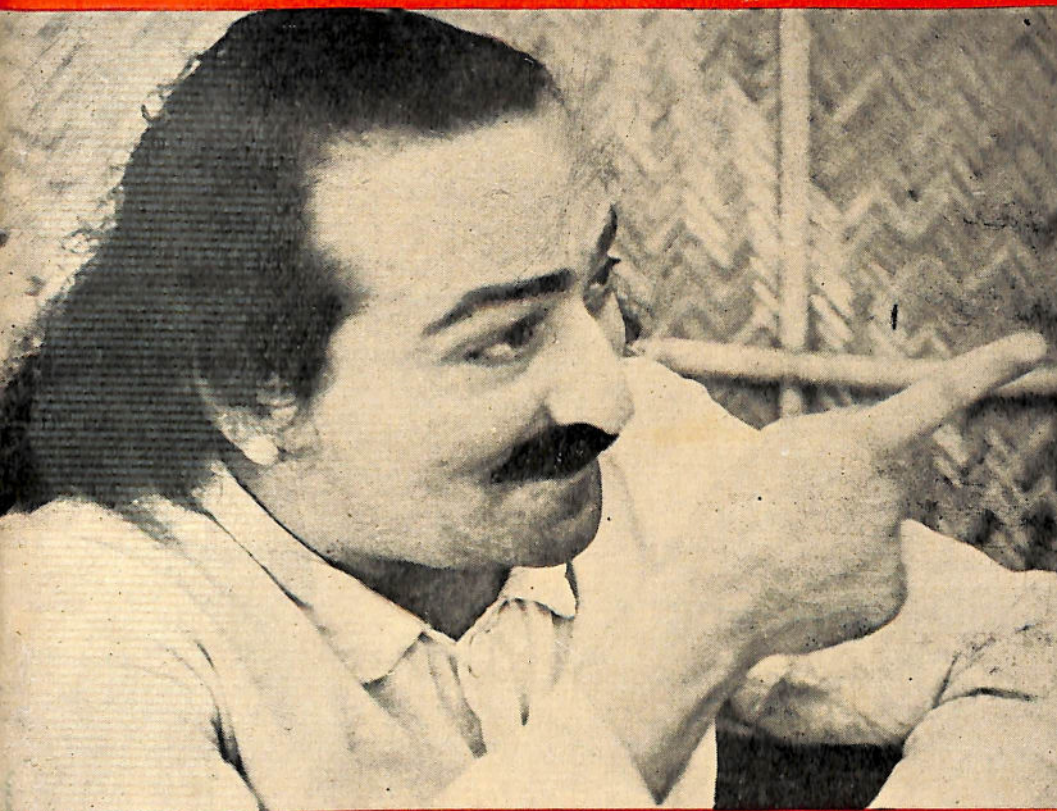

the answer

CONVERSATIONS WITH MEHER BABA



a glow publication

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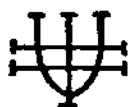
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the answer
CONVERSATIONS WITH MEHER BABA



A GLOW PUBLICATION

dedicated to
Kahlil Gibran
whose songs fill me
with ecstatic joy

1-700029



Meher Baba answering questions at Rahuri, India, in 1936. The questioner is Dr. Abdul Ghani Munsiff.

EVERY rational man has an innate desire to have his questions answered. And every rational man does get an answer. Questions arise in the minds of men because of inherent fear. This feeling of fear differs from man to man. While some ponder after what they term as the 'insoluble' or the 'beyond', there are others who seek within themselves an answer to the purpose of their lives. They ask, that if there is happiness, how can it be achieved. They ask, that if there is love, how can it be felt. And with each question there are a million additional questions to be answered.

Meher Baba, recognised as the Avatar, knew the Question and the Answer. He was the Question and he was the Answer. Nevertheless all his life he continued to satisfy the 'convulsions of the mind' of men. THE ANSWER makes no claims. It is merely a feel of the innerness that Baba gave to those who sought his help. There were many who demanded answers to questions on the theme of creation, but there were also those who felt the warmth of his presence and were silent.

These conversations with Meher Baba were held in India, Great Britain, Switzerland, Italy and the United States of America between 1931 and 1939. They were faithfully recorded by Framroze H. Dadachanji and Princess Norina Matchabelli. Most of the interviews printed in this volume are appearing for the first time. The answers at times may appear repetitive, but it will show the discerning reader that Meher Baba's methods in dealing with the distressed were infallible, for his technique of dispelling fear and giving a fresh lease to life was unailing. In doing this Meher Baba not only gave material help to those who needed it, but also gave them spiritual awareness. In fact, he lifted the confused from the grind of despair and put them on a pedestal where they could help themselves on the path to attaining God-consciousness.

In presenting THE ANSWER to the world, THE GLOW PUBLICATIONS seek to tell those who would hear, that while the God-Man Meher Baba was silent, in the sense that he did not communicate by word of mouth, he ceaselessly continued to help the helpless, spiritually and otherwise.

THE ANSWER is the story of the working of this Universal Man.

February 25, 1972
11, Hyderabad Estate,
Type IV, Napean Road,
Bombay-6.

NAOSHERWAN ANZAR
Editor,
THE GLOW

The Beloved Answers

Most of the interviews with Meher Baba were brief and to the point. The method was simple. Those who wished to ask questions did so through an interpreter who understood Baba's finger signs and gestures. Baba answered each question, and at times, explained in detail.

There were others who came to Baba to feel his 'touch' and to receive the 'spiritual push'. All who came to him were assured of his help and guidance.

