirteen hundred years, many Sufi Masters have claimed this, and some, including the famous Imans, Ghazzali and Fakhruddin Razi, leaders of the 10th and 11th centuries respectively, are widely admitted to have been the Mujjadids or Renewers of their time. Pakistan's well-known Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sir Mahomed Zafarualla Khan, is said to believe Ahmed Sahib of Qadian to have been the latest Mujjaddid.

There have, of course, been many Perfect Masters of the Vedantic tradition, as well as of the Sufi; notably the Guru Nanak, who lived in the first part of the sixteenth century. He made a prophecy concerning the British when he spoke of the coming of "The blue-eyed stranger from across the seas," who did come and liberate India from the evils of Mogul fanaticism and imperialism, for in the days of Baber, the Mogul hordes coming from Central Asia had invaded India. The Guru Nanak was the first of the ten gurus of the Sikhs. The line ended with the Guru Golind Singh.

As A. S. Wadia writes in *The Message of Krishna*: "Hindu scriptures are filled with disquisitions on the doctrine of the Avatar ; all their systems of philosophy and religion recognise the periodical involution and dissolution of world-process as representing the systole and diastole of the One Universal Heart, which is ever active and yet ever at rest. Though the Universal heart lives and beats in all, It lives and beats in a special degree in the Rishis and the Buddhas, the Prophets and the Messiahs. When the downward materialistic tendency holds sway over the lives and ideals of men, these great souls appear on the scene, and redress the balance and thereby restore peace, harmony, and righteousness on earth. On the point of the Descent of the Lord; Krishnaic Hinduism is broadly at one with Trinitarian Christianity

the only difference between the two being that while the Hindus believe that Krishna for the time being was the one, immediate and complete manifestation of immanent Brahm on earth, the Trinitarian Christians aver that Christ was the only one of three co-equal manifestations of God."

There are differences between the Sadguru (Godman, Perfect Master) and the Avatar. According to Meher Baba, God becoming man, i.e. incarnating as man, is the Avatar; whereas man, evolving into God by a process of numberless evolutionary lives, is a Sadguru. We have reason to believe that all the great World Teachers who have influenced the trend of World religious history were the Avatars. We will now try to distinguish between the two states of Spiritual Perfection attributed to the Sadguru and the Avatar. *The Avatar belongs always to the same One and Only Avataric state, or Avataric Soul-consciousness. He was the first individual soul as Adam to emerge from the evolutionary process as a God-Realised being, and he is the only Avatar who has ever manifested or will ever manifest.* Through him God first completed the journey from unconscious divinity to conscious divinity, that is to say, God first unconsciously became man, in order, consciously, to become God, and God only becomes conscious of Himself through man's highest state of consciousness. For the liberation of mankind, it is necessary that periodically God should become man, and thus we get the Messianic or Avataric manifestations, which appear to come at more or less set periods in history. Since, as already stated, the Avatar was the *first human soul*, as Adam, to have attained Self-Realisation and to be fully conscious of His Divinity, He does not pass through the process of innumerable evolutionary lives, but directly takes the human form for His mission on earth at the appointed time. He is the Manifestation of God and has been playing that role all through Eternity, for He is, was, and ever shall be. In this manner God awakens con-

temporary humanity to a realisation of its own true spiritual nature, gives liberation to those who are ready and quickens the life of the Spirit in His time. It is for this reason that the new spiritual push to Creation will adjust world problems, till the spiritual energy involved is exhausted; then the downward trend begins again, until such time as there is need for another upward movement, which again takes place in another Avataric cycle. It is presumed that the next Avataric period should be about seven hundred years hence. According to Masters like Jalaluddin Rumi, the "Chargeman" of Shams-e-Tabriz, the real significance of the Koranic assertion is that no distinction is ever made between the God-sent or the Rasuls; for instance, Mohammed taught that there were no distinctions at all between God's Messengers, such as the First Adam, Noah, Moses and Jesus. They had but one Command.* Jesus, like Krishna and others, must have referred to the same unity of being in Avataric manifestations, but no doubt the Early Fathers suppressed all such esoteric references, as Christianity had become a Western religion, with its headquarters in Rome, which, as we know, early in the Christian era resented all further influence from the East.

The Avatar has the same spiritually Perfect State of consciousness as the Sadguru. Like the Sadguru, he experiences throughout the "Aham brahmasmi" "I AM god" state of the Avatar and the Sadguru. The Avatar experiences the whole universe emanating from Him, and He is EVERYTHING!

* The Koran which has survived thirteen centuries with no alterations to a single word defines Islam thus (III, 83): "Say ye; We believe in God, and that which hath been sent down (revealed) to us and that which hath been sent down to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes; and that which hath been given to Moses and to Jesus and that which was given to the Prophets from their Lord. No difference do we make between them—and to God we are resigned (Muslims)."

The Koran (XII, 41): "All the prophets from Adam to Mohammed received but one and the same Revelation and therefore preached Islam and Islam only."

The word "Islam" means literally resignation or peace.

The watchwords of the Avataric state of Self-Realisation are "I AM god," and "I AM EVERYTHING!" The watchwords of a Sadguru are "I AM god" and "GOD IS EVERYTHING!" Here lies the fundamental difference in the gnosis of each. It should always be borne in mind that the Avatar (the God-descended) must be given God-Realisation by a Sadguru (a God-ascended), i.e. *God-become-man must have as his Master one who is man-become-God.*

To avoid misunderstanding we repeat that there never has been but the one Avatar, the Ancient One who continually comes back. So that in a sense He cannot be given God-Realisation since He already has it. But He comes back to the world veiled for a certain period of time, pre-arranged before the next Avataric drama. So some Sadguru man-become-God has to unveil Him so that He may recognise Himself and His mission.

As the difference between a Sadguru and an Avatar is so important, we have paraphrased from the *Discourses of Meher Baba* on this subject. A Sadguru knows himself both as the unchangeable divine essence and as the infinite varied manifestation. He knows himself as God in everything, and is therefore able to help all men spiritually and to make other souls realise God, either as Muktas, Majzoobs or Sadgurus. The Masters are absolutely impersonal and universal, but they can, for their spiritual purposes, limit the scope of their work, and also allow their personality to become the centre of the aspirations of their disciples. They use personal relationships as well-defined channels to pass on their help to those aspirants who become connected with them. The help of the Master consists in shortening the time which the aspirant might otherwise take to arrive at the ultimate goal. They take active interest in all souls in bondage. The Sadguru, as also the Avatar, finds himself in the centre of the entire universe, and everyone, high or low, good or bad, at the *same*

distance from him. It can be appreciated that whilst the spiritual help rendered by a Sadguru or Godman is restricted in scope and is of an individual nature, extended mostly to those who are directly connected with him, such help as is given by the Avatar, being both of an individual and collective nature, envelops the *whole* universe and is extended even to those who are not personally connected with him; in short, we once more repeat, a Sadguru is *man becoming God*, whereas, in the Avatar, *God descends on earth as man*; that is why Jesus was called the Son of Man as well as the Son of God, for all Avatars are Sons of God in a particular sense.

It should always be remembered that there is no difference in the consciousness of an Avatar and a Sadguru, nor in the Perfection of an Avatar and a Sadguru. *Both are One with God*. Both experience Infinite Power, Knowledge and Bliss, and both use these three aspects of Sat-chit-Anand for the Universe. The difference is in the actual scope of their working. The Sadguru works for a selected few in a chosen way and for the Universe in a general way, but the Avatar works for the selected few in a general way and for the Universe in a chosen way; thus, although both work for the Universe and the field of their working is not limited, the scope of ways of their working is *different*.

It should be emphasized that these differences exist only for the uninitiated; they do not exist for the God-realised Persons themselves, who are not only One with each other, but One with all life and existence. So far as the fundamental characteristics of consciousness and the nature of the work in creation go, the Avatar is like all Sadgurus. The Sadgurus, as well as the Avatar, do not lose their God-consciousness even for a moment, although they might be engaged in all sorts of activities in relation to creation, and both work through the Universal Mind, which is theirs during their lives on earth.

The different states of God are extremely confusing and difficult to understand, since this is a subject entirely outside the scope of normal minds. We have attempted to give in the Appendix a more detailed explanation of some of the principal terms relating to God.

Each of the Fifty-five (not Fifty-six) God-Realised Men of every cycle has a circle of twelve members, who belong to the circle because of their spiritual affinities in past incarnations. Each of these twelve members is made Perfect by the Masters concerned, that is to say, they attain to the same state of Perfection as their Masters, only differing in the particular duties they have to perform. As we have already stated, the Fifty-Sixth Sadguru in the Eleventh Age is *the Avatar of the cycle in question*, and he always has a circle of one-hundred-and-twenty members, that is, one-hundred-and-fourteen men and six women. This particular circle is made up of ten concentric circles of twelve disciples each. The innermost of these concentric circles has twelve members, all of them men, and each succeeding circle has a like number, but the members may be women as well as men. Each succeeding circle differs in point of duty and importance, although, as already understood, all the hundred-and-twenty members of the Avataric circle are *All One in Self-Realisation*.

Meher Baba states that the Avatar is the Supreme Head of the Spiritual Hierarchy, and, for that matter, of all the invisible hierarchies as well, functioning behind the scenes. At a moment's notice, these august members and the Avatar can gather together at any point of the globe for conferences, whenever and wherever necessary, unhampered by considerations of time or space. At such august conferences questions of far-reaching importance to the world are settled far in advance of their actual occurrence. The Avatar's work is never only for the immediate present, but for posterity. Before the Avatar's appearance on earth, the world pattern was mapped out in the mental or

creative world, later becoming externalised on the physical plane of existence. This work always being fructified for hundreds of years ahead.

Scholars, particularly of the West, in the absence of any knowledge of the Masters and their Circles, are apt to discount Sufi and Vedanta traditions. For example, knowing nothing of the essential ONENESS of existence, or of EXPERIENCED REALITY, they may attribute such statements as are made in this chapter to confusing the various theories of different ages, instead of recognising the universality and similarity of these ideas. That is why, in their researches in comparative religion, they can sometimes be completely at variance with the subject they are writing. There are to-day Eastern and Western scholars who, in their ignorance of the essential truths behind all humanity, will even assert that Sufi thought in Islam is nothing but "an after thought," inherited through superstition and myth. It is, of course, very difficult to unravel the tangled skein of myth and folk lore, but we will give an example to justify the Sufi tradition as being as old as Mohammed himself.

We will take the story of the Sufi, Uways of Qaran, which confirms the original tradition of Tassawuf or Sufism. At the time of Mohammed's death he was living a life of Divine ecstasy in the desert. Two of the Prophet's chief circle members, Omar and Ali, following Mohammed's instructions that after his death they were to visit Uways, sought out the great man in the solitudes around Mecca, and with deep reverence carried out their Master's last wishes by conveying his greetings and a request to Uways to bless the people.

During the last thirteen hundred years most Muslim Masters have exercised great reticence regarding their work and their intimate circles, and it is not to be wondered that so little is known about the Sufi tradition, even in Eastern circles, and nothing at all in Western circles. Mohammed once said, since his

other name was Ahmed: "I am Ahmed without 'm' and I am Arab without 'a'!" The word 'Ahmed' without 'm' and 'Arab' without 'a' turn into the Arabic words 'Ahed' and 'Rab'; both these words mean God.

Let us now look at the patterns prevailing in myth and mythology, to see whether there are any similarities with the traditional ideas outlined in this chapter. It is to be noted that the number twelve often appears in research on the above subjects, and it is interesting to observe that the mythological gods (deified men) appear quite frequently to have had circles of twelve, such as the Scandinavian Odin and his twelve chieftains; the Danish hero, Hrold, was always accompanied by his twelve berserks; Romulus (reputed to be man and God-incarnate at the same time) had his twelve lictors; then again, in the legend of King Arthur there were twelve knights at his Round Table. There seems to have lingered a belief in the Middle Ages that this Master would return again. The figure twelve, with the thirteenth as the leader or spiritual head, constantly comes up in folklore, as in the ancient covans, which always consisted of thirteen.

In these conclusions, those who search for comparisons in universal ideas and universal events will always find the ideas of the West and the East to be similar. For example, it is an interesting fact that the life of Jesus follows the pattern of the culture heroes in ancient myths. The pattern is that the hero's mother is a virgin, his father often of royal descent; then there are attempts to kill the child, who mysteriously disappears, to re-appear later as king or teacher, popular for a time, then losing favour with subjects or followers and meeting with a mysterious death, often on the top of a hill. Here we have an illustration in the death of Krishna. Leaving his Capital Dwarka, on the western coast of India, Krishna came to the sea, and was sitting cross-legged under a Peepal tree. A huntsman, mistaking the

underpart of the Lord's "red lotus feet" for the mouth of a deer. shot an arrow at it. As he came near he realised his mistake and broken-heartedly prostrated himself before the Lord in his grief and adoration. Krishna told him not to distress himself and granted him the boon of his next life to be in Heaven. Just then the charioteer who was already in search of his Master arrived. Instantly Krishna's chariot, banner and shield disappeared! Later his body vanished also on ascending into the Supreme Heaven.*

As the description of Elijah's ascent into Heaven resembles this legend we quote 2 Kings, Chapt. 2, v.1: "And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven."

Although these heroes do not always appear to have died in the ordinary sense, the body not being buried, nevertheless they left behind them various holy sepulchres or places. Lord Raglan points out these facts in his book, *The Hero*. When referring to ritual drama he finds a common basis in these different legends on the grounds that since the majority of culture heroes follow the *same pattern*, it is because of this similar pattern one should deny the authenticity or historic truth of such myths! We feel on the contrary that on these grounds he should be all the more ready to accept and confirm them. Perhaps if he had been acquainted with the secret traditional Eastern view of the God-Realised Men, he might have reconsidered some of his ideas, becoming aware that the universality of this pattern rather suggests that there is a basic truth behind it. Professor C. G. Jung, however, whose authority is unquestionable, emphasizes that in myths and religious symbols of different epochs and amongst different peoples it is to be remarked that the *same type of hero often appears*; and the idea of an All-Powerful Being is recognised

* Shrimad Bhagawata. IIth Act. 30/31 Chapt.

everywhere. In fact. Dr. Jung's findings suggest a *Supreme Universal Consciousness behind all things*.

We now refer to the Flood heroes of prehistoric antiquity. There was Osiris, a Deluge hero, who is said to have converted the Egyptians from cannibalism, and taught them agriculture and other arts. There was Bochica (or Memtereketeba), said to have come from the East to the Bogata plateau and whose coming averted a great flood. Then again Quetzal-coati, the Deluge survivor of the Toltecs; and also the Babylonian myth about Oannes, after whom there appeared to have been other great beings. An interesting point is that while it seemed quite possible for culture heroes to become gods, it appears to have been comparatively rare *that the gods became culture heroes*. Does not this suggest the Avataric periods of manifestation? For the prehistoric past is thick with legends of Flood heroes from different parts of the world* and, we surmise. Flood heroes may have been Avatars.

With regard to the flood legends and cosmic catastrophes of the past, the Calendar of the great Sun Temple of Kalasasaya intimates that man lived with a *previous satellite* in the sky. Also, according to an article by E. H. Nutter on a revised Hoerbiger Theory (*Atlantis*, July 1953), the Strandlines of the Bolivian Altiplano form the strongest evidence in favour of Moon Capture, and show man to have existed during the Tertiary Epoch in a highly civilised state. (Pace scientists!) For all we know, may not man have lived at the time of the giant reptiles of the Secondary (Mesozoic) Age? Again, in an article Johannes G. Arnoldt (*Atlantis*, Jan. 1953) pointed out the interesting fact that the great Saurians resemble the fantastic dragon monsters depicted in the centuries old temples of ancient Mexico and China. Also in the Book of Job there is a description of Leviathan in which the monster appears to combine the characteristics

* See *Flood Myths and History* by Hugh Soar, in the Journal of Research, *Atlantis*, July 1953.

of a whale, a crocodile and a fire-breathing dragon!

Here, might not we have the puzzle of the origin of such pictures; for if man was a creature of the Quaternary period, and of the retreating ice age, then he could not have been a contemporary of the giant reptiles. Most people believe they belong to a period before man saw the light of day, but, if that is so, where did the idea of giant mammals and reptiles originate? As Arnoldt points out, such ideas of great dragons have been at the back of folklore and mythology since time immemorial. The more widespread the investigations on early legends and mythology, the easier it is to believe in the many similar myths that man has lived from a far earlier age than orthodox opinion would have us believe. For why should not folk myths be evidence of real folk memory?

Arnoldt says that the Great Flood was caused by the disintegration of the Tertiary satellite, and therefore Man must have been present as a fairly developed reasoning being. But there seem to be indications of a memory of still earlier floods; then these race memories should reach back to the Secondary Period; hence these explanations, or at least the possibility of legends regarding the fights of primitive man with these terrible dragons, for why should the Saurians have died out, unless exterminated by man?

Hans Hoerbiger, in his work *Glazialkosmogonie*, gave his "moon capture" theory; and he also had interesting suggestions that man co-existed with the Saurians. Hinzpeter, too, found out the meaning of the monsters in the World Flood myths originating from the Babylonian recordings of Tiamat, the dragon snake.

Then again we have the legends of less remote times. For example, the Greek legends of the Bull of Minos were not believed till Sir Arthur Evans unearthed the Palace of Knossos and revealed that there had been a magnificent civilisation in Crete.

Archaeological discoveries have proved, and will continue to prove, that there is a hard core of fact in previously disbelieved legends. As Egerton Sykes says in his Dictionary:" One of the disadvantages of the English system of classical education is its failure to recognise that Greek and Roman mythology, myths and traditional stories constitute the final stages of a process of historical development that stretches back into the past. This intellectual neglect on the part of scholars is the reason for so little being known regarding the myths and traditions of the Fertile Crescent and the Lands bordering on the Middle Sea. Hence the difficulty for a foundation of comparative mythology."

As the oldest stories which come down to us appear to be the Creation myths, the student is struck by the significant fact that the majority of these stories refer to a re-emergence of humanity after some great catastrophe; the event being so outstanding in the memory of the narrators that it suggests a kind of rebirth on the part of humanity, bringing in a new age. Sykes suggests, in his introduction to the above mentioned book, that the genuineness of these legends is shown by the fact that they date back to periods of time when philosophic or scientific doctrines as to the beginning of things had not yet been evolved; since those which are of later date frequently bear the imprint of the abstract religious philosophies of the Hellenistic Schools of the Middle East and should be considered as theological conceptions rather than as true myths. He also suggests that the hundreds of deluge and fire myths all belong to this earlier period, and can usually be fitted into the following patterns :

- "1. The Tribal Deity is displeased with humanity and threatens to punish them by driving them from the Elysian Fields or earthly paradise.
2. There are signs and portents in the heavens, such as the changing of the course of one or more of the heavenly bodies.

3. The Ancestor (man or woman) is warned of approaching disaster, and advised to flee to some high mountain, to a place of refuge, or to build a ship.
4. He does so and is mocked by the wicked and impious.
5. The time of trial begins. There are cyclones and hurricanes, quantities of rocks and stones falling from above, volcanic eruptions, followed by vast fires, which are only extinguished by the heavy rains and the uprising of the waters of the great deep, which cause a flood on a vast scale.
6. The waters eventually drain away and the ancestor sets about the founding of a new race. In order to do this he is forced to resort to incest or other desperate expedients. Many legends tend to begin at this point—presumably because there were only a few survivors but no leader—with the Deity surveying the watery waste and considering ways and means of beginning again. In the Americas there are several stories of survivors digging themselves out of caves which have fallen in.
7. Some myths give details of the re-establishment of life and even go so far as to provide genealogical trees linking historical rulers with the great ancestors."

In view of modern astronomical ideas that the earth is far older than previously believed, is it not unscientific and illogical to persist in imagining that man is such a new arrival that he is only a million years old? As Sykes says: "Gradually by sheer force of attrition, the official scientific world is being forced to recognise that civilisation is much older than any of the leading experts have been willing to credit. . . . This reluctance is to some extent bound up with the hide-bound materialism of the nineteenth century—

an attitude still to be seen in the marked atheism of a recent series of scientific talks on the B.B.C.—which has tied up the past, the present and the future in a series of neatly wrapped packages, guaranteed to contain all the answers."*

We understand that an Ice Age occurs approximately—at least so it is at present believed—every two to three hundred thousand years; if that is so, then surely many civilisations must have come and gone about which we know nothing? As if palaeontologists could possibly reconstruct "the missing link out of a bit of fossilised jawbone of almost immeasurable antiquity"?§

But quite apart from ice ages, surely the constantly changing pattern of the earth's crust, due to cosmic upheavals, would effectively blot out all traces of man and his past civilisations? For example sedimentary rock covers high mountains like the Andes and the Himalayas, where sea shells and skeletons of marine animals have been found on the summits, showing that these great heights were once under the sea. There are many mountain tops all over the world, where the soil gives evidence of having once been a marine bed.

The mystery of the great blocks of stone high up in the Andes has never been solved; could it be that they might have been there before the mountains rose to their present altitudes? Geologists are unable to give any answers to many questions concerning the earth's surface and its strata. They cannot explain why coal deposits have been found in arctic circles, showing that huge forests must have once existed in these regions. Why did palm trees once grow at Spitzbergen? The only explanation is that giant natural catastrophes have from time to time changed

* Egerton Sykes, Editor of the Journal of Research, *Atlantis*.

§ In the *Times of India*. (Feb., 1953) prehistoric archaeological remains were mentioned as dating back at least 250,000 years, which had just been unearthed in the Narmada Valley near Nagpur, by an Archaeological Society from Poona University.

the map of the world. There is every reason to suppose that the axial stability of our planet has never existed. According to Velikovsky's book *Worlds in Collision*, modern research along these lines must come into conflict with the Darwinian theory of an exceedingly slow evolutionary process governing genetics. Darwin admitted his inability to explain the sudden extermination of the mammoth elephants of Alaska and Siberia. As early as 1799, the frozen bodies of these animals were found in perfect condition, the flesh so well preserved that the sledge dogs could eat it. The sudden extinction of these mammoths must have been caused in a few moments: otherwise why should the flesh have been so well preserved all these millions of years? Also, undigested grass and leaves were found in their stomachs, although such vegetation did not grow in that ice region but over a thousand miles away! These and other facts collected by Velikovsky help to prove the past existence of great catastrophic upheavals. As he says, the conception of ages brought to their end by violent and sudden changes in nature is common all over the world. His work has been an exhaustive study of the history and cosmology of our planet, so far as it can be based on historical texts, classical literature, epics and the sacred books of the Orient and the Occident, also primitive folklore, as well as from geological and paleontological material. According to him, "modern physics describes dramatic changes in the microcosm—the atom—the prototype of the solar system; a theory then, that envisages not dissimilar events in the macrocosm—the solar system—bringing the modern concept of physics to the celestial sphere." In his preface to his work, he has suggested that if man solves the problem of fission and fusion of the atoms, he may take our planet out of the struggle for survival among the members of the celestial sphere. Here we venture to contest this point of view, from the spiritual angle, that no such complete destruction will

occur because man's journey through Creation is not finished and that the Powers that Be *will always stop such an eventuality, by some catastrophe, designed to leave enough people to start another age.*

According to Sufi and Vedantic wisdom, the End of the Hierarchy of Avatars functioning on the earth plane will synchronise with the End of the World. This will be the final dissolution of the material Universe—Maha-pralaya. Then follows another "Night of Brahm."

Chapter V

MEHER BABA

As already stated in the preceding chapter, the Five Sadgurus support the Avatar in avataric periods and prepare the stage in advance for his manifestation. In this age the Five Masters associated with Meher Baba have already finished their work and, as the Indians say, laid down their bodies. The identity of the present Five Masters has not been disclosed.

We will begin by describing Babajan, who was a Moslem Kutub. Her tomb is at Poona, under the neem tree where she insisted upon living the latter part of her life. Very little is known about her beyond the fact that she came of aristocratic lineage and was born in Afghanistan. According to the usual Eastern custom, her parents tried to force her into an unwanted marriage. How she managed to escape purdah and make her way to a Hindu Master is not known. At the age of thirty-seven she was assisted in her higher spiritual development by a Moslem Master. Returning later to her former Hindu Master for the final stage, she became Self-Realised at the age of sixty-five. There is a story that her constant affirmation that she was God and the source of everything, so enraged some orthodox soldiery of a Baluchi regiment that they buried her alive. She used supernormal powers to effect her escape, and these same soldiers were astounded to find her safe and well many years later, holding court at Poona amongst her devotees. The whole regiment became her followers. This remarkable woman went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and is said to have honoured the religious customs of

the Moslems when in a normal conscious state, but, as she was a Salik-Majzoob,* that may not have been very often. There are many amazing stories about her as there are of all Masters, but we are only concerned with her relationship to Meher Baba.

The boy Merwan (Meher Baba) met Babajan one day in 1913, at the age of nineteen, when he was a Poona College boy. Fascinated, he would visit the old lady. Then came the momentous meeting which transformed the boy's consciousness, and for seven years he remained in a somewhat mast-like condition, for Babajan gave him God-Realisation, but did not give him back his normal consciousness. We will now quote in detail from *The Perfect Master*, by C. B. Purdom, which book gives a very detailed account of the earlier part of the life of Meher Baba.

"One night in January 1914, when Merwan, whose name was shortened to Meher, made his usual visit, Babajan was in a mood to talk. He kissed her hands and stood humbly before her. She pointed her little finger at him, and declared that 'This child of mine will after some years create a great sensation in the world and do immense good to humanity.' Meher remained standing before her for a few minutes, and then went home. It was nearly eleven o'clock at night. He at once went to bed. Before ten minutes had passed he began to experience extraordinary thrills. He felt as if he were receiving electric shocks and as if his nerves were mere vibrations. He felt great joy mingled with pain, and presently he became alarmed. But his alarm was short-lived, for he became unconscious."

The first person to discover Meher in this condition was his mother. She found him lying with wide-open, vacant eyes. She called to him, and he

* We understand that Rabia of Bazra had the same spiritual status as Babajan. This state of Self-Realisation on the Seventh Plane of consciousness is very very rare in women. When a soul has reached the end of its journey through Creation and is about to achieve union with the Oversoul, it almost always takes on the male form for its final initiation into Self-Realisation.

sat up. He could not speak. Thinking he was seriously ill, she made him lie down again. For three days he lay in this condition. His eyes were open, but he saw nothing. On the fourth day Meher began to move about and was slightly conscious of his body. So he remained for nearly nine months. He had no knowledge of his own actions, and what he did was in response to no prompting of his mind. He was totally unconscious of the world. If he seated himself, he would not get up until the lapse of several hours. If he walked, he would continue walking for a number of hours. One day he is said to have left his home in the hot sun during the afternoon and to have walked for fifteen miles without stopping, in the course of which he went from his home to the Bund Garden and back three times. Once he went to Kondwa, behind the Parsi tower of silence at Poona, and there lay down for three days. He had no food. He did not sleep. His parents thought his mind to be unhinged. He was given food, but he gave it to the dogs, or, intending to give it away to beggars, put it in his drawers, where it went rotten and stank."

"He was placed under medical treatment, given sleeping-draughts and morphia injections; but nothing had any effect. He was sent to Bombay to see if a change of environment would make any difference ; but he remained the same. He stayed with his brother Jamshedji in Bombay for two months, and used to go to Chaupati in the mornings, sitting there for hours watching the waves, and in the afternoons he would go to the Victoria Gardens, sitting always on one particular bench. Then he returned to Poona, spending most of his time in the garret of his father's house."

In November 1914 he regained a little consciousness and behaved, it was said, '

as an automaton possessing intuition.' His eyes ceased to be vacant and life returned to them. He began to take food regularly, though in small amounts. He mixed little

with the members of his family and seldom went out for walks. A month after this partial return to consciousness his friend Khodadad Shirzad Irani brought to him a poor young man of Persian parentage named Behramji Ferdoonji Irani, who immediately became attached to him, and afterwards was one of his most intimate disciples. Meher offered to teach Behramji Persian, which was the first sign of his having regained consciousness. His parents were delighted and urged him to get regular work with the object of aiding his recovery, and when he refused they got additional pupils for him, but he declined to accept them. But he taught Behramji, who made rapid progress, though Meher himself was said to possess no more than a tenth of his normal consciousness. He taught automatically, not as a conscious teacher."

SECOND SPIRITUAL MASTER

At last there came a further development. During April 1915 Meher had an impulse to lead an itinerant life. At first he wandered only in the suburbs of Poona; but as the impulse grew upon him he decided to go further afield. So one day he informed Behramji that he would shortly go to a distant place, and there lead the life of a monk under the guidance of a Sadguru. He told Behramji that after settling there he would invite him to join him, and that he (Behramji) would do well to accept the invitation. On the same day he left Poona by train; but to everybody's surprise returned the next day. He had intended to go to Raichur, but at Kedgaon, thirty-four miles from Poona, he decided to get out. About seven miles away from Kedgaon station there lives Sadguru Narayan Maharaj, whom Meher had the impulse to meet. Meher therefore called upon him, and after a brief stay returned to his home at Poona."

"Sadguru Narayan Maharaj lives in a large, well-furnished bungalow. He wears costly clothes and adorns his person with jewels. He is a strict vegetarian and eats very little. He plays the role of a

great Bhakta, and offers prayers and performs ceremonies regularly. His pilgrims number thousands, and he has built a large inn to accommodate them. He has also built a beautiful temple in honour of the Hindu God Datta, into which he goes twice a day. Though his mode of living is that of a rich man, he is regarded as 'God-Realized.' He is said to have become an itinerant monk as a child and to have become spiritually perfect at the age of twenty-five."

"After a fortnight in Poona, Meher, accompanied by Behramji, left again and went to Bombay, where he remained for a few days. The only person he saw in Bombay was Tipoo Baba, who stayed at the time near a mosque at Bhendi Bazaar, which is one of the most crowded localities of the city. Tipoo Baba, a disciple of Harzat Abdurrehman, is a saint, but not a perfect one. From Bombay, Meher went to Aurangabad. At that time Benemyan Baba was staying in that city. He was a Majzoob, that is a God-realized man who remains unconscious of the gross world; he was a disciple of Sai Baba of Sherdi."

"After visiting Benemyan Baba, Meher went with Behramji to Nagpur, where both of them paid a visit to Tajuddin Baba, about whom Babajan used to say, 'Taj is Kalifa' (meaning Taj is head of the Caliphs). Tajuddin Baba was a great Mahommedan Hazrat. He was once a soldier in the service of the British Government, when he became God-realized. Then he gave up the military calling and went to Nagpur. As soon as it was known that Tajuddin had become spiritually perfect, persons of all castes and creeds called upon him with a view to getting his blessing. There seemed to be no limit to the number of his visitors. People troubled him by asking him silly questions and by entreating him to fulfil their desires. He was indeed much annoyed with them, and the annoyance became so unbearable that he desired to get away from all visitors. He carried out this resolution in the following manner. One evening he went naked to a tennis court where Europeans were

playing, and began to behave exactly like a madman. As a consequence he was sent to a lunatic asylum, where he lived for seventeen years. Even there hundreds of people called upon him with a view to receiving his blessing. In the last year of his life in the lunatic asylum the titular Chief of Kampti, near Nagpur, paid him a visit. The Chief was well aware of the fact that Tajuddin Baba was a Sadguru and as sane as himself. He persuaded the saint to leave the asylum and stay as his guest at his palace in Nagpur, where he would not be troubled by worldly people. The Hazrat accepted the invitation, and passed the remainder of his life, when already well stricken in age, in the Chief's palace. He is reputed to have performed a number of miracles, one of which was to make a dead man alive. He breathed his last in 1924. At his funeral no less than thirty thousand people were said to have been present."

"From Nagpur Meher returned to Poona. After some weeks he again left in company with the same friend to call upon Hazrat Sai Baba, of Sherdi, of whom something should be said. When and where Sai Baba* was born, who were his parents, how he passed his boyhood days, are not known. His career can be traced from his arrival at Sherdi, which is a village at a distance of ten miles from the Kopargaon railway station, in the district of Ahmednagar in the Deccan. About sixty years ago he first went to this village, and in the beginning led the life of an itinerant monk. He begged not only for food but also for oil, for in the mosque of the village he kept a lamp burning all night. One day those who generally used to give him oil resolved not to give him any. So in the presence of several people he filled the lamp with water, and to their astonishment it began to bum when he lighted it, and it burned all night! This miracle, which I repeat as told me, naturally convinced the

* (It has been said by Meher Baba that Sai Baba had the spiritual direction of the First World War. He is greatly revered throughout India, and was noted for speaking very little.—I.H.C.)

people that he was not an ordinary fakir but a great saint. Thenceforth the whole village were his devotees, and he began to live in the mosque itself. When calm he was as gentle as a lamb, but when roused up he was liable to be exceedingly fierce. As the years rolled by the number of his devotees went on increasing. From his rich visitors he asked for money, and there and then gave it away to the poor standing near. Thousands of his devotees were Hindus, and though he was a Mahommedan, they performed the ceremony of arti* in his honour."

His greatest and most famous disciple was no other than Upasni Maharaj, who is a Hindu. It was in 1918 that he finally entered Samadhi, or, as we say, died. A stone slab in the mosque used to serve him as a pillow. One day in that year it was accidentally broken to pieces. Sai Baba, seeing the pieces, said that the breaking of the slab meant that it was to be the last day of his life; and it proved to be so."

"After beholding the white head of Sai Baba, Meher, with Behramji, turned his footsteps to the residence of Sadguru Upasni Maharaj, who, as will be seen later, was destined to bring him to full consciousness after six long years. It was then the last month of the year 1915."

"Kashinath Govindrao Upasni, now well known as Sadguru Upasni Maharaj, was born on May 15, 1870, at Satana in the district of Nasik. His childhood was happy, but occasionally he was found sunk in a state of depression. When he became seven years old it was decided by his guardians to send him to school. But the boy hated the idea of school: it was to him like going to a prison, and to study was equivalent to being heavily punished. He disliked studies, not because he wished to play, but because

* "Arti" is an act of devotion in which the devotees stand facing the Master; one of them holds a metal tray on which there are flowers, ember sticks, and camphor which is ignited; the tray is waved before the Master, while the devotees chant a hymn.

he was religious-minded. Nothing gave him so much joy as the offering of prayers, participation in the performance of ceremonies, and the hearing of sermons. From his early childhood the very word religion cast a spell upon him. Indications of his future were seen in his boyhood. In courtesy and modesty, in generosity and devoutness, the boy was said to be father to the man. When scarcely twelve years of age he resolved to relinquish the shelter of his parents' home and to lead the itinerant life of a monk. From Dhulia he went on foot to Nasik, where he chanced upon an old friend of his grandfather. The aged man, on hearing the boy's story, requested him to stay with him. The boy accepted the offer, but hated to be a burden to his host. Though he lodged in the old man's house, he did not accept food from him. When hungry he would go out and beg. His father, as soon as he came to know that his son was in Nasik, thought of a plan to call him back. He sent a telegram to say that the boy's mother was on her death-bed and was pining to see him. The telegram made the boy sorrow-stricken, and he returned to Dhulia. But there he found his mother in health and strength! He entered into his parents' feelings and agreed to their request to stay with them, but he remained heavy-hearted."