Questioner: She is a painter.

BABA: I am also a painter. I paint the hearts of people with colours of spirituality. She is a good soul.

Questioner: She feels she has a guilty heart.

BABA: No, she is not guilty as she believes. Everyone has weaknesses, but it is the heart that counts. She need not worry. I will help her spiritually.

Questioner: Would you help me to understand the process of evolution?

BABA: Yes, I will. It is the process of evolution through which a soul has to pass to attain the human form to realise Truth, and human beings also have to experience suffering to realise God, which is the goal of humanity and of eternal happiness.

To a workman who was paralysed

BABA: It is not the paralysis of the body that matters, but of the mind that retards the soul Yoga practises do not matter much he has to learn much to progress spiritually. I will help him spiritually. (Baba appreciated the spirit in which he took all his sufferings)

Questioner: With my own language I speak with God, because I love Truth.

BABA: Love for Truth is everything, hence no need of speaking anything.

Questioner: I cannot imagine how people can be anti-God.

BABA: It's only due to delusion. Once this disappears, they understand.

Questioner: It's a privilege to meet you, and this will be a red-letter day in my life.

BABA: Are you happy?

Questioner: No, very very miserable.

BABA: Try to be always happy. Never think that 'life is dreadful'; 'I am tired of life'; such thoughts really make life miserable. 'Life is worth living' if you think like that, all difficulties will appear insignificant. I will help you try to develop love. Never think, 'I am alone, I have so much to do, I am poor' and so on. All are poor. The whole world is poor. Even the millionaires are poor because they have greed and want more. Love someone and I will help you. Do not worry, my blessings.

Baba is handed over a written statement by an aged man. It is the confessions of the confused state of his life which makes him believe that he is fallen and feels utterly broken.

BABA: I know. No need to tell me, and I will explain. Don't worry. When one is meant for spiritual advancement, one has either love or lust in him to the extreme. This lust must be converted into love. What is lust, but a craving to satisfy physical senses, and love is the craving of the soul. I know all about you and will spiritually help you. Never think that you have fallen so as not to rise again.

BABA: Does he want to ask anything more?

Questioner: He thanks you very much. He got the answer that he wanted, and feels much relieved.

BABA: Ask if she wants to speak about anything to me.

She nodded refusal.

BABA: I understand, because what can explanations mean when internal help is at hand? Real help is spiritual help, and not by words and explanations. I'll help her. (A tear trickles down her cheek. She feels intensely and lays her hand in Baba's, and sits there for about a minute, when Baba asks her to leave, she goes away full of feeling and much affected).

Questioner: He is a dancer and is very glad to see you.

BABA: Dancing is a very good art if expressed rightly. It has divine qualities, and if properly expressed, it will have a wonderful effect. If expressed wrongly, it has the opposite effect....I am happy to see you.

Questioner: I feel so happy, too.

BABA: Anything more?

Questioner: Since a certain time, he does not quite clearly understand his own individual way to do things, i.e. the right way to express himself through art.

BABA: Soon, you will know. I will help you spiritually. You will feel it. This contact will help you henceforth.

BABA: Any questions?

Questioner: What he craves for is the contact. Words are therefore unnecessary.

BABA: Yes, it is true. If it is true that I know everything then there is no need to ask me any questions and explanations. And if you feel I do not know, what is the use of asking me, for then, I would not be able to help you!

Questioner: He has no doubts as to your powers and knowledge.

BABA: I will help him spiritually. I like him very, very much.

Questioner: He has gone through very terrible times and struggles.

BABA: I know. He has a very good heart and my help will make him understand things as they are.

BABA: Nervous? Tell her to be rested.

Questioner: She is in love with a church pianist, and asks if that friendship is to be kept up very pure.

BABA: Where's the harm to keep it up?

Questioner: Catholic law prevents marriage with a man who is divorced. The Church is against.... That's the conflict.

BABA: But do they love each other?

Questioner: Yes.

BABA: Then love is all that matters, if there is no lust. I see no harm in it. Let that love grow so that it makes two souls like one. I will spiritually help her to make this love grow purer.

Questioner: How can one develop a conscience to attune oneself to Truth?

BABA: Conscience can never be defined as right or wrong, because it is not based on intellect. So when one feels, the emotional side is affected.

Questioner: Is it something internal?

BABA: Today your conscience might say to believe in me, and tomorrow it might say not to believe. So conscience means the immediate response of the emotion, and so always do what you feel. If you feel today to believe in me, do believe. Tomorrow if you don't feel, don't. Conscience is different from discrimination.

Questioner: Is there something higher than conscience or discrimination?

BABA: Yes, higher than discrimination is Divine Love and when one really loves, conscience and discrimination are out of place. Everything is immaterial then, nothing counts.

Questioner: He is a painter.

BABA: I am also a painter, I paint with the colours of spirituality.

Questioner: That is what he wanted, the spiritual insight.

BABA: It will come gradually. Anything more to ask?

Questioner: I want a better channel for the expression of art, something spiritual.

BABA: It will come. For the present, any way that you think appropriate for expressing your art is good, and when you will feel something better to express, then automatically and by itself it will open out to you.

Questioner: That is what he thinks also.

BABA: There is one painter in India. When we were both young, he came to me and showed me his paintings. They were fantastic. I said, "They are good, go on." After a year or so, he came back to me and showed me some more. They were marvellous. Yet I did not say they were marvellous. I only said, "Go on," and today he is one of the greatest artists of the East. So whatever you feel like doing, go on doing. It will go on developing by itself. How do you like my paintings? (the artist began looking around when Baba pointed out the beautiful scenery outside). All this is my painting.

Questioner: I wish I could paint a thousandth part of it!

BABA: You will, when you will feel the proper intuition, I will help you.

Questioner: She is a student of law.

BABA: And law is good. All this universe is based on the Divine Law of Love which covers all existence. I will spiritually help her to understand more.

Questioner: How can I strive to achieve in life what one wants materially and also lasting permanently?

BABA: Yes, it can be done. What does perfection mean if it does not include material life? It is easy and practical. One has only to adopt that life which keeps materialism and spirituality in balance. How to do that? Lead the worldly life, attend to all your worldly duties, but for some moments in the day, long for knowing something that is beyond life; and this longing will increase gradually and that will make you free and detached from material results. Anyway, I will help you spiritually and you will know how to do it.

Questioner: I am so grateful to you for this interview and advice and will look forward to your help which I will so appreciate.

Questioner: She has come to ask to develop the Divine within. She feels she cannot achieve it herself alone, without help.

BABA: She will....by my help. Never be disheartened. It is all within, and I will help you to open it. I am so happy to see her longing for spiritual attainment.

Questioner: She does not know anything but this, and asks for nothing else.

BABA: I am so happy to know this.

Questioner: How can spirituality be attained?

BABA: It can be attained not by the intellect, but by heart and feeling and inner experience. I would explain for hours, but that would be nothing compared to one second of my internal help. Do one thing. Every night, just before retiring, think for one minute, "The Infinite God is within me, and I am part of the Infinite." This will contact her more and more with me internally.

Questioner: She says she doesn't want to bother you with questions.

BABA: That is the real thing, to know me through inner feeling.

Questioner: She always had a great longing to meet you.

Baba makes her sit beside him and she gives her hand in his. She is allowed to have a feel for two minutes.

Questioner: She wanted so much to be near you.

BABA: I know how she feels. I will help her.

BABA: Anything to ask?

Questioner: I cannot ask anything. I am so perplexed!

BABA: And it is a pity I have not much time, because when one comes I must explain. But for that I must have time. Anyway, you can ask. I would like to make you sit here and think of questions.

Questioner: But it makes it so awkward for you.

BABA: Never mind, go on.

Questioner: I am very anxious to find something real that we have to think of and do.

BABA: And that something is the only thing worth having. I will help you spiritually.

Questioner: Can I have that?

BABA: Yes, I know. You can. It is not through words or explanations that it can be explained. It is within you. It is to be opened. I will do it.

Questioner: In New York, I saw some of your people who made me think and feel I must have something else to seek, and for that I do try to see that Reality.

BABA: And when you find it, you can experience (higher) things even while being in your worldly affairs. Every morning, just the moment you get up, think for a minute, "It is in me", and rest assured that I will help you. I can help you.

Questioner: I understand very well. I realise and believe it. I thank you very much for all that you have given me already and am sure I will be helped.

Questioner: She doesn't dream or think of Jesus.

BABA: Why bother about the physical Christ... (If she can't get that idea as clearly as she wants). If she can't picture him, she can feel the Christ within. That means the ideal or Pure Love.

Questioner: She has read the "Sermon on the Mount", but can't have a clear conception of Jesus.

BABA: I will help her. Do one thing. Immediately she gets up every morning, just let her have this thought "Christ is within me" and leave the rest to me. I will help her, spiritually.

BABA: Anything to ask?
She just looks at Baba.

BABA: And in reality, from the spiritual viewpoint there is never a need of explanations. It is to be felt and experienced. One can, by reading books and having theories, get some intellectual understanding of Truth, but that is not real understanding. One must experience Truth, be able to live Truth, and realise Truth.

Questioner: Is it difficult?

BABA: Very easy, if one takes it to mind.

Questioner: How?

BABA: So easy. But people make it so complicated that it seems a gigantic task. I will tell you. Think much of others and very little of yourself. Very easy. Try little by little. Just try. When you have a scarf and she (pointing to a lady) needs one, spare your scarf for her. Even if she has something more, and you nothing, don't feel it. This is a simile. Don't take it literally. It is also simple. I will help you spiritually. Think less of yourself.

Questioner: How can one be a good doctor and use that science best?

BABA: It is very simple. Through love. If you love your work, you can do it with love, and anything that is done with love has perfect results. To be a good doctor always have in mind that to you all patients, good or bad, big or small, are equal. Treat with as

much care and interest a beggar as you would a millionaire, and in case you find you are not paid the price, you must not for a moment think of refusing. It is simple and practical, and yet a good many doctors don't observe this simple rule. Only if a doctor realises that One Infinite God is within all, then that doctor works like a saint! I am a doctor of souls. To me, good and bad, all are lovable and I help each according to the need. But although it is simple for you to be a good doctor, it is very difficult to practice it. So many things interfere, reputation, name, money, society, circumstances, and so on. Is it clear? You can be a good doctor if you take it to mind. You are such a fine soul. I will help you.

Questioner: Master, thank you very much for all you have said. I will try to act accordingly.

BABA: Anything to ask?

Questioner: Why do you not bring the salvation now?

BABA: Yes, I know. The world needs it very badly, but still there is a need for some of its greater evils to be eradicated, and then it will be very soon. I know it because I work it out.

Questioner: Will salvation be felt by anybody and everybody?

BABA: Mostly by all, but in degrees. To some more, to others less. But it will be a universal spiritual push.