"After some time his parents married him to a girl named Durgabai. Within a couple of years of her marriage Durgabai died. When he was sixteen he married for the second time, but the marriage failed to produce any effect upon his temperament. It did not remove his melancholy. He was conscious of the fact that his parents had forced him into a course of life which was entirely opposed to his convictions. His parents grieved for him. but they had not the heart to agree to his daily request to allow him to lead the life of total renunciation. However, when the conviction that he would grieve himself to death grew upon them they saw the advisability of complying with his wishes. After

obtaining their blessings Kashinath bade good-bye to them and went to Poona, where he resumed the life of a san-nyasin. He practised great austerities. When he was about twenty years old he shut himself up for one year in a cave on the top of a mountain near Nasik. When he came out of it he was reduced to a skeleton."

"After leaving the cave he stayed three months in a village inhabited by poor people, who fed him and to whom he tried to be useful. Then he returned on foot to Dhulia. Within three years of his reunion; with his family he lost first his father, then his grandfather, and lastly his wife. Six months after the death of his second wife his mother and uncle got him married for the third time; then he went with his wife to Poona, where he lived at the house of his brother, Balkrishna, who was then one of the professors at the Poona Training College. From Poona he repaired by himself to Sangli, which is situated not far from Kolhapur. In Sangli there is a temple, known as Shri Dattaguru Temple, which borders on the River Krishna. In this temple Kashinath stayed, leading the life of a devout monk for two and a half years. His food during this period was mainly the leaves of certain trees; he only occasionally partook of grains and fruits. Soon after this period he set out for Poona, but on the way he was captured by a band of gipsies on a pretext which resembled that under which the wolf in the fable ate up the lamb. The gipsies flatly refused to release him unless he first provided them with a large sum of money. As he had not a pice on his person, they forced him to work for them, but in two days he got back his freedom. He then went to Poona, whence with his wife he went to Satana, where he began to practise as an Atha Veda doctor. He soon shone out as a practitioner and became well known. As he was fired with the zeal to establish a hospital in a well-populated city, he went to Amraoti, which is in the Central Provinces not far from Nagpur. Immediately after settling in it he

founded a nursing-home, which he designated Rama Ashram. Kashinath was an ideal doctor. He gave free treatment to the poor, and was far more bent on restoring health than upon making money. No wonder that within a short time he became popular with the people of Amraoti! But Kashinath was not born for such a life, and it began to bore him, though it was bringing him both fame and riches. Boredom at last caused him so much disgust that he gave up medicine and repaired to Ujjain. He was then about thirty-five years old. With his wife he led a quiet and holy life in Ujjain for a couple of years, passing the greater part of the day in prayer and meditation. From Ujjain the husband and wife went to Amraoti, whence after staying for a few days they repaired to Nagpur, where Narayan Maharaj was then staying on a flying visit."

"Some time after this he went to Rahuri, which is in the district of Ahmednagar, and stayed there for a few days as a guest of Kulkarni Maharaj, who was a yogi. The latter urged him to pay a visit to the Hazrat Sai Baba, but Kashinath declined to do so for the reason that Sai Baba was a Mahommedan.' Why should I go to a Mahommedan,' said he to his host,' and pay him devotion? Even if I am likely to be benefitted at his hands, I must not call upon him.' After taking leave of his host he went to the jungle not far from Rahuri. Not minding the thorns, he made the jungle his abode. He was at this time in the depths of depression and imbued with the belief that he was soon to die. After several days he left the jungle and went to the village of Jejuri. From Jejuri he repaired to Morgaon, and from Morgaon to Supa, where he resided in a temple for some days. The people of Supa were much drawn to him and paid him devotion as a saint, though he told them repeatedly that he was but an ordinary itinerant monk. Some of his devotees one day took him to the Shankar temple, which had a small underground cell. Seeing it, he asked them whether they would like to go down

into it, but all of them refused to do so as it was in darkness. Though they requested him not to descend into it, Kashinath went down, and to the surprise of all who were watching him no sooner did he enter it than it was illuminated by a bright light. Where the light came from neither he nor anybody else could understand. That is how the story goes."

From Supa Kashinath went to Kedgaon to call upon Narayan Maharaj. But he had gone to Bombay. So Kashinath also went to Bombay. There he expressed his desire to talk with Narayan Maharaj privately. The latter replied, 'You should go presently from here, but come back in the evening.' When he called upon the Sadguru in the evening, Narayan, as soon as his eyes fell upon him, said : 'Do not be afraid. Everything will be all right in a few days.' After uttering these words Narayan gave Kashinath something to eat, told him to masticate it thoroughly, and then observed: 'To-day you have been so much painted as till now nobody was ever painted.' It was beyond the comprehension of Kashinath to grasp the significance of these words, and he was so much bewildered that the Sadguru said to him, 'Never mind if you do not understand me! The time will come, and it is approaching fast, when you will understand everything.' He added: 'For the present be contented with believing that you have been thoroughly painted. I cannot explain what I mean.' On the following day Kashinath went to the Sadguru and asked his permission to leave Bombay. The Sadguru replied: 'You may go out of Bombay whenever you like. I will meet you within a few days, and in such a way that I will permanently stay with you.' These words were mysterious, and Kashinath wondered what the Sadguru meant. After leaving Bombay, Kashinath went to Rahta in the Ahmednagar district."

"From Rahta he went to Sherdi to see the Hazrat Sai Baba, his prejudice against him having melted away. After a short time he asked Sai Baba's

permission to go. 'What!' said the Sadguru, 'do you want to go away so soon? No, no, you shall not go so soon. Go and stay for a few days in that yard.' This silenced Kashinath, but he made a wry face, as he did not like to stay there. Sai Baba read his face, and said: 'All right, all right, you may go, but return to me within nine days.' 'If it is possible for me,' said Kashinath, 'to return here within nine days, I certainly will. But I do not give you any promise.' Kashinath then went to the Chitali railway station, which is only thirteen miles from Sherdi. It so came to pass that by a combination of circumstances, in spite of himself, he was forced to return to the Sadguru on the eighth day. When he presented himself Sai Baba asked him, 'How many days have elapsed since you left the village?' 'To-day is the eighth day, sir,' was the reply. 'Now then,' observed Sai Baba, 'did I not tell you that you would return within nine days? Now go and make the yard your abode.' Kashinath carried out this command. In a few days Sai Baba, we are told, made Kashinath, who was then about forty-two years, God-realized, and then brought him down from the divine plane to restore a little normal consciousness."

"Thus Kashinath Govindrao Upasni became perfect, and was called Upasni Maharaj. Afterwards Sai Baba told him to dwell in the Khandoba temple, which was not far from the abode of the Sadguru. In this temple Upasni Maharaj lived for four years. As he was possessed only of a little earthly consciousness, he sometimes acted like a madman. But all who understood his condition respected him as much as they respected his master, Sai Baba. After four years at the Khandoba temple Sai Baba brought him to the consciousness of the earthly world. Thus, when he was forty-seven years old, Upasni Maharaj became a Sadguru, or Perfect Master."

"Soon after becoming a Sadguru, Upasni Maharaj left Sherdi and went to Nagpur, where he stayed for a few weeks. From Nagpur he went to

Kharagpur, a village in the Monghyr district of Bengal. At Kharagpur he stayed for about a year. Scarcely a week elapsed after his arrival when his saintliness revealed itself and drew towards him persons of all castes and creeds. His Hindu devotees, even then, numbered thousands: Mahomedans by hundreds, and Christians by scores. His luminous face enthralled, as it still enthralls, thousands of men, women, and children. Sometimes he stayed with Brahmins, but often with Bhangis. Bhangis are sweepers who clean the streets and remove the refuse of the houses—they are considered to be untouchables by the Brahmins; but even when Upasni Maharaj was in the locality inhabited by Bhangis, Brahmins called upon him and performed ceremonies before him without any reserve or scruple. Sometimes to test the faith of his Brahmin visitors he would say: 'You belong to the highest caste. Are you not ashamed to approach me when I am staying with these untouchables?' And his visitors would reply: 'Why should we be ashamed to come near you? Are you not Paramatman? To whatever place you go it becomes holy. Wherever you go we shall follow.' Clad in beggar's rags he was often found helping workmen in public streets. Sometimes he was with cobblers mending shoes, or with poor women grinding corn, or cleaning vessels, or breaking stones. He swept the streets of the slums and the hovels of the poor."

"From Kharagpur he went to Nagpur, and from Nagpur to the district of Ahmednagar. For the last nineteen years he has stayed in Sakori, which is a village about nine miles from the Chitali railway station. His home is small, though the temple he has built near it is large and splendid. The temple is open not only to the Hindus of low as well as high caste, but also to non-Hindus. He generally wears nothing save a loin-cloth, and his food is as simple as his clothing. The accusation has been made against Upasni Mahara] that he sometimes not only

vituperates, but also severely beats some of his followers. The accusation is not groundless. The charge can also be levelled against other Sadgurus. That a God-Realised person should abuse and beat others may seem odd; but the explanation is that when he beats or abuses anyone he is doing such a one much good.*

"When Upasni Maharaj saw Meher for the first time he flung a stone at him. This was to help to bring Meher down still further into gross consciousness, to awaken him to the things of this world. The stone hit Meher's head, but he was not surprised and understood the reason of what was done. Meher stayed with Upasni for two days, and then returned to Poona. From that day onwards Meher recommenced to visit Babajan, sitting with her every night for about an hour. He also at that time took food twice daily."

RETURN TO NORMALITY

"All this time the members of Meher's family considered that he was weak in the head and did not regard him as being in a high spiritual state. Almost every day he would go to the Parsi tower of silence and sit there for hours, or go to the jungle beyond, where he would sit knocking his forehead against the stones. His head was bruised, but Meher wrapped a handkerchief about his head to hide the bruises so that his family were not aware of what was happening. Meher has since explained that the physical pain caused by knocking his head relieved the spiritual agony in which he was at that time. He no longer felt an impulse to travel, but twice each month he would go to Sakori to visit Upasni Maharaj. He also wrote regularly to the Sadguru, and the latter wrote to Meher. None of these letters has been preserved, but they are said to be unintelligible to other readers."

* When a Master acts in such a fashion he is wiping out some of the devotees' Sanskaras.

"As Meher gradually became normal his mother more and more pressed upon him the desirability of adopting a profession or engaging in some business. He was then twenty-two years of age. Meher tried to do as his mother wished, and on three occasions found employment, but he could remain at no work for long. He was compelled to play the role of a spiritual eccentric."

"In 1916 Meher was appointed manager of the Kan (Kavasji) Khatau theatrical company, and in that capacity went to Lahore. At that time he wrote a letter to his friend Behramji, in which he said: 'I am compelled to do even what I do not like, compelled to eat what I dislike, forced to put on clothes for which I have no liking.' While still holding this appointment he used to visit solitary places and continued to beat his head against stone walls. But after two months the proprietor of the company died and it was disbanded, and Meher returned to Poona. He then took charge of his father's teashop at Ashurkhana in the Poona cantonment, for the old man was sick and had to go to Bombay. Meher was not a successful shopkeeper. He could not keep his mind on the business and was cheated by the customers. On his father's return from Bombay, he (the father) applied for a licence to deal in toddy, and opened a shop in the locality of Kasba Peth in the city. Meher looked after this shop for two hours every day; but the customers took pleasure in cheating him. In spite of this, however, Meher made up his mind to open a toddy shop of his own in partnership with his friend Behramji, who secured the licence for Meher's father's shop in Kasba Peth, and Meher and Behramji became partners. Meher worked in the shop from six in the morning until twelve o'clock, washing the bottles, sweeping the floor, and serving customers. The toddy is the sap of the palm tree, a cheap drink, and not of strong alcoholic content. Meher, however, used to urge his customers, who were largely the poor riff-raff of the city, to drink moderately and often

urged them to abstain altogether. After a year of this work, Meher became merely a sleeping partner, and in the troublous times of the Non-co-operation Movement the toddy shops were picketed as well as liquor shops, and Meher prevailed upon Behramji to dissolve their partnership and to close the shop."

"During this time Meher used to play the game of atya-patya (the game of the Rishis), gilla-danda (Indian cricket, played with a thick stick for the bat and a thin stick instead of a ball), and cricket, and used to entertain his friends in the evening. He hired a small room near the shop, and hung the walls with pictures of saints and prophets, including Babajan and Upasni Maharaj. Ceremonies were performed every evening and twice a week between four and five o'clock in the morning."

"One day in 1920 Meher shut himself up in an attic belong to Behranji in the locality of Kama-tipura. He remained in the attic for thirty-six hours. When he came out he was in a pitiable condition. From head to foot he was smeared with dirt (he had obtained a bucket of refuse which he got from a sweeper of the public roads) and he was thoroughly exhausted.* Behramji took it upon himself to make him clean. The stage in spiritual development in which Meher then was, impelled him to do the most lowly work, hence the toddy shop, and to abject himself continually. We are reminded of the life of St. Francis. Meher had visions and spiritual experiences. On one occasion he realised that the universe was created for him, and he was alone in it. At another time, sitting near a pond at Sakori, he felt that the thoughts of others were entering his mind; he was so much disturbed that he sought relief by immersing his head in the pond."

HE BECOMES A MASTER

"By the beginning of 1921 Meher was three-

* In abnormal psychology it is known that the attraction to dirt can be associated with an intense sense of nearness to God (I.H.C.)

quarters normal; he could do ordinary acts, speak in a normal way, and understand what was said to him. In the month of July he went to Sakori, and lived there for six months with Upasni Maharaj. During that period he did not take a bath, nor did he lie down to rest, but walked continuously or sat upright; he took food, at first, only once in two or three days. During the last month, however, for some reason he ate a great deal, taking four meals a day. He was looked after by the spiritual mother of Upasni Maharaj, who was then about fifty years old: she regarded it as her mission to serve Meher and put herself at his beck and call. Meher and Upasni Maharaj used to spend a number of hours together, at night and every day, when none was allowed to approach them. Usually they sat silent. Sometimes Meher would sing." (I have been told by those who had heard him that his voice was so beautiful that it made people weep. —I.H.C.)

"At the end of December 1921 Meher was restored to full normal consciousness. Upasni Maharaj said to his disciples: 'I have given my charge to Merwan. He is the holder of my key.' Sometime later in the presence of a number of people, the Sadguru said: 'This boy will move the world. Humanity at large will be benefited at his hands.' A few days later Upasni Maharaj sent for Gustadji Hansotia, one of his leading disciples, and said, 'I have made Merwan perfect. He is the latest Sadguru of this age. Now you have to leave me and stick to him.' To Behramji he said, 'Your friend is God-realized; carry out every command and every desire of his.' So Meher became a Sadguru at the age of twenty-seven, and came to be recognised as Meher Baba."

From July 10th, 1925, Meher Baba began to observe silence and started the use of his present alphabet-board by which he points to the letters and digits for communication with others. The Master's silence may not be understood, but it is done for

spiritual reasons, and is a form of sacrifice for humanity. Masters as a rule speak little; it is said that Jesus and Mohammed both spoke little. In Meher Baba's case, his followers believe that it is a prelude to his manifestation as Avatar of this Age, and it continues to this day. When he eventually breaks his silence the New Spiritual Dispensation is expected to come into being. Many ask why Meher Baba keeps silence. We understand that this is done for the special purpose of concentrating the libido; for silence would increase the power or energy which would otherwise be expended in speech, and for spiritual reasons Meher Baba needs a very highly concentrated direction of the forces which he uses for the work he has to do in his mission for humanity. There is no doubt that the force of Meher Baba's silence is tremendous, he does not have to make himself felt with words. It is well known in the East that avoidance of words and explanations is a recognised technique amongst the spiritual teachers and leaders, for true knowledge cannot be revealed in words.

In 1931/2 C. B. Purdom wrote a series of articles concerning Meher Baba, published in *Everyman*, of which he was Editor, and various extracts are quoted hereunder:—

"It is sufficient to be in his (Meher Baba's) presence to know the Truth. He does not need to speak; he has the power of Truth in him."

It is not to be thought that he is an unpractical mystic, out of touch with everyday affairs. His knowledge includes even the concerns of ordinary men and women. He makes no demands on anyone, but those who come to him for help have to be prepared to do what he says, which may be severe. The way to Truth is simple, but it is very hard; for the way to know God is to know oneself, to face oneself in one's own inner consciousness and then, renouncing everything, to let God flood the soul. Meher Baba is master of one knowledge, which is God, but that

knowledge includes everything else. The rules that he gives, so far as he gives any at all, are meditation, selfless service and pure intention. He does not ask the Christian to cease being a Christian, but to be a true follower of Christ, that is, to do what Christ said. He does not ask the sceptical man or woman of to-day to accept any dogma, but in the spirit of humility to obey the God in his heart. What Meher Baba says, the mystics of the Western world have said: he also lives it. What he says, the psychologists of the West have also said in part; but he interprets their theories in practical life."

It may be strange to find a great spiritual teacher from the East speaking in terms that belong to our scientific text-books; but it is stranger still, and this is the overwhelming fact about Meher Baba, that he is one whose word is alive with the spirit."

The greatest visible social power among us is still example. To behold in another the realization of our ideals, or what we wish were our ideals, is what all may become. It is the power of the lived or experienced Truth that we look for, not the mere utterance of the Truth. . . . Therefore the only teacher that we can accept is one who has experienced God, or whatever we like to call the ultimate Reality. He must be one who has consciously bridged the gulf between time and eternity and can show others how to do likewise."

"That, indeed, is how a teacher is recognized. He enables us to discover ourselves, to understand ourselves by his presence, simply by our awareness of him. We get through him a change of heart. He has the power to transmit grace, kindle love, and bestow Illumination. Above all he has abounding life. In him, the idea has not only become thought, as in philosophers, or inspiration as in poets, but flesh and blood. He is a living work of art. In such a teacher, God in the heart becomes conscious. He can, therefore, awaken God in others."

"He (Meher Baba) does not seek to convert men to anything; certainly he does not attempt to change their religion. All religions are revelations of God. What he does say is, that whatever religion one has, should become experience. It should transform life. Until it does that, it is a dead religion."

"He does not bring Eastern ideas for us to act upon, but intends to help us to act upon what we already know. He revivifies unused knowledge. He does more than that, of course, for he shows us the necessity for a change of heart and enables us to gain real knowledge through experience. Above all, he unites the mind and heart, so that we need no longer be divided personalities, but can live as entire men. Those who recognize him are the humble, the single hearted, the despairing and the aspiring. The self-satisfied or the proud will not recognize him. 'Who walks in singleness of heart shall be my companion—I will reveal myself to him by ways the learned understand not'."

"There are imperfect teachers who know a little, we met them often; but the Perfect Teacher is met with rarely. It is the turning point of one's life when such a meeting takes place, and it does not happen to everyone. We can meet Teachers in books; but it is better to meet them in the flesh. The difficulty is that they do not often let themselves be seen."

"What Meher Baba is, people must discover for themselves. His authority must convince without argument. He must be recognised by the heart."

We have little to add to C. B. Purdom's remarks; they stand to-day as when they were written. We must always remember, though the Master has been to the West a number of times, his visits have always been fleeting, and in India for over the last fifteen years he has led a life of almost complete seclusion, or else travelling secretly. As with the majority of real Masters whose work lies in unknown spheres of

activity, his intimate followers are comparatively few and all of them have been brought to him through some spiritual experience. Then again it should always be emphasized that the Master does not teach in the ordinary sense, since he neither writes nor speaks. He is seldom seen and will often cut himself off to the extent of forbidding all interviews and correspondence. For this reason it is difficult for strangers to see him except at rare public gatherings. Private appointments are not usually given because they are not easy to arrange, since arrangements in advance are not usually known, and if known, are liable to be changed at any moment.

People complain that Baba is so uncertain in his movements and continually changing his mind. It is impossible to excuse or to explain the Master's idiosyncrasies; we can only repeat that it should always be borne in mind that a Sadguru or an Avatar is working for *infinite* ends, whereas ordinary persons work for *finite* ends; therefore the scope and manner of a Master's working must necessarily be different. This is obvious if we compare Baba's eccentric behaviour with that of Jesus, Krishna and other Avatars. The most Baba has explained about himself, is to say: "The world is against spirituality and so against me, as I have often told you. Do not be hasty in forming opinions regarding my words or deeds. My words will prove to be true, but I alone know how, when, and where. You will not understand them, because to understand my mystical statements, supernatural intelligence is required."

Everything he does, no matter how trivial, has a meaning, though perhaps not apparent to our eyes. For example, he may spend time joking and attaching no importance to urgent events of immediate interest. It is like him to spend hours discussing something of no importance and dismissing the question of creation in almost the same breath, by saying it is made up of nothing, is the outcome of nothing and is altogether nothing by itself!

The outsider might find it difficult to imagine that this unassuming silent little man was a dynamic force, a centre of unimaginable power; from which stream channels of force, radiating all over the world. If one is with Baba for some time, it is impossible not to become aware that he is unceasingly active, like a kind of gigantic broadcasting station, sending out and receiving silent messages, about which we know nothing. With him, one has a curious sense that history is being made; and that nothing is REAL! To the Westerner the Master's life is so strange and different from anything elsewhere that he has experienced, that there are moments he wants to rub his eyes and ask: "Am I real?"

Jung, when writing in *Man in Search of his Soul*, says: "The man of the immediate present must, by virtue of his state, be solitary, as solitude alone frees him from all embracing pristine unconsciousness that claims the bulk of mankind almost entirely." This describes Baba. One feels that his solitude must be immense; that he has been alone throughout Eternity and that he stands before a void out of which all things grow.

Lack of space prevents us from giving any details of the New Phase which took place in Baba's life at the end of 1948 and which terminated at the beginning of February 1952. Without warning Baba announced to his hapless and bewildered mandali, that he was going to cut himself off entirely, and from them perhaps for ever; in fact many thought that he might never again appear to them in the flesh. This story of the few he chose to embark with him on his strange adventure into the wilderness of India, with no money and often no food, including the most incredible hardships, has been briefly described in two brochures.* Like Krishna, Baba certainly enjoins his men "To forsake the Fruit of Action." And to have detachment in all things.

* *The New Phase of Meher Baba's Life. Meher Baba in the Great Seclusion.*

He has gathered together those who were associated with him in former avataric incarnations and it does not appear that he wishes to enlarge his close following. He lives in secret and works in secret; all he does is unknown even to those who have been close to him for over thirty years. They do not know how he works or what he does, for such secret technique can neither be explained nor divulged.

But one thing we should know and fully understand even though such a state of feeling must be entirely incomprehensible to normal thinking. We want to impress on the reader that the Master is never free from pain, for those who share the Universal Consciousness are never free from the suffering of this world, and as Baba has said, "I suffer every second of my life untold agony."

Since the Master neither speaks nor writes, his communications by means of the letter-board can sometimes give rise to slight differences of interpretation; for this reason oral statements from others unless expressly confirmed by the Master should be accepted at times with reserve.

It stands to reason that so great a spiritual personality as Meher Baba should have enemies, and our Pharisees are quick to exploit all situations and stories that do not redound to the Master's credit. Thus there are reports without foundation circulating, particularly in America, where great Eastern Masters tend to be misrepresented. It is therefore incumbent on us to be circumspect; for example, childish claims to be the Master's channel or direct mouthpiece harm the Cause. Here it is appropriate to give Baba's warning: "I want you all to know that whatever you do, good or bad, the one thing not forgiven by God is to pose as that which you really are not." Also we quote Ramjoo Abdulla: "The faith and belief in a Master and for the Master's teachings has its own value, but more harm than benefit results when that

faith and belief, on the one hand is made use of as free leave and license to find fault with and abuse others, and on the other hand to condone one's own acts of omission and commission, against the very teachings that one believes in, in the spirit of a spoilt child of a Master, without actually living a life befitting the child of that Master."

Millions of people in India consider the Master to be the Avatar of this age. His Christian followers believe him to be the reincarnation of Jesus; to his Moslem devotees he is the promised Madhi; his Parsee disciples believe him to be their Zoroaster come to life again, and his Hindus say that he is the Tenth Divine Manifestation, the Kalanki Avatar who has to destroy the evil in this world!

Baba's own Master Upasni, who brought him down to normal consciousness, gave his expression of love and reverence for his pupil when he said: "An Avatar is born in your person, Merwan."

No matter what people may think or say, the mere fact that a man does not speak and can at the same time command the devotion of millions is phenomenal. Baba's name does not make headlines in the newspapers; there is no professional organisation in the shape of advertisement through press and radio.

On the few occasions that the Master emerges into publicity by giving darshan (grace and blessings) to the people, there are no oratorical outbursts; only a few simple messages given over the microphone, and that is all. Except for occasional shouts of "Ki jai!" (Hail the Avatar) and the singing of "bhajans" (songs of devotion), silence reigns over the masses; an intangible influence. What is this influence that will make the untutored peasants walk great distances under the burning sun from the scattered hamlets, and brings all classes of humanity to see him? It is because they have heard that a Godman is in the vicinity. It is a revelation and an inspiration that

moves people to tears, to see the tens of thousands who gather to pay their homage. To all such gatherings all can come, irrespective of caste or creed, those of high and lowly estate, the untouchables and the beggars; none is turned away. Their demonstrations of devotion and spiritual yearnings is a sight that can never be forgotten and is an overwhelming proof of the extraordinary spiritual influence which Baba wields. Considering he does not speak it is all the more amazing; in fact, as his mandali would say, "His silence speaks !"

And what does Baba do? The important work that Baba does in these individual contacts is that he actually sows the seed of Divine Love which must some day fructify according to the individual response. Divine Love sustains the universe and is that mysterious intangible force which holds the atom together; the greatest force on earth which no scientist can find nor explain. It is this Force in Meher Baba which is the secret of the inexplicable ethereal fluid which affects the character and destiny of those who meet him.

The Master says he performs no miracles, but his life is a living miracle; and all those close to him have stories they can tell which can only be regarded as miraculous: let it be understood, however, that miracles have nothing to do with spirituality and are of no more value to a Master than conjuring tricks. The real miracle is that which brings about a sincere change of heart in any person influenced by him. As the Sufi Master, Al Hugweri, said: "The novice desires to gain miracles, but the adept desires to gain the Giver of miracles."

One of the most mysterious and puzzling features of the Master's work for humanity, is his contact with his spiritual agents, of whom there are many incredible stories. Little is known about them or how they work, beyond the fact that externally they appear to be leading normal lives and the Master alone

knows their secret status. Generally when they appear it is in normal circumstances and nothing unusual is observed; but sometimes there are occasions when difficult circumstances may necessitate the immediate and supernormal visitation of an agent, in order to solve some delicate situation or even to save a life. According to Meher Baba, the Avatar always has his spiritual agents. These agents hold definite and distinct offices. Just as the Christ-state, or the Nabuwat-e-Mohammedi, is the office held by the Saheb-e-Zaman or Sahibee Waqt, so also are there always His agents.

Of these there are three types. The Direct Agents, who are very few. There is, in fact, a direct agent for every continent. These beings receive their instructions directly from the Saheb-e-Zaman himself. We now come to the other Agents, the Indirect Agents, who again are few, and who in their turn receive all their instructions from the Direct Agents. Then there is the last or third class of agent; these are called Borrowed Agents; they are very numerous and take their orders from the Indirect Agents. The principal agents are always stationed on the Fourth Plane, and through the powers they wield on this plane, the Plane of Miracles, they act for the Saheb-e-Zaman. He seldom performs miracles Himself, for should He wish to do so, He would be obliged to station Himself on the Fourth Plane for the time being. On the other hand, the Agents for the Saheb-e-Zaman never use their powers for their own benefit, only for their Master. They are, of course, exempt from the dangers of the Plane to which the ordinary aspirant is exposed unless he is helped to cross them—unconsciously—by his Master.

We now quote direct from The Wayfarers, regarding the few notes Dr. Donkin has given us about Baba's contacts with some of these mysterious personalities.

"Place: ALBUQUERQUE, New Mexico, U.S.A. Date: December, 1934.

"Baba has explained that this is one of the very rare agents; he is the direct agent of America. In 1934, when Baba and a few of his disciples were on their way to California, the train stopped at Albuquerque for a short time. Baba spelt out the word 'Indian' on the palm of his hand, and went with R— away from the station into a small street near by. At a street corner they noticed two American Indians; one was selling bows and arrows, and he walked away as soon as Baba approached. The other, a tall, impressive figure with a red band tied round his head, stayed where he was, and for a few moments Baba and he stood facing one another, each looking intently into the other's eyes. Baba then abruptly walked back to the station."

"Place: BARCELONA, Spain. Date: November, 1933.

He is one of the third type of agent, a borrowed agent. He was a policeman who always seemed to be on duty at any time of day that Baba came into the Plaza (public square). The policeman kept glancing at Baba in an indefinably significant way, and when those with Baba enquired about him, Baba explained that he was one of his agents."

"Place: LUGANO, Switzerland. Date: May, 1932.

"A borrowed agent; Baba and his group were on a steamer on the Lake of Lugano. There was an old man dressed in simple, poor clothes on the opposite side of the deck, whom Baba pointed out as one of his agents. One of the group asked how he should know this. Baba then took Dr. G—'s walking stick and asked those about him if they would believe him should the old man tap his own stick in the same way that Baba tapped Dr. G—'s stick. Baba then tapped Dr. G—'s stick two or three times on the deck in a special way, and the old man, though he was not looking at Baba at the time, tapped his stick in exactly the same way. Baba then tapped again

in a different way, and the old man again copied his taps exactly. This was done finally a third time, and again repeated exactly. Baba later sent someone to him with a piece of bread and butter, which he ate."

"Place: MARSEILLES, France. Date (?): November (?) 1936.

"A borrowed agent. One day, when in Zurich (Switzerland), Baba said suddenly that he must reach Marseilles before midnight the following day, since he had a spiritual appointment there. As soon as the party arrived in Marseilles Baba asked to be taken to the city park, and, when he came to a particular part of it, he began walking to and fro on a gravel path with N— and E— on either side of him. N— and E— both noticed that, on the other side of a small lawn, there was a young man sitting on a park seat. Baba eventually took a loop round the lawn and walked straight past the young man who, as Baba passed, stood up and bowed his head in a reverential way to Baba. Baba then walked off, explaining that the man was one of his agents."

"Place: MOSCOW, Russia. Date: 1933. (No direct contact with Baba). He was an indirect agent who took orders from 'Christiano' of Rome (q.v.).

"One of Baba's English disciples was ordered by Baba to go to Moscow on his way back to China (he had a job in China), and give a certain article to an old man who would be dressed in a long garment, and would have the physical appearance of the old man seen at Santa Margherita (q.v.). Baba explained that he would be very difficult to find.

"This disciple hunted high and low all over Moscow for three or four days, and was about to leave to catch his connecting train for Nankin, when he saw an old man sitting outside a church who answered to Baba's description. He approached him, gave him the article from Baba, and set off at once for the station."

"Place: ROME, Italy. Date: July, 1933.

"He is the direct agent for Europe. Baba and a group of his disciples were in the Aragno al Corso. This man drove very slowly past in a Fiat car, driving the car himself. He was a fattish, middle-aged, blond-headed man, looking apparently a typical inconspicuous bourgeois citizen. Baba explained that he lived in Rome and had a wife who knew nothing of his spiritual status. Baba calls this direct agent for Europe 'Christiano'."

"Place: SANTA MARGHERTA, Italy. Date: July, 1933.

"A borrowed agent; K— (one of Baba's mandali) first saw him. He was an old man with long hair and beard, who was leading a little boy by the hand. As he passed K—, he greeted him in the Hindu fashion with hands palm to palm before his face."

"A little while later when Baba and the Western Group were on the seashore, they noticed this old man with the little boy walking back and forth, the old man glancing frequently in a significant way at Baba."

"Baba later explained that he was one of his agents, and that he was very similar in appearance to another agent whom H. (one of his English disciples) would have to contact later in Moscow. H., however, had missed seeing him, as he was not present on the beach at the time, in spite of having been called by Baba. The result of his not having seen him was that his work in Moscow was made much more difficult."

"Place : SING-SING Prison, Ossining, N.Y., U.S.A. Date: December, 1931.

"A borrowed agent. Baba was staying at Harmon, and, late one afternoon, he suddenly said that he wished to go to the prison close by. He was driven to the prison, and the car was halted near the gates. Baba then covered his head in a shawl, and sat silent for a while. He afterwards explained that

he had an important agent in the prison, who would be freed when he (Baba) broke his silence."

The most impressive story that I have heard about agents, is one which happened in California. It was narrated to me by the persons concerned. N. and E., devotees of the Master, were motoring and had gone for a long drive in the Indian Reserve. They were climbing a lonely mountain side; the car presently was unable to progress further, being stopped by a row of large stones, drawn across the road. Obviously it was dangerous to proceed. A landslide perhaps? E., the driver, looked round and noticed that there was a detour up to the bridge above, the track going across the dried river-bed at their left. As she drove the car across a voice suddenly called out "Halt!" Startled, she looked round to see an old Ford car standing at the very place they had just left. E., feeling as if compelled to do so, reversed the car and went back. There was a man sitting in the Ford. Without waiting for them, he called out "Follow me!" and proceeded to drive down the mountain side with E. meekly following him. As the car wound away in front of them, N., turning round to have a last look at the bridge they had hoped to reach, noticed, on seeing it at a different angle, that there was a large gaping hole in the middle of it. So if their route had been uninterrupted, they would have fallen through the bridge.

Suddenly, without a word of warning, the car in front of them went up in smoke, disappearing before their eyes. Simply vanished! Disconcerted and terrified, they now knew something of a supernatural order had occurred. On arrival home they immediately went to Baba, who was staying in the vicinity and related their adventure. Baba replied on the letter board as was his wont: "You were just about to be killed. I had to send one of my agents to the rescue!"

Meher Baba has said that he will bring together

all religions and cults like beads on one string, and revitalize them for individual and collective needs. Meanwhile he remains as yet an enigma to us all, for until his Manifestation has taken place we have no means of ascertaining if he really is the spiritual symbol of this era as being a Divine Incarnation; that is, the Spiritual Personality of world-wide significance, the Second Advent. There are many to-day who claim to be messiahs and world-teachers; and Baba does not appear concerned at present to prove Who he is; he seems only concerned with his secret work in preparation for the New Era. But time is getting short and we shall soon know.

This book seeks to show that some form of divine intervention alone can save humanity from extinction; for science has become the victim of dangerous and unscrupulous forces, and those who worship scientific ingenuity now realise with dismay that modern mechanical marvels may be weapons designed to destroy civilisation rather than to advance it* As we scan the threatening horizon we envisage only one solution; the spiritual revolution of the conditions of our immediate future. For we see in the last analysis that our survival depends on the spiritual quality of life and not on Power Politics.

In a recent message in India, Baba said: Ordinary persons are caught up in the universe and its allurements, though the entire universe is nothing but the shadow of God or Truth. The Masters are always immersed in the Joy of Union with God, and can never be caught up in the mazes of the illusory creation. Just as ordinarily we do not pay attention to the shadows, so the Masters do not pay attention to the universe, except to divert the attention of humanity from the shadow to the Substance. The purpose of

* We understand it is now technologically possible to start building a "space station" or artificial satellite, which would revolve in an orbit round the earth; though there are many problems to be solved, connected particularly with rocket propulsion, before such an aim can be reached; the first nation to establish a manned space station might be able to dominate the world.

life is to realise our oneness with the Infinite; this can be achieved through love for God."

Divine Love makes us be true to ourselves and to others. It makes us live honestly, comprehending that God Himself is Infinite Honesty. Divine Love is the solution to all our difficulties and problems. It frees us from every kind of binding. It makes us speak truly, think truly and act truly. It makes us feel one with the whole universe. Divine Love purifies our hearts and glorifies our being."

Chapter VI

THE DUALITY OF THE UNIVERSE

The life of St. Francis of Assisi has beautifully exemplified the fact that the universal indwelling spirit is in everything and has its highest expression in Divine Love. His super-conscious contact with the animals or sub-human races, gave him an extraordinary influence, for Perfect Masters have dominion over all things. The story of how the Saint tamed the bad wolf of Gubbio is looked upon as a charming legend. The wolf was terrorising the inhabitants of the little mountain town of Gubbio, carrying off animals and children. So bold and cunning was the beast that the people besought the Saint to come to their rescue. One day, as the Holy Man was on his way to the forest to find the wolf, it suddenly appeared without warning, tearing down the mountain side. St. Francis was followed by some of his monks and timorous townsfolk, who witnessed the following amazing spectacle. The Saint stopped the wolf, spoke to it and reproached it for its nefarious activities! To the astonishment of the onlookers, the wolf immediately grew calm and prostrated itself before St. Francis. According to tradition, the wolf then became one of the Saint's most devoted followers, and finally the pet of the neighbourhood.

But this is not just an unfounded legend, as we might imagine. Some years ago Mr. Harold Goad, Director of the British Institute at Florence, told an interesting story about this very same wolf. One day he was watching some repairs being done to the Church of San Francisco in Gubbio. The workmen,

uncovering a part of the floor before the altar, found the unexpected remains of the wolf, testifying that the animal had died revered by all, since it had been buried in the Church! It is known in India that even tigers will respond to Love.*

We must repeat once more that God is latently conscious in nature, and only becomes fully conscious in man; that is to say, when the highest state of human consciousness is completely freed from the duality of creation or Maya, then the union with the Real Self can be consummated. As we have already said, there are very few who attain to the Ultimate Reality and afterwards remain alive for long, as they are unable to contain the flooding of the Spirit. This final transcendental initiation usually occurs when the ego is about to vacate its earthly dwelling place. But on the other hand, those who do have the Supreme Initiation and nevertheless continue to live, retaining normal consciousness, might be described as having passed through the "Second Death" or the "Mystical Rebirth." St. Francis and other Saints have spoken of the "Second Death." Only a Master of consciousness knows how the transformation of the Ego takes place: such a divine event is entirely beyond our understanding. But Jesus might have alluded to this, when explaining to Nicodemus about being born again: "Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." That is to say, he becomes one with God and shares His Kingdom. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." The spiritual meaning of these words implies realisation

* *Reader's Digest*, October, 1953, gives a condensed article from *The American Mercury*, in which the author, Alan Devoe, tells how a friend of his, who had spent many years in India, described a certain monastery in the Himalayan foothills. It was in the middle of tiger-infested country. The monks are not afraid; they believe that love can cast out fear and invite love in return. They are friendly with the tigers and talk to them. The abbot can be seen going out on the verandah in his yellow robe in the dusk and talking tiger-talk, until out of the jungle comes a big striped cat, and presently the tiger settles down and purrs under the abbot's stroking hand.

of God by human consciousness, which is completed only in life and in human form, and *not after death*.

We sometimes hear a great spiritual teacher say he is One with Life, meaning he has reached a certain stage of development in which he has felt the Unity of Being. We may also hear of a great teacher who says he is God! Such an expression is more common in the East than in the West, where it would be much misunderstood. To say "I am God," or "I have the Christ-consciousness," is not necessarily blasphemous. In those words lie the majesty of pantheistic glory, and the truth of the Eternal Divine Ego, which is within us all. For those who can triumphantly rise above the shackles of the flesh into the boundless space of the Spirit, such truths are *real*. But there should be a warning here, for not until the aspirant has *transcended Maya*, will he have reached Self-Realisation which belongs only to the Seventh Plane of consciousness. So although a man may say he is God, and may claim to have divine revelation, he may as yet still not be near Ultimate Perfection. We have said that in initiations there is always a lifting of the sevenfold veil drawn over the mind, an opening of the inner senses, giving glimpses of the higher realms and empyrean heights of the soul. These revelations are always the same, varying little in detail or degree, though the initiates may have lived in different times and climes. We know it is characteristic of those who have attained to some form of illumination, though by no means reaching the fullness of Self-Realisation, to have a vision or experience lasting only a few seconds, but showing that time and space bear no relation to the higher spheres of spiritual existence.

Let us now consider the "I am God" initiation, in which it is realized that man's highest purpose in life is to be united with his Real Self, the Oversoul. A friend told me about this tremendous event. He is a highly advanced man, probably nearing the end of his journey through Creation. The initiation lasted

the long period of three days and three nights and very nearly killed him, for his physical vehicle had not been "stepped up" to the high rate of spiritual frequency required for such a state of cosmic awareness, or, as the Masters say, "the time was not yet ripe for the final consummation." He told me that it was the most wonderful, but, at the same time, the most terrifying experience of his life. He felt that at any moment his body might be torn asunder, bursting with the cosmic strain imposed upon it; it felt as if it were being pulled in all directions, being stretched out to the uttermost, as if it could not contain the life and rush of the Spirit. In this greatest of all initiations, bordering upon Self-Realisation (which cannot be fully accomplished without the aid of a Perfect Master) my friend knew that he SUSTAINED everything, that he was IN everything, that HE GAVE LIFE to everything, and that he LOVED everything. He felt that the sun, moon, planets and stars were all coming out of him, and that REALITY was neither good nor bad, but EXISTENCE. He saw the whole immense Universe dwindle like a speck on his being! It was as if he could put his finger on it and wipe it out! When a man has this cosmic state of illumination and is transcending Creation, he then knows the Universe to be an illusion or Maya, and it vanishes as the morning mist. He might easily have died. But now, provided he meets a Perfect Master, he should, in all probability, become Self-Realised in the coming fresh Awakening of the Spirit.

Meher Baba explained that after regaining creation consciousness, a Perfect Master "beholds countless numbers of suns, moons, stars and planets issuing out of himself." . . . "The whole Universe is in the self and springs into existence from *a tiny point in the self* which is referred to as 'OM'. But the self has become habituated to gathering experiences through one medium or other, and therefore it comes to experience the universe as a formidable rival, *other than itself*. Those who have realised God and regained

consciousness plus God-consciousness, can constantly see the universe as springing from the 'OM' point, which is in everyone."*

The Eastern philosophical concept of the spiritual aspect of Creation is that the whole Universe, known and unknown, has come out of a point in the microcosm, which may be called the "Creation point." At the same moment, simultaneously along with emanation of creation, two other processes came into play:—Evolution and Production. The difference between the two, as Meher Baba has explained, is significant and should be clearly understood. The process of Production is dependent upon the process of Evolution in sequence of causation, but not in sequence of time. Evolution depends on the "Creation point" for cause, but Production signifies material growth and change, which is organic and inorganic.

Astronomers, as the results of findings with the Palomar 200-inch mirror, now estimate the age of the known universe to be between four and five thousand million years,* and some say that if it has always expanded at the rate it is now expanding, all matter must have originally sprung from "one tiny point." Dr. Shapley says this estimate brings the age of the universe into line with the maximum age which has been calculated from rocks discovered on the surface of the earth. Would that not enable us to assume that the earth is the oldest planet in our universe?

Scientists now think that if we have a curved expanding relativistic universe, its age must be reconciled with that of our earth. In an article in the Daily Telegraph, July 14th, 1953, Sir Harold Spencer Jones, Astronomer Royal, writing of the cosmic nickel found on the ocean bed, and of the particles which fall from the sky to the ground as micro-meteorites,

* *Discourses* of Meher Baba.

* At the 116th Annual Meeting of the British Association, Dr. E. D. Adrian put the time back to six thousand million years ago.

concludes that they "must come from the primordial dust, the surviving relics of the original debris left over when the solar system was formed." Does not that again suggest a beginning and an end? But only provided that the whole universe came into being simultaneously. Here we might refer to another scientific view of Creation. In 1952, the American Geophysical Union at Washington was told by two John Hopkins scientists that creation took only about thirty minutes, some five thousand million years ago. They said that something, which they cannot explain, acted as a trigger, and in that brief period the three basic elementary particles, neutrons, protons and electrons, were fused by intense heat into the existing ninety-two elements. The universe, so they think, started from an extremely heavy "neutron fluid" which suddenly expanded. Using a mechanical "brain" at the Bureau of Standards they calculated what the ratio of the heavier elements would be on their hypothesis, and found the results were about the same as the known ratio.

In the Daily Telegraph, July 10th, 1954, we see that a stir has been caused among U.S. physicists, about an atomic particle, apparently from outer space, which it is estimated moved at a speed and energy of ten thousand billion volts, the photographic record having been made by Dr. Marcel Schein, of the University of Chicago, who reported his discovery to the American Physical Society. In referring to this atomic particle. Dr. Robert Oppenheimer said: "It is trying to tell us something if we could only read and understand it. Just what the particle is and what force it possesses nobody knows. When we understand what it is, we will understand a lot more about the nature of physics." For scientists the implication of this new discovery is that somewhere in the universe there exists a *means of annihilating or converting into energy* all the various kinds of matter known on earth.

In *Explorations in Science*, by Waldeman

Kaempffert, the Science Editor of the New York Times, the doubt and uncertainty prevailing in Physics to-day is shown; for scientists appear to be divided as to whether our universe is closed, relativistic and expanding. That is to say, have we "a closed universe from which matter wraps space round itself in the Einsteinian way, a universe which is blowing up like a soap bubble?" Dr. Hubble's epoch-making discovery with the 100-inch Mount Wilson telescope established "that the farthest nebulae then amenable to spectroscopic analysis were rushing away at the sensational speed of 24,000 miles a second. This is just what ought to happen if the nebulae were spots on a cosmic soap-bubble blown up by titanic invisible lungs." . . . "There is hope that, with the aid of the 200-inch mirror (of Palomar), the message which the spectra of the outer nebulae are sending will be read," . . . "and, as Dr. Hubble says, a choice is presented, as once before in the days of Copernicus, between a strangely small finite universe and a sensibly infinite universe, plus a new principle of nature."

Again we quote from the same book the following significant paragraph: "The Bohr-Dirac-Heisenberg school of scientists studied equations that were supposed to reveal the secrets of the atom and hence of Reality, only to find that reality had vanished and that trees, houses and stars were not what they seemed to be but only indications or 'pointer findings' of a deeper something that was real, something that science could never reach." And Kaempffert goes on to ask: *"Is it just a coincidence that the same uncertainty prevails in art, in economics, and in international relations?"* Of course it must not be forgotten, however, that the procedures of such mathematical physicists are expedients and not intended to be final solutions of this age-old problem; also that Cause and Effect play no part in atomic physics. The scientist is not concerned with the purpose of Creation; he asks not "Why?" but

"How?" and when religion and philosophy attempt to explain questions he has no way of answering: he replies that he cannot understand mystical conceptions which he asserts are based on faith and belief and not on reason. Here we beg to differ to the extent of asking what is Faith and Belief? True faith and true belief are born of *illumination* which in itself is something *outside* and *beyond* the scope of the ordinary limited human mind.

Scientists naturally have difficulty in accepting philosophical premises relating to our transitory world and the cosmos, as metaphysical concepts cannot be reached by methods acceptable to the experimental rules of science. This unfortunately seems to be a difficulty which can never be overcome because of the *inherently dual nature of the universe*; also the existence of Maya is *never sufficiently considered by science which seems as yet unaware of the essentially illusory nature of the material creation*.

It is therefore useless to pay serious attention to modern theories relating to the cosmology and astronomy of our times; for as we know scientific concepts about the Universe are always in a state of flux. None of them bears any relation to the ancient and eternal conception of the cosmos emerging into manifestation, going through a vast cycle of evolution and then returning to non-manifestation. "The Days and Nights of Brahm." (We understand that the word Brahm denotes God in the impersonal sense, and Brahma stands for the Creator or Personal God.) Meher Baba has said that one who understands Maya understands half the Universe. The Universe is essentially *dual in its relationship* to man and the operative laws in question are karma* and maya. The great difficulty in grasping such a concept in its totality is that it would necessitate a *full explanation of the cosmic scheme*. This no ordinary man, however

* Karma might be described as the sum of a person's actions in one of his previous states of existence, viewed as deciding his destiny in the next life. (See Chap. VIII.)

great his intelligence and intellect, can master, because he remains *always unable to formulate his ideas*, since he has not transcended the *limitations* of the human mind, ergo, always held in the grip of Maya. Then again, all cosmic conjectures being outside the scope of the human intellect, it is not possible even for a Master to explain, except by means of his Grace and Enlightenment, which are *beyond* the limits of the human mind or "false ego" and so inexplicable in words.

Once, when asked whether material science, in the near or remote future, would be able to probe into the subtle and higher planes of existence, since at the present rate of scientific progress it ought to be possible, if there be continuity or point of fusion from matter to the finer aspects of matter, Meher Baba gave the following answer: "The soul, essentially divine, infinite in existence, knowledge and bliss, is, all by itself, the only *Reality*. Everything else exists only in imagination. The famous and oft repeated parable of the snake and the rope will elucidate the point. The soul, somehow, imagined the rope to be the snake. This phase engendered fear, which, to stretch the simile further, we may call mind; the mind extended itself to grasp it (the snake); this is energy, the actually grasping it means body. Thus we see mind, energy, body, although all three have no *existence* except in *imagination*, but in relation to each other they are altogether distinct, separate and independent. Although mind emanates energy, and energy, in essence, is mind, nevertheless in expression and form both are distinct and apart. Similarly, body is the outcome of energy, and though identical in essence, the function and formation is radically different and independent. To illustrate the point further, let us take thread to be *mind*, and cloth made thereof to represent *energy*, and clothing to signify *body*. The cloth here is of thread, but, in utility and form, is altogether different from thread; the clothing, say a coat, is from thread, but in form and expression

is obviously and distinctly apart from cloth and thread. The making of cloth and coat is easy and possible, but the return of the coat and cloth to the state of the *original thread means the destruction and annihilation of the form and expression of both*. Similarly, the emanation of energy and matter from mind is automatic and natural, but the return of matter and energy to mind is almost impossible. *This return factor is the beginning of spirituality*. You must have felt by now your question answered by realising how impossible it is for science to probe into the subtle and higher planes. Science is, as yet, a very long way off, it has, up to now, only touched the *fringe of matter*. It may, at the most, touch the extreme limits of matter, but that will take ages, and who can, till then, vouchsafe for the integrity of this, the present civilisation?"

Let us continue to quote some other words of Meher Baba, as they give the real explanation of this problem: "The Divine, which constitutes infinite power, wisdom, love and bliss, is independent eternally. The whole mental, subtle, and gross existence, which in itself is illusion, was latent in this Infinite (like shadow being latent in substance). This latent illusion manifested itself as the mental, subtle and gross planes. The mental phenomena depend on the independent eternal law of God; the subtle depends on the mental, and the gross depends upon the subtle. Thus matter is controlled by energy, and energy is controlled by the mind. God, who is beyond intellect and mind, upholds the whole illusory phenomena by His all-in-all infinite self-sustaining knowledge. The law of Karma governs evolution, reincarnation, and spiritual advancement. Likewise the Divine Law of Reality governs the whole phenomena of gross, subtle and mental illusion. Thus nothing is haphazard, and the whole Cosmic existence of substance and shadow, of intelligence and imagination, of God and the Universe, is governed and controlled by the everlasting, unchanging divine law of Unity."

What we want to make clear is that the process of evolution, reincarnation and spiritual advancement is so linked with Soul-Realisation, that in the end it is found that cause, effect, time, space, birth and death, suffering and happiness are all mere imagination!

Dr. Einstein wrote an article, "My Faith," in a Bombay paper, *Blitz* (30th September, 1950), in which he gave his views on the nature of Cosmic Religion. In this article Dr. Einstein traced the history of religion through three distinct stages, viz.: 1. Religion of fear, 2. Social or moral religion, and, finally, 3. Cosmic Religion. When the great scientist expounded his views on Cosmic Religion, he was treading on unsafe and unexplored ground, as Dr. A. G. Munsiff revealed in replying to Dr. Einstein in the columns of *Blitz* :—

"3. Cosmic religion. Concerning the sources of the first two stages of the growth of religion, I think none can disagree. They are just the picture of the development of the mind of man adjusting itself to environments and circumstances. It is only in dealing with the third stage of what he calls 'Cosmic Religion' that Einstein flounders and is evidently found to be less informed and authoritative. Einstein has unwittingly huddled together all the three types—the philosopher, the scientist and the saint, into one category, as believers in Cosmic Religion, without clarifying their distinctive outlook towards creation and the Creator. In so far as these three types have risen above dogma and the anthropomorphic idea of God, they may be said to belong to Cosmic Religion, but there is a world of difference in their endeavour to arrive at Reality." Dr. Munsiff continues, "In the language of science pertaining to Cosmic Religion: A scientist's research is analytical; a philosopher's research is synthetical, and a saint's research is harmonical."

"In philosophic parlance: a scientist's approach to God is empirical; a philosopher's approach to God

is conceptual, and a saint's approach to God is perceptual."

"In spiritual (saintly) terminology, a scientist's investigation of Truth is materialistic; a philosopher's investigation is rational, and a saint's investigation is spiritual."

"The best efforts on the part of a philosopher in understanding Truth end in agnosticism; but science, in its unbridled pride, claims that God, if there be one, must answer the laboratory tests. No wonder the established religions are antagonistic to science. Who can gainsay the poignant fact that, till now, science has done more harm to the peace and progress of the world than the good it promises? Science, even if it avoids landing itself in atheism, can never successfully practise Einstein's Cosmic Religion. The endeavour of science to arrive at Truth by probing into the heart of matter is misconceived, and therefore bound to end in disaster. The monster of a Frankenstein—the atomic or hydrogen bomb—the creation of science, is already threatening the world with colossal ruin and destruction."

"It is, therefore, wrong for Einstein to say that Cosmic Religious experience is the strongest and the noblest driving force behind scientific research. A highly developed and analytical intellect, as that possessed by a scientist, should not be mixed up with ideas on Cosmic Religion."

"Truly speaking, the saints have no religion worth the name. And if, along with Einstein, we were to take this class as belonging to Cosmic Religion, then it must be admitted that they have altogether a different technique of practising it. To a saint, the study of man—the *microcosm*—is, in itself, a complete answer to the *macrocosm*, which embraces and includes all the planes of consciousness and existence, including God."

"Citing a contemporary that the only deeply

religious people of our largely materialistic age are the earnest men of research, Einstein has evidently misapplied the quotation. He ought to know that the truly religious people, or the earnest men of research, are the saints, who try to probe into the domain of the Spirit, and not the scientists, who probe into the realm of Matter."

As an Indian friend wrote to me recently: "If Einstein, the scientist, begins to believe in a conceptual understanding of Maya, he will cease to be the scientist. If a perceptual understanding is forced upon him, he might turn into a mast (god-mad person) and the world would lose an intellectual giant! If Einstein, the man, opens his eyes, he is likely to turn into a great Saint. One day he is bound to open his eyes, if not in this life, then in another. The more we understand about Truth, so far as the intellect goes, the more we should realize the depth of our ignorance. Unfortunately, in proportion to the brilliance of our conceptual grasp of 'a to z' about Truth, the primary fact that there is *nothing* like 'a to z' about Truth, save that it is Truth, is dimmed more and more. Therefore, unless we can begin to appreciate that the more we know, the more we know not, we are apt to lapse into deeper ignorance."

The final involution of all matter is called Mahapralaya. After that, there remains Nothing! That is, nothing until such times as God has another Thought, for cannot the Universe be described as His Thought? Or, rather, until such time as He again becomes conscious of Himself as Creator. And what do we mean by "nothing"? We read in Dr. Donkin's book, *The Wayfarers*, that "zero is equal to nothing, and yet the very fact of its non-value makes it the important factor in arriving at valuations. Thus if the figure 1 (one) is taken to represent the unity and reality of God, and the cipher zero (0) the unreality of the material universe, we may add as many zeros (material universes) as we choose to the single figure

1 (God), and so make combinations that have significance, such as ten, a hundred, a lakh, a crore, and so forth. In other words, the cipher zero (or the material universe) in itself, or combined with others like itself, is nothing, means nothing, but when it has the figure 1 (God) in front of it, the various combinations have distinct values."

The deeper universal metaphysics of Eastern wisdom are applicable in their intrinsic purity to all the other religious doctrines; that is why India is called the Mother of Wisdom, since all the religious teachings were conceived in her womb. Most scholars tie themselves up endlessly into knots on the subject of "nothing," and on the "Principle of Contradiction." If the reader is interested in the higher metaphysics of the Hindu tradition, Dr. Mascarenthas' little book, *The Quintessence of Hinduism*, although learned, is most concise and clear in its appreciation of the finer points of the doctrine of the Infinite. He says that it is necessary to understand the fourfold division of "nothing" in order to avoid the superficial misinterpretations current among the generality of Orientalists and Indologists. In expounding the doctrine of Abhava and Anantatva, he explains that the nearest equivalent to Abhava in European speech would be the English "nothing" (no-thing). He continues that we find not one but *four* species of "nothing" recognised: "absolute nothing" (atyantabhava); "previous nothing" (pragabhava); "subsequent nothing" (pradhvamsab-hava); and "exclusive nothing" (anyonyabhava) (Cf. Tarkasangraha 11.7).

In the West, philosophy so often degenerates into an "empty play of words," because Westerners are not conversant with the deeper realities of Eastern thought. In the same way the scientist to-day uses the term Infinite in the wrong sense. Hence we again quote at length from Dr. Mascarenthas' work: "The real Infinite, which excludes only 'absolute nothing,' is illimited absolutely and is outside the

range of the measurable in any sense, being transcendently beyond all categories and full with fullness incomprehensible and ineffable. . . .In Hindu doctrine, Creation is said to be not out of '*absolute nothing*,' but out of '*previous nothing*.' Creation is understood among the Hindus as polar, not to the contradiction explicit in '*absolute nothing*,' but to the rich possibility implicit in '*previous nothing*,' that is, not to atyantabhava, but to pragabhava, not to nihilum absolutum, but to nihilum antecedens. The Tarka-sangraha is clear on the point: 'Creation is polar to previous nothing.' . . ." Summing up, we must say that the doctrine of Creation, as popularly expounded, is inadmissible, because in that exposition the term '*nothing*' is loosely employed to cover also '*absolute nothing*.' In such an exposition we encounter a confusion of thought and expression that is very much to be deplored."

"If, on the contrary, we restrict '*nothing*,' in the special sense of pragabhava, to '*previous nothing*' or pure possibility, then Creation becomes not only a reality amenable to theological treatment, but a reality in metaphysics, appropriate and necessary as the only course of self-manifestation (sva-praka-satvam) open, 'in the beginning' (agre) to the Infinite."

"Without the Infinite," Dr. Mascarenhas continues, "there can be no existing matter, not even existing from all eternity, for the Infinite excludes only '*absolute nothing*,' and therefore all existing matter depends in principle on the Infinite and has to be created out of '*previous nothing*.' The Infinite alone is sufficient unto itself by metaphysical necessity; and since it excludes only '*absolute nothing*,' it is the primary and ultimate principle of all reality, manifest and non-manifest, actual and possible, whether *existing-in-fact*, or merely *capable of existing*, i.e. purely principal . . ."

"The Infinite alone is recognised by Supreme

Identity of Cognition to be the Absolute Reality, necessary and transcendent, in regard to which the entire universe of manifestation, if considered independently, is rigorously null. Taken independently, the universe of manifestation, because of its intrinsic limitation and this very entitative *dependence*, can never stand comparison metaphysically with the Infinitude of the Supreme Principle, which holds all actual and possible manifestations *principally*. All creation entirely serves its purpose in the quality of 'support' (pratika) for contemplation (dhyana), mystical consideration (dharana) and mystical rapture of ecstasy (samadhi), by which one should rise to transcendent knowledge of the Supreme Reality of all realities, which itself transcends all limitations and conditions, and is principally and ultimately itself the ineffable fullness of the Truth of all truths. It is uncompromisingly certain that the transcendent Infinity of the Supreme Principle is the ultimate Absolute Reality to which everything else serves merely as a pointer. In a word, Advaita Vedanta is concerned with *transcendence absolute*."

"Understood in this manner, there is and can be no question in Hindu doctrine of confusing the manifest universe with the non-manifest Supreme Principle. There is no question of confusing even the particular with the universal, or of mistaking the limited universal for the Supreme Universal. How can there be any possibility in orthodox Hindu doctrine of materially identifying the world and God, as is done by modern theosophists, who pose as interpreters of Oriental wisdom in the West?". . . . "What kind of *ultimate unity* is this, uniting the many particulars to the one Infinite? Have we here again the old philosophical dilemma of the one and the many? The unity which the discriminating Hindu mind recognises as necessary and internal is the *unity of principle*. 'I will proclaim that which should be known, for, when it is known, immortality

is enjoyed. The beginningless supreme Brahm is neither sat nor asat' ". . . .

Here we have a correct approach to the Infinite. No Aristotelean need be troubled by the translation of sat as 'being,' and of asat as 'absolute nothing,' because the principle of the Excluded Middle is not violated by the special sense in which we have defined these terms. Moreover, Aristotelean metaphysics do not contemplate the Infinite (anantam) in the sense of that which excludes only absolute nothing, but in the sense of the merely indefinite (aparimitam). Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas: *Summa Theologies* I, q. VII, art. Iad2."

Here we must end our excerpts from *The Quintessence of Hinduism*. It is remarkable how clearly the Ultimate Reality concept has been explored by a Catholic Father, and goes a long way to proving the essential unity in the metaphysical basis of all the Faiths.

To return to the age of man and of this earth. Such vast cycles of time are incomprehensible to us. When we look at history, we see civilisations coming up and going down; all is construction, preservation and destruction—Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. Nothing lasts! The recorded history of man is so brief. As Alfred de Musset puts it:

La vie est brève.
Un peu d'amour,
Un peu de rêve
Et puis bonjour.
La vie est vaine.
Un peu d'espoir,
Un peu de haine
Et puis bonsoir.

Since all external values and life itself are so fleeting; we can only surmise that our cultural heritage memory is recorded in our past lives; and that through the process of reincarnation, we benefit

by acquiring instinctively past heritages of cultural experiences, for our progress comes as always, through the process of gradual Self-Realisation.

Modern science is fast reaching a decisive stage in its growth, which entitles us to know some of the real spiritual truths concerning the nature of man and creation. Therefore Meher Baba has written a book (to be published when he deems opportune*), in which he has explained many secrets which, so far, have remained hidden, although such secrets are within the grasp of the intellect, and yet have completely baffled scientists. In this book he has given the whole explanation of the evolution of the First Man, who has been manifesting time and again, for he has been many millions of times evolved, not only on our earth, but on many millions of earths!—The God-man, ageless, timeless, without beginning or end—God Himself.

In the same book the Master has also explained cycles; the position of the earth for Realisation; the earth dying; and the simultaneous evolution of another earth (not another planet, but ours); and many details from the spiritual, metaphysical and scientific standpoints.

This should be the greatest book of the age, since it is written by One who, in all fullness and completeness, knows, as well as feels Himself to be the One and the many, at one and the same time, from beginningless beginning to the endless end! The One about whom the Master Moulana Niaz Akmed can sing : "Yar mara zama'n, namo nisha'ne deegarast,

Kul-le yavmin suratash, der shaklo deegarast."

"Every time my Beloved bears a different name, and manifests in a different garb, yet ever the same Face assumes a different form of beauty and grandeur."

Here we might mention that amongst the Moslem Perfect Masters, the famous Bayazid of Bistam had

* We understand after his death.

repeatedly asserted himself to be God-incarnate by using the expression "I am God!" But at the same time he did not encroach on the Avataric status, since he always declared that he bowed down or worshipped the Rasool or Avatar (in the same manner as John the Baptist glorified Jesus).

One might read many philosophical accounts, and yet remain ignorant, as illumination is necessary to enable the aspirant to realise that Creation is like an immense motion panorama, and that he is in it and not in it; inside, and yet outside it all! As Paramhansa Yogananda explains: ^{*}" . . . a Godman alone knows the Truth behind the relativities of life and death. Omar Khayam, so grossly misunderstood, sang of this liberated man in his immortal scripture, the Rubaiyat:

'Ah! Moon of my Delight, who knowst no wane,
The Moon of Heav'n rising once again;
How oft hereafter rising shall she look
Through this same garden after me—in vain!'

The 'Moon of Delight who know'st no wane' is God, eternal Polaris, anachronous never. The 'Moon of Heav'n rising once again' is the outward cosmos, fettered to the law of periodic recurrence. Its chains have been dissolved for every by the Persian seer through his Self-Realisation. 'How oft hereafter rising shall she look . . . after me—in vain.' What frustration of search by a frantic universe for an absolute omission."

Christ expressed his freedom in another way:—
"And a certain scribe came and said unto him,
'Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou
goest.' And Jesus said unto him, 'The foxes have
holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the
Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.'"

"Spacious with omnipresence, could the Christ indeed be followed, except in the over-arching Spirit?"

^{*} *Autobiography of a Yogi.*

Chapter VII

KNOWLEDGE AND IMAGINATION

(An Explanatory Communication from Meher Baba)

On the one hand, Dnyan or Marefat (Divine Knowledge) is a thing which cannot be had even after going through numberless forms for countless ages; and on the other hand, when it comes, it comes. It would not be correct to say that Knowledge comes quickly. To say that it comes suddenly, or that it comes unawares and so on, is still not correct to express the "Flash of Becoming" which is beyond description because Knowledge is beyond the range of imagination.

Imagination has a tremendous range and an almost unlimited scope, and man has a very strong imagination. For example, it would not be impossible for a man to imagine a rat having a million heads. The whole world is created and carried on by the force of the imagination. But in spite of being apparently unlimited, imagination reaches the limit when checked by Knowledge itself. By the power of imagination no man can ever understand or explain the beginningless beginning or the endless end. In other words, eternity is beyond the reach of all imagination, and Knowledge is Knowledge of Eternity.

God is without beginning and without end, and there can never be any question of time and space in Infinity as, otherwise, that would mean a limitation against God's infinitude. No amount of imagination can, therefore, ever think of Infinity, because where

there is no beginning, the very question as to what was in the beginning cannot arise at all.

For example, let us repeat that before God, there was God, and before that, there was God, and before that there was God; or repeat that after God, is God, and after that, God is, and after that, God is: and all this would convey nothing to the imagination. That is why Knowledge is said to be even beyond the reach of Rishis and Munis (the advanced Saints). Hafiz also advises against the futility of trying to catch the 'Falcon' of Knowledge when he says that nothing but 'emptiness' can ever come into the 'net of imagination.'

Thus, the most powerful mind in imagination is entirely helpless against Knowledge, because it comes only after all power of imagination is completely and absolutely exhausted and ended. For imagination to go, mind must go; and for Knowledge to come, consciousness must remain. Only when the mind disappears, does consciousness get freed of all imaginary 'this and that' and 'I and you.' The moment consciousness is freed from all imagination, this 'consciousness of nothing' is all at once transformed into the 'Knowledge of Everything,' i.e., Dnyan or Marefat.

Even Vedanta and Sufism cannot reach or explain Knowledge. One may try to imagine a shoreless ocean with numberless drops, and think out in various terms of comparison and contrast; but just as 'no beginning—no end' would always remain 'no beginning—no end,' so, Knowledge can never be imagined. If that be so, and if I were a listener among you, I would have asked "Then why all this headache over explaining a thing which can neither be explained nor can it be grasped?"

Ordinary Swayambhu-Knowledge or the ordinary self-knowledge does not depend upon any process of reasoning or imagination. A man, woman or child neither acquires nor has any need to acquire

knowledge of one's individual existence from sources outside existence itself. A woman knows that she is a woman. This knowledge is not received. It is self-knowledge of womanhood; and the same is the case with the self-knowledge of manhood and childhood for a man and a child.

Similarly, Divine Swayambhu-Knowledge is Divine Knowledge of Power, Beauty and Bliss. When one gets such Dnyan or Irfaan, one not only feels oneself in every one and in every thing, but one then actually lives the free life of God. This Knowledge can come even at a moment when one is attending to a call of nature, as has actually happened in certain cases, including that of Upasni Maharaj. That is because a Master can give knowledge any moment instantaneously, provided there is a sufficiently deep and strong connection with him, or there is complete surrender to his Will. The only other way is complete annihilation of 'imagination,' like the attempt to prove that 'nothing' is really 'nothing,' which amounts to the annihilation of the mind by itself and as such, it is next to impossible.