Questioner: Why does not everybody find or feel God within?

BABA: It is nobody's fault. Every soul, sooner or later, has to realize the God within.

Questioner: Why do a few realise God and many do not?

BABA: It is because these many have yet to pass through the experiences of duality ("Maya"—illusion) and because to reach Unity one has to pass through duality. It is like this: (Here, Baba drew a diagram of one point and two branches shooting out of it, and then becoming one again).

BABA: These two branches are virtue and vice, good and bad, and so on that is, aspects of duality. I will help you.

Questioner: It is so puzzling to see why at times when one desires for good, bad comes out; then the confusion. Must one feel responsible for bad results of good work?

BABA: The essential must be to desire good.

Questioner: She has to speak to people, she believes, who are worthy to be led on and helped; but they do not listen and the results are painful. That's what she feels.

BABA: Always think of helping, and not of results. Never worry about results, because selfless service means trying to help others, not even thinking that 'I am doing this or that'.

Questioner: The world and others reproach her for her good motives.

BABA: Always work with all your heart hoping for the best, and don't worry. The world crucified Christ.

Questioner: She has the strength to fight it all, but still worries for the people.

BABA: The fighting is good, but worrying is unnecessary. Remember what I told you, try to follow it and I will help you spiritually.

Questioner: Can one realise virtue without experiencing vice?

BABA: One has to experience both, virtue and vice, to be able to realise the Infinite who is beyond both.

Questioner: Is Christ the only question of realisation?

BABA: Yes, Christ is only to be realised.

Questioner: Is there any great difference in Christ and church religion?

BABA: A world of difference. Christ is to be lived and not 'ceremonised' (i.e. found in ceremonies).

Questioner: Is this path-finding very difficult in the West than in the East?

BABA: No. It is a different outlook only, because in the East as in the West there are intelligent giants. Also, in both, there are good hearts. And in the teachings of great men, both East and West, there is Love, the name and method is differently expressed.

Questioner: I understand. Thank you for clearing the mist.

BABA: Happy to see you.

Questioner: He is an artist and has encountered opposition always, and is trying to find a clear way in the face of it all, and he has always to go in for pure influence.

BABA: There lies the fun of the game, to meet opposition, to face and encounter it. If not, life becomes dull and monotonous. One can find spirituality only through opposition. But when you are facing it, if you are determined, it becomes enduring just like a wall which stands erect, unaffected, against any number of balls struck at it, the balls rebounding with the same force with which they are struck against the wall. On encountering opposition, life becomes enduring, determined and unaffected, like the wall, that stands erect and unaffected against the continued strokes of the ball thrown against it. And art is a divine thing. It can only be rightly expressed if opposed to bring out its inner beauty that lies behind. I will help you spiritually.

Meher Baba explained to a private group, including Mr. F (the learned historian of art) some points on Evolution & the Missing Link, and also the desirability of informing the masses about it all, and also showed them a specially drawn chart. Mr. F., after seeing the chart, remarked that the importance of it lies in the spiritual evolution and not in the organic. He expressed his opinion that it was not desirable that the masses should be enlightened about the missing link at this stage. He meant to say that the

time was not yet ripe for all to know the secrets of Nature and its working.

Baba explained to him to clear his misunderstanding, for the time for the spiritual push was approaching very near and that there was nothing wrong in the people being enlightened about evolution—both organic and spiritual—since both are interlinked and go hand-in-hand. To understand the spiritual, he explained, one must know the material (organic), so that through this knowledge i.e. the process of the organic evolution, people would be enlightened on the process of the spiritual evolution, which begins from the human form.

Mr. F. remarked that the idea in the scientific world about the 'missing link', as he understood, was erroneous. Baba said, "Yes, it is a great mistake. In fact there is nothing like the 'missing link' in the organic evolution...." Mr. F. understood thoroughly what Baba meant and thanked him for clearing his misunderstanding.

Questioner: How could I know the state "beyond" which I consider to be the goal of life.

BABA: Try and practise to keep the mind blank.

Questioner: I try to curb my desires—say smoking—I can control for a time, but they rise up again and overpower me.

BABA: By daily dwelling on the thought and trying to keep the mind blank will these desires be diminished gradually and eliminated eventually, and in this process of your trying to do this, you will feel my help.

Questioner: Oh will I! How grateful! (After a moment's pause) I have been trying so hard to bring the mind to a state of coma, but the inrush of thoughts and the unsteadiness of mind makes things very difficult and I feel it is impossible.

BABA: It is possible by observing the correct method of control. The disturbing thoughts should be allowed to come and go. There is no need of trying to exercise a direct pressure to drive them away. The

more you do so, the more will they confront you. So keep an attitude of apathy and total indifference, holding the "central" intended thought uppermost in mind, disregarding every other disturbing thought. (Here Baba gave her a certain process to practice, every day)—and you will feel my help which I shall release at the time. This contact will help you a great deal as you will realise in future.

Questioner: Oh, I am so happy to see you I am so tired of life and very unhappy Don't see how I can improve!

BABA: Everyone is unconsciously tired of this life, because everyone seeks happiness, but knows not how to get it. But life is so beautiful. It is meant to be happy. I will help you. Then things will appear changed. You will see it. It is always the outlook that counts, and not the object. Today you feel tired, upset, seeing nothing beautiful in things round you in life. If tomorrow, you do not feel bored, but cheerful, in the same things that appeared so black to you yesterday...it is all due to changed mentality and outlook. The easy way is not to make much of things. Take them lightly. Say to yourself, "I am meant to be happy, to make others happy" and gradually you do become happy yourself and make others too. Don't suggest to your mind, 'I am tired, haggard, depressed'. That will make you feel worse. Always say, "All is well and beautiful, I will be happy." I will help you spiritually. I can and I will. You will feel it.

BABA: Wonderful soul. (She stares at Baba) Does she want to ask anything?

Questioner: What must I do for better life with my mother who does not approve of what I do for you and for your work?

BABA: Think more of her and less of yourself. That will make matters adjusted; because even if you think at times that your mother is in the wrong and you are in the right, or sometimes she is in the right and you are in the wrong, still it matters little if you think of her, and not only about her, but also about all others the same way. In short, just think less of yourself and more of others. Real happiness is to make others happy. (The words had a deep impres-

sion on her.) After a moment's silence, Baba added, "Very dear soul, I will help you spiritually. My love is Pure and Infinite."

Questioner: Thank you very much. I am so very happy to have met you. Should I tell my mother regarding my feelings for you.

BABA: Yes, I know. But not for a few days. Later on you can. You will feel. I will tell you somehow.

BABA: Feeling nervous?

Questioner: Yes. She is an artist.

BABA: I am also an artist. I have the whole world as my canvas. I paint souls....

Questioner: She is stricken with the failures she has met she is a very sensitive soul.

BABA: I know. She has a great heart. It is the 'feeling' that matters and not explanations.

Questioner: She is suffering very much being unable to express her feelings. She says, "I never found a way to express myself in art." Creative power in art did find an outlet through people, but not through art.

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BABA: But now it will open, and once it is opened, it will pour forth continually. The more it is disclosed the more it comes out. But it must be opened at the right moment. I will help her to open it. She will feel my help, because I help through pure love, and it must open and she will have her right ambition. She has a very good heart. I will help her. (She feels very, very grateful and relieved.)

BABA: Anything to ask?

Questioner: She is in very awkward moments, fight within and fight without, disease, difficulties in profession. She feels that she fails every day. (She cries with her hand in his).

BABA: I know it all and will help her. (She sobs) Yes, I will help you.

Questioner: She wants to believe in you and have faith in you.

BABA: Yes, she will feel my help. Now that she has met me, it will gradually change her outlook on life.

Questioner: She believes in you, but does not believe in herself.

BABA: My help will make her believe in herself too, and that's the most beautiful thing in life (to have confidence in one's own self).

Questioner: How?

BABA: Because the entire outlook is changed, and I will change it, so that all these difficulties will gradually fade away.

Questioner: Can that really be done? (She asks surprisingly).

BABA: Yes, I know that I will help her to gain what I said, and everything will change.

Questioner: Is she condemned to be alone, as she feels now?

BABA: No. When the outlook is changed, she won't feel alone at all.

Questioner: Very glad to have met you.

BABA: Anything to ask?

Questioner: How can one achieve one's ambition? He (pointing to her son) is an artist.

BABA: And art is one of the sources through which the soul expresses itself and inspires others. But to express art thoroughly, one must have the inner emotions opened thoroughly. If you feel something checks you from expressing yourself thoroughly, then you have to do one thing, that is, to adjust your mental attitude thus: just before expressing, think, "I can and will express it thoroughly" and every time you express it, you will find you are more convinced of your expression. It is the mind that keeps it closed. There are many actors who either through inferiority complex or through nervousness or through dryness feel they cannot express and this (negative) feeling of the mind checks the expression. While acting, think you are one of the greatest actors of the world and try to express yourself thoroughly. I will help

you spiritually. Just think you are the greatest (actor). Where's the harm in thinking like that? It is not for pride you do it, but for bringing the best out of you. There is nothing wrong.

Questioner: She complains that she does not develop quicker on her spiritual progress.

BABA: I know, and have nothing to say to her.... My help will be internal....She will feel.

Questioner: She feels confused about things.

BABA: All are confused, except me. But it will soon be alright.

Questioner: She feels unhappy being unable to help others as she wants on account of doubts arising in her mind.

BABA: She can't help if doubts come into her mind. This feeling of not being able to help others is in itself spiritual.

Questioner: Can one attain to perfection immediately after coming in contact with a Master?

BABA: In some cases, yes. In others, it (the progress) is very gradual. It all depends upon internal help. It does not necessarily mean that coming into contact with me must make you at once realised. If that were the case, the Jews, who were all the time near Jesus and in his immediate contact, would not have crucified him. You will understand. I will help you spiritually.

Questioner: It is a torture to feel one is hard up, unable to help or do anything by way of "service" to others.

BABA: This is very noble. She will be as she wants. Let that desire remain and she will improve. This contact will help her. My blessings.

Questioner: He is an artist.

BABA: I love artists because through art one can express oneself beautifully.

Questioner: So far, through ideas, he tried to find the source. Is there any other way to find the way to the Divine? He has painted fine paintings for a church, with a deep insight to approach the subject, and not for competition.

BABA: Yes, he has a right to understand and express. Art when inspired with love leads to higher realms, and that art will open for you the inner life. When you paint, you forget everything except your object. When you are too much engrossed in it, you are lost in it and when you are lost in it, your ego diminishes, and when the ego diminishes, Love Infinite appears, and when Love is created, God is attained. So you see how art can lead one to find Infinite God.

Questioner: He realises that he has his ego which he must use in a selfless way to express the Divine Infinite.

BABA: Then that ego is not finite and limited. It is then the Selfless, Unlimited Ego.