Granting that as a very, very rare case, a man succeeds in breaking through his imagination by himself and achieves union with the Truth, still such a one cannot make any use of the knowledge and so he cannot become a Dnyani or A'riff. That is why Masters like Tukaram and Dnyaneshwar, Hafiz and Rumi, all say that there is no way out of imagination or ignorance, except with the help and by the Grace of a Perfect Master.

The fact is that God alone is real, and every thing is in God. We all are one with Him, but owing to our ignorance, we feel ourselves separate from God. We always were. What was before us? We! Before 'we'? We! We! We! Only when we get Knowledge, we know what this Being means. Then instantly, everything is absolutely clear in the twinkling of an eye; but such a 'Flash of Being' is

even quicker than the twinkling of an eye! There is therefore no question of becoming God, since we are already God; and so, on the other hand, we have to cease to be God. In order to do that, we have got to get more and more away from God through prayers, fasting, etc., as otherwise, what can God do for God?

That is why Knowledge cannot come to one and all individuals because we all are God, and God being in every one, who is to give and to whom? Only when God is perfectly Individualised as Most Perfect Dnyani or Most Perfect A'riff, can He impart knowledge to other individuals. The question may yet be asked as to why should the Master then not impart knowledge to all individuals instead of giving knowledge to some, and not giving it to others?

This is a question of Divine Law, commonly known as the Law of Karma or Law of Bindings or Law of Cause and Effect. Except the Perfect Dnyani or Perfect A'riff, no other individual can under any circumstances escape this law and its consequences. Therefore when the Master gives knowledge to certain individuals and does not give it to all, that is not because of the Master's incapacity to give to all, but because of the incapacity of one and all to receive knowledge. The latter incapacity is due to the lack of a sufficiently deep and strong connection with the Master or for want of complete surrender to his will or on account of the absence of the required degree of preparedness on the part of the individuals concerned.

Under these circumstances, it would be like throwing pearls before swine, for the Master to offer Knowledge to one and all irrespective of the individual's receptivity. The fact is that scores of Masters have come without beginning and scores of Masters will come without end, and still it would be quite true to say that there is no question of any time at all in spite of the countless epochs involved. If Knowledge cannot come within the purview of one's imagination, how can one be able to imagine the One possessing Knowledge?

On one side, Knowledge is so very, very small that it may be likened to a mustard seed; and on the other, it contains and covers every thing in existence, including the 'nothing' or 'ignorance of Maya.' This Dnyan, which in Sufism is termed Marefat, lies in the certainty of 'becoming.' There are three stages of this certainty. First is the certainty by intellectual conviction called 'Illmul-Yakeen.' Second is the certainty of 'Anicol-Yakeen' through actual 'Seeing'; and the third, the certainty of certainties, is by 'Becoming' or 'Hukkal-Yakeen.' What the Vedantists say about our being one with God, even though that is not the intellectual conviction of 'Illmul-Yakeen,' because when we hear that we are one with God, we imagine only what the intellect grasps temporarily. This temporary understanding turns into the certainty of intellectual conviction, only when nothing whatsoever can check the conviction, and nothing can upset the holder of that conviction, and when one actually begins to see that one has grasped permanently, then the 'Yakeen' or certainty of conviction can be said to be spiritually firm for all times. It is only after one becomes united with what one IS that the certainty of conviction is Dnyan or 'Hakul-Yakeen.'

Now, you all are ordinary men. This knowledge of manhood on your part does not depend upon intellect or reasoning whatsoever. You just know that you are men. None of you ever think, 'I am a woman, I am stone,' etc. That is because your knowledge that you are men is self-knowledge of your manhood, and it is not the outcome of a mere belief based on what you hear about the feelings and experience of others. Similarly, when you actually feel and find that you have become God, you are then God; and this 'becoming' is the Knowledge which the Master can and does impart at the right moment in literally no time at all.

True Mahatmas and Valis can and may give the shadow of true Knowledge to anyone by influencing

through a touch, sound or sight—the centres and seats of Knowledge; but even that shadow may be enough to make one lose one's physical body.

We all are, in a way, hypocrites inasmuch as we always try to justify ourselves, right or wrong. According to the Vedantists and the Sufis, God does everything; everything is done according to His Will and in accordance with His laws. In a way, that is all right; but being short of one truth, the whole of it is not right. And the lack of truth is the lack of experience behind the assertions. The reactions of the actions based on such 'ignorance of knowledge' are too terrible to contemplate, apart from other consequences like lunacy or nervous breakdowns.

Bhakti-marg, which is the sum and substance of every religion, makes us inflexible over 'Right is Right' and 'Wrong is Wrong' leading to a dry-as-dust, brittle and boring attitude of the mind. Under yoga practices the experiencing of different kinds of temporary samadhis brings forgetfulness of Reality and causes the yogi to lose sight of the Goal itself. By 'Jap-tap' and 'chilla-Kashi' he is entrapped in novel, but none the less limited, powers that eventually prove a boomerang for his mind.

The real headache lies in the fact that we have to become really what we really are, and therefore in order to gain God, we must first lose Him. Suppose I am God; then first I have to lose myself in order to be able to find Myself.

Complete loss of Self means wants are not there, desires are not there, likes or dislikes are not there, you are not there. God is not there; in short, nothing is there: and this is Real Fana or the Divine Vacuum. The moment this Fana takes places, at that very moment, God comes into His own full glory of the everlasting Baqua. This is not according to the Western conception of Realization of 'this inside' or 'that outside' but is discovery of God, by God, for God.

Even when God is lost and found, the life of God is not there. The life of God can be led by regaining ordinary human sobriety and, at the same time, retaining one's Divinity Individualised. For example, Sai Baba's Individuality is eternal, although his work in the different planes and spheres of existence is no longer there. Only those who were then in the respective planes of consciousness knew about Sai Baba's work in those particular planes; and all the work of Sai Baba in all the planes at one and the same time was known only to him and his contemporaries.

Chapter VIII

THE STAGES OF THE PATH

In these days of analytical psychology, some knowledge of the dynamics of the Path towards Self-Realisation would doubtless be appreciated; but it is a very difficult and abstruse subject, and those interested are sometimes inclined to think they know more than they do.

Tolstoy once remarked: "One might succeed in explaining to the dullest of men the most difficult of problems, if he had no previous conception in regard to it, but it is impossible to explain to the cleverest man even the simplest matter, if he is perfectly sure that he knows everything about it!"

Christian lore was derived from the Egyptian schools of thought, which had their source in India. If we study the papyri in the British Museum, or in Egypt, we can discern that the Egyptian hieroglyphs were often symbolical representations of the journey of the soul through Creation, the different stages of the Path being clearly depicted. If one should point out such signs to an Egyptologist, he would probably smile, remarking that the scripts do not tell him that! Lack of knowledge of the secret technique would make it difficult for him to appreciate the symbols. Yet it is hardly reasonable to suppose that the High Priests would divulge their secret knowledge to hoi polloi, for whom alone the scripts were intended.

Real spiritual experience begins when the aspirant is on the threshold of the Path. This awakening is to be identified with the consciousness

of the soul; for when its long journey through Creation is coming to an end, and it has reached the turning corner for the straight path back to whence it came, the soul begins to have faint recollections of its inherent divinity. The aspirant then experiences for the first time what some call "touches of cosmic consciousness."

There are *three distinct initiations* into the life of the Spirit, which every writer on mysticism should know, as these subjective experiences herald the entrance to the Path. They take the form of *hearing, smelling and seeing*. At the same time it is important to recognise the fact that those who have fleeting experiences, in the form of glimpses, should realise that these are very different and as nothing compared with actual stabilisation on the Planes; such experiences should not be taken too seriously. Therein lies the great danger of self-deception. The *hearing* of a peculiar buzzing sound in the ears, called by some "the purring of the cosmic motor," often precedes subjective mystical sensations, which can develop into sound harmonies, such as "The Music of the Spheres," or, again, "The Centaur's Hoofs" (the Revolt of the Animal Soul). The form, beauty and harmony of such celestial music is beyond description. According to Meher Baba, the cosmic harmonies are peculiar to the First Plane. In the experience of *smelling*, there may be an inexplicable sweet scent of flowers, seeming to come from nowhere. This experience belongs to the Second and Third Planes. The most important of the initiations is *seeing*. Here "The White Light" will appear; it may become apparent in the beginning as a blinding flash, rendering the percipient temporarily unconscious, or it may be a shaft of brilliant white light, so dazzling that the aspirant realises he is not perceiving with his physical eyes but with his "inner" eye. *Seeing* belongs to the Fifth and Sixth Planes of consciousness, but this must not be confused with the real Divine Light in the sense of the Sufi term "Noor."

The Master says the Seventh Plane is unique, for the sound, sight and smell there is divine in its essence, and has no comparison with the experiences of the lower planes; for on the Seventh Plane the aspirant has become Self-Realised and is *in everything*; therefore he is sound, scent and sight simultaneously.

In different religious and yoga practices, after contact has been established with the Planes, mystical experiences are induced. As Meher Baba says, contact with the First Plane (sound) engenders inspiration; the Second and Third Planes (smell) beget intuition; the Fifth and Sixth (sight) give illumination. The Sufi term is "marefat" (gnosis). The Seventh Plane stands for Revelation, and this according to Sufi terminology is Haquiquat (Reality).

Now a word of warning. When the aspirant has reached the Fourth Plane, the bliss associated with the sensations of sound, smell and light are subdued and repressed; as this particular Plane connotes "the darkest night" of the soul, he who traverses that Plane alone without the guidance of a Perfect Master, is exposed to the terrible dangers which accompany the pilgrim's progress along this Plane, with its snares, delusions and temptations to use the powers exercised thereon. Should the pilgrim give way and misuse the powers in question, he may fall right back to the beginning of his evolutionary career and have to start his journey all over again. When it was said that Zoroaster was tempted by Ahriman, Buddha by Mara, and Jesus by Satan, this is a reference to their experiences on the Fourth Plane which they and all other aspirants *have to undergo* before reaching their final destination, the Seventh Plane or Christ-consciousness, where they become God-Realised or Perfect. That is why it is always inadvisable to take up mystical practice's without realising what the consequences may be. There are powers which belong to all the three first planes, culminating in the Fourth Plane, and the more experienced a person

becomes in the handling of magical powers, the greater is the temptation to misuse them by seeking to dominate and influence others. The amorality of such practices should be widely known, for not only are others victimised in this way, but the persons who have reached a certain degree of proficiency in the manipulation of dangerous forces they do not understand, will eventually victimise themselves as already described, by having a fall in evolution. It is really a case of the blind leading the blind into a bottomless pit. Though some persons may be sincere in their quest, they are still playing with an incalculable Force, none the less dangerous.

To return to the main theme—awe-inspiring revelations of an cosmic nature may develop as cogent evidence to the aspirant that there is something outside the *phenomenal world of forms*. Krish-namurti has an expression, "The Something that cannot be formulated." The saints have testified as to the impossibility of putting such spiritual experiences into words, but at the same time, such mystical adventures bear unmistakable credentials of their validity. But many seekers may have hallucinations and delusions which bear no relation to the experiences described above. As Meher Baba explains, the only way to recognise the validity of such spiritual initiations is the joy, peace and ecstasy which should follow.

There are two states of consciousness in man, the finite and the Infinite. The Infinite state is only achieved when man has completed his journey through the Seven Planes or Spheres of consciousness. The final or Seventh Plane can only be accomplished *through the help of a Perfect Master*. It must always be born in mind that the first six Planes of the Path are an *illusory pilgrimage within Maya or Creation*. Only when the Seventh Plane has been reached does the aspirant have a real awakening into Truth-consciousness and only a Perfect Master can awaken the seeker from his dream-state of Maya and

initiate him into the realm of actual Reality, which as we know is the only real Self-Realisation or Godhood. When a Master needs his disciple for daily activities, he will draw him along across the Path, unconsciously, as if under a veil, through the different stages of the various Planes of spiritual existence. It is useless to try to explain what is inexplicable, since no intellectual explanation of the mystery of life, death and Maya is possible. Only when a man has been fully awakened will he know the LAHAR within the Absolute and the BHAS of Manifestation.

The longing for man to be reunited with his Source may be conscious or unconscious, according to the number of his lives, but in some life or other the urge to find his Real Self will be so strong as to predominate over all other desires.

This urge will bring him to the Path which leads to his Goal. Owing to the operation of the Spiritual laws pertaining to the transformation and emancipation of consciousness from Maya, the spiritual progress of the aspirant, once he has entered the Path, is more or less unconscious; that is to say, it is the same as with a child, who is not conscious of the growth and development of his body towards manhood. Thus the process of Self-Knowledge to the ultimate full Self-Realisation is a gradual unconscious progress in the ultimate liberation from Maya.

A study of the intricacies of the Path towards Self-Realisation shows that men, on reaching a certain stage, may believe themselves to have reached the Ultimate Goal; for under the influence of Maya the Path itself can give rise to many deceptions. Thus men can delude themselves and others into believing they possess spiritual claims far in advance of their actual attainment. In this manner semi-advanced pilgrims on the Way, and also the yogis, can and do see Truth, as the Master says, through multi-coloured glasses, whereas the Sadgurus and Avatars need no glasses at all because they are already Truth-Incarnate.

It is almost impossible to explain why the aspirant should be trapped into self-delusion, except to say that there are such infinite distances between the Planes. Although the consciousness of the aspirant is the same, it is no longer unfolding, as was the case in the earlier intermediate stages on the different Planes. Ergo the difference on each Plane has become so sharp and well-defined that there can be no point of fusion from one Plane to another as had existed before. So we can see that the spiritual pilgrim who does not come under the protection and direct guidance of a Perfect Master, might easily believe that he has reached the Ultimate Goal, whereas he may be nowhere near its termination.

As for the final stage, the Seventh Plane, Meher Baba has said that the gulf is so great that the difference in the state of consciousness or awareness might be likened to the difference between the consciousness of an ant and that of a human being! If we appreciate these most important distinctions, then it becomes easier to understand why there are so many claimants to-day to the greatest of all spiritual initiations into the life of God. It should be remembered that the *great difference* between a Perfected Man and others is that He alone can bestow the gift of Perfection on others. Only He can give Self-Realisation and full God-Consciousness.

It is impossible to go into lengthy descriptions of the initiations, but a short description of the different stages of the Path can best be described in Meher Baba's Discourses: ". . . . After entering a new Plane of consciousness a person usually takes some time before he can freely function on that Plane. As there is a radical change in the total conditions of mental life, the person experiences a sort of paralysis of mental activity, which is known as Samadhi. When the pilgrim enters a new Plane he merges into that Plane before he can experience the state which is characteristic of that Plane. Just as a pilgrim who is tired by the strain of a journey sometimes goes to

sleep, consciousness which has made the effort of ascending to a new Plane, goes through a period of lowered mental activity, comparable to sleep. At the same time, however, the Samadhi is fundamentally different from sleep, because in sleep a person is totally unconscious, whereas, in Samadhi, he is conscious of bliss, light or power, although he is unconscious of his body or surroundings. After a period of comparative stillness, the mind begins to function on the new Plane and experiences a state of consciousness which is utterly different from the state it has left behind."

"When the aspirant enters a new Plane he gets merged into it, and along with the lowering of mental activity he experiences a substantial diminution in his ego-life. This curtailment of the ego-life is different from the final annihilation of the ego, which takes place on the Seventh Plane; but, like the final annihilation at the Seventh Plane, the different stages of the curtailment of the ego at the intermediate Six Planes deserve special mention, owing to their relative importance. In the Sufi spiritual tradition, the final annihilation of the ego is described as Fana-fillah, and the earlier samadhis of the Six Planes of duality have also been recognised as kinds of Fana, since they also involve a partial annihilation of the ego."

"Through all these Fanas of ascending order, there is the continuity of progression towards the final 'Fana-Fillah,' and each of them has some special characteristic. When the pilgrim arrives at the First Plane he experiences his first merging of Fana, which consists of the minor annihilation of the ego. The pilgrim is temporarily lost to his limited individuality and experiences bliss. Many pilgrims who thus get merged in the First Plane think they have realised God and get caught up in the First Plane, but if the pilgrim keeps himself free from self-delusion, or comes to realise that this attainment is really a transitional phase in his journey, he advances further on the spiritual path and arrives at the Second Plane.

The merging into the Second Plane is called 'Fan-a-Batili,' or the Annihilation of the False. The pilgrim is now absorbed in bliss and infinite light. Some think they have reached the goal and get stranded in the Second Plane, but others, who keep themselves free from self-delusions, march onwards and enter the Third Plane. The merging into the Third Plane is called 'Fana-e-Zaheri,' or the Annihilation of the Apparent. Here the pilgrim loses, for days, all consciousness of the body or the world, and experiences infinite power. But since he has no consciousness of the world, he has no occasion for the expression of his powers. This is 'Videha Samadhi,' or the state of divine coma. Consciousness is now completely withdrawn from the entire world."

"If the pilgrim advances still further he arrives at the Fourth Plane. The merging into the Fourth Plane is called 'Fana-e-Malakuti,' or the Annihilation leading towards Freedom. The pilgrim experiences a peculiar state of consciousness at the Fourth Plane, since he now not only feels infinite power, but also has plenty of occasions for the expression of that power. He can, for example, know what anyone, situated in any part of the globe, is thinking or doing. Further, he has not only occasions for the use of his powers, but has a definite inclination to express them. If he falls a prey to this temptation, he goes on expressing powers and gets caught up in the alluring possibilities of the Fourth Plane. The Fourth Plane is for this reason one of the most dangerous and difficult planes to cross. The pilgrim is never spiritually safe and always has the possibility of a reversion, until he has successfully crossed the Fourth Plane and arrives at the Fifth Plane."

"The merging into the Fifth Plane is called 'Fana-e-Jabaruti,' or the Annihilation of all Desires. Here the incessant activity of the lower intellect comes to a standstill. He does not 'think' in the ordinary way, and yet he is, indirectly, a source of

many thoughts inspired in others. He sees, but not with the physical eyes. Mind speaks with mind, and there is neither worry nor doubt. He is now spiritually safe and beyond the possibility of a downfall, and yet many a pilgrim on this exalted Plane finds it difficult to resist the delusion that he has attained Godhood, In his self-delusion he thinks and says 'I am God,' and believes himself to have arrived at the end of the spiritual Path. But if he moves on he perceives his mistake and advances to the Sixth Plane. The merging into the Sixth Plane is called 'Fana-e-Mahalbubi', or the Annihilation of the self in the Beloved. Now the pilgrim sees God directly and clearly, as an ordinary person sees the different things of this world, and this continued perception and enjoyment of God does not suffer a break, even for an instant. Yet he does not become one with God, the Infinite."

"If the pilgrim ascends to the Seventh Plane, he experiences the last merging, which is called 'Fana-Fillah,' or the Annihilation of the self in God. Through this merging the pilgrim loses his separate existence and becomes permanently united with God. He is now ONE WITH GOD and experiences himself as being none other than God Himself. This Seventh Plane, 'Fana-Fillah,' is the terminus of the spiritual Path, the goal of all search and endeavour. It is the Sahaj Samadhi, or the Nirvikalpa Samadhi, which is the characteristic of conscious Godhood. It is the only real awakening. The pilgrim has now reached the other shore of the vast ocean of imagination, and realises that THIS LAST TRUTH IS THE ONLY TRUTH, and that all the other stages on the Path were entirely illusory. He has arrived at the final destination."*

* For more detailed account of the various stages, see *Meher Baba, His Philosophy and Teachings*, revised and enlarged by Dr. A. G. Munsiff.

Chapter IX

THE MASTS

India is a strange country full of startling anomalies. One can but be impressed with the grandeur of her hoary civilisations, as seen in her monuments, temples and history. But her deformed beggars, her lepers, her emaciated peoples, her neglected and ill-treated animals, (religious taboos allow them to die slowly in great pain) make a sad sight. The sensitive Westerner is appalled by the raw brutality of life, and by the "spawning millions" of humanity for whom there is no future. Until the education and emancipation of women takes place, it is difficult to see where real progress can begin. Then again the dirt and the dust! Yet nowhere in the world does one meet with such sensitive and beautiful souls, heirs to all the Ages. One feels they had a spiritual heritage when we went about in woad and skins!

No country in the world has such an unequal distribution of wealth; the very rich and the very poor. A wealthy person can, if he chooses, eat like a glutton while famine stalks the land. The Mahars, known to us as the Untouchables, are a standing example of man's inhumanity to man; these people are a down-trodden, despised, rejected and neglected group of some fifty million or more. It is true that some legislation has been passed to make their condition a little more tolerable, so that they may travel in public transport and not be kept as entirely isolated as before; but it will be many years, if not generations, before they become accepted as part of India's present-day so-called democracy, unless the expected push

in Spiritual consciousness affects the unadvanced peasant class and village folk who are still much more intolerant than the townsfolk.

India's bloodbath to celebrate her Independence and the Partition in 1947 shocked the civilised world who did not realise the lack of religious toleration or the fanaticism of the different sects. It is the religious differences which are the curse of India, and which help to create the tremendous political differences which rend the country in twain and complicate still more the problem of bringing India and Pakistan into the comity of civilised nations.

The standards of ancient Indian literature are too far removed from those of Western culture to be appreciated by foreigners except for the Vedas and the Upanishads. What is more sublime than the Bhagavad Gita? Let those who indiscriminately condemn Hinduism for its faults study the Gita before they presume to draw comparisons with Christianity. But writings in general are overloaded with repetitious didactic material, and the original legends and myths are impossible to disentangle from the two hundred and twenty thousand lines of the Mahabharata, the ninety-six thousand lines of the Ramayana and other great epics, which were the work of generations of poets, the esoteric teachings of which are hidden under double meanings and obscurities which could hardly be unravelled by any but initiates. The Sanskrit language, the key to past Indian culture, is unfortunately already beginning to be neglected under the impact of Western influence.

Travellers in India are more struck by the superstition of its various peoples than by their spirituality. Take for example the holy lake of Pushgar, where multitudes of pilgrims go every year to bathe, believing they will leave their sins behind, as they often leave their legs and arms in its crocodile infested waters. It is only the Himalayas in their immensity of untrodden snows that give one the feeling of the Infinite,

the Eternal. Yet despite India's sins, her hidebound traditions, her cruel caste distinctions, her inability to accomplish much without the aid of baksheesh, she remains the most spiritual country in the world! Why? The Master's explanation is, because India is nearest to *Creation point*. The "*one tiny point*" from which generated the expanding universe. For this reason there are more "Lovers of God" in India than anywhere else in the world; the *explanation of this curious fact is that India retains so much spiritual energy*. This God-essence, as it might be called, is more apparent in India than in any other country. But needless to say, amongst these "Holy Men" there are many who find religious hypocrisy an easy way to earn a living, for the peasants are apt to think it safer to please rather than to displease them.

The aspirants to God range in varying degrees, from the Sadhu, in his saffron robe, to the great Muktas and Majzoobs of the Seventh Plane. The most unusual of all these pilgrims on the Path are the masts. The Westerner who is interested in the Real or Secret India, has heard vaguely of these peculiar beings, the God-mad, the God-intoxicated. God gives out his love to mankind in divers ways. His expression needs the purest channels, and what purer channels are there than the great masts? For they, having lost their egos in their love for God, have transcended the limitation of the flesh.

During his ascent into God-consciousness a mast has, in his contemplation of Eternal Being, become oblivious of the phenomenal world of forms, which, for him, has become but the domain of Maya. The Spirit, having risen so high, becomes free from its bondage of the flesh and deigns not to descend again to the valley of shadows, the physical plane. In such an instance the body of the aspirant takes on the appearance of a madman or a peculiar person. These masts might be described as human dynamos, of what can only be called "God-essence." Here we will digress for a moment to ask. What is God-essence?

The dictionary definition of Spirit tells us that "Spirit is life or intelligence, conceived of as entirely apart from physical embodiment. It is vital essence, force, energy, as distinct from matter." As we know, God manifests himself in various forms of energy, and space is full of forces about which science knows nothing, but undoubtedly one of the main forces is electricity. No scientist has been able to answer the question: "What is Electricity and what is its relation to other forces?"

We are told that human beings are composed of electrical and chemical units.* The researches of the late Dr. Kilner, of St. Thomas' Hospital, have demonstrated that the aura of man is an emanation of an electromagnetic character. Scientific opinion states that man is a mechanism, composed of electrical and chemical reactions; a machine made up of twenty-eight trillion electric cells. If we look at the human being from the standpoint of physics, it should be easier to appreciate the masts as being, in some manner, channels for the higher potential of a spiritual force in some way resembling electrical energy. The fact that sometimes the mandali (disciples of the Master) when near the masts have actually experienced sensations analogous to electrical shocks, emphasizes this contention.

There is no doubt that the mast, who has attained to the higher spheres, has entered the region which is the domain of energy. Matter being a solidification of energy, it follows that when a man has transcended the physical form of energy and entered into the realm of spirit energy, he enters into a state in which his consciousness consists of vibrating spiritual energy. His entire life is contained in this energy and he becomes a powerful organ for the production of energy. We presume it is this force which is utilised by the Master for his universal work on humanity. For the mast, who is entirely absorbed in and concentrated on God,

* Lakhovsky's and Crile's theories. See Appendix.

becomes a perfect channel through which the Master can work, since he has become a medium of God. A mast, because his mind is entirely absorbed in his inner spiritual experiences, can very easily get excited and even dangerous, if his divine contemplation of Divinity is disturbed. His condition makes him impervious to his surroundings. His body is left to a mechanical control and maintenance, whereas the main pre-occupation in the life of a normal man is the care of his body. As the mast is so closely linked with the spiritual life of humanity, the book. *The Wayfarers*, to which we have already referred, is of great importance to the psychiatrist and psychologist. It reveals knowledge never before given to the West, and is a very remarkable commentary on the behaviour of these extraordinary individuals who are, indeed, unconscious saints of a high order.*

With regard to the mentality of the masts, it is necessary to quote at length from the above-mentioned book, the author of which is an English medical man: "The derangement of the masts differs from that of ordinary mad persons both in its origin and nature. The latter lose their mental balance through disintegrating physiological and psychic causes of an ordinary kind. In the physiological field, disease of some sort is the cause, while in the mental field, acute and apparently insoluble conflict between deep-rooted instincts and man's conventional codes is the source of madness. In the case of the masts, their state of unbalance is induced by their powerful urge to realise God. As the spiritual aspirant advances in his all-consuming desire to experience God, the mental structure, with its normal tendencies and capacities, is dissolved. The successful termination of this urge initiates the aspirant into the supramental state of perfect integration and direct realisation of the Supreme Self. Naturally, the methods of treatment of the ordinary insane person and the God-mad will

* Here we feel it not inappropriate to refer to the researches of Charles Lancelin. See Appendix.

differ. In the case of the former, the usual method consists in counteracting whatever physical causes may have contributed to the derangement. If a psychic origin is also involved, expert analysis helps to bring to the surface of consciousness the deep-rooted conflicts and complexes which have led to the mental breakdown. Unfortunately, the average analyst cannot give the patient the power to solve these problems. Though the analyst may exercise the utmost patience, gentleness and understanding, unless he has the capacity to arouse the latent spiritual powers of the patient, no cure is possible."

"It naturally follows that the ordinary analyst, who has little insight into spiritual realities, could hardly be expected to help the God-mad, whose experiences and objectives are entirely beyond the range of his own experience, or even his imagination. Only a Supreme Master of Consciousness can give them the help that they so greatly need. With his discernment he is able to appreciate both their spiritual yearnings and their peculiar individual obstacles, and, through the exercise of his spiritual powers, he can advance them towards their goal, or bring them back to three-dimensional consciousness, as their case requires."

"During the process of transcending the mind, the aspirant is subjected to so much disturbance, that he is unable to use his mind in the normal way, and to all appearances behaves like a madman. But the Master, who has direct insight into the workings of the mind, knows the true cause and nature of the mast's peculiar mental condition. He knows precisely what mental motivation has induced this state of unbalance, and is therefore able to help the mast to attain the goal in his own particular way. With such help, the spiritually-dazed eventually emerge into a supra-mental state of perfect integration and harmony."

The appearance of balance which the ordinary

man possesses, is only provisional, and is due to his ability to strike a compromise between the warring elements of his psyche and his environment. However, in order that the mind may achieve a true balance, the provisional balance has to be considerably disturbed. When this happens without the supervision of a Perfect Master, a condition of apparent madness results."

These extraordinary creatures, the masts, mad, and with the appearance of beggars, are often quite incapable of taking care of themselves, that is to say, of their bodies. Being oblivious and indifferent to all material considerations, their bodies and surroundings can be indescribably filthy. They sometimes have very peculiar appetites; some eat garbage, and others drink out of drains. Yet, although they may live in the most insanitary surroundings, they remain perfectly healthy!

There is one mast mentioned in this book, whose diet consisted chiefly of dry bread, powdered stone and wood! The masts can live under all climatic conditions, being quite insensible to burning heat or bitter cold. They can sit in the snow or rain with perfect equanimity, being impervious to all physical discomforts. This is analogous to the state of ordinary insane persons, who at times appear to be quite insensible to changes of temperature. The masts draw their vitality direct from the Essence of God; this causes them to be immune from normal physical reactions. Their ego having soared to the higher spheres of existence, in their intoxication, they ignore the flesh! Meher Baba once said: "Mind stopped, is God. Mind working, is man. Mind slowed down, is mast. Mind working fast, is mad."

The Yogis, who are sane and well-balanced men, can show a similar indifference to the discomforts of the flesh. But they have to undergo a lifelong training, with special breathing exercises, mental and physical practices and exercises of the will and

imagination. Such ascetics have sometimes been seen by travellers, sitting naked on the snowy slopes of the Himalayas, but, for that matter, during the winter of 1952 there were photographs in the London newspapers of an ascetic sitting naked in Hyde Park, in extremely rigorous weather! But nevertheless the Yogis do not reach the same high planes of consciousness as the great masts.

In the West we have a fair proportion of religious maniacs in the asylums, but they have no spiritual status comparable with that of the masts, who are only to be found in the East.* Egotism and megalomania in some cases, no doubt, partly contributed to some break-downs in the West, as unfortunately in religious matters, there is always scope for arrogance and desire for domination. There are, however, no known Western traditions about God-intoxicated souls. It is certainly very hard for the Westerner to understand how such a being as a mast can be nearer to God than a normal intelligent and good man. Meher Baba has explained this mystery as follows:

"Standards of good and bad are established according to contemporary standards, that may vary with time and circumstances. In spirituality, very often what is understood to be good by the masses is, from the spiritual point of view, bad; and what is understood as bad by the masses, is often good from the spiritual point of view. For example, robbery is bad by general standards, but if one robs to help some starving mother who has just given birth to a child, it is good. Also, by general standards, beating others is bad, but if you beat someone with the motive of correcting his life, and do so without malice and without anger, this beating is a blessed virtue."

"From general standards of society, religion,

* It might be safe to assume that some of the Christian anchorites and hermits who lived in the Near East at the beginning of the Christian era might have been masts. St. Simon Stylites sitting on top of his pole for twenty years, might have been a mastlike personality.

health, morality, and so forth, cleanliness of body and mind are indispensable. It is very easy to keep the body clean, but cleanliness of the mind is very difficult indeed. The more one gets attached to body cleanliness for merely selfish reasons, the less are the chances of having a clean mind."

"If, however, one is given up wholly to mental cleanliness, which means becoming free from low, selfish, impure desires and thoughts of lust, greed, anger, back-biting, etc., the less is one's mind attached to bodily needs and bodily cleanliness. All this applies to ordinary persons."

Now, of the five types: God-merged, God-intoxicated, God-absorbed, God-communed, and God-mad—The God-absorbed and God-communed can, more or less, keep their bodies clean. Their minds are almost automatically clean, owing to their being absorbed in God, or in communion with God. But the God-mad, the God-intoxicated and the God-merged all invariably have dirty bodies, live in dirty surroundings, and may have dirty physical habits. A God-mad man has a clean, pure mind. A God-intoxicated man has a mind, but no thoughts, for his mind is simply enjoying the intoxicated state. A God-merged has also no mind—he is fully merged in God. So in these three cases their mental cleanliness and purity cannot be questioned."

"Now why should their bodies and environments be dirty? You will find that the majority of ordinary mad people have very little consciousness of their bodies. So if an ordinary mind, when mad, does not pay attention to bodily cleanliness, then the three types of God-men who, unconsciously, know all the universe to be zero, body to be shadow, and whose minds are absolutely unattached to the body, cannot be expected to keep their bodies and surroundings clean."

"When the mind does not pay attention to the body, the body naturally, automatically survives and

looks after itself. Now, because of a kind of universal working on the gross plane, a sort of automatic attraction takes place, which causes the man who is indifferent to cleanliness to be attracted to place himself in dirty surroundings. He does not purposely choose an unclean place, but tends to gravitate towards it, for he is himself quite indifferent either to cleanliness or to dirt on the physical plane. For those who are God-mad, God-intoxicated, or God-merged, this dirtiness does not affect their health, because the mind is not attached to the body."

"For these souls, good or bad, cleanliness or dirt, a palace or a hut, a spotless avenue or a filthy gutter, are all the same, and they are driven into any of these places according to circumstances. It is natural for a mast to have a dirty body, and it is natural for him to be driven into dirty surroundings, but if the devotee of a mast happens to give him comfort and cleanliness, he takes it because it is forced on him, but he is quite indifferent to it."

"In these three types also, greed, anger, avarice and lust do not exist, since the minds of the God-mad and God-intoxicated are always turned towards God, as the God-merged have no minds; their bodily actions are not under their control. They are indifferent to everything, so that their actions are either indifferently controlled or are controlled by God."

"Whatever they do, whether it be called good or bad from worldly standards, it has no selfish motive or personal deliberation. So if these persons laugh or cry, seem happy or morose, caress others or beat them, they are not conscious of what they do, or of how they behave. Nevertheless, their doing acts in anger, helps those on whom this unconscious anger is spent, because their selfless anger destroys the anger sanskaras of the recipient. In ordinary circumstances, if A. gets angry with, and beats B., B.'s red sanskaras of anger become attached to A.; A. loses and B. gains. If B. also gets angry and beats A., then both

are equal. If a mast hits either A. or B., their sanskaras of anger are destroyed, but these sanskaras do not recoil on the mast; but if either A. or B. hits the mast, it is a terrible binding."