Questioner: But this he will always try to develop more and more, even through art, and then leave it to you.

BABA: Yes, and I will help him spiritually.

Questioner: He is so sorry to have spoken too much.

BABA: No, don't worry. I am so glad. He has a very good heart. He will have and feel my help.

Questioner: I have seen in Switzerland, as also in Europe, in the present-day movements that only a few know things and the masses do not. They simply follow blindly. I see good in everything.

BABA: As long as anything appears as heaven, it is alright, because the Infinite One is in everything and can be expressed in everything.

Questioner: But isn't happiness the goal of life.

BABA: That is the true aim of life—to attain to real happiness, and it does not matter through what medium it is attained.

Questioner: I understand the words in the Bible, 'Love your friends and foes alike ...'

BABA: Yes. But it all depends on just one thing, that is, forgetting self-interest. For those who have no self-interest, even hell is heaven!

Questioner: I know that it is through the Master that one attains to Perfection. But there are other means too, I think.

BABA: Yes. But that also will gradually have a solution, because it is like a sea-saw. When one end goes up the other must go down.

Questioner: Masters lead, but also mislead.

BABA: That is what I said (re: the sea-saw) it will happen when the new feeling starts to influence the masses to discriminate, and not be blindly led by emotional people! And it is the masses who have to be made to understand, and the time is near.

Questioner: He is desperate about the masses being labelled on the word of a man and be misled into chaos—as is exactly done at present.

BABA: It will all end soon. I feel it infinitely more than you do.

Questioner: I believe that some power must guide the world aright.

BABA: I know. It will come soon.

Questioner: You have got the Master of the East to bring new consciousness and happiness; but in the West too, there are means such as art, science, through which they can find the heavenly bliss.

BABA: It is due to the times (of the spiritual upheaval). The consciousness desired will come, soon.

Questioner: Very happy to see you.

BABA: Anything to say?

Questioner: About the children for whose salvation she strives against the will of the parents and conventional ideas.

BABA: Tell her to try conscientiously. I will help her. She must never be afraid of anything or anyone when doing something for the benefit of others. If she wants to develop more and more, tell her to do

one thing. Let not her mind think too much of her doing it. When doing any service to others she should not remind them too much of her doing it. She has a noble heart, and I will help her.

Questioner: Her physical capacity is paralysed, will she be able to do her duties? She wants it.

BABA: Yes.

Questioner: There is an offer asking her to go to America for her work in her capacity.

BABA: You may go on with the present work as you are now doing; you may later on go to America. You have much to do here. Even if you can help one soul, it is enough.

Questioner: He has published your books in German, and hopes they will have very good circulation. He feels that the Swiss people are not so receptive of Eastern lore. He has published other works too, but the people do not seem to take much interest in them here.

BABA: Yes, but now they will have to. The internal spiritual message of love will reach every heart, because it is the same Infinite One in the Swiss, in the German as in all people. It should be unlocked and opened. My love will do that.

Questioner: Will it effect the materialistic world of the West as to the spirituality of the East?

BABA: Yes. Because when the turning point arrives, those who are more materialistic will get a greater shock, and so they will also have the same effect. It is like a sea-saw having a reciprocation.

Questioner: Will the world conditions take a better turn?

BABA: Yes, it has to.

Questioner: Will there be an understanding between the East and the West?

BABA: Yes, it is to be. It is inevitable. Soon it will be such a spiritual world-wide revolution that all will have to unite.

Questioner: Will it be a new religion or union of all religions into one?

BABA: Yes, all will be one. It will just be a movement of Eternal Love, and so it will be a religion of Love.

Questioner: Same as Christ's?

BABA: This change will soon happen in this generation and will last very long. It will be very soon when the spiritual revolution will take place.

Questioner: Will it express itself through war?

BABA: It might or might not. But it will express itself just after an economic war all the world over. I am trying to avert the war (fighting and bloodshed).

Questioner: How can we help avoiding the war, how can we be useful?

BABA: By thinking that there will be no war. My millions of agents are working towards that. Your love messages can reach anyone, anywhere; because in all of them there is the One Infinite God. I will help you spiritually.

Questioner: From the Christian standpoint, Christ is the only one and unique of the prophets. Do you believe that?

BABA: Unique, indeed, from the standpoint of his state and consciousness. The Mohommedans claim that Mohommed is the only prophet. The Buddhists claim Buddha, the Parsis for Zoroaster and the Christians for Christ. Each say that his perfect ideal (of the Prophet) is the unique one. But why bother about that? What do names matter? What is important is the life that Jesus lived. To understand Christ, to know him, one has to live his life. Mere ceremonies and talks, discussions and criticisms don't help one towards knowing Christ. Christ taught one simple thing, LOVE, and so few of his followers have that love developed!

Questioner: Is this standpoint of "Love" consistent with the Christian dogma?

BABA: Love has in it selfless service and renunciation of low desires. Pure Love includes everything. If one loves, all other low qualities automatically dissolve themselves; and by Love, I mean pure love, not the sexual love as it is meant today in the world of matter.

Questioner: This kind of Love is impossible without the help of Masters!

BABA: Yes. God is within and without. Why not seek Him within? If one seeks the grace of God, and God is not able to give it, what kind of God do you call Him? People talk, but do not seek His grace. It is all one. God is Infinite, the Soul of souls, and the individual souls are the drops of that Infinite Ocean. All this only depends on outlook. You see this (pointing to a flower) as a "flower", I see it as "God".

Questioner: Very, very happy to have seen you, and very grateful for all you have explained.

Questioner: Happy to see you. (feels somewhat nervous)

BABA: Do not feel nervous? Anything to ask or say?

Questioner: I have doubts standing between you and me, and also why Western religion calls the Eastern confusing and not straight as of Christ.

BABA: And the Eastern people say the same about the Western religion! Every one thinks his own religion is best. This is ignorance. Jesus never meant that. What does religion mean? To find God within. What did Jesus teach? To find him within and not to carry on wars as his own followers have been doing!

Questioner: How can we realize that?

BABA: Through love and helping others selflessly. It is very easy. If you think less of yourself and more of others it is so easy. No matter if you doubt me or do not even believe in me I will help you.

Questioner: I want to believe in you and have faith in you.

BABA: But why? If what you want is within you will find it only there. And my need (of help) is only to help you find it, whether you follow me or not.

Questioner: But it is difficult!

BABA: I will help you even if you don't want it. When the sun is high up and you feel hot, you cannot avoid it. It does shine on you even if you don't want. It is a question of going out of yourself, to help others, and that I will do. This contact will help you immensely. My blessings.

Questioner: Why was Jesus not married?

BABA: Every Avatar adopts a particular aspect of his time. He adapts and embodies his mode of working according to the attitudes of the people.

The outstanding weakness that marked the attitude of the people in the time of Jesus was pomp, cruelty and pride; and to do away with that and set an example, he based his working or mode of life on simplicity, humility and suffering. And so there was no necessity for him to marry.

In the time of Mohammed, lust dominated in the minds of men, so much so that nearly every man used to have sex with several women. Mohammed marking this point, made it lawful for every follower of his to have only a certain number of wives, and himself married seven. Had he, like Jesus, not married, then it would have been deemed essential to make it lawful for his followers to remain unmarried, but nobody in that case would have followed him. It would have been worse to uselessness to come to nil from numerous, and so he fixed the number to seven from scores.

The people were too much steeped in materialism in the age of Buddha; therefore, stressing the nothingness of Maya, he set an example of true renunciation, and left his wife and children. He founded his system on renunciation and sanyas.

Dry atmosphere marked the age of Krishna. The predominating elements then were internal strife, jealousy, greed. So he preached and founded his teachings on the gospel of love and gaiety, so that people began learning lessons in them and developing love and merriment.

The hopelessness of the situation in Zoroaster's time, when people progressed neither materially nor spiritually, made him base his system so that to make them live the life of the world, yet be spiritually inclined in search of God and Truth, he enacted certain laws and made it incumbent on his every follower not to marry more than one woman, and not to regard any other with a lustful eye. He founded his religion on the tenets of good thoughts, good words, good deeds.

In reality all these Avatars were the manifestations of the same One Divinity, void of desires and above lust, greed and anger.

Questioner: Why do the teachings of Avatars vary?

BABA: The same, One Divine Element, had to give different teachings according to the different attitudes of the people in different times and in different circumstances. One forbade drinking of wine, another smoking. A third advised the worship of a personal God, another advocated impersonal worship. One instituted the worship of God through the medium of different elements of Nature—so according to the times and circumstances, every Avatar left behind him a different teaching.

For example, there are about twenty to twenty-five patients in a hospital. Those complaining of thirst in the morning are prescribed tea or coffee. Those with the same complaint at noon, are given lemon-water; in the evening butter-milk and at night hot milk. The physician is the same the complaint is the same. But the one complaint (of thirst) is satisfied in different ways according to different conditions at different times.

In the same way, God is One; but his manifestations at different times to satisfy the thirst (for Truth) ordains different ways and remedies.

Questioner: What is destiny, luck, fate?

BABA: Destiny means the Divine Will guiding the lines of sin and virtue (resultant on suffering and happiness) experienced by the soul from the beginning of its evolution till its end in Realization.

Fate or luck or fortune is the means or process of spending the impressions the soul gathers while passing through innumerable evolutionary stages which, in other words, is the Law of Karma, or the automatic forming of Luck or Fate in the next life, according to the sanskaras gathered in this life.

The impressions of every life build the fate of the life coming after. As a simile, suppose every soul has to bear a burden of 700 tons (i.e. certain amount of suffering and happiness which every soul has to pass through) from the beginning of its evolution till the end in Realization. But as the burden (of these 700 tons) vary in kind and form, the impressions of lives vary too, and the fate or every new life is formed according to the impressions gathered in the past life. Thus the experiencing by the soul of the impressions of the past life means fate. The soul has to pass through a certain number of lives and forms; but as the experiences of every life vary, so does fate also vary.

Hence, Destiny is One, but Fate (Luck or Fortune) is different.

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

BABA: Beauty and ugliness has relative existence. To one trudging along under a scorching sun barefooted with an empty stomach, Maya outside will not look beautiful. The mood of the subject (the perceiver) invests the object (the perceived) with its own colouring.

The goal of Realization does not necessarily imply, for an average man denial of things good or bad. It only emphasizes its relative worth. From the heights of Realization, Maya would cease to exist; it was pure imagination. Even apart from this experience the conception that you are in the world but not of the world, would go a long way in dissipating sadness and the feeling of void, emptiness.

If one were to treat, sincerely and whole-heartedly Maya as pure imagination, this external disinterestedness would automatically open up one's internal fountain of bliss, and instead of feeling sad and empty, would enable one to live the perfect life of being in harmony with the whole universe.

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

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

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

Questioner: Is there really the place known as "Shamballa", the astral centre where the Masters dwell in disembodied form?