"Now, why does one mast become a Jalali, another a Jamali, another a Mahbubi, and so forth? Everyone has to pass through innumerable lives. If one man who, in his past life, lived in an environment of strife and great activity, becomes in this life a mast, he is of the Jalali type. If another, who led his past life in a quiet village, or was perhaps in a dull and idle environment, becomes in this life a mast, he is of the Jamali type. If a man who in his previous life was a bachelor, or may or may not have committed the sexual act, becomes in this life a mast, he is of the Mahbubi type. That is because the sanskaras of love for women were unexpressed in his past life, and in this life they find expression in the wearing of some part of a woman's dress, or in acting in some ways like a woman."

It is known that Ramakrishna, during one phase of his life, wore women's clothes, which suggests that in his former life he had belonged to the Mahbubi type.

The whole subject is handicapped by the sparse vocabulary in English for the different states of spiritual experience, the different types of mast, and the different grades of spiritual aspirant, so all terms applicable come from Sufi or Vedantic sources.

The author of *The Wayfarers*, from which book we draw our material for this chapter, has classified, under the direction of Meher Baba, the various types of advanced souls, in the ascending order of spiritual progress, and in the supplement to the book a large number of masts have their histories recorded and placed in their specific categories.

Some of them have made very interesting observations on the Master's spiritual status. Chatti

Baba, a Sixth Plane mast of Negapatam, one of Meher Baba's favourites, said in June 1940: "There will be much trouble and privation, and many will die of starvation, but Baba will assuage the suffering of the world." In March, 1941, in Quetta, he said: "There will be so great a calamity in the world that no one can imagine it, even brother will kill brother and there will be great tribulation; then all the world will think of my big brother (Meher Baba); at that time Baba will draw aside the veil, and all will pay obeisance to him." In July, 1941, he told one of Baba's mandali who was in a bad mood at the time: "You want to leave, don't you, but what's the good of it; all the world is in Baba's power, so where will you go to? Serve him now, he is the Ocean; because one day when lots of people throng to see him, you may never get the opportunity of meeting him; so take your chance now." This particular mast, though generally unconscious, is greatly revered in India by his devotees, who prostrate themselves on approaching him.

It is known that certain masts are called "spiritual chargemen." These great masts see to the spiritual welfare of a town or city for which they are responsible on the inner planes of existence. This is peculiar to India alone, for in the West there are the spiritual agents.

The spiritual chargeman of Poona is Joshi Buba, a Sixth Plane mast and therefore of considerable importance to the spiritual world. I went to see him. He was sitting almost naked in a corner of one of Poona's market-places. I was impressed with his fine physique and dignified bearing. He greeted my companion graciously and accepted my homage. We offered him cake and coffee, which he ate and drank with the manner of a cultured man; he had been a well-known lawyer before he became a God-addict. He always sat at this same spot, surrounded by rags. The mast offered my friend one to sit on, but happily I had accommodated myself on a doorstep. I sensed

the spiritual radiance which enveloped him. I could see from his face that he was in a state of concentrated preoccupation with the Holy Grail of his desire, and had attained a bliss that I could not even aspire to. Since I saw him he has been removed to an asylum where he can be better looked after.

Some of these masts are well-known in the localities in which they live; they also have circles of devotees. At Delhi there used to be a very famous mast, Hafizji Nabeema. This man was the spiritual chargeman of Delhi. Here we will quote verbatim from the supplement of the book mentioned above:

"He was quite blind and quite naked, but, despite his 'blindness,' he would walk all over the old city of Delhi. There is a strange story in connection with his nakedness. It seems that certain influential residents of Delhi told the police that this man, walking about the streets quite naked, was indecent. So the police brought him to the police station. There he was told that he would be taken to the court and charged, and he demanded to be taken in a palanquin. Seeing he was blind and already held in some respect by many people, this request was agreed to, but when the palanquin reached the magistrate's court and its curtains were opened, all they found was a stone lying on the floor of the palanquin. The police returned to the station, their ears smarting with the reprimands of their superiors, and sought out Hafizji again from the streets of Delhi. This time they begged him to come with them to the court, since they themselves were getting into trouble because of him. So he came and appeared in Court, and was duly convicted and locked in a prison cell. The same night, however, some policemen found Hafizji again free in the town, and knowing he had that day been locked up, reported the matter to the police station. Investigations showed that Hafizji's cell was quite empty, though the locks on the gates of his cell were intact, closed, and apparently untampered with. So, from that day forth, the fame

of Hafizji became greatly spread throughout the town, and he was allowed to move freely as and where he liked. . . . Hafizji passed away on the 6th July, 1941, and his fame was so great that reports of his death were published even in the Times of India."

Those who wish to appreciate something of the extraordinary work done by Meher Baba in connection with the masts, should study the supplement of *The Wayfarers*. It purports to be a complete record of the Master's contacts with masts, salik-like pilgrims, sadhus, fakirs and the poor, and is chiefly a record of all these thousands of contacts on his various exacting tours in India. Dr. Donkin writes as follows:

"The reader, then, has no need to drag aching and dusty feet along the twenty miles of stony hill track that lead to Jasingan, where Nanga Baba sat naked on a hilltop for twenty-five years; he need only settle more snugly in his chair, and with a few flips of finger and thumb, turn to Jasingan in the supplement and descend in imagination upon that wild hill, and sit with Baba, his men, and the local village folk, and in his mind's eye watch Nanga Baba devour his meal of pounded wood and stone."

"No need, also, to sit with aching bones, hour after weary hour, in the compressed and sweaty discomfort of an Indian third class carriage, as Baba and his men have done, nor to work a passage along the squelching banks of rice fields to Bansi, where that ageless yogi sits like a waxen image in a darkened room. The reader need only slide the lamp a little closer, and, if he reads in bed, shift his pillow to a new angle, and turn over the pages to Bansi, and dream himself into that strange room."

"No need to have fingers pinched and clothes torn by the incalculable behaviour of tonga hoods and tonga upholstery, nor to suffer the battering of bullock cart journeys over interminable country tracks, for with agile fingers and a rapid eye the reader may fly within a few minutes from Rikhikesh, where

Keshwanandji stood in that mountain valley at the edge of the grey waters of the Ganges, to Kilakkarai in the farthest South, where Pallukollah Baba awed the villagers by crossing rivers without swimming, and without a boat."

"And if, in turning the leaves of the supplement, one finds pages here and there with few souls of interest, one may infer how much more tedious were the hours and days of labour of Baba and his men spent in searching out these minor souls. Saints who are consciously aware of their spiritual progress are, perhaps, not so hard to find, but great masts are gems wrapped in the rubbish of an outer packing of eccentricity and physical dirtiness, and it needs the skill and vision of the Master, not only to pierce the veil of trivialities, but also to separate the real jewels from plausible fakes."

Dr. Donkin observes that his book possesses "one irremediable defect, that it shows nothing of the invisible spiritual interplay between the consciousness of the Master and the minds and souls of the inmates (in the Ashrams for the mad). For that, we are circumscribed by Baba's own statement that his relationship with masts is a matter between him and them. So, like an iceberg, we see only the eighth part that stands above the surface of the ocean, and the submerged seven-eighths, the real mass of the thing, is hidden from our eyes."

I presume that the Avatars have sometimes worked with the masts, prior to a new spiritual dispensation, to release the flow of spiritual energy. The only information that I have been able to elicit from Baba is that "a few Avatars and some Sadgurus and Qutubs, such as the Guru Nanak and Khaja Saheb of Ajmeer, did work with the masts."

Without trespassing on arcanic preserves, I think we may surmise that the masts are reservoirs of spiritual energy, the Essence of God. And when the Avatars work on these spiritual containers, perhaps

they are, in some manner we know not, by means of their secret technique, canalizing the divine energy for the regeneration of mankind. Since the masts do appear to be focussing points for the accumulation of divine energy, eventually to be directed in a great outpouring of the Spirit upon our distressed planet. "And it shall come to pass in the Last Days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon All Men, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men see visions and your old men dream dreams."

Chapter X

KARMA

As a Universal Divine Manifestation always coincides with the spiritual renaissance of man, so the period nearing that stupendous event is always one in which humanity is suffering from the agony of approaching rebirth. It is not sufficiently realised what the internal and external significance of this cosmic springtime means. Amongst other things, the Manifestation reacts not only to the good and bad sanskaras (impressions past and present) of individuals, but also to the collective karma or destiny of a country or nation. The direct divine influence can bring about great changes in world affairs, causing the rise and fall of nations and of economic systems, in keeping with their karma, as may suit best the Divine Plan as a whole. Towards this goal, statesmen, politicians and great men in public life are more directly, though unconsciously, influenced to bring about the adjustment of social and economic life. All human suffering, whether individual or collective, caused by wars or great natural catastrophes, is neither accidental nor coincidental, for man has to conform to the Law which governs the Universe.

It would be difficult to see any sense or significance in life or to recognise an ordered creation, if we did not believe in the Law of Cause and Effect. Without this belief we would see no justice in life at all; for some are born rich, and others poor, some cripples, and others strong. There have been events in history in which God has seemed to favour evil rather than good; but in reality it was not so, as there

is always a plan and a purpose behind everything in the cosmic scheme. Take, for example, the historic case of the gallant men of Melos, who refused to desert their good neighbours, the Spartans. The men of Melos thought their cause was just and honourable and that the gods would therefore surely side with them. They were mistaken. The Athenians had their revenge, destroyed their city, killed all the men, and sold the women and children into slavery. There must have been a number of reasons for this tragedy, impossible for us to fathom; one may suppose that the men of Melos were reaping what they had sown in a previous incarnation, and that the Athenians were paying off a karmic debt. But the judgment of men upon what is good and evil is not always the judgment of God.

In an age which has forgotten chivalry and the Golden Rule, the free world to-day is faced with the soul-searing problem of Action and Resistance to Evil. The words of Krishna to Arjuna should be of comfort; the bravest of the brave stood hesitating on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. In great distress of mind that he should be forced to slay his unworthy kinsmen, he protested: "My limbs fail me, my hair standeth on end, and my whole body trembles with horror and dismay!" Krishna rebuked him, telling him he was being false to his own dharma* and that "The sin that is committed by killing one who does not deserve to be killed is as great as the sin of not killing one who deserves to be killed." For when submission to evil is wrong then it is one's duty to resist evil by force. Jesus certainly taught "Resist not Evil," the principle of non-violence (Ahimsa); but his teachings in that respect were only applicable

*"Every Brahmin is asked to respect *Ahimsa*, yet the system provides for a class of warriors (Kshatriyas) whose profession it is to kill and be killed. . . . When submission to evil is wrong, when resisting it by love is impossible, then it is the duty (dharma) of the warrior class to resist aggression by force."

"The term dharma stands for all those ideals and purposes, influences and institutions that shape the character of man both as an individual and as a member of society." (Radhakrishnan)

to the problems of his age and not to the problems of our age. Now we must follow Action and Resistance to Evil, without hate and out of a sense of duty. "Stand up, Parantapa! And Fight !"

We cannot compromise with deliberate aggression and slavery. Behind the Iron Curtain, the basic freedom of being allowed to live where one likes is forbidden. This is what distinguishes a free man from a slave. Peaceful co-existence with the Iron Curtain is therefore impossible. It matters not if we all lose our lives fighting; what matters is our salvation in our next life, and this is conditioned by what we do in this life.

If we could but realise that we shape our future life by the actions of our present life; that "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," and "turning the other cheek," apply equally to the laws that govern life. According to the Law of Cause and Effect, if a man commits a murder in one incarnation, his victim will probably kill him in the next. One wonders what karmic debt the Crusaders had to pay for killing every man, woman and child in Jerusalem? But of all the crimes committed by man, is there anything greater than the action of dictators who have uprooted millions of people from their native soil, and transported them to Siberia's icy wastes where none can live for long. Behind the Iron Curtain, the blood of millions cries out for vengeance. "Vengeance is Mine, saith the Lord!" And in the Lord's own time evil men will expiate their crimes. All debts and credits must be cleared in one life or another, on earth, in hell or heaven, before one can discover life as it really is, the eternal fountain of Divine Love, the Supreme Law.

Ordinarily a person is not killed by an Avatar or a Perfect Master. But there are exceptions, as in the case of Ram and Krishna, who are said to have slain many of their enemies. The spiritual connection between a Perfect Master and his enemy is very

significant of the ways of God. Just as a perfect lover remembers constantly the Master, so do the enemies of the Master entertain a constant enmity towards God, when personalised as an Avatar or Perfect Master. In fact their remembrance, although in enmity and hatred, is as constant as that of the perfect devotee of God. "They also remember Me and their internal minds are ultimately combined with the same God."* So said Krishna, and he explained whatever is uppermost in the mind of a dying person, his next life is conditioned thereby. In the final end he comes face to face with God or His incarnation (in the form of the Avatar) and dying in His thought, attains to Heaven. There is nothing illogical about this. God harbours no ill-will or grudge against an enemy in the sense we mortals do. Once a man is punished for his vile acts; the chapter ends. Death after all is the best leveller.

It is said that Kansa—the Demon king who was slain by Krishna—used to think constantly of him with extreme agitation, fear and hatred. Eating, drinking, sleeping, walking, speaking or breathing, i.e., at all times, he used to see the Lord as if he was present before Him. Due to this constant remembrance, in holding the thought of Krishna even though it was in enmity—he attained to salvation (God-Realization).*

The doctrine of Karma has always prevailed in the East, in some form or other. In fact, free will or law by Karma is a subject about which many volumes have been written. The question of whether exertion or destiny is greater has yet to be answered rationally. The Masters are undoubtedly above the Law, but it is a well-known fact that, except in rare cases, they generally remain within the Law, as fully known to them, even to the extent of getting their bones broken in accidents, or of being tortured and

* *Shrimad Bhagawata* (The Epic Story of the Life of Lord Krishna by Vyasa) — Act X, Chap. 44.

* For elaboration of this idea, see *The Ramayan of Tulsidas*.

murdered. The many points of Karma are too complicated and we are not competent to deal with them. But we should always remember that the Perfect Men are always beyond Maya, or rather, that Maya does not exist for them, even as an illusion. When trying to explain a problem beyond the capacity of the human intellect to grasp, one can only say, like Meher Baba, "It cannot be fully intelligible yet."

I have often wondered, when watching the behaviour of men, animals and birds, how they can do these things so naturally and easily, if they had not been performing the same actions for millions of years. Surely unconscious behaviourism must be the result of "the sediment of all experience in the Universe of all time and also an image of the Universe that has been in process of formation for untold ages."* Those who study Astrology declare that the celestial pattern of terrestrial forms is primarily based on the influence exerted by past lives, and certainly we must admit that the theory of reincarnation does explain so many of life's mysteries otherwise inexplicable.* We know that children sometimes have strong recollections of a former life, but in the West no heed is paid to their "fairy tales." But in the East they are listened to and there are some famous and authenticated stories where remembrance of a previous life has been confirmed. In the West, a few writers like Mark Twain and others, have obtained glimpses through dreams or by some other means, of incidents which can only be explained by this theory.*

Socrates said that "all knowledge was only remembering," and some of the Greek philosophers undoubtedly regarded the belief as a self-evident truth. At one time it was a widely accepted belief of the Jews and certainly many of the Early Christians

* *The House that Freud Built.* Jastrow.

* The Hon. Ralph Shirley has given circumstantial evidence of former lives in his book, *The Problem of Rebirth.*

* See *The Mysterious Stranger and Other Stories* by Mark Twain.

held the doctrine, especially Origen, who declared that "every man received a body for himself according to his deserts in former lives." The disciples of Jesus believed that John the Baptist was Elijah, but gradually the Church suppressed such ideas as heretical, for reasons too obvious to elaborate.

In the Gita, the argument is detailed by Krishna: "A thing imaginary has no existence, while that which is true is a stranger to nonentity. The wise, therefore neither grieve for the dead nor for the living For the wise know that as a man throweth away old garments, and putteth on new, even so the soul, having quitted its old mortal frames, entereth into others which are new Never did I not exist, nor thou, nor all the princes of the earth; nor will any one of us ever hereafter cease to be. As the soul in this mortal frame findeth infancy, youth, and old age, so in some future frame will it find the like. One who is confirmed in this belief knows that the contacts of the senses give heat and cold, pleasure and pain, which come and go and are transient and inconstant: while the soul, though invisible, is inconsumable and incorruptible. For the soul is not a thing of which a man may say it hath been, it is about to be, or it is to be hereafter, for the simple reason that it is a thing without birth, surpassing all conception. Both I and thou, therefore, have passed many births. Mine are known to me, but thou knowest not of thine."

The popular term for Karma is fate. In truth, however, we really create our own destiny, which we have shaped as good, bad or indifferent, in our former lives. But just as we have shaped it in the past, so also can we shape it in the future, provided we have some understanding of the laws in operation, enabling us to modify or remould the course of our future life. The law of Karma is inherently just and moral, even though we may not be able to appreciate this truth, because we may not have benefited in the way we wish. Here some may ask, "Why do we not all

retain memory of past lives?" Mercifully a veil is drawn over past experiences, the memories of which are stored in the mental body of the individual soul. When we are born again into a new physical body, we also take a new brain, and in ordinary circumstances the brain acts as a curtain which completely shuts out all experiences connected with our past lives. It is not necessary for most of us to know about our past existences; our spiritual development depends on our present intuitive faculties which help us to adjust ourselves to constantly changing situations in life. If our minds were clogged with past impressions, it would be far more difficult. Some may also ask, "What happens in the period between our earthly lives?"*

If all action is based on thought and the power of thinking, then our thoughts, in action, are bound to influence the world at large, for good or evil. It is thought that patterns the shape of things to come. Esoteric literature gives many examples of how a man's life has been affected by the misdeeds of a former incarnation. Max Heindel's book, *Message of the Stars*, gives convincing testimony of such cases. Not only do our lives here on earth react to the thoughts we create, but we thereby influence our future lives also, and our life in the subtle and mental worlds as well. This inexorable truth was revealed in a dreadful form to Max Heindel, who could look into a person's former incarnation to explain his present difficulties.

The problem of Karma and reincarnation seems to be one unending tangle, unless reviewed in the light of spiritual truths, so we will give an extract from the Discourses of Meher Baba: "The intermittent incarnations in the gross world are only apparently disconnected. Karma persists as a connecting link and determining factor through all the lives of the soul. The law of Karma, and its manner of operation, cannot be fully intelligible as long as the

* See Appendix. After death conditions.

gross body and the gross world are considered to be the only facts of existence. Karmic determination is made possible by the existence of subtle and mental bodies and worlds."

"The plane on which one can possess physical consciousness is the gross world. The planes on which the soul can have subtle and mental consciousness, are the subtle and mental worlds."

"The source of desire is to be found in the mind, which is related to the mental plane. Here the seed of desire is attached to the mind; the desire exists here in an involved form, just in the same way as the tree is latent in the seed. The mental body, which is the seat of the mind, is often called Karma Sharira, or the causal body, because it stores within itself the seeds of the causes of all desires. The mind retains all impressions and dispositions in a latent form. The limited 'I', or the ego, is composed of these sanskaras. However, the actual manifestation of sanskaras in consciousness, as expressed through different mental processes, takes place in the subtle body."

"The soul, which, in reality is one, and undifferentiated, becomes apparently individualised through the limitations of the mental body, which is the seat of the ego-mind. The ego-mind is formed by the accumulated impressions of past experiences and actions; and it is this ego-mind which constitutes the kernel of existence of the re-incarnating individual. The ego-mind, which is a reservoir of latent impressions, is the state of the mental body; the ego-mind, becoming spirit and experiencing activated and manifested impressions, is the state of the subtle body; and the ego-mind, as descended in the gross sphere for created action, is the state of a physical incarnation. Thus the ego-mind, which is seated in the mental body, is the entity which has all the phases of continued existence as a separate individual, until it is completely dissolved into higher life."

"The ego-mind, which is seated in the mental

body, takes lower bodies, according to the impressions stored in it. These impressions determine whether a person will die young or old, whether he will experience health or illness, or both, whether he will be beautiful or ugly, whether he will suffer from physical handicaps like blindness, or will have general efficiency of the body; whether he will be pure or impure of heart, fickle or steadfast in will, and whether he will be immersed in the pursuit of material gains or will seek the inner light of the spirit."

"The ego-mind, in its turn, becomes modified through the deposited impressions of Karma (which includes not only gross and physical actions, but thought and feeling), and the circumstances of each incarnation get adjusted to the composition and the needs of the ego-mind. Thus, if a person has developed certain social capacities or tendencies in one incarnation, he takes them on to the succeeding incarnations which follow. Through the persistence of impressions, the Karmic links which have been forged in one incarnation are carried on and developed in succeeding incarnations, so that those which have been closely associated with each other, through good or bad dealings, have a tendency to have recurring contacts, and carry on the game of duality far enough to gather so much experience of the opposites that the soul, out of the fullness of its experience, eventually becomes ripe for dropping the ego-mind and turning inwards to know itself as the Oversoul."

The ways of Masters and Initiates in the East appear strange and incredible at times to Westerners who have had no previous experience of them; their idiosyncracies, their eccentricities, their absolute disregard of any previous arrangement which they may have made, the rapid and inexplicable changes and alterations in their plans, conduct, agreements, and so forth. Such acts tend to produce adverse impressions in many who meet them, but the Masters work in accordance with the law of Cause and Effect. Needless to say, intimate followers live under very

trying conditions at times. Here we should always try to realise that our limited viewpoint sees things only as they are from the objective standpoint. We have to understand that our minds know nothing of the inner technique or subjective work done by the Masters, who are often engaged in "tricking Maya," so that we are hardly in a position to judge or criticise those who have transcended all human limitations, being beyond the domain of Karma and Maya, and thus established "above the law" of mind and matter. The wheel of life and death no longer turns for them. They are the Great Compassionate Ones, who voluntarily reincarnate for the sake of their work to perfect humanity. These Perfect Men, being in direct touch with all the spheres of inner consciousness, work along many avenues, of which we know nothing. This secret unknown approach can only be fully apprehended by Self-Realised Men; they work for infinite ends, and infinite ends must necessarily be very different from the finite ends which govern ordinary limited individuals.

A disciple's relationship with his Master is very different from his relations with others. His connection with his Master is governed by his former associations in past lives, for when a Master takes an incarnation, he calls those who have been associated with him in former lives. This calling by the Master is not usually effected by purely natural means; it is generally a secret process, the disciple being drawn to the Master by an unaccountable and unconscious magnetism, which he would be unable to explain. He might be blown along, as if by the wind, unconscious, and yet sure. In many cases there will have been some subjective process, as when the Master may appear in a dream, either as himself, or in some symbolical form; or, again, there may have been some spiritual experience, or some chance meeting, in which the aspirant feels the recognition of his soul; and knows intuitively that there is some deep connection with the Master, and that henceforth

his whole life will be completely changed by this one predominating factor; this new spiritual relationship, which overshadows all previous events and all the former relationships of his life. Spiritual development consists in the gradual emancipation of consciousness, the mind having been entangled in the bindings of the sanskaras, which have accumulated from past lives. A Master who receives unstinted devotion and service from a devotee is able to wipe out many of the sanskaras which impede the aspirant's progress along the Path towards Self-Realisation.

We should here make some reference to the Koran, since explanation of the theory of reincarnation is noticeably absent from it. According to Moslem usage. God's word is Koran, and Mahommed's word or say is Hadees (plural Ahadees). A Moslem authority on the Koran writes me that he has not come across any Hadees in support of reincarnation, but that there are several pages in the Koran which no doubt cover the facts of evolution and reincarnation; but these particular passages are also capable of being interpreted differently, and, as a rule, in the Moslem world they are interpreted in the sense of the final resurrection or the Day of Judgment. There is neither categorical admission nor rejection of evolution and reincarnation in the Koran and the Ahadees. To make out a case for evolution and reincarnation from the Koran is *not impossible*. What one might call "the stalemate" of reincarnation is practically unknown to the Moslems, who are more positively minded than the Hindus. One of the great Moslem Masters, Jalaluddin Rumi, the charge-man of Shams, does not mince words about evolution and reincarnation. In his famous *Masnavi* he has graphically described them both, and he invariably quotes Quranic words in support of his "direct" experiences. He says :

"Manzar Qur-an Maghzra Bardhastam,
Vostulhan Pishay Sagaan Andalabitam."

That is: "I have digested the marrow out of the Qur' an and have left over the bones for the dogs." The Sufis generally refer to worldly-minded people as Sagay-Durian or Worldly-dogs!

Millions of Hindus believe in reincarnation, and millions of Moslems do not believe in it, yet they have both produced a great number of Perfect Masters, and both have shown the worst in human nature, as we saw recently during the Indo-Pakistan Partition! In philosophy India has had no influence on Arabia. The Hindus worship God through the medium of picturization of the different aspects or attributes of God, whereas the Arabs, before Mohammed came, were idol-worshippers, for whom the very idols were God, much the same as fetish worship of backward Africans of to-day.

Some may ask: Has not man's evolution always been a very slow process? How do we know? Except for a few thousand years of vague historical records, we know *nothing* of man's progress through the ages. Moreover, his spiritual evolution must be a debatable point, since there have been Perfect Men from the days of Adam. Again, one might ask, How can there be a sudden quickening of the Spirit on a universal scale, as predicted in this book? Our reply is that the Masters have been patiently working behind the scenes to bring in the New Dispensation. But if so, then what happened in the days of Jesus and Mohammed? We are not competent to do research work on the origins of the Christian and Islamic ages, or to examine historical records so far back, but it has been authoritatively presumed that the renaissance in the first century of Islamic history, the great and magnificent Omayyad period after Mohammed's passing was due to his Avataric manifestation. But now, in some respects, Islam seems almost back to the conditions prevailing before the advent of Mohammed! In fact, the first chapter of the Koran paints a picture of the presentday Moslem in the same way that Jeremiah's

prophecies applies to the Christian of to-day. Certainly Islam is in great need of the Imam Mahdi to reveal himself once again, to give the Moslem faith a new spiritual orientation, and to revitalise it with a fresh spirit of sympathy and co-operation and service towards mankind in general.

The last war, and the one before, with all their colossal chaos and misery, to say nothing of the aftermaths, are helping to bring about man's spiritual redemption; for only when man's pride, his conceit of intellect and self-sufficiency of knowledge, are humbled by physical and mental suffering will he at last be prepared to turn in his extremity to God.

"The Spirit of Truth, whom the World cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth Him!" The Intellectuals cannot see the Spirit with their clouded vision. As Nietzsche wrote, "Spirit is Life, which itself cutteth into life. By its own torture does it increase its own knowledge; and the Spirit's happiness is this, to be anointed and consecrated with tears as a sacrificial victim." The Intellectuals turn away from Life, and, seeking after their dead Tree of Knowledge, may become fools in becoming wise! How can we obtain the actuality of Real Knowledge? Only by the Real Inner Experience. The Avatar will give us a fresh awakening of the heart, to bring about that spiritual revival necessary for the work of restoration and reconstruction following the coming upheaval. The problems of to-day are so great, so far-reaching, that no statesman or combination of statesmen can deal with them effectively, for none has the requisite inspiration or spiritual comprehension; which can only come through a superhuman faculty for assisting man in solving his problems. Only Divine Love can bring about the change that will induce co-ordination of the mind and heart and give rise to a better balanced personality than that possessed by the average person. This change of heart or rebirth of spiritual

perception will enable men to develop the sympathy, capacity and, indeed, genius necessary to deal with the almost insoluble questions which bewilder and perplex them. There is no other solution.

Chapter XI

PROPHECIES

We should know that the world is passing through an avataric period, the signs of which are universal unrest and dissatisfaction with present-day life. What, therefore, is to happen when man accepts the truth that, underlying the realities of life, there are fundamental laws and spiritual principles which cannot be violated or ignored? Only if these principles are respected can humanity rebuild on a broader and more equitable basis. What sound economic and political structure can there be without an enduring ethical foundation? The conflicting conceptions of life and the different social ideological experiments of our age have done nothing but bring about wars and enhance the general misery of the ignorant masses of mankind. How can the present welter of confused ideals produce that inner and outer harmony in human relations indispensable for co-operation in ordered and peaceful progress? As we have said, the answer is that we must be taught to perceive spiritual values. There is only One Reality, there is only One Truth, which can unify the heart and produce love and harmony in our relations with one another. That Reality is God. We see our world falling apart. How can we make a new world unless we have new men to make it, and how can we have new men without new hearts? We surely need a New Order in which politicians are not alone, but are guided by the Saints and Sages!

During the last two thousand years there have been many prophecies of some great impending

change. There is no need to elaborate on the Biblical prophecies. We will turn our attention to some others, while bearing in mind that prophecies are not reliable until verified, and that the seer's vision is coloured by his own personal prejudices and mental limitations, unless he is one of those who have transcended Maya. Nevertheless we know that many seers in different countries and in different ages have predicted stupendous upheavals and great changes of every kind in preparation for the New Era, the world having reached a point in its development where the same forces which caused the great Atlantean island continent to sink beneath the waves are again active.* Volcanoes, dormant over long periods, are again in eruption; great natural catastrophies of every kind are on the increase. The late Max Heindel, who founded the Rosicrucian Fellowship in Southern California, wrote in 1917, before anything was known of nuclear fission and the atomic bomb: "We know that upheavals and volcanic outbursts show us that subterranean activities are not suspended by any means." He had seen (clairvoyantly) great subterranean caverns, filled with oil and gas, which run in a South-Westerly direction from Maine, across the American continent, beneath Southern California and far out under the South Pacific ocean. He thought that their ignition and explosion might make a great gap in the earth's surface. At the same time, he saw an archetype in process of construction, which shows that a great change will take place in the world when a cataclysm, or a series of cataclysms, has broken up the present Continent of America and the adjoining seas. This may seem an impossible prediction on the part of Heindel, but, as he says, we should remember how, half a century before America was discovered, "Mother Shipton," the Yorkshire seeress, prophesied the discovery of an unknown land, in which gold would abound. She saw many

* Research on the subject of Atlantis, is being carried out by The Atlantis Research Centre. See *Atlantis Journal*. Markham House Press Ltd., 31 King's Road, London, S.W.3.

things of the future, including railways, automobiles, airships, and the great iron vessels which would supersede the wooden ships. She foresaw great political upheavals, notably that of France, the alliance of France with Britain, and the amalgamation of Anglo-Saxon races, which has not yet come to pass. She beheld the emancipation of the Jew, and the unprecedented spread of knowledge amongst those of even the most lowly estate. As Heindel says, she ended with a prediction of certain upheavals of the earth's crust, whereby old lands will become submerged and new lands will appear. She foresaw the end of the world in 1991. Have not Nostradamus and others said much the same? This, however, means only the end of a cycle. Heindel goes on to say that perhaps it is hazardous to set the time when the remodelling of the earth will begin, but the archetype or matrix, moulded in mind stuff and representing the creative thought of the Grand Architect and His builders, seems so nearly complete, judging by the progress made during the years Heindel had watched its construction, that he thinks it safe to say that by the middle of the present century, about 1950, if not before, the upheavals will have started; so it is not at all incredible that shortly there may be one of such magnitude that Mother Shipton was justified in believing it to be the end of the world! Or perhaps, as Heindel goes on to say, he may be premature in judging that the upheavals will start in the middle of the century; they may be deferred until its end. We shall soon know, for only time can tell, but certain it is that great preparations are going on in the invisible world and have been going on for centuries, and are now nearing their completion.

Just before leaving America, as I was saying goodbye to Mrs. Max Heindel, who, like her husband, is also clairvoyant and a notable astrologer, I asked what she thought about her husband's prophecy concerning the breaking up of the American continent. She then told me that she had recently had two

visions, in which she had been shown a huge mass of land being pushed up out of the sea, off the coast of Southern California. This event, she said, would cause tidal waves of immense size.

The reader might ask, "What is going to happen to England?" In the beginning of the last War, when England was fighting desperately with her back to the wall, practically unaided and unarmed, Meher Baba remarked: *"England must and will win the war. Shorn of her pride and complacency she will become senior partner in a real Commonwealth of Nations."* The war has never really ended, but there are signs that this Commonwealth is coming into being.

Britain could not have come through the First World War if her survival had not been divinely ordained, for was she not saved before by divine intervention? We all know the legend of the Angels of Mons. We had only a thin line of khaki between us and the German hordes, the position was untenable, absolutely desperate, and the British could not hope to hold them back. An eyewitness of the supernatural event which then happened, a British Officer, said: "The air was full of Shining Ones! I then knew we would not fail!" It was believed by some at the time that the explanation of the Germans not breaking through, was that some of their observers saw behind the British lines great concentrations of reinforcements which did not really exist, so that the Germans waited, instead of pushing on, and Britain was saved. The sceptics will remark that it was the taxi-cabs of Paris which saved the situation!

Then, again, what happened in the early part of the Second World War? Are we ungrateful enough to maintain that we did not have divine intervention in the form of the "Miracle of Dunkirk"? This time the small British Army was again in rout. The English Channel, ordinarily never really smooth, became like a mill pond, and the great black cloud,

caused by exploding oil tanks, screened the remnants of the withdrawing troops from the enemy. Small craft of all kinds had been collected from all over the British Isles, and had crossed the water, along with the Navy, to take off the survivors of our retreating forces. Men and officers waded into the sea, nearly up to their necks, clambering into the boats just in time. Meanwhile the heroes who fought the rearguard actions delayed the enemy till the whole army had come across.

Students of history have often speculated on the strategic blunders of Hitler. Why, after the Dunkirk defeat, did he not immediately invade England, before America could re-equip our shattered forces? Instead, Hitler overran France and did not concentrate on England when he had her at his mercy. Why, also, did he not invade Turkey before sending his troops to Russia? Why did not Japan follow up her initiative, after Pearl Harbour, by bombing defenceless American cities, for at that time America had practically no aircraft. It seems a mystery that she missed her opportunity, but the solution to all these riddles is a spiritual one. History has ever shown the designing finger of God. The possible developments suggested above were *not* part of the Divine Plan.

I do not think it is irrelevant here to mention that I had two symbolical dreams concerning the future, which were indirectly connected with America. They took place some years before 1939. I dreamt that a relative and I were standing outside our home, looking up into the sky above a London Park. High in the blue heavens, an enormous, angry storm cloud was massed above us. Out of it pointed the long black muzzles of four great guns; two to the East and two to the West. "This means another war!" I exclaimed. Then a voice spoke: "GOD HAS BEEN BLASPHEMED! HE IS ANGRY! HE IS NOW GOING TO SPEAK!" Much perturbed in my dream I ran upstairs, but when I came down, it seemed that God

had already spoken! Turning to my companion, I asked, "Well, what did God say?" I thought he was just going to tell me, but I woke up!