BABA: It is presumed you know already that planes are not places. The state and stage connoting Shamballa exists. There is difference of terminology only. This is also known as Vidhnyan.

Questioner: Are there seven rays as told about in occult books and are there Masters who function on these respective rays, such as Jesus who stands on

what is called the sixth ray of devotion, or abstract realism; the Master D. K. on the second ray of love, wisdom; the Master Hilarion on the fifth ray of concrete knowledge or science, the incarnation of Paul of Tarsus, this time in a Cretan body and spending much time in Egypt?

BABA: The seven rays with their peculiar characteristics are a symbolic expression of the seven stages of the return journey of a Realized soul to normal consciousness. Those Realized beings who have a duty to perform and a mission to fulfil, have to come down to normal consciousness and take their stand at one of the seven stages of the return journey, best suited for the fulfilment of their task. These seven stages of the return journey have their peculiar features and characteristics and reflect the outward circumstances of a Master. For instance, one Master lives on earth like a prince, another lives in all austerity. One is in the midst of the busy world, another in seclusion. The powers are peculiar to different stages. For instance, healing of diseases and bringing of the dead to life is characteristic of the fourth stage.

Questioner: Where is the "Hall of Learning" of which I have read and where those on the path are taken as they progress to take the first few initiations? Books allegedly dictated by Hilarion describe it impressively, telling of the great host of souls who stand within it, veiled, thinking themselves alone until their veils are raised with various initiations. Here takes place the ceremonies of the soul that begin in December and last until Easter. Is all this true or just told as symbolism?

BABA: "Hall of Learning" is pure symbolism. It is analogous to Islamic belief and picture of "Darbare Mohammadi", i.e., the court of Mohammed. The inner court presided over by Mohammed in person and the outer court presided by deputies, and the outermost court consisting of those prepared souls clamouring for entry, is almost and similar to the picture drawn by Hilarion, as you say.

Questioner: Will I have to wait until I have received Realization to carry on work on the astral plane, as I asked when I first met you? Do I work now without

being able to bring anything through? How long will it be before I am able to direct my consciousness deliberately to leave my body and establish contact with those whom I love, or would like to help, regardless of time and place?

BABA: Yes, you are working on the astral plane but unconsciously. In order to do so consciously, you are to attain illumination (sixth plane) which is a prelude to Realization.

I have assured you of the experience one day.

Questioner: Is it impertinent to ask why you are focussing our attention on such a high goal rather than showing us the lower planes and giving us understanding of their properties and functions? The high ideal is so removed from our understanding that it leaves us empty, unsatisfied, still as blind as ever, like a class of children listening to the nebular theory.

Without this more elementary knowledge, how can we go back into the world and answer the questions of those who only need and can understand just a little to help solve these problems? We would seem to be then like hundreds of spiritual teachers whose words go over the heads of the humble seekers. Most of them are too tired or too blind to deal with higher concepts—they need the simple remedies first.

BABA: There is no higher or lower goal. There is only one goal, i.e., Self-realization. The journey of the planes, from one to the other, is like changing one prison cell for another, or amounts to exchanging iron fetters for golden ones. In neither case is one free, and it is perfect freedom from the bindings of the physical and the spiritual planes that I aim at. The advancement on the planes may connote progress and beauty, tempting to the wayfarer; but the allurements of a plane once entered are difficult to shake off. In fact, the bindings (sanskaras) of the physical plane are much easier to destroy than the bindings of the astral planes. I wish you to be free once and for ever.

Questioner: What is meant by "turning the key"? And what effect does it have on the lives of those to whom it is applied?

BABA: Perfect Masters as a rule work and bring about results of a spiritual character in a natural way. On rare but significant occasions however, they have to disregard the natural laws and bring about the desired result by the use of Divine powers.

For instance, suppose I want a certain person to come to me and be with me for his spiritual benefit, and this being not possible, because of the parents objecting to it, the person in question develops symptoms of leprosy. Seeing this state of affairs the panicky parents of their own accord bring and hand over to my charge the party in question. This is "turning the key."

Questioner: Do you want us to accept everything you tell us blindly, whether we understand it or not, or may we ask questions?

BABA: No, I do not want you to accept everything blindly. I like discrimination and a sense of humour. You may ask questions, but the most necessary ones.

Questioner: What are the psychic, mental and/or spiritual reactions to preserving silence as you have done for so long, and in what degree do organizations react from the same practice over a short period of time?

BABA: Universal Mind and Infinite Consciousness has infinite ways of working universally. So whichever work one does, it reverberates throughout the universe and produces reflex action. If he fasts, the result of fasting is felt by the whole universe spiritually. A Master working is always for the spiritual end. If he observes silence, the same result is brought about.

At present the world is labouring under a terrible economic chaos. To follow the spiritual path and to enable the mind to accept the spiritual, the material needs to an extent must be satisfied. So when I, with my own hands, give food and clothing to the poor,

the result will be that the world will gain its economic and material welfare. When I give the mad and lepers a wash, the effect will be that those of sub-normal or abnormal consciousness will gain normal or supernatural consciousness and the lepers will get either cured or their future births get lessened.

When I ask anyone of you to bathe a leper, your doing it serves a dual purpose. In the first place, you are trained to tackle difficult work which automatically, from the spiritual stand-point, results in the gradual elimination of your ego and secondly the habit of obeying my orders implicitly and unquestioningly is developed. For example, if I ask you to observe silence, and if you have had sufficient grounding in that respect, I can then rely upon you to obey me in other similar difficult tasks.

Also