The following night, before falling asleep, I wondered what the dream meant; it was a warning, a presage of something terrible to come. What was the voice of God? I thought of the "still small voice," the "Voice of Silence." What about one's conscience, the inherent sense of moral obligation? Our conscience, which guides us, or should guide us, was by no means infallible; one has only to think of the foul deeds done by individuals and nations in the name of conscience. The question of "guidance" was very difficult. I thought of the things a man will do under the impression that he has God's guidance! How far could we depend on our limited human conscience, which led so many astray? When did guidance come from a really higher source? Still, at times, a voice did speak, sometimes loudly, sometimes softly.

There was the external voice which had spoken so loudly into my ear the words, "THIS IS NOT REALITY," that I had turned round sharply to see who was speaking, but nobody was there! This strange incident took place at the beginning of my quest for Truth. The words had conveyed nothing to me at that time, and I just dismissed the experience as an hallucination. Some years later, however, I was to appreciate the meaning. Then there were the spiritual experiences, which we cannot go into here, but which enabled me to realise that there were unknown realms outside the mind. All through the ages man has had messages from sources outside his usual self; in some cases these have been genuine divine revelations, from his Higher Self; The Supreme Intelligence would express Itself, sometimes symbolically and sometimes directly.

If, according to the dream, "God Was going to speak," there must be some coming cosmic revelation.

There were many who thought that a great crisis in human history was on its way. Was there to be the war of wars, Armageddon? Was the Word again to be made flesh? Would there be some form of divine intervention to stop man's total destruction of himself? Was that why God would have to speak? The Word again made flesh!

That night, as I fell asleep, I prayed: "Good Lord! Please give me another dream, and this time tell me what is going to happen. When and Where?" I had the answer that same night. This time I was walking quietly along the bank of a wide and peaceful river. I noticed a clump of unusual white flowers on the path. They were outstanding in their beauty, strange flowers I had never before seen. The landscape was tranquil and all seemed at peace. I noticed that people were walking about unconcernedly. Suddenly the atmosphere changed, for I had turned round and saw something gleaming white, away up the reach of the river. It was very far off but, as I watched, I could see this glint of white was the white crest of a huge tidal wave. It was coming, very slowly, up the river! "Good gracious!" I cried, "We shall all be drowned!" For I could now well see that this slowly advancing crest would, in time, flood all the ground, which spread in a flat expanse to the far horizon—the plains of civilization! As I searched for a means of escape from the oncoming doom, I noticed that my path (symbolizing the Mystic Path, which is called 'Sair' by the Sufis), wound away in the distance to a curiously shaped hill. This hill stood up out of the plain. It resembled a pyramid. It was the way to safety. "We must all make for that hill! I must warn the people!" As I shouted I woke up.

The dreams plainly indicated the coming catastrophe which would slowly overwhelm our present civilisation. But at the time I understood nothing of the significance of the pyramid-shaped hill. Later I discovered that the pyramid signified the mystical

triangle, which is the symbolical meaning for the soul's journey through creation, back to itself, the Divine Self, or Oversoul.

The soul is not part of Creation, but is as much inside it as outside it, in the sense that Creation is but an illusion and not Reality. The white flowers on the path, the Mystic Path, stood for purity, the necessary purification of our consciousness, if we were to progress towards the Ultimate Goal.

While at that time I could appreciate the nature and meaning of the two dreams, I could not see how I could help others or enable them to escape. While meditating on my dreams I remembered the words of a strange man whom I had met some years previously in Central Europe. He had explained some strange events regarding the new spiritual Dispensation to come and had insisted that Jesus and the Apostles, already reincarnated, were again on earth, preparing for their new mission. He also told me a little of what was going to happen, and how every living creature would get some form of spiritual rebirth, in proportion to the degree of its spiritual development. He even told me what I should do in the new Awakening to come. When I sceptically protested, he retorted sardonically: "Ah! But you do not know what the Spirit can do! The Spirit can change even you!" While reminiscent, I recalled the curious message I received some years before I met this man. My hand wrote, "automatically," "You will belong to a new movement of an entirely new nature in connection with the Unseen World . . . we want you to write a book on Christ's teachings in relation to modern thought." I remember I thought that a theologian would be much more suitable, and, to my surprise, the answer came back, "No! You are a very suitable medium for the coming revelations to humanity!" Needless to say, I was not interested, but I did note down this strange communication. Now, many years later, I find myself attempting to

explain Christ's teachings in relation to modern Eastern metaphysical thought.*

At that time I knew nothing of the Silent Saint of India, nor his message to the world. If God was going to speak, then it must mean the Word would again be made flesh. Some divine manifestation in human form which would tune in the cosmic wave length, releasing the dynamic spiritual voltage which would recharge the stagnant consciousness of men! Some believe the Universe is constructed upon the vibrational quality of tone. Our globe is certainly a discordant symphony, with all members of the orchestra playing different tunes. It has been said that "The entire world is a musical instrument, and the pole of the world celestial is where the heavenly chord is divided by the spiritual sun."* According to Socrates, on the upper surface of each circle there is a siren going round with it, humming a single note, and these together form one great harmony. This can be sensed by all who have heard the celestial harmonies of the Spheres. Pythagoras evolved the doctrine of "The Music of the Spheres" on the Number Seven, for the purpose of the Seven Spheres or Planes of inner existence is the transmutation of matter into Spirit. Esoteric knowledge points to the theory of the material world changing into the subtle world, which, again, will change into the mental world. Gradually new states of being are born, leading us to that event described by Tennyson:

"One God, one Law, one Element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole Creation moves."

* To critics who may consider I am too dogmatic or categorical, I ask that it should be realised from the beginning that I do not mean to be controversial. I have merely *endeavoured to interpret* the philosophy of the Master, and my work is primarily for those who believe on him and his Mission. As many of my statements demand in themselves books of explanations, I feel that readers can, if they choose, study the sources referred to, since they are the basis of much of the material which may be questioned.

* We have been unable to trace the source of this quotation.

Corrine Heline, in her booklet. *Healing and Regeneration through Music*, writes on this theme: "A study of the symphonic aspects of the cosmic pattern and its relation to musical science as we know it, offers not only an absorbingly fascinating field for occult practical application, that goes far to remove in our consciousness the sense of separateness that now exists between the seen and the unseen, the material and the spiritual. When the fact of universal relationship becomes a living truth in our consciousness, we truly know ourselves as a part of that One, in whom we live and move and have our being. . . . Every creative thing, from molecule to man, possesses a keynote of its own. The sum total of all these notes makes up the Music of the Spheres." The Magic Flute of Krishna and the Harp of Orpheus drew all men to them. He who has heard the distant fluting of the "Pipes of Pan" swell into a cosmic orchestra of sublime celestial harmonies, knows full well that these pipes are the symbolical urge of the soul to find Itself, for God is the Supreme Conductor of the heavenly orchestra.

As Kabir sings :

"There, where my Lord is seen self-revealed, there
 reigns the spring of the Spirit!
 There the unstruck music, the Song of the Holy
 Spirit, sounds of itself!
 There the streams of Light flow in all directions.
 Few are the men who can cross to that Shore!
 There millions of Krishnas stand with folded
 hands:
 There millions of Vishnus bow their heads:
 There millions of Brahmas read the Vedas:
 There millions of Shivas are lost in contemplation:
 There millions of Indras dwell:
 There the demi-gods and the munis are unnumbered:
 There millions of Saraswatis play on the vina:
 There, in those depths, dwells the scent of sandal
 and flowers !"

Laboratory work by science is even now beginning to rediscover and verify these ancient truths, which will one day be accepted. But few, at present, can do more than sense the vibratory rhythms which uphold and enfold this planet.

It was not till some five years after my dream about the pyramid, when in America, that I understood something of its import. All national symbols and images are related to a nation's inner life, as well as to its outer life, for such symbols are the focal points, as it were, for the transmission of the spiritual force which influence and guide humanity. They help to bring about the unfolding of the consciousness of a particular race. Those who are acquainted with the language of symbolism may be able to discern the character and destiny of a nation. In America I discovered that on the reverse side of the Great Seal of the U.S.A. is stamped a pyramid. This pyramid is constructed of thirteen blocks, symbolising the original thirteen colonies of America. No one has ever discovered how the Pyramids of Egypt were built, or how old they are. Some say they were built by the Atlanteans and are far older than estimated by the archaeologists. Since there are other pyramids in other parts of the world, including China, they suggest a unity of hidden knowledge. The initiates gave them to the world as symbolical representations of the spiritual growth of humanity. In looking at the pyramid inscribed on the Great Seal of the U.S.A. it will be noticed that the capstone hangs suspended on the top and is not in place. This suspended stone has an eye in it; the All-Seeing Eye of God! Light radiates from the stone. The same pattern is on the dollar bills.

All these interesting signs symbolise a great spiritual growth in the States. But only after she has experienced the purifying and purging flames of tribulation. It is sad to think that the hope of the Western World, where the standards of living are the highest and the happiest, should have to suffer, but

she, too, has to play her part in the World Passion. This reminds us that some two centuries ago, George Washington had his famous vision in which he "saw" a dark shadowy being, like an angel floating in mid-air, between Europe and America. He was given to "see" the three great distasters to afflict American soil. The War of the Rebellion, the Civil War between North and South, and finally the War which has yet to come.*

We will close this chapter by giving Baba's warning as described by Dr. Donkin in his book, *The Wayfarers*. It was in October 1945, the period of Baba's seclusion on the Angiras Rishi Hill. This is a forest-clad mountain in one of the wildest parts of the Central Provinces, so teeming with game that huge fires had to be kept burning to keep the wild animals away from the summit of the hill where Baba chose to spend his seclusion. "Imagine a verdant forest cloaking the harsh contours of a broken mountainous tract, and in the curving vales, brooks and rivulets babbling over the stones to join the sacred Mahanadi, whose source lies only a few miles away."

"In the days of old, it is said, four great rishis passed their lives in these lonely forest, and in the scattered hamlets that lie between the hills, the tales of these great saints are still handed down from one generation to another. The four rishis were known as Angiras Rishi, Shringi Rishi, Muchkunda Rishi and Kunmag Rishi."

"Jal Kerawala, to whom Baba had entrusted the selection and preparation of a suitable place for his seclusion, chose the hill connected with Angiras Rishi. He gave orders for a hut to be built on its summit, had the rough track to the foot of the hill made passable for cars, arranged for men to bring water, milk and vegetables up the hill, and in short, saw to all the details of making Baba's retreat smooth and easy."

* *Prophetic Years* by Wing Anderson, U.S.A.

"Baba and his men came to this wild hilltop on the last day of October and for four days Baba spent most of the day sitting alone with Ali Shah (one of Baba's favourite Fifth Plane masts) in a hut which had been prepared for the mast on the lower slopes of the hill. Thereafter Ali Shah was sent back to Ahmednagar, and for the final week Baba continued his silent work alone, in his special hut on the summit of the hill."

"On one of these latter days Baba emerged, after having sat for many hours in complete seclusion, his face more drawn and weary than Adi* ever remembered having seen it, and said that a gigantic disaster would overwhelm the world that would wipe out three-quarters of mankind. Adi was deeply stirred, not only by the anguish on Baba's face, but also because he spontaneously dictated these words immediately on emerging from his seclusion, as if the work done during that seclusion had been specifically related to the world passion of which he spoke."

Nine years later, in September 1954, Baba, when describing his death (which has to be a violent one, by means of assassination), stated that at that fatal moment, he would break his silence in the ONE WORD (OM) which only God could utter. Then our planet is expected to give a shudder and the Great Disaster will occur. This cosmic catastrophe, as the Master has explained, will force the remaining one-fourth of humanity to come together in peace and amity, and it will unite to bring about a Real Brotherhood of Man which will be the prelude to the Golden Age.

Here no doubt the sceptics will pooh-pooh such a calamity. But do not increasing warnings from scientists as to the dangers of continuing hydrogen bomb explosions, causing permanent increase in world radiation, have to be considered?

* Adi K. Irani of Ahmednagar, India, publisher of *The Wayfarers* and other works connected with Meher Baba.

Is not there the possibility of World suicide, apart from a Third World War, unless the Masters behind the scenes arrest such an insane and suicidal development by putting an end to the present state of affairs?

Chapter XII

JESUS AN AVATAR

As already stated. Creation came into being to enable man, as the individual soul, to recognise his own true nature and his divine origin. His origin is the Oversoul, God Almighty, Paramatman, Yazdan, or by whatever name He is known. He is always none but One.

In the West we have to get back to forgotten truths, that man is God and that Godmen do exist. All who come under the influence of a Perfect Master come not only to look upon the Master as God, but to accept the thesis that every man is God! In fact, they come to realise God in everything. This, in a sense, is a contradiction, and amounts to admitting the existence of innumerable Gods, though insisting that God is One! To meet this difficulty we must repeatedly stress the duality of Creation and the Cosmic Illusion of Maya. We must emphasize the fundamental Truth of existence, namely, that man, once arrived at human form, has ended his evolutionary career, so far as the physical development is concerned, and, having thereby attained his human consciousness in full, should now begin to realise his real mission in life. When he arrives at inspiration, born of experience in the Subtle World and the illumination of the Mental World, he will begin to grasp the fact that the annihilation of the "false ego" will bring his transformation into the Real and Only Self, which is always One with everything. So we should constantly stress to ourselves the words, "I am man! I am God!"

'Remember always that, no matter when and where, Man is always ONE in the highest experience of Truth, namely Self-Realisation. In the same strain as the Celestial Song of Krishna, we find, several thousand years later, that Jalaluddin Rumi sang in one of his famous odes which begins:

"I am the theft of the rogues,
I am the pain of the sick.
I am both cloud and rain."

Modern psychology, by accepting the hypothesis that the object of creation is to bring the unconscious into the realm of the conscious, should discover the hidden truths of existence. But how can this be done? Only through the impulse of love, for love is the main-spring and motive force of Creation. As we know, man's concept of God varies according to his degree of culture. How far is it possible to explain the nature of God? Within the limited focus of our mind, so far as it is possible, we can say that God is love; that is to say. God is divine love! Divine Love is very far removed from human love, ordinary human love. Let us begin by analysing the various aspects of love.

First of all in Nature there is the love of inanimate things, the power of attraction, in the negative and positive units, that is to be found in chemistry and physics. Then comes love in the vegetable kingdom, shewn in the pollinisation of trees and plants. Then there comes the love of sentient creatures, reptiles, birds and animals. Love is to be found in all animate things, but the love which animals, whether domesticated or otherwise, can show to one another and to human beings is proof of the capacity of their love instincts to rise to a very high level, often to the extent of individual sacrifice. Finally, there is human love, which has some of the aspects of animal love, but is altogether on a higher plane of consciousness. It is of an exceedingly complicated nature, for man is an intricate and contradictory

creature! Selfless human love, the highest aspect of all, is very rare and can never be of a totally impersonal nature till man has achieved Perfection and ended his evolutionary career. We must never confuse human love with the love of our Divine Self, which is God. "All love comes to me!" said Krishna.

All mystics have felt the Love of God; have experienced that inner glow, those divine rays, warm palpitating vibrations, as if the love of Heaven was being poured down to envelop and caress them. It is impossible to feel the ecstasy of a spiritual experience without this divine love, which is the birth-right of every soul. St. Augustine said, "Man is what he loves," and Eckhart's comment thereon reads: "If a man loves a stone, he is a stone; if he loves a man, he is a man; if he loves God, I dare not say more, for if I said he would then be God, ye might stone me." Divine Love brings about the annihilation of the animal self, or "false ego," and finally union with the Divine Self. In the words of Meher Baba: "It is for the sake of Love that the whole Universe sprang into existence, and it is for the sake of Love that it is kept going. God descends into the realm of illusion, because the apparent duality of the beloved and the Lover is eventually contributory to His conscious enjoyment of His own Divinity. God has to suffer the apparent differentiation into the multiplicity of souls in order to carry on the game of Love. They are his own forms and in relation to them He, at the same time, assumes the roles of the Divine Lover and the Divine Beloved . . . He is their Real and Ultimate Saviour, drawing them back to Himself."

"Though the whole world of Duality is only an illusion, that illusion has come into being for a significant purpose . . . Love is the reflection of God's unity in the world of Duality. It constitutes the entire significance of Creation. If love were excluded from life, all the souls in the world would assume complete externality to one another, and the only possible

relations and contacts in such a loveless world would be superficial and mechanical. It is because of Love that the contacts and relations between individual souls become significant, and Love, which gives meaning and value to all the happenings in the world of duality, is, at the same time, a standing challenge to duality. As Love gathers strength, it generates creative restlessness, and becomes the main driving power of that spiritual dynamo which ultimately succeeds in restoring the consciousness of the original unity of Being."*

Here some may object that the whole animal creation is based on the systematic extermination of one creature by another, and on a cruelty expressed in their instincts. Anyone who studies natural history might well come to this conclusion. The only answer we can give is that pain and suffering had to be; to bring about the spiritual evolution of the creature and to enable man eventually to recognise the divinity within himself, instead of remaining indefinitely separated from God, his Divine Source. The existence of various degrees of illumination, leading to the super-conscious states, is well exemplified in the lives of the saints, both Eastern and Western. There are also the mystical inspirations of less exalted individuals. Even a minor state of soul-awakening can transform the life of a man. How much more so when an advanced stage of initiation into the life of the Spirit takes place. There are many records of the transcendental revelations of the soul experienced by the Illuminati who have made their mark on religious history. There are also the great waves of evangelism which sweep over the masses who suddenly feel their need for God.

Every two thousand years, roughly, the sun enters another sign in the Zodiac, and we are now approaching the Aquarian Age. Every age brings with it a new culture, a new philosophy of life. This implies an immense outpouring of spiritual energy and

* *Discourses of Meher Baba.*

the quickening of man's spiritual nature. Hence a divine manifestation of the Avatar is expected in the near future. Humanity has always welcomed and acknowledged every fresh dispensation of the Truth as embodied in the Great Ones and World Teachers. But it is recognised that, as the divine influence of these Masters recedes into the dim and distant past, their teachings become separated more and more from other teachings. No connection between the various faiths is sought, no common inspiration is admitted. Yet all the great world religions have been founded on the SAME principles. Fanatical supporters of each religion would insist that their Prophet and their Avatar alone was the only one and true Teacher of all time, and that every man outside was a heretic, an infidel, or a pagan. Yet all the original founders taught peace and the Brotherhood of Man. All the Masters have stressed the same principles, namely, the Continuity of life; the Forgiveness of sins; the Trinity of Manifestation and the Communion of Saints. To-day Baba says: "It is time religion goes (meaning rituals, ceremonies, creeds and dogmas) and God comes!"

Some Christian apologists interested in the comparative side of religion insist that the life of Jesus is completely unique; that in fact his life is incomparable. This is the characteristic defence of most of those holding office in Christian churches. The explanation for this narrow view is that there is insufficient acquaintance with the principles and spiritual laws which govern Creation, and also insufficient practical knowledge of the truths and realities behind the teachings of Jesus and other great Masters. Swami Vivekananda spoke of religion in the highest sense when he said: "Religion is the manifestation of Divinity already in Man."

It is to be wondered that no original Christian research has been made into the unknown life of Jesus before his Baptism, apart from some facts of his childhood. But there are legends from Moslem sources

that he visited India; also his visit appears to have been definitely recorded in Hindu and Buddhist Shastras. There is, so we understand, an ancient Tibetan manuscript at Marbur said to date from about the time of the Crucifixion, which states that Jesus came to India at the age of thirteen. That is easily possible since even in those days there were long caravan trips to India. It is reputed that Jesus visited Sindh, Puri, Benares and Nasik. It is thought that many great teachers have visited India, the Homeland of Spirituality. There is no real reason to suppose that the pattern of life of Jesus differed from that of the other great Avatars of history. Jesus seems to have had some of the same peculiar characteristics of Krishna and other Masters, which accounts for the riddles of the Gospels never having been explained.

The discovery of the Logia in Egypt, which created such a stir in Oxford, gives us grounds to suppose that Jesus spent some of his manhood in Egypt. It is to be questioned why there is no mention of a meeting between Appolonius of Tyana and Jesus; for they lived at the same time and must have had a spiritual connection with one another. Appolonius spoke reverently of the Masters in India, and there seems to be evidence that he had some of his initiations there. He also believed in the theory of reincarnation, for he said he was once a boy and once a girl. Like Jesus he had great powers which attracted much attention. It is recorded that when haled before his judges he rose in the air and disappeared, to be seen sometime later several hundred miles away.* It has been said that Jesus appeared in twelve different places at once, though no record of such an event is to be found in Christian literature. The Church blackened the name of Appolonius as they wanted no rival or competitor to detract from the unique miraculous nature of the Christ.

My father and some of his colleagues questioned

* Levitation. For evidence of Levitation phenomena see *The Encyclopedia of Psychic Science* by Dr. Nandor Fodor.

the death on the Cross and thought perhaps Jesus escaped after the ordeal of the Crucifixion. I can only conjecture that these scholars may have been influenced by the strong tradition in India that the body of Jesus is buried in Kashmir. The founder of the Ahmadiya Moslem sect insisted that Jesus was buried near Shrinagar. We know that in the days of Jesus, without air transport, the difficulties would have been almost insurmountable of conveying the body by natural means. But knowing the powers of the Masters it is easy to presume that the body may have been taken by supernormal means. No doubt "the man in white" found sitting outside the cave where the stone had been rolled away, was an initiate and may have been connected with the explanation of the empty tomb. The evidence in the Bible suggests a supernormal event, for the grave clothes had not been moved or disturbed, except for the napkin around the head of Jesus, which was found "rolled up" in a place by itself.

Modern research into psychic phenomena knows that dematerialisation of objects and bodies can take place.* This is easier to believe than the resurrection of the physical body, which may have been one of the early Christian myths made to impress the faithful. There is no reason to suppose that the disciples did not see Jesus in his spiritual body in the "upper chamber" and elsewhere; for all those acquainted with psychic phenomena know that there are many well-authenticated cases of appearances soon after death by deceased persons to relatives and friends. These are too numerous to be discounted by any who take the trouble to investigate.

It may be wondered why Jesus the Christ allowed himself to be crucified. But for all those who understand the occult significance of the blood, especially of the blood of an Avatar, which, when shed, assists in the regeneration of mankind, it is easy to understand

* Dematerialisation. See also The Encyclopaedia.

why our Lord chose to undertake the suffering on the Cross; for "the blood of the Lamb washeth away the sins of the world."^{*}

It should be borne in mind, however, that though Jesus suffered on the Cross ^{**} like an ordinary man, he was sustained by his Conscious Godhood, and was therefore experiencing, in spite of the physical torture, all the Bliss, Power and Glory which belongs to the God-conscious state. For the sake of man in bondage, the Christ allows himself to be vicariously bound. Thus the Avatars and God-men will continue to suffer vicariously as long as it helps to emancipate souls in the bondage of Maya, and to enable them to attain to the goal of life, which is Self-Realisation.

Although the Masters are always in the God-conscious state, which is non-duality, nevertheless, by descending into the realm of duality, they not only know themselves to be God, but they also see God in all their dealings with the world of duality, without in any manner becoming affected by its bindings. Thus the Masters are continually being crucified, by sharing the burdens of humanity, which they will continue to do till the purpose of Creation is realised by all.

Reading the life of Jesus, one is filled with

^{*} According to all primitive cults, "It is expedient that one man should die for the people," (John xi, v. 50, 51) and that God-incarnate, or the divine king, or his substitute should be sacrificed, their blood being shed for the regeneration of mankind. According to *The God of the Witches*, a book on folklore history by Professor M. Murray, William Rufus, Thomas a Beckett, Joan of Arc, and Gilles de Rais come into this category. Then, again, ritual flagellation, both in the West and East, follows out the tradition that the blood has some occult significance and value as fertiliser to the earth. Therefore the blood of saints and martyrs should have a very potent effect. Though many Perfect Masters have died sacrificial deaths for the sake of posterity, it has by no means been the law, since many Perfect Masters seem to have died from natural causes and peacefully. The horrible ritual murders of to-day amongst African tribes, in which a native boy is sacrificed for the good of the community, often under the cruellest conditions, are based on the same idea of substitution, to propitiate the gods.

^{**} Crucifixion in the days of Jesus was a very common form of death penalty. Philo of Alexandria, who lived at that time, witnessed many hundreds of his compatriots die in such a manner.

wonder and bitterness that a God-Incarnate One and the Avatar of his Age should have had so many enemies, and that almost every man's hand became raised against him. But the forces of bigotry, intolerance and jealousy are ever marshalled against the saviours of humanity. Even some of the followers of John the Baptist, along with the Pharisees, appear to have criticised Jesus. Yet John, a Perfect Master who enabled Jesus to realise his own Perfection, said of Jesus, "But one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose"; knowing Jesus to be the Avatar of his age.

When Jesus attained Self-Realisation on his baptism, or, as the Bible says, was "In the glory of the Father," it is recorded: "Straightway, coming out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the spirit, like a dove, descending upon him . . . and there came a voice from Heaven saying Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." This is a symbolical description of the great spiritual event which leads to the sanctum sanctorum of the Spirit; for the Sacred Books never disclose the secrets of God-hood. Such sacred revelations are always couched in veiled language.

In the life of St. Francis of Assisi there is an account by Brother Leo of the vision of the Saint on Mount Alvernis, when he "saw, coming down from Heaven, a torch of flame, exceeding beautiful and light, which, descending, rested on the head of St. Francis, and out of the flame there came a voice" St. Francis explained his initiation to Brother Leo in the following words: "Then was I in a light of contemplation, in which I saw the abyss of the Infinite Goodness and Wisdom and Power of God, who also spake in such a manner unto me, even as in olden times he had spoken to Moses." (Moses was presumably a God-Realised Man, but living in very primitive times, he suited his methods to the people with whom he had to deal.)

In the Bible we read that on Mount Sinai God

appeared in a thick cloud with fire. The Bible should never be taken too literally. The word "cloud" (manzil) means state of consciousness or mansion and has other meanings also. It is the symbol used by initiates for different planes of higher consciousness. As in the words of a great Sufi Saint:—

"Asman abro Bunya Basta Been
Avvalin Haq manzil puz zamin."

"Behold the sky and clouds and the world.
First is God, then the planes, the last is earth,
But all three are linked."*

Jesus was referring to the spheres or planes of higher consciousness of the inner spiritual existence when he said: "In My Father's house are many mansions." We read that when the Transfiguration occurred, Jesus had ascended a mountain, "And there was a cloud that overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, hear ye Him.'"

It was Christ, and not Jesus the man, who was the *only* Son of God. The word "Christ" in the dictionary denotes a state of consciousness, the very highest that can be attained to in physical existence, since the Realisation of Self can only take place in life, and *not* after death. Meher Baba, once asked if he were Christ, replied, "All can be Christ, but very few can be Jesus," for very few can be the Avatar, but all of us have, eventually, to attain Self-Realisation in some life or other.

In the New Testament it is recorded that Jesus gave secret teachings to the Twelve, "And he said unto them. Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God, but unto them that are without all these things are done in parables." Jesus also promised Self-Realisation or Gnosis to his disciples when he said: "Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that

* This translation is not quite exact, but we have been unable to find a more literal version.

I drink of, and with the baptism that I am baptised withal shall ye be baptised," and also "Whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be the servant of all . . . for even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many." Jesus in calling himself the "Son of Man" admitted the intrinsic divinity of man.

My father, in his book, points out that one of the characteristics of the Gospel of Mark was that he constantly assigns, as the reason why Jesus taught in parables, the desire *not* to be understood by those who heard him! It is quite clear from our quotation that the parables were for those "without"; but my father, along with other scholars of his time, was naturally unable to fathom the reason for this secrecy. for they did not know the hermetic truths which were only for the chosen few, since they were related to the subtleties of the Path leading to Godhood. Had these scholars been acquainted with any followers of the Perfect Masters of to-day, they might have appreciated the technique of Jesus with his men.

We cannot know what Jesus really said to his chosen few, about the ultimate perfectioning of their being; but Chapter 14, John, indicates Jesus' explanation of the state of Gnosis, and the 26th verse in particular is very clear in its meaning regarding their future glorification: "But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." . . . Paul explained his state of Perfection (for he became a Perfect Master) when he declared: "This mystery . . . Christ-in-you, the hope of Glory." . . . "It is no longer I, Paul, who live, but Christ who lives in me." The Bible in referring to the Supreme Initiation of the disciples, said that "The Holy Spirit, the Comforter, came upon them."

We will now take advantage of Professor Puech's great work, already referred to in Chapter I,

by looking at his article in *The Times Literary Supplement*, Friday, April 30th, 1954, in which the Professor gave a short summary on *The Gospel of Truth* and the other Jung Codex manuscripts. Want of space only allows us to quote verbatim from a short extract of this article on the "Gospel." It confirms much of Meher Baba's teachings on Gnosis, and is therefore of particular interest for our book. The Professor writes: "At most we know that the Valentinian Gospel differed profoundly from the four canonical gospels, which it was doubtless meant to complete or displace. This was little enough, but it proved to be correct. The rediscovered 'Gospel' contains neither an account of the life and acts of Jesus nor any mention of his sayings and conversation. On the contrary, it presupposes a knowledge of the Synoptics—different episodes and parables of which it internets—and above all St. John's Gospel, of which it makes use, together with the Revelation and the Pauline Epistles. But it goes much farther than that: it claims to be an esoteric and transcendent message reserved for a small number of Elect, the 'Living Book of the Living,' written in the mind of God before the creation of the Universe and revealed to the world by the Word."

"What it describes, explains, and exalts is the full manifestation of the Truth by the Gospel, the sudden discovery granted to the spiritual man (the pneumaticus) of his authentic self and of God, by a Messenger who is by the same token a 'Saviour'; the awakening to consciousness and to the Light of beings, hitherto plunged in the thick mists of ignorance and error, in the night of a world which is illusion, nightmare, and anguish, whose absurdity, misleading emptiness and nothingness are suddenly revealed and dissipated. Couched in impersonal terms which are abandoned only towards the end, the 'Gospel of Truth' is throughout a sort of lyrical effusion or hymn to gnosis, the 'knowledge' or 'recognition' of self in God, and God in self which

brings deliverance from insufficiency and gives direct access to fulfilment or pleroma."

Is it not remarkable how historical research in our present century is uncovering the original esoteric truths which Jesus taught, and which have been hidden and suppressed for over eighteen hundred years. Such truths should revitalise Christian teachings and bring them into line with modern thought.

Christian dogma is being slowly replaced by the Christ-in-you metaphysical teachings of New Thought. These help to bring us back to the realities that Jesus taught. St. Augustine's soliloquy is very apposite: "I, Lord, went wandering like a strayed sheep, seeking Thee with anxious reasoning without, whilst Thou was within me. . . . I went round the streets and squares of the cities of this world, seeking Thee. And I found Thee not, because in vain I sought without for Him, who was within myself!"

In the eyes of Jesus, every man could be "in Christ," that is, in the Father (Oversoul). He never considered himself to be apart from other men; he recognised the Unity of Being and Christ consciousness in all.

"I speak not from myself, but the Father, abiding in me, doeth the works." . . . "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word, that they may all be one, even as Thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be in us . . . I in them and Thou in me . . . that they may be perfected in One."

In the *"New Sayings"* from the Logia, discovered in 1897, on the site of Oxyrhynchus (a city of Ancient Egypt), and translated by the Oxford archaeologists, Dr. Hunt and Dr. Grenfell, the following appears: "Said Jesus, 'Raise the stone and thou shalt find me! Cleave the wood and I am there ! . . . Let him that seeketh cease not till he find. When he finds he shall be astonished; astonished, he shall

reach the Kingdom; having reached the Kingdom, he shall rest." This is a direct reference to Self-Realisation, which comes in a "*flash*," according to those who have experienced it; and though we think the word "astonished" in the translation a little out of place for the greatest of all initiations, yet it does give the impression that some great revelation is referred to. When Jesus referred to the Kingdom of Heaven being within us, he stated: "And whoever knoweth Himself shall find it." To KNOW THYSELF has ever been the teaching of all ages, for such knowledge is SELF-REALISATION.

In the Gita, Krishna explains:

"There is true Knowledge
Learn thou, Arjuna! this—
To see One Changeless Life in all that lives
And in all that separate seems—
The One Inseparable Self."

Jesus taught, as all the Masters have, the value of silence. "Some people said to Jesus: 'Direct us to some work, by which we shall enter Paradise.' He answered: 'Never say anything!' They replied: 'We are not able to do that.' So Jesus said: 'Then never say anything but what is good!'"*

In non-Christian books from Muslim and Hindu sources, Jesus is reported to have stressed the value of silence. Even to-day, there are Eastern and Western orders which practise silence. Jesus is reported to have said: "Devotion has ten parts, nine of which are found in silence, and one in flight from men." In one book it is written that the highest example which Jesus set was silence, and that whenever he opened his lips to speak, his one word was: "Give! Give!"

Is history repeating itself? In India there is the great Master, Meher Baba, who has been silent many

* *Logia et Agrapha Domini Jesu apud Moslemicos Scriptores asceticos proesertim, usitate.* Michael Asin y Palacio. Professor of Arabic, Madrid.

long years, and his followers sometimes keep silence. It is said that when he breaks his silence, the New Spiritual Dispensation will come into being! All the great work of the world is done in silence, behind the screen of inner existence. About silence, Meher Baba has said: "God has been everlastingly working in silence, unobserved, unheard, except by those who have experienced His Infinite Silence. If my silence cannot speak, of what avail would be speeches made by the tongue? The very moment when He knows that my speaking will be heard universally, God will make me break my silence."

When Jesus was preparing for the Crucifixion, he was no doubt thinking that his work for humanity was drawing to its close on earth, and that he would again be himself in the impersonal aspect of Divinity, for the time being, when he prayed: "Glorify Thou me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."

The Avatars were all "before the world was." They are Beings enshrouded in impenetrable mystery. The Avatar could say to His chosen few: "Even the Perfect Ones and the Saints understand Me not. Then how can ye fathom Me?" The holder of the present title of Avatar became Perfect when God first became "I AM GOD!" Thus the Avatar achieved the Universal Mind as the master-Master. According to Sufi mythology this must have been about two hundred thousand times; in this present Day of Brahm.

In the Bible we read: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The "Word" made flesh is the reincarnation of an Avatar.

Krishna explains:

"Albeit I be
Unborn, undying, indestructible,
The Lord of all things living; not the less—
By Maya, by my magic which I stamp

On floating Nature-forms, the Primal vast—
I come, and go and come."*

"I make and unmake this Universe;
Than He there is no other Master, Prince!
No other Maker ! All these hang on He
As hangs a row of pearls upon its string—
I am the fresh taste of the water; I
The silver of the moon, the gold of the sun,
The word of worship in the Veda, the thrill
That passeth in the ether, and the strength
Of man's shed seed. I am the good sweet smell
Of the moistened earth, I am the fire's red light—
The holiness of hallowed souls, the root
Undying, whence hath sprung whatever is—"

"Hard it is
To pierce that veil divine of various shows
Which hideth Me, yet they who worship
Me Pierce it and pass beyond."*

* *Bhagavad Gita IV, 6.*

* *Ibid VII* (Sir Edward Arnold's translation. *The Song Celestial.*)

Chapter XIII

THE SECOND ADVENT

Ramjoo Abdulla, in writing of the problems of Men and Masters in *Meher Baba in the Great Seclusion*, says: "It is indeed difficult for men to appreciate fully all that the great spiritual Masters say and do. In fact, granting that there is a definite plan behind all life capable of a distinct fulfilment, many things that the Masters have said and done so far, are as much a bundle of contradictions and anomalies as is the history of mankind to date; when man is still engaged to-day in a life and death struggle between beautiful ideals to be achieved on one hand, and dangerously ugly situations to be avoided on the other. Nevertheless, according to Baba, the realisation of God is the One Plan that every individual has equal right to achieve; and everyone does possess equal opportunities to achieve it."

He goes on to explain: "The real significance of the work of the Masters does not necessarily consist in founding organised religions. For example, the world on the whole respects Jesus the Christ for himself alone, quite apart from his being a Master of more than three hundred millions of Christians, who are supposed to be his true followers to-day. If the total is made of the average number of all those who have lived and died believing in the Cross, during these one thousand, nine hundred and fifty odd years, it would turn into a 'sky full of stars' to gaze at and pick many of the first magnitude from amongst them, such as St. Francis of Assisi. . . . The greatness of Jesus and the tremendous force of spirituality that he

let loose in the universe during his lifetime were expressed in bringing a few fellow-beings to his own level of Perfection; in giving divine illumination to many, and a stupendous impetus towards Truth, not only for mankind, but for each and every living creature of his time. Therefore, that which the world looks upon as the mission of his life, namely Christianity, is, in fact, but a residue of the 'buttermilk' that Christ left over for posterity, after distributing as much 'buttermilk' and as much 'milk' as could be digested by contemporary humanity."

"That, in fact, applies to all true Masters, who are ever present at all times in the world, either manifested as Perfect Masters, Prophets or Avatars, according to the existing exigences, or who remain incognito, except to the few they raise to their own levels of perfection and hiddenly carry out the rest of their activities and workings in the interest of Creation as a whole."

"The good fortune of man in being man is equally beset with his misfortune in being extremely self-centred in every field of life. For all the splendours of the civilisations that man has raised from time immemorial, be it in India or China, Greece or Rome, Persia or Egypt, these have been brought down like a house of cards for want of a straight and honest sublimation of his selfish instincts."

"One of the results of such collective selfishness is that names of great MEN who succeed in breaking through selfishness to selflessness are (contrary to their own intentions, desires, aims and objects) also dragged back into the mire of the great selfishness of the greater numbers."

"It is wrong to believe that men like Ram, Krishna, Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus and Mohammed whose one mission was to declare unequivocally the inviolable unity of all life and unimpeachable brotherhood of all mankind, cared more for the so-called

Hindus, Zoroastrians, Buddhists, Christians and Muslims than humanity as a whole."

"Granting that compared with what they gave to those who, above all other considerations, followed them sincerely and faithfully, very little fell to the lot of others; it was not because they could not or did not want to give equally. When it rains, the water is showered equally upon rocks and pebbles and over the ups and downs of all soils. The bounty of rain cannot be questioned if particular spots receive and retain more or less quantities of water. Excepting those who have completely blinded themselves with their selfish prejudices of one kind or another, any man can very easily find out that all the great Masters were more concerned with people gone astray, people commonly looked upon as infidels, people whom we call bad and sinners, than those like the pious smugs who preponderate to-day in every fold of human life."

We might say that the main trouble with Christianity is the assumption that men are as good as the ideals of justice and love which they have set up but do not practice. We like to preen ourselves into believing that we enjoy a much higher standard than that ruling in the past. But if we think enough, can we really boast of a higher way of life? While we willingly admit that the average citizen, no matter where, should be more humane and advanced than he was a few centuries ago, the fact remains that he is now caught up in the relentless maw of the colossal machine and is unable to extricate himself from a situation moving altogether at too rapid a tempo for his spiritual nature. Have our education, our present-day knowledge, our science and so-called civilisation brought us any genuine spiritual progress? Have we not lost our resistance to evil, since we are no longer shocked by it? Where is our sensitive conscience? The Humanists bury their heads ostrich-like, closing their eyes and ears to the evil around them. Are we seriously stirred by the cruelty, oppression and slavery of those behind the Iron

Curtain? Do we not prefer to believe otherwise rather than face the fact that we are living in the wickedest, bloodiest and most hypocritical age the world has ever seen. Long ago Solon of Athens taught the people that "Those who are uninjured by a crime must be trained to feel as much indignation at it as those who are injured."

With regard to politics, we will turn to the late Stafford Cripps, who in 1950 was the first layman to preach at St. Paul's Cathedral. He warned the congregation that "Uncontrolled materialism, rising in a crescendo of power, must crash in self-destruction . . . so long as power is the principle aim of competing groups of mankind, the tensions of uncontrolled power are too great to persist indefinitely without tragic release . . . nothing matters so much in the world today, as that we should get back to the standards which Christ set for us by his example and teachings in our private as well as in our public life . . . those standards are not easy to attain, and they are desperately difficult to maintain. Yet the whole future of humanity depends upon our being able to make them a common factor throughout national and international life." Sir Stafford concluded that "the lack of soul which comes with the extension of group control would be avoided only by bringing to bear the full force of our spiritual nature to control and direct our corporate actions by guiding our own individual action in the democratic sphere."

Albert Schweitzer, in an inspired speech before a distinguished gathering of great minds,* said: "The great conflict of our times is that between Hegelian exaltation of State in opposition to Goethern insistence on the individual as the starting point to the State. . . the Spirit does not let man simply assert and impose himself over all other beings, but obliges him to have a consideration for them. The Spirit in this fashion brings order into the chaos of relations.

* At the International Commemorative Convocation in the American Rockies for Goethe's Bicentennial, June, 1949.

The man who really finds himself, cannot do otherwise than let himself be guided by love. This latter is the divine element in him. . . . If love is the very essence of Spirit, God can only be conceived as the fullness of love."

Professor Toynbee has given us to understand in his monumental work, *A Study of History*, that our civilisation is in a convulsive and prolonged decline, in fact, that the West is finished, and that the cause of it all is Sin and our only hope is Repentance. He prophetically insists that the Indian Religious spirit is the way of salvation for human beings of all religions.*

The idea of a New Spiritual Dispensation or Second Advent has never been peculiar to Christian thought. All the great world-religions contain the same expectancy that their Founders will return. In world history there are always landmarks where the great spiritual teachers have appeared from time to time, each with his own individual mission to perform, in accordance with the days in which he lived.

Buddha foretold the coming of one named Metteya, Moses foretold the advent of Jesus. Mohammed and Jesus both indicated they would come again, or one like them. Jesus recognised the need of a personal divine manifestation in his period when he said: "How can ye love the Father whom ye have not seen, if ye cannot love me whom ye have seen." He constantly referred to the God-Realised state, as when he said "I and the Father are One." The author of Revelations stated that Jesus was "The Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was and which is to come."

The failure of the Jews and Romans to appreciate the Avataric role of Jesus is repeated to-day, for few would recognise the Avatar of the present time. Those who now follow Jesus, so far as the official

* See his article in *The Observer*, Oct. 24th, 1954.

churches go, have misunderstood or ignored the signs of the times. The few sects believing in the imminence of the Second Advent do so only from a narrow and parochial standpoint.

Nevertheless there is, amongst all the great religions, a general expectancy of some form of Divine Manifestation in the near future.

Not so long ago we had a notable example of a remarkable man deceiving himself regarding his actual spiritual status. This great reformer was called The Bab (The Gate). In 1845, he mistakenly proclaimed himself to have arrived at Perfection, when he declared "I am the Primal Point, from which have been generated all created things!" He certainly was not a Perfected Man, as there is no record of his possessing such divine authority. For his announcement of divine right, he was punished and shot, and his enthusiastic and faithful followers were condemned to the most atrocious tortures by Allah-fearing Moslems, for daring to recognise a great saint in the Bab, and also his mission.

His successor, Baha'u'llah, another striking spiritual personality, who founded the Bah'ai movement, announced that God would, in this Age, fulfil his ancient promise to mankind, and that by His intervention, the hearts of men would be so swiftly and completely changed, that within this Twentieth Century universal peace would be attained, and all nations would unite in founding a New World, for, so he said, soon will the present-day order be rolled up and a new one spread out in its stead.

Spiritually advanced personalities who proclaim their Godhood and declare their mission as Avatar or Messiah can mistake their spiritual identity. Such men have undoubtedly reached great heights in spiritual endeavour, but they fall short of the standards of the great World Avatars who have the supreme direction of the Universe.

The New World Saviour of our Age will be One

who can prove his spiritual authority to humanity, by causing the universal descent of the Holy Spirit, to change men's hearts on a world-wide scale. The privileged few who will receive Enlightenment and attain to All-Knowledge will be able to look back in Time—to the days of Adam and before that, to when they were strange ape-like men; and before that, to when they were the elephant, the dog and the horse; and before that, to when they were some amphibious reptile crawling out of the primeval slime; and before that, they will be able to see millions of worlds in which they lived, and be able to sing of the millions of Christs! Like the Guru Nanak who sang:

"At His Throne a million prophets, and millions
of Brahmas and Vishnus and Shivas,
And millions upon millions of Ramas,
And millions of Wayfarers, each clad in a
different garb.
He, the Lord of All, is One, the Chief of all
lords!
He is the Creator of all that is.
He is beyond conception and speech;
His qualities are unnumbered and endless!"

In the Second Advent we remember the words of Jesus: "And then if any man shall say unto you 'Here is Christ or Lo He is there!' believe him not. . . . But in those days, then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of Heaven."

Meher Baba has interpreted this as follows: "The gathering of the Elect refers to the reincarnation and final assembling of his close disciples and followers at the time of His Second Coming. It is wrong to associate the Second Coming with the imprisonment of Satan and a thousand years of peace or with a literal interpretation of the Last Day of Judgment. When the Christ descends through the

clouds, i.e., through the higher spheres of consciousness, he will bring with him to earth Infinite Goodness, Wisdom, Power and Love, and also the signs and experiences of the six lower Planes."

This will be the great manifestation of the Christ-consciousness, which will bring in the New Dispensation. Can the "Tribulation" be anything but Armageddon, to be followed by the Second Advent? "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring. Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of Heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." (Luke Ch. xxi, v. 25-28.)

Are we not reaping what we have sown in materialistic greed and intellectual superiority? Few seem to have realised the significance of the last two wars, and those who have seem powerless to influence the world. Even now, if all the peoples of the earth were to go down on their knees in prayer, penance and fasting, would not the coming upheaval be avoided? For we CAN shape our own destiny.

How collective prayer can change a nation is proved by the miraculous appearance of "Our Lady of Fatima" to the little peasant children in Portugal in 1917. In the third year of the First World War, Pope Benedict XV issued an earnest appeal for a crusade of prayer, on the 5th of May, to our Lady Mediatrix of Graces, for the purpose of ending a war which threatened to engulf civilisation. On the 13th of May, the Virgin Mary appeared to three children tending their sheep at the village of Cove da Iris. "The Lady" paid a number of visits to the children, on the 13th of each month; the crowds watching the

miraculous event numbered some sixty thousand persons or more at the last appearance, when the "miracle of the Dancing Sun" took place.

The Lady of the Rosary warned the people that they must not continue to offend her Son, who had been so deeply offended. She made several prophecies, which came true. When the communist revolution was launched in Russia, with all its atheism, it did not affect Portugal, and Portugal escaped the horrors of civil war which afflicted her neighbour, Spain. The whole of Portugal's spiritual life was affected by the amazing heavenly visitation of the Virgin. Such was the miracle of Our Lady's divine intervention!

We are individually and collectively responsible, because we, ourselves, build up our own thought forms, or mental impressions, and are therefore responsible for them. These forms reflect our moods which are in accordance with our thinking. If we think harmoniously and constructively, our thought forms support us in the right direction; but if, on the contrary, we think inharmoniously and throw evil and malicious impressions of hate and vengeance into the ether, we create evil entities, which react adversely on ourselves and our environment—"As above, so below!"

The unspiritual reactions of a materialistic civilisation, full of hates and fears, have created billions of evil influences in the semi-subtle spheres. These have been formed by individuals and groups. Their repercussion in malevolent thought forms is now causing the tragic denouement coming upon the earth at large. Is it any wonder that we must have SOME FORM OF DIVINE INTERVENTION?

The world crisis grows deeper and deeper, and the despairing cry of humanity grows louder and louder, till it will reach the very Gates of Heaven itself! In the Lord's Song in the Gita, the Blessed Lord Krishna spake unto Arjuna, and he saith:

"Whenever virtue is on the decline, and the resurgence of evil and injustice in the world is occurring, I, the Avatar, take on human form. For the establishment of righteousness and the destruction of the evil doer, I am born from Age to Age." Then turning to Arjuna, the Blessed Lord revealed Himself in all his glory . . . ! Then fell Arjuna on his knees and covered his face . . . "Lord! I see! I see!"

When man has sunk so low that he can sink no lower, when his intellectual powers and scientific pride are humbled in the dust; then will he see, and the Masters will act. The floodgates of the Seventh Plane of Heaven will be unlocked. A miraculous outpouring of Divine Love will deluge humanity, flooding every corner of the human heart, giving rise to a tremendous and universal upliftment, which will affect the whole universe. This will be the awakening of the Heart Chakra on a cosmic scale!

We conclude this book by giving Meher Baba's long address to a recent gathering of his workers in India. It is important, being the *very first time* that the Master had ever given out more than short messages. His communication is as follows:

"This is no political or social meeting. The meeting for which you have all assembled here, and which is the first of its kind that I am holding in these sixty years of my life, is for the Divine Cause. This assemblage reminds me of former meetings during my previous Incarnations. Then the circumstances were different; but since eternity, the same God-Incarnate has been presiding over such meetings for the same Cause—the Divine Cause. Thus never has it been more truly said than in the spiritual cause, that history repeats itself."

"Even if this meeting were to take all night for what I have to say I would not mind, because this one night would be worth millions of nights if you all honestly live up to and act according to what I wish from my real workers. The Apostles and the

'Asahaba' who worked for the Divine Cause did my work at the very cost of life itself. So heed my words most attentively."

"My personally contacting the masses in India through vast 'darshan' programmes has been sufficient for my work. The presentation of addresses and the giving of messages, mean nothing on the actual Spiritual Path. I tell you with Divine authority, that chanting my 'Arti', performing my 'Puja', garlanding me, offering me fruits and sweets and bowing down to me, in themselves mean absolutely nothing. It is a waste of money to spend on garlands, fruits and sweets and bowing down to me for the conventional 'puja' and a sheer waste of breath and energy merely to chant my 'arti'. From time eternal, gods have been performing my real 'puja'. WHAT I WANT FROM ALL MY LOVERS IS REAL UNADULTERATED LOVE, and from my genuine workers I expect real work done."

"I also want to draw your attention to the fact that miracles experienced by my devotees and admirers, both in the East and in the West, have been attributed to me. On the basis of my Divine Honesty, I tell you that in this Incarnation I have not, up till now, consciously performed a single miracle. Whenever a miracle has been attributed to me, it has always been news to me. What I wish to emphasize is that by attributing such miracles to me, people cheapen and lower my status as the Highest of the High. But to-day I do say this, that the moment I break my Silence and utter the Original Word, the first and last miracle of 'Baba' will be performed. And, when I perform that Miracle, I shall not raise the dead, but shall make those who live for the world dead to the world and live in God; I shall not give sight to the blind, but make people blind to illusion and make them see God as Reality."

"I have had enough of this alphabet board and my silence. I must break my silence soon. And

when I do, all will come to know of it. Those who have come in contact with me will have a glimpse of Me. When the 'Power House' is switched on, there will be Light wherever the electric bulbs are connected with it, provided these bulbs are not fused. Where the bulbs are of high candle power, the light will be considerable, where a bulb is fused there will be no light."

"Love me whole-heartedly. The time for the Power House to be switched on is so near that the only thing which will count NOW is Love. This is why I have been telling you all to love me more and more. Love me, love me, love me, and then you will find Me."

"From you I want no surrender, no mind, no body, no possessions, only Love."

"I know that you, big and small, rich and poor, have done your best to work for the Divine Cause. And I say with happiness that you have tried to express your love for me by spreading my messages of Love to the masses. But I feel that something deep down is very wrong and that you have not clearly understood how my work should be approached. It is natural that amongst workers of any cause, be it political, social or spiritual, there are bound to be differences of opinion. These differences of opinion and feelings of competition and jealousy lead to the breakdown of the very basis of work. . . ."

"I will now explain to you how you should work. First of all, bear in mind that you should not seek appreciation from me or from others. Though this may seem easy, it is very difficult to put into practice. Remember that work in itself is its own appreciation; the moment you seek appreciation the work is undone. Therefore, seek not any appreciation for the work you do for me.

"Secondly, do not count upon someone else or on outside help in your work for me. Many of you

are ready to work for me a hundred per cent; yet because some of you are poor and have families, you cannot devote your time and means for my work. But why then work beyond your means? When the worker depends upon anyone or anything the work suffers. Therefore, do as much as you can, but do it honestly."

"Thirdly, if money is collected for the work in the name of the Divine Cause and spent wrongly and without being accounted for, then all work in my name must be stopped immediately by the so-called workers. Even one penny extracted in my name without true foundation, is Dishonesty, and will be the cause of millions of re-births; and for one cent taken from others by such false pretensions one dies a million deaths! Therefore let honesty in work prevail."

"Fourthly, when you spread my eternal message of Love to others, show them first that you really love me. Do not merely make them read my books and messages; do more. Live such a life of love, sacrifice, forgiveness and tolerance, that others will automatically love me. If instead of doing the real work of love, you start doing organised propaganda work for me, it is absurd. I need no propaganda or publicity. I do not want propaganda and publicity, but I do want love and honesty. If you cannot live the life of love and honesty, you should stop working for me. I am quite capable of doing my Universal Work alone."

"Fifthly, I want you all to know for certain that Baba's work needs no money. In other ages my work has been done without money, it can now be done without money. When money was in use, it was the cause of Judas's undoing, and for which he sold me. It is natural for those workers who are poor to think that they must have money for 'Baba's' work, to spread far and wide His Message of Love. But, from my point of view, to *depend* on money

for 'Baba's' work is work undone. To ask people to give money and then in return to propagate 'Baba's' Message of Love is utter folly. Therefore whether you have money or not, let it not affect my work. Money comes and goes; whereas, my work is eternal. Money does not play any important role in my work for the Divine Cause, it is the life that you lead that plays the most important role. Hence, *live* such a life that others not only know you love me, but *feel* your love for me. Begin to live this life and let other workers for the Divine Cause follow suit. Let there be no compromise in this; no mixture of honesty and dishonesty—there can be no 'Baba' without it. I am 'Baba'—I know what I AM."

"All those who love me and want to share my work can do so. Those who have money and can afford to go from place to place can spread my message of Divine Love in every distant nook and corner. Those who have a little money can go round their own town and district spreading my Message of Love and living the life of love by doing the service of God. And, those who have no money, or have families and little time, can also do the work by guiding their own families and friends towards 'Baba's' Love. If you all love me even a little, I want your hearts towards each other to be clean and for you to forget your differences. Cleanse your hearts and live for 'Baba'."

"Outwardly, you may establish hundreds of centres for Baba, or none at all; that is your own responsibility. But bear in mind that for my work it is not necessary to have centres or offices, nor the botheration of accounts and the collecting of money. Let Baba's Love be the Centre, the Office, the help and the work."

"I want my lovers and workers to know that there is no greater 'Baba Centre' than the heart of my lover. *Those who truly love me are my Centres in the world.* Let each 'Baba-lover' wherever he or

she may be, be a 'Baba's Centre' personified, radiating the eternal message of Love Divine, living the life of love, sacrifice and honesty."

"When I say that each one of you be a 'Baba-Centre', it does not mean that each of you should work individually when you can work collectively in groups as 'Baba-Centres'. Neither does this mean that you should not work on your own. I have shown you how I desire the work to be done; it is for you to follow the method best suited to you."

"Let me now see how you love and work for 'Baba'. *I am everywhere. I am in you and see you.* Do your share in my work in all sincerity. Be responsible for what you do and how you do it. I now will do my personally ordained work and break my silence very shortly."

"I love all. I am the Lord of Love, the slave of my lovers, and devoted to my devotees. Although I do not perform miracles, I will give anything to whoever asks for it from the bottom of his heart. If I am 'Baba', everything is possible for me. Ask whole-heartedly and you will get it from me. But this I tell you too, that *the one who asks for my love will be the chosen one.*"

"You who love me have expressed your love in a way that touches my heart, and I feel very happy. Yet I have not known one who loves me as I would wish to be loved. There are about 220 men and women from the East and the West who have so completely and utterly surrendered to me that they would do anything I say. Whatever I order them to do they will carry it out, even if it means being cut to pieces."

"To surrender is higher than to love, and paradoxical as it may seem, *to love me as I ought to be loved is impossible, yet to obey me is possible.* Therefore to say you love and yet not obey me would be hypocritical."

"The time is very near for the breaking of my

silence and then, within a short period all will happen—my humiliation, my glorification, my manifestation, and the dropping of my body. All this will happen soon and within a short period. So, from this moment, love me more and more. . . ."

"I am everything that you take me to be, and I am also beyond everything. If your conscience says that 'Baba' is the Avatar, say it even if you are stoned for it. But if you feel he is not, then say that you feel 'Baba' is not the Avatar. Of myself I say again and again, 'I am the Ancient One—the Highest of the High.'

"If you had even the tiniest glimpse of my Divinity, all doubts would vanish and love—Real Love—be established. Illusion has such a tight grip on you that you forget Reality. Your life is but a Shadow. The only Reality is Existence Eternal—which is God."*

In this address, readers will see that Baba has publicly identified himself with Jesus. Westerners who have had the privilege of accompanying the Master on his travels in India, have often been struck by the similarity of his life with that of the Gospels. Such unforgettable scenes have touched a cord of memory in the hearts of those near him. Once more we will remind those interested, that the Avataric State of Soul-consciousness—that is to say the Avataric Individuality of God—always manifests the One and Only Avatar or Brahma, in different forms and under different names, in order to sustain Unity and Duality at one and the same time.

Whatever we may believe, it is very obvious to all that our world is now undergoing the most critical phase of its known history; and its trend seems to be towards an explosive climax. There is a theory that cosmic disturbances on a cosmic scale are caused by the planet being out of joint or equilibrium; so that it

* This address, given by Baba at Rajah-Mundry on the 27th February, 1954, was part of his Mass Darshan Tour in Andhra State.

may have to make certain revolutions or movements to regain its lost balance or axis. This state of unbalance has been caused by a world-lack of mental and spiritual poise; a disharmony not in accord with the Divine Pattern or Rhythm of the Universe which is dependent on the vibrational quality and power of the cosmic tone, which depends on the mind of man. Thus we need a new vibration, a new tuning of our consciousness; if we are to have another Dispensation of the one and only Truth, that GOD IS LOVE.

We now come to what we believe to be the most important of all the events connected with Meher Baba. At Ahmednagar, in the last days of September 1954, a special gathering took place of men followers from all over India, and those who could come at such short notice, from Europe, Australia and America. On this momentous and final occasion about nine hundred men were present. The address (as always by means of the letter-board) suggested that their beloved leader was making his farewell to the world stage and that the divine drama was drawing to its close. The scene was so affecting that many wept. The Master gave a detailed description of the circumstances which would bring about his death, the destruction to follow, and the New Dispensation to come.

The Master also made it very clear that when he breaks his silence and says the One word or sound vibration, he will lay the foundation for that which is to take place during the next seven hundred years, and that when he comes again as the Avatar, seven hundred years hence, the evolution of consciousness will have reached a certain peak, so that the materialistic tendencies of to-day will have disappeared and the world will be united in a Real Brotherhood of Love and Truth, and this will be the long-looked for Golden Age.

FOOTNOTE.—Readers wishing for details of Baba's address and events generally which took place at Ahmednagar can apply to *Meher Publications*, King's Road, Ahmednagar, India. Also *The Awakener*, Seattle, Washington, U.S.A.

Those who understand the esoteric significance of the Redeemer's death on the Cross, know that when the Christ cried out the Creative word of God, the Avataric Spirit gushed forth in the Saviour's blood, redeeming and regenerating the whole Creation. Thus the foundations for the Christian Dispensation came into being and the Chosen Ones were illumined with the Glory of the Father; and every living creature partook of the divine upliftment.

The Old Dispensation is nearing its end, and a New Dispensation again comes into being. The manifestation of the present Avatar will redeem and regenerate our tired and tortured world. For God's recurring Creative Impulse will again repeat and assert the word. When Meher Baba utters his dying cry, the word; the whole Creation will move, and the Chosen Ones will be illumined with the Glory of the Father (Self-Realisation) and every living creature will partake of the Cosmic Outpouring of the Spirit.

And all things shall be made new". . . ."and the heaven was removed as a scroll when it was rolled up and every mountain and island were removed out of their places."

We now conclude this work with the Avatar's description (in *The Discourses*) of how Divine Love will gradually change the hearts of mankind and bring Peace and Goodwill to all.

"The New Humanity will come into existence through a release of love in measureless abundance, and this release of love itself will come through the spiritual awakening brought about by the Masters. Love cannot be born of mere determination, through the exercise of the will, but one can, at least, be dutiful. One may, through struggle and effort, succeed in ensuring that this external action is in conformity with one's conception of what is right; but such action is spiritually barren, because it lacks the inward beauty of spontaneous love. Love

has to spring from within; it is in no way amenable to any form of inner or outer force. Love and coercion can never go together, but, though love cannot be forced on anyone, it can be awakened in him through love itself. Love is essentially self-communicative; those who do not have it, catch it from those who have. Those who get love from others, cannot be its recipients without giving a response which, in itself, is of the nature of love. True love is unconquerable and irresistible, and it goes on gathering power and spreading itself, until eventually it transforms everyone whom it touches. Humanity will attain a new mode of being and life through the free and unhampered play of pure love from heart to heart."

"When it is recognised that there are no claims greater than the claim of the universal Divine Life, which, without exception, includes everyone and everything. Love will not only establish peace, harmony and happiness in social, national and international spheres, but it will shine in its own purity and beauty."

"Divine Love is unassailable by the onslaughts of duality and is an expression of Divinity itself. It is through Divine Love that the New Humanity will learn the art of co-operation and harmonious life; it will free itself from the tyranny of dead forms, and release the spiritual life of spiritual wisdom; it will shed all illusions and be established in the Truth; it will enjoy peace and abiding happiness; it will be initiated into the life of Eternity."

THE SEVEN REALITIES OF MEHER BABA'S TEACHING

EXISTENCE, LOVE, SACRIFICE, RENUNCIATION, KNOWLEDGE, CONTROL AND SURRENDER

Meher Baba's teaching gives no importance to creed, dogma, caste systems, and the performance of religious ceremonies and rites, but to the UNDERSTANDING of the following seven Realities :

1. The only REAL EXISTENCE is that of the One and only God, who is the Self in every (finite) self.

2. The only REAL LOVE is the Love for this Infinity (God), which arouses an intense longing to see, know, and become one with its Truth (God).

3. The only REAL SACRIFICE is that in which, in pursuance of this Love, all things, body, mind, position, welfare, and even life itself, are sacrificed.

4. The only REAL RENUNCIATION is that which abandons, even in the midst of worldly duties, all selfish thoughts and desires.

5. The only REAL KNOWLEDGE is the knowledge that God is the inner dweller in good people and so-called bad, in saint and so-called sinner. This knowledge requires you to help all equally as circumstances demand, without expectation of reward, and when compelled to take part in a dispute, to act without the slightest trace of enmity or hatred; to try to make others happy, with brotherly or sisterly feeling for each one; to harm no one in thought, word, or deed, not even those who harm you.

6. The only REAL CONTROL is the discipline of the sense from indulgence in low desires, which alone ensures absolute purity of character.

7. The only REAL SURRENDER is that in which the poise is undisturbed by any adverse circumstance, and the individual, amidst every kind of hardship, is resigned with perfect calm to the will of God.

APPENDIX

PREFACE

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Although my father gave the book, *Myth, Magic and Morals* to the Rationalist Press, I feel it is expedient to quote the following words from the French biography of my father by Louise Maries, compiled after my father's death, which took place in 1924; p. 304:—

"Messrs. Watts and Co. are the publishers of the books which issue from the Rationalist Press Association, it was fitting that they should become the publishers of the books which deny the historical existence of our Lord. They publish Mr. J. M. Robertson's two books, *Pagan Christs and Christianity and Mythology*, they publish Mr. W. B. Smith's *Ecce Deus*, and they publish the English translation of *Witnesses to the Historicity of Jesus*, by Professor Arthur Drews. It does not seem so fitting that Messrs. Watts should publish a book by Dr. F. C. Conybeare. It is true that Dr. Conybeare is radical, as radical a critic as it is possible for a scholar to be. But then he is a scholar. The other men whose books Messrs. Watts publish are not. When his *Myth, Magic and Morals* appeared in the same advertisement as the books of Mr. J. M. Robertson and the rest, it was understood that Dr. Conybeare, Honorary Fellow of University College, Oxford; Honorary LL.D. of the University of St. Andrews; Honorary Doctor of Theology of Giessen; Member of the British Academy, and Member of the Armenian Academy of Venice, etc., had gone over to the materialists, and for the sake of companionship in his utter radicalism had cast in his lot with the unlearned and the ignorant who belong to the Rationalist Press Association. But Messrs. Watts have just published another book by Dr. Conybeare. Its title is *The Historical Christ* (3s. 6d. net). Dr. Conybeare is not comfortable in his present company. In this book he turns upon the three men who have obtained some glory by denying the historical existence of Jesus—Mr. J. M. Robertson, Dr. Arthur Drews, and Professor W. B. Smith—and makes an exposure of their ignorance and incompetence the like of which has not been seen in our day."

Undoubtedly my father, with his strong historical sense, saw clearly that the Jesuits and the Christists could not have any object in hoaxing their own and all subsequent generations, and in building up a lasting cult and Church on what they knew to be fables.

It is interesting that he applied an equally unprejudiced acumen to his defence of *The Historical Christ* as he did to his general attack on orthodox Christianity in *Myth, Magic and Morals*.

SAGUN OR UNIVERSAL MIND

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The Oversoul and the Universal Mind carry two different meanings. It must be understood that Western terminology is a makeshift, since the dynamics of Divinity is an infinitely complex subject,

and without a knowledge of Sanskrit and also of Sufism and Vedanta, it is almost impossible to explain many terms as we have no appropriate words in the English language, or in any Western language. This subject is practically unknown in the West, due to Christianity having been an entirely Western religion under the charge of Rome. Therefore Christian mysticism is cloudy instead of clear, and each writer makes his own terminology applicable to what he wishes to express. Unlike Vedantic and Sufi terms, that are generally accepted to carry particular meanings or fixed ideas, words have to be coined in English, which add to the confusion of our thinking. It is therefore important for writers to adhere to particular words for particular ideas, but in many cases they are obliged to use the Sufi or Vedantic term.

One who becomes one with the Oversoul, is a Perfect One, but merely as such. He has nothing to do with the Universal Mind, or with anything else, save Perfection, i.e., God-consciousness. For the limited mind has been transformed into the unlimited Self, that is the Divine Self.

A Perfect One who is able to return to normal human consciousness with Divine consciousness has the Universal Mind, which always remains with him till he leaves his body. In this state of super-consciousness, he is a Perfect Master or Sadguru.

It should be understood that the majority of Perfect Ones are not Perfect Masters, because many Perfect Ones do not retain the Universal Mind, and are therefore unconscious of creation (the gross physical or universe).

There are no end of categorical statements on these points in Sufi and Vedantic literature, and Eastern scholars with an interest in Eastern mysticism will enter into endless arguments on this subject, so long as they only understand through the intellect and are not associated with a Perfect Master.

When consciousness of duality (namely Creation) is achieved in addition to consciousness of the Divine state, the illusory nature of the gross or creation consciousness is never lost sight of by a Master.

The "Individuality" of a Perfect Master or Perfect One rests for all time in God-Realisation or God-consciousness, which is one and the same thing. But the Personality of a Perfect Master depends upon the Universal Mind. That is to say, the individuality of 'I am God!' plus the personality of 'I am Jesus' or 'I am Buddha,' means the Christ consciousness, but there again it must be remembered that God-consciousness is not Christ-consciousness!

When a Master drops his body, he drops his connection with the Universal Mind. Thus he ceases to be 'I am Jesus' or 'I am Buddha,' but continues to remain for ever 'I am God!'

This happens after the death of a Perfect Master, for he again becomes only Himself in God the Oversoul, and as he has given up the Universal Mind, he remains unconcious of the world which is as always, Maya, until such time, as he again takes the gross form in another incarnation on earth.—(It should be remembered that he will be born as ever, like an ordinary mortal, until such time as he meets a Perfect Master, who will give him God realisation.)

Throughout the centuries, many have claimed to have seen Jesus, the Virgin, and other great spiritual beings, but such figures are within Maya, and therefore 'thought forms.' Nevertheless they play a very important role for the spiritual work of the world.

From the point of view of Truth and nothing but Truth, the

Universal Mind is of importance only so long as our ignorance subsists. It is only from the view-point of our ignorance that the Universal Mind is of prime importance. In other words, if Man is not completely conscious-God, or if God is not completely conscious-man, both states are of no use to us in our own Self-Realisation.

For our own Self, the only thing that matters about Christ is his Godhood, whether it is with or without the Universal mind. But for those who believe in God through Christ, the only thing that counts is the fact that God has been Christ with the Universal Mind. If the Universal Mind is really that, then God as Christ cannot through the Universal Mind respond to anyone, at any time, or in any way.

But if we can believe in God as in 'I am God,' whether as a Master of the Age, or whether as a Master of the Cycle, He is always there for everyone, no matter how one may believe in Him. The question of prime importance is not the type of belief but the sincerity behind it.

This is the same as the Snfi concept of Mohammed as the Hayatun-Nabi or the ever-living Prophet of God. The master-Master such as the Avatar, is the same one eternal Christ, all time Zoroaster, never-dying Buddha, ever-present Krishna.

Prayer or intense desire of a devotee, as well as the grace of God, both jointly or severally can, may, and do bring about divine response, no matter in what particular faith the aspirant may be.

In regard to the question of the inability of disembodied Masters and other Great Souls to affect humanity. Hazrat Naqahband made the following apt remarks in a Persian quatrain:—

"How long you'll waste your precious years,
In pilgrimage to tombs of this and that;
Against a thousand lions—dead and gone.
More spiritually alive is the Adept's cat!"

It should be understood, however, that the disembodied saints do continue to affect the world by their spiritual radiations and grace, which are all part of the content of the Higher Spheres. Also it is well-known that people have derived benefit from visiting tombs or making pilgrimages, so great is the spiritual radiance and influence which surrounds the sepulchre of a great saint. But if we think of the benefit derived in this way, what can it be when one is in the presence of or near a living saint? Here we will quote Dr. Munsiff on this subject (Jan. 1940, Meher Baba Journal): "Treating the subject from the analogy of electricity, the difference in the spiritual potency of buried saints and living saints will be made much clearer. Scientists will tell you that the indirect (alternate) current of electricity is much more dangerous than the direct current. The indirect current when touched very often kills, which the direct current seldom does. And further, the earthing process, that is the burying of the copper-wire in the earth, serves to neutralise the extra load on the current, with the magnetism of the earth, thereby making the machinery and the surroundings comparatively immune from damage and harm."

Similarly the spiritual powers of the Masters after dis-embodiment are merged (neutralised) with the universal and infinite powers of Almighty God, which sustain unceasingly the process of evolution. But the living Masters are the spiritual power-houses round which the atmospherics (Tajalliyat-shaktis) are much more active and powerful."

"Spiritual Masters are concerned with and emanate both the spiritual currents (Tajalliya-shaktis), direct or indirect. The direct one is their divine aspect of Jamal (Divine Beatitude) which takes cognisance of devotion, Bhakti and love on the part of the seeker and rewards him in proportion to the sincerity and intensity of longing. While the indirect one is the aspect of Jalal (Divine Glory) which responds quickly and irrevocably to any mischievous act or intention towards them. And the Power-Houses—the Spiritual Masters, though presenting these two aspects in their lives on earth are yet above and beyond them! It is in this sense, the Suns say, that Spiritual Masters neither bless nor curse anyone. Whatever reactions good or bad that people experience when contacting such Masters, are the result of and due to the response of the numerous powers (Tajalliyat-shaktis) that are alive and active round such personalities."

Once when Meher Baba was asked what should be the correct and safest attitude of people towards the saints, he recalled the significant words of the Persian poet Hafiz:

"Ya makun ba peel-banan dosti;
Ya bina kun khana-e dar khurde peel."

Which means "Either do not form friendship with an elephant-driver; or be prepared to receive his elephant as well!"

WHAT IS MAYA? (False Values)

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(Excerpts from The Discourses of Meher Baba)

Importance of understanding the Falsehoods of Maya.

Everyone wants to know and to realise the Truth; but Truth cannot be known and realised as Truth unless ignorance is known and realised as ignorance. Hence arises the importance of understanding Maya or the principle of ignorance. People read and hear so much about Maya, but few understand what it really is. It is not enough to have a superficial understanding of Maya; it is necessary that Maya should be understood in its reality. To understand Maya or the principle of ignorance is to know half the Truth about the Universe. Ignorance in all its forms must disappear if the soul is to be established in the state of self-knowledge; therefore it is imperatively necessary for man to know that which is false, to know it as being false, and to get rid of the false by knowing it to be false.

The Essence of a Falsehood

What is the essential nature of a falsehood? If the true is known as being true or if the false is known as being false, there is no falsehood but only a form of knowledge; falsehood consists in taking the true as being false, or the false as being true, i.e., in considering something to be other than what it really is in itself. So falsehood is an error in judging the nature of things.

Two kinds of Knowledge

Broadly speaking there are two kinds of knowledge: (I) purely intellectual judgments about the facts of existence and (II) judgments of value which imply the appreciation of the worth or importance of things. Purely intellectual judgments or beliefs derive their importance from their being related to values in some way; if they are divorced from values, they have very meagre importance in themselves. For example, no one takes much interest in counting exactly

the number of leaves which exist on a particular tree, although from the purely theoretical point of view such information will be a form of knowledge. But such information or knowledge is treated as unimportant because it is not vitally connected with other values. Intellectual knowledge becomes important when it enables man to realise certain values by giving control over the means to their realisation, or (in) when it enters into valuation itself as an important factor, modifying or in some way affecting the accepted values.

False values arise due to the influence of subjective wants

Mistakes in valuation arise owing to the influence of subjective desires or wants. True values are values which belong to things in their own right: they are intrinsic: and because they are intrinsic they are absolute and permanent and not liable to change from time to time or from person to person. But, false values are derived from desires or wants; they are dependent upon subjective factors, they are relative and impermanent and are liable to change from time to time and from person to person.

Giving wrong importance to a thing

The working of Maya also expresses itself by making the mind give to a thing an importance which is other than the importance which it really has. This happens when rituals, ceremonies and other external religious practices are considered to be ends in themselves. They have their own value as means, as vehicles of life, as a medium of expression; but as soon as they assume claims in their own right, they are being given an importance which is other than the one which belongs to them. And when they are considered important in themselves, they bind life, instead of serving the purpose of expressing it. When the inessential is allowed to predominate over the essential, we have the third principal form of Ignorance concerning valuation. This again is the working of Maya.

False Values and False Beliefs are the Clutches of Maya

The shackles which hold the soul in spiritual bondage chiefly consist of wrong values and falsehoods concerning valuation. But some falsehoods, which are of the nature of wrong beliefs, also play an important part in holding the soul in spiritual bondage. False beliefs implement false values; but they also in their turn gather strength from false values, in which the soul has been caught up. All false beliefs are as much creations of Maya as false values; and false beliefs as well as false values are among the 'tricks' which Maya uses in order to hold the soul in ignorance.

Intellect plays into the hands of Maya

Maya becomes irresistible by taking possession of the very seat of knowledge, which is human intellect. It is difficult to surmount Maya, because, when the intellect is under the sway of Maya, it creates and upholds false beliefs and illusions; it creates barriers to the realisation of Truth by the persistent attempts to sustain and justify erroneous beliefs. The intellect which functions in freedom prepares the way to Truth; but the intellect which plays into the hands of Maya creates obstacles to true understanding.

Discerning the falsehoods of Maya

Countless are the falsehoods which a maya-ridden man embraces in the stupor of his Ignorance; but, from the very beginning, falsehoods carry upon themselves the stamp of their own insufficiency and bankruptcy; and sooner or later they are known to be falsehoods.

This brings us to the question, 'How do we discern the falsehood as falsehood?' There is no way out of the falsehood except by knowing it as a falsehood: but this knowledge of falsehood as falsehood would never come unless it were in some way latent in the falsehood, from the very beginning.

In Falsehood there is Suspicion and Fear

The acceptance of the falsehood is always a bed-ridden compromise. Even in the very depths of Ignorance, the soul does give some kind of challenge to the falsehood; and howsoever feeble and inarticulate it might seem to be in its initial stages, it is the beginning of that search for the Truth which ultimately annihilates all falsehoods and all ignorance. In the acceptance of a falsehood there is an ever-growing restlessness—a deep suspicion and a vague fear. For example, when a man considers himself and others to be identical with the gross body, he cannot reconcile himself completely to this belief. In embracing this false belief, there is fear of death and the fear of losing others. If a man depends for his happiness only upon the possession of forms, he knows in the heart of his heart that he is building his castles on slippery sands, that this surely is not the way to abiding happiness, that the support to which he so desperately clings, may any day give in. So, he is deeply suspicious of his grounds.

Falsehood betrays itself

Man is restlessly aware of his own insecurity. He knows that something is wrong somewhere and that he is counting upon false hopes. Falsehood is treacherously unreliable; he simply cannot afford to embrace it for ever; he might as well garland himself with a poisonous snake, or go to sleep on the top of a volcano which is only temporarily inactive. The falsehood bears the hall-mark of being incomplete and unsatisfactory, temporary and provisional; it points out to something else; it comes to the person as hiding something which is greater and truer than what it seems to be at its own face value. Falsehood betrays itself; and it leads man on to know the Truth.

The Citadels of Maya

The falsehoods of vitiated thinking spring from initial mistakes in valuation; they arise as a side-product of a psychic activity, which consists in the pursuit of certain accepted values; they come into existence as a part of rationalisation and justification of the accepted values; and they owe their hold upon the human mind owing to their appearing to support those accepted values. If they did not affect human values or their realisation, they would immediately dwindle into insignificance, and lose their grip upon the mind. When false beliefs derive their being and vitality from deep-rooted wishes, they are nourished by false seeking. If the error in false beliefs is purely intellectual, it is easy to set right. But the false beliefs, which are nourished by false seeking, are the citadels of Maya; they involve much more than intellectual error; and they do not suffer any appreciable shock by mere counter-assertion of a purely intellectual nature.

Clarity of Perception comes from Inner Purity

The cutting out of the desires and attachments which vitiate thinking is not primarily a matter of merely intellectual propositions; it requires right effort and right action. Not in arm-chair speculation, but in the doing of right things shall spiritual truths be discovered; honest action is a preliminary to the elimination of

spiritual falsehoods. The perception of spiritual truths requires not merely strenuous and furious thinking, but clear thinking, and true clarity of thought is the fruit of a pure and tranquil mind.

God as Truth is Known after Transcending Falsehood

Not till the stripping off of the last vestige of Maya-created falsehood is God known as the truth: only when Maya is completely crossed, there arises the supreme knowledge that God is the only Truth. God alone is real. All that is not God, all that is impermanent and finite, and all that seems to exist within the domain of duality is false. God is one Infinite Reality; all divisions which are conceived within this Reality are falsely conceived: they do not actually exist.

God is Indivisible

When God is considered as something divisible, it is due to Maya. The variegated world of multiplicity does not effect the partitioning of God into several different portions. There are different ego minds, different bodies, different forms, but only one soul. when the one Soul is taken along with different ego-minds and bodies, we get different individualised spirits; but this does not introduce any multiplicity within the soul itself. The soul is and always remains indivisible. The one indivisible soul serves the purpose of a background for different ego-minds, which do the thinking and doing of various types and which go through numberless types of dual experiences; but the one indivisible soul is and always remains beyond all thinking and doing and beyond all dual experience.

The different types of opinions or the different types of thinking do not introduce any variety or multiplicity within the one indivisible soul, for the simple reason that there are no opinions or any types of thinking within the soul. All the activity of thinking along with its conclusions is within the ego-mind, which is finite. The soul does not think; it is only the ego-mind, which thinks with the background of the soul. Thinking and the knowledge which comes through thinking are both possible in the state of imperfect and incomplete knowledge which belongs to the finite ego-minds. In the soul itself, there is neither thinking nor the knowledge that comes through thinking.

Soul is Infinite Thought and Infinite Intelligence

The soul is infinite thought and infinite intelligence itself; but in this infinite thought and intelligence there is no division of the thinker, the thinking and the conclusions of the thinking, nor the duality of the subject and object. It is only the ego-mind with the background of the soul that can become the thinker. The soul, which is infinite thought and infinite intelligence, does not think or have any activity of the intellect. Intellect with its limited thinking comes into existence only with the finite ego-mind; in the completeness and sufficiency of the infinite intelligence, which is the soul, there is no need for the intellect or its activities.

God is the Only Reality

With the shedding of the last vestige of falsehoods created by Maya the soul not only knows its reality to be different from the gross, the subtle, or the mental body, but knows itself to be God, which is the only reality. It knows that the mind, the subtle body and the physical body were all equally the creations of its own imagination, that in reality they never existed; that it was through ignorance that it conceived itself as the mind or the subtle body or the physical body, and that it, as it were, itself became the mind, the subtle

body or the gross body and then identified itself with all these self-created illusions.

God is beyond Duality

God is infinite by being above the limiting opposites of duality. He is above the limited aspects of good and bad, small and great, right and wrong, virtue and evil, happiness and misery; therefore he is infinite. If God were good rather than bad, or bad rather than good, or if he were small rather than great, or great rather than small, or if he were right rather than wrong, or wrong rather than right, or if he were virtuous rather than evil, or evil rather than virtuous, or if he were happy rather than miserable, or miserable rather than happy, he would be finite and not infinite. Only by being above duality is God infinite.

The Finite cannot be the Second part of the Infinite

Whatever is infinite must transcend duality; it can never be one term in a duality; therefore that which is truly infinite cannot be considered to be the dual part of the finite. If the infinite is regarded as existing side by side with the finite, it is no longer infinite, for it then becomes the second part of duality. God, who is infinite, cannot descend within duality. So, the apparent existence of the duality as an Infinite God and the finite world is illusory. God alone is real; he is Infinite, one without a second. The existence of the finite is only apparent; it is false. It is not real.

The World of Finite Things is a Creation of Maya

How does the false world of finite things come into existence? Why does it exist? It is created by maya, or the principle of ignorance. Maya is not illusion; it is the creator of illusions. Maya is not false; it is that which gives false impressions. Maya is not unreal, it is that which makes the real appear unreal, and the unreal appear real. Maya is not duality; it is that which causes duality.

Creations of Maya are Finite

For the purpose of intellectual explanation, Maya must be looked upon as being infinite. It creates the illusion of finiteness; it is not in itself finite. All the illusions which are created by Maya are finite; and the entire universe of duality, which appears to exist, due to Maya, is also finite. The universe may seem to contain innumerable things, but that does not make it infinite. Stars may be countless; they are a huge number but the collection of stars is all the same finite. Space and time might seem to be infinitely divisible; but they are nevertheless finite. Everything which is finite and limited belongs to the world of illusion; but the principle which causes this illusion of finite things must, in a sense, be regarded as not being an illusion.

Maya is not Limited by Space

Maya cannot be considered as being finite. A thing becomes finite by being limited in time. Maya does not exist in space and cannot be limited by it. Maya cannot be limited in space, because space is itself the creation of Maya. Space, with all that it contains, is an illusion and is dependent upon Maya; Maya is in no way dependent upon space. So Maya cannot become finite through any limitations of space.

Maya is not Limited by Time

Nor can Maya become finite because of any limitations of time. Though Maya comes to an end in the state of super-consciousness, it

need not be considered finite for that reason. Maya cannot have a beginning or end in time, because time itself is a creation of Maya. Any view that makes Maya a happening that takes place at some time and disappears after some time, places Maya in time and not time in Maya. Time is in Maya; Maya is not in time. Time as well as all the happenings in time are the creations of Maya; time comes into existence because of Maya and disappears when Maya disappears. God is a timeless reality and the realisation of God and the disappearance of Maya is a timeless act. So, Maya is in no way limited by time.

Maya is Infinite

Nor can Maya be considered to be itself finite for any other reasons for, if it is finite, it would be an illusion; and being an illusion it would not have any potency to create other illusions. For the purposes of intellectual explanation, Maya is best regarded as being both real and infinite, just as in the same way as God is usually regarded as being both real and infinite.

Maya cannot be Ultimately True

Among all possible intellectual explanations, the explanation that Maya, like God, is both real and infinite, is most acceptable to the intellect of man. But Maya cannot be ultimately true. Wherever there is duality, there is finiteness on both sides; the one thing limits the other. There cannot be two real infinities. There can be two huge things; but there cannot be two infinite entities. If we have the duality of God and Maya, and if both are regarded as co-ordinate existents, then the Infinite Reality of God is considered as the second part of a duality. Therefore, the intellectual explanation that Maya is real does not have the stamp of final knowledge, though it is the most plausible explanation.

Intellectual Difficulties in understanding Maya

There are difficulties in regarding Maya as illusory and there are also difficulties in regarding Maya as ultimately real. Thus, all attempts of the limited intellect to understand Maya lead to an impasse. On the one hand, if Maya is regarded as finite, it itself becomes illusory and then it cannot account for the illusory world of finite things; therefore Maya has to be regarded as being ultimately real, it, itself, becomes a second part of the duality of another Infinite Reality, namely God; and from this point of view, therefore, Maya actually seems to become finite and therefore unreal. So Maya cannot be ultimately real though it has to be regarded as such in order to account for the illusory world of finite objects.

Maya is God's Shadow

In whatsoever manner the limited intellect tries to understand Maya, it falls short of true understanding. It is not possible to understand Maya through the limited intellect; it is as unfathomable as God. God is unfathomable, un-understandable; so is Maya unfathomable and un-understandable. So, they say: "Maya is God's shadow." Where a man is, there is his shadow also; so where God is, there is also this inscrutable Maya.

The Enigma of Maya is solved after Realisation

But though God and Maya are inscrutable for the limited intellect working under the domain of duality, they can be thoroughly understood in their true nature, in the final knowledge of realisation. The enigma of the existence of Maya can never be finally solved until after Realisation, when it is known that Maya does not exist in Reality.

Maya does not exist in two States

Maya does not exist in two states. In the original unconscious state of Reality, there is no Maya, and in the self-conscious state of God also, there is no Maya. It exists only in God's consciousness of the phenomenal world of duality, i.e., when there is the consciousness of the gross world, or the consciousness of the subtle world, or the consciousness of the mental world. Maya exists when there is no self-consciousness but only the consciousness of the imagined other, and when consciousness is helplessly dominated by the false categories of duality.

Maya exists only for the Illusion

Maya exists only from the point of view of the finite. It is only for the illusion that Maya exists as a real and infinite creator of unreal and finite things. From the point of view of the last and the only Truth of Realisation, nothing exists except the Infinite and Eternal God; there, the illusion of finite things as separate from God has vanished, and with it has also vanished Maya or the creator of this illusion.

The Knowledge of Realisation

Self-Knowledge comes to the soul by looking within, and by crossing Maya; and in that self-knowledge, it not only knows that the different ego-minds and bodies never existed, but also that the entire universe and Maya itself never existed as a separate principle. Whatever reality Maya ever had is now swallowed up in the indivisible being of the one soul. The soul knows itself to be what it has always been—eternally self-realised, eternally infinite in knowledge, bliss, power, and existence, and eternally free from duality. But this highest form of self-knowledge is inaccessible for the intellect, and it is incomprehensible except to those who have attained to the heights of final Realisation.

NIRGUN OR GOD THE ABSOLUTE, IMPERSONAL, WITHOUT ATTRIBUTES

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God in the Beyond State is absolutely independent of the world. He is the source of all Power, Knowledge, Bliss, Beauty and Wisdom; but at the same time though conscious of His Power, Beauty and other Attributes, He is not (in the Beyond State) able to express these qualities. He remains eternal in the sense that He ever was, is and shall be! We imagine He was; before that He was, and still before that He was! One who has no beginning and no end!

Since our imagination is quite unable to grasp this Truth, we can only conclude that such a State is entirely beyond our grasp and understanding. It is almost useless to try to write anything at all about the Absolute God. As Meher Baba says: "Whatever is said about God in volumes of Puran scriptures and the Gita, is just all mere talk!" For to speak correctly of God is to say "GOD IS!" That is all we can say of Him in His Beyond State where there is no beginning and no end, for nothing exists but God!

But "nothing" exists also. (Here we refer to the "previous nothing," pragabhava, as expounded by Dr. Mascarenhas in Chapter VI.) Let us try to see how this "nothing" represents the whole universe! "Nothing" (previous nothing) exists latently in God. If only God the Absolute is, then God is everything and in this infinite everything "nothing" is latent, but is. As the Master has explained: —

The First imagination which Vedanta calls "lahar" and Sufism calls "guman" is the First urge on the part of God to know Himself. As soon as this urge appeared, a beginning was made, not of God, but of the urge. It was the question who am I?

Now we come to "Nothing"! God, instead of knowing Himself, began to know "nothing"! This process may be likened to a man tickled out of his sleep into a gradual opening of his eyes—a progressively full awakening. When he finally awoke (but not in full consciousness) he saw the object, his own shadow and not Himself! By passing gradually through the Seven Stages of inward evolution, through the rise of expanding consciousness He attained to a full opening of the eyes and then came the consciousness of a fully manifested shadow. The shadow being our illusory Creation! This is maya.

The shadow was latent in God. In "previous nothing," like the tree in the seed. The "previous nothing" being the seed. God saw Himself as such, but only Himself as the shadow. Impressions (sanskaras) gathered and grew as the shadows of creation flitted past, the alternations of pain and pleasure, beauty and ugliness, births and death piling up in profusion, germs of imagination and illusion!

If God is to have knowledge of Himself as He really is, this can only take place in full open-eyed consciousness. This culminating event takes place only when man has attained to his highest spiritual consciousness after ascending and passing through the various stages of the Path to complete Self-Realisation. Thus God becomes conscious of Himself in man's highest state of consciousness, which can only be when man has realised his inherent Divinity by reaching the Ultimate Goal of Self-Realisation or God-consciousness.

It is impossible in a short book, to go into details of the various aspects of the Universal Mind and of God the Absolute. We are simply endeavouring to stimulate interest in these metaphysical problems, which can only be answered by One who has attained Perfection. Readers should refer to Meher Baba's own work, *God Speaks*, written through the medium of his letter-board. This illuminating work is expected to be published shortly in U.S.A.

MOHAMMED chapter IV — Page 70

Mohammed born A.D. 570, died A.D. 632.

He began to realise the Self or God at the age of 40. This experience was described as the "First revelation through Gabriel." But the Meraj or final Realisation of the Self was achieved later (between the age of 49 and 52). The name of his Master was not disclosed. After the announcement that he was a Prophet of God, he immediately came up against the vested interests of the Mosques or Temples. His life was endangered and his followers persecuted and tortured. His flight from Mecca took place at the height of the persecutions in A.D. 622.

Mohammed later re-entered Mecca as conqueror accompanied by 10,000 Moslems, without any bloodshed, in A.D. 630, and became its virtual ruler. In the Prophet's time Arabia was an incredibly barbarous country, far more so than it is now; girl babies were thrown into burning pits amidst the applause of their relatives. Women had no legal status at all (they have not much now, since they are still bought and sold like slaves). At the time of Mohammed the only

way a man could obtain protection for a woman was to marry her, hence the reason for the Prophet's wives.

The Meccans treated Mohammed to begin with in much the same fashion as the Jews treated Jesus; only they did not succeed in killing him. There are various miraculous stories and events connected with the Prophet's life, but although he had all the powers of the Godman, it appears that he rarely exerted them. Before he died, he had united Arabia.

Chapter IX—Page 160

Dr. George Crile, the eminent American surgeon, in his book, *The Phenomena of Life*, pointed out that electrical energy plays a fundamental part in the organisation, growth and function of protoplasm. Crile held that living cells are electric cells functioning as a system of generators, inductance lines and insulators and that the role played by radiation and electricity in living processes is no more mysterious in man than in batteries and dynamos.

Georges Lakhovsky, the engineer physicist, in his book, *The Secret of Life*, shows that his theories bear a striking similarity to those of the above-mentioned medical man, and both were singularly successful in the practical application of their theories which have revealed a new vista for scientific research which may ultimately lead to the solution of the cancer problem.

Although Lakhovsky, by means of his famous Multiple Wave Oscillator, obtained relief from cancer and various forms of arthritis and other diseases, if not cures; it appears that his methods are not in use in England, although widely known on the Continent and in America. Yet professional criticisms of the great dangers of radium treatment are on the increase.

Professor D'Arsonval in his preface of Lakhovsky's revolutionary work writes: "The high priests of science are well-nigh as orthodox and tyrannical as the pontiffs of religion. Whoever dares to question the validity of their dogmas is promptly anathematised, if not expelled from the sacred fold of acquiescent sheep penned up in nationalised institutions and laboratories."

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French investigators, with their unusual mental clarity and capacity for following out a logical system of thought to a realistic conclusion, unhampered by want of intellectual honesty or lack of moral courage, did much useful research on what they called the anatomy of the soul, at the beginning of this century. Unfortunately their works for the most part have not been translated into English.

Charles Lancelin, a fearless investigator of the Unknown, wrote a book, *L'Ame humaine*, which was published in Paris in 1918. This work was before its time, but is now of considerable importance to the psychologist. The author sought to prove the objective reality of the mind, in so far as its objective status could be proved, as in photography and clinical work. He began first of all by proving the objective reality of the "double," that is the astral body of the subject, or in other words, the theory of bilocation. From this hypothesis he went on to prove the existence of other finer ethereal bodies. Lancelin in his researches, by means of experimental studies in psycho-physiology, sought to obtain data on the substance and properties of the mind, its organic biology, its anatomy, its material elements and general chemical and physical properties.

In this work he was assisted by Madame Lambert, a most

remarkable "sensitive," whose daring self-sacrifice for the sake of science, puts her on the level of the greatest explorers into the unknown spheres of existence. She allowed Lancelin to magnetise her into her different bodies or forms, pushing her ever higher into the realms of super-consciousness. While in these trance-like conditions, she was able to describe to Lancelin what she saw. It seemed that differently formed lights symbolically marked each new ascent into a higher sphere. Sometimes she would be almost blinded by the brilliance of the White Light, she would become terribly afraid, and implore Lancelin to wake her up, and bring her back to normal consciousness. For she was always in great fear that during these expeditions to the higher levels of the Spirit, she might be unable to descend again to her normal physical vehicle, her body.

Lancelin's work therefore was of an exceedingly dangerous nature, for had he made the slightest mistake, he would have killed her; the "silver cord" attaching the subject to her various bodies might have become ruptured in the process. For as we know, death is always caused by the breaking of the "cord" which keeps the ego and its various bodies en rapport with one another.

Such hazardous and difficult work had never before been tried, and Lancelin would sometimes find it exceedingly hard to "pull her down to earth," for once the spirit has risen so high, it is always loath to come down again to its physical habitat.

On one occasion Lancelin asked Madame Lambert what would happen to her should he fail to reintegrate and reconstitute her back to her normal vehicle and home, the physical body. She replied that should the spirit refuse to return to its body, the physical vehicle would be bereft of control by the ego, and would take on the appearance of an idiot, and eventually die. In other words, she would be unable to get back into her body!

In these excursions she seems sometimes to have gone to the very limit, for when urged to go still farther, she would cry: "Mais il n'y a plus rien, puisque nous sommes au bout de l'âme!" (But there is no more anything, we have come to the end of the soul!) On other occasions she would say that there was "rien que l'esprit!" (nothing but Spirit!) Had she, like the Yogis, traversed to the regions where pure spirit, freed from all material properties, began?

I have touched on the French investigator's amazing experiments, because Madame Lambert's remarks concerning the fate of her body, and her fear of the spirit's refusal to come down again back into it, are in some manner analogous to the psychology of the masts.

KARMA chapter X—Page 173

It is not possible to go into details concerning life in the here-after for it raises too many issues and many volumes have already been written on this subject. The Churches prepare one for Heaven or Hell, but there is no death, the continuity of life cannot be destroyed. Such states are but illusory dreams of the ego, which has not yet transcended the domain of Maya; therefore has not arrived at the end of its journey through creation and obtained liberation from the round of births and deaths. Much of the 'Borderland' troubles can be explained easily enough, because those who have passed the threshold of death, without being aware of their transition from the earth sphere, are liable to get into difficulties

because their consciousness is unable to adapt itself to the new surroundings. Many cases of insanity and obsession are due to those who have passed on, not having realised this fact, and becoming entangled in the aura of a living person. See Dr. Carl Wickland's book. Forty years amongst the dead. This physician was renowned in Los Angeles for his sudden cures of acute cases of insanity. He adopted the spirit hypothesis with great success.

The confusion and ignorance of the Churches, who should be the custodians and guardians of the soul, are largely responsible for the unhappy condition in which so many find themselves after death, due to their lack of interest during life-time in post-mortem conditions. We will here quote from the Discourses of Meher Baba and see what he has to say about after-death conditions:—

"Under certain conditions it is possible to use the physical senses consciously, in such a way that we contact the semi-subtle spheres, that is to say the link between the physical or the gross world, and the subtle or mental plane. Thus we can communicate with the spirits of the dead. . . . The spirits of all human beings (except those who have progressed so far as to be beyond the fourth plane) come to this semi-subtle sphere. In accordance with their *sanskaras* (their impressions gathered during earth life) they return to the semi-subtle plane for a time. These spirits that are, as it were, in the waiting room of the semi-subtle sphere may be contacted by spirit communication. The semi-subtle sphere, and heaven and hell and their respective experiences are not real; they are subtle enjoyments and miseries experienced through the subtle organs of the subtle body. Some of the descriptions after death are partly true, but little importance should be attributed to them. . . . During the interval between the two incarnations, the consciousness of the soul is turned towards the *sanskaras*, or impressions, with the result that there is a revival and magnification of corresponding experiences. The average man does not become aware of the subtle environment. He is wrapped up in his state of subjectivity and is absorbed in living through the revived *sanskaras*. In this state the experiences of pain and pleasure become much more intense than they were in the earthly life. And those subjective states of intensified suffering or joy are respectively called heaven or hell, which are illusions within the greater illusion of the phenomenal world."

To return to the theory of reincarnation—dreams quite often suggest "dips " into past life experiences. For instance, a cousin of mine once awakened from a singularly vivid dream in which she distinctly heard herself speaking from a church pulpit in the following terms (the words were at the end of a sermon): "All primitive religions have for God a Trinity consisting of Man, Woman and Manchild—but in the Protestant religion the place formerly occupied by the Virgin Mary has been usurped by the Holy Ghost!" The cousin and myself both come from a long line of Churchmen. This suggests that her dream implies a former clerical incarnation.

My sister-in-law, once when dangerously ill, saw on the wall from her bed a series of wonderful cinematic-like records of events concerning the Stuart period which were unknown to her; which gave the impression that they were associated with some previous incarnation. Many readers must have had such "dips"; there are also many other experiences which can only be explained by the theory of reincarnation, but they are outside the scope of this book.

A FEW NOTES ON STATES OF GOD

There are three distinct states of consciousness belonging to the Seventh Plane.

(1) The Sadguru, Qutub or Perfect Master, i.e., Nirvikalpa.

This state is the fully God-Realised state. But though God-Realised, normal consciousness has been fully retained, i.e., the Sadguru is conscious of himself as a man (in his physical body) and thereby experiences the physical consciousness of the gross or material world. He is concerned with everyone and everything, and his duties consist in the care and progress of humanity. His hand of love and grace is extended to us, but at the same time it might be said that it remains under the protection of a glove, which keeps it unstained and unaffected by the deeds, whether good or bad, of mankind. So that in spite of his mission on earth, he remains in a sense detached and unattached.

(2) The Jeevanmukta.

This God-Realised man retains his normal consciousness, but he remains unaffected by the world, as he is not concerned with it, and has no obligation nor duties to perform in connection with it. But at the same time, in spite of his purely negative attitude towards humanity, he remains a source of great spiritual radiance, and his spiritual power is used for the sustainment of the world.

(3) The Majzoob of the Seventh Plane.

This God-Realised soul is completely merged in God, and has no normal consciousness and therefore is quite disconnected from the affairs of the world. Hence the expression "The Living Dead." Though the Majzoob will eat, sleep, talk and move like a normal man, he is at the same time more or less unconscious of what he is doing, or of what is happening to his own bodily existence. In a sense he is free from all the illusions of duality which accompany the life of a normal man. His presence nevertheless has great spiritual potency, and people can be benefitted by his proximity. He is generally recognised by those around him as being a great saint, and is cared for and worshipped as such. The Godmad cannot take care of themselves, and if left alone, their bodies will be neglected and starved.

We must make it clear that besides the Fifty-Six God-Realised Ones and the Seven Most Advanced Souls, always physically alive on earth at all times, there are numbers of other advanced souls, and amongst the latter, different types of Majzoobs and Saliks. There are in fact seven chief types amongst both on the various planes in ascending order to the Seventh Plane. But we cannot go into details in this book. Such knowledge having already been elaborated elsewhere in the Master's teachings.

We must always remember that nirvana is the State of Ultimate Perfection, when the ego becomes merged in God or the Oversoul, and none can return to earth from this State.

Nirvikalpa is also the same state as nirvana, but the ego can and does return to earth-consciousness as a Sadguru, Salik or Majzoob.

GLOSSARY

A FEW TERMS IN EASTERN METAPHYSICS

<i>Mystic</i>	<i>Vedantic</i>	<i>Sufi</i>
God's Beyond	Paratper	Ghaibul-Chaib
Beyond State.	Para-Brahma.	Warau-Wara.
God in Beyond State.	Paramatma.	Allah.
Power, Knowledge and Bliss.	Shakti, Gnyan, Anand.	Qudrat, Marefat and Mussarat.
Emanator.	Brahma.	Afridgar.
Sustainer.	Vishnu.	Parwardigar.
Dissolver.	Mahesh.	Fanakar.
Embodied Soul.	Jeeva.	Jane-Jismi.
Evolution.	Utkranti.	Irteqa.
Reincarnation.	Punar-Janma.	Rij-at or Awagawan
The Divinely Absorbed.	Brahmi Bhoot.	Rij-at Majzoob.
The Highest Divine Consciousness.	Vidnyan.	Arshe-Ala.
Attributeless.	Nirgun.	La-Sifat.
Formless.	Nirakar.	La-Surat.
Divine Junction.	Turya Awastha	Fana-Ma-Al Baqa.
God-Man.	Sadguru.	Kntub.
Manifest in form.	Sakar.	Ba Surat.
Human.	Jeewatma.	Insan.
Gross World.	Anna Bhuvan.	Alame Nasoot.
Subtle World.	Prana Bhnvan.	Alame Malakut.
Mental World.	Mano Bhuvan.	Alame Jabrnt.
Advanced souls.	Sadhus.	Mutawassit.
Infinite.	Anant.	La Mahdood.
Liberated Incarnate.	Jeevan-Mukta.	Azade-Mutlaq.

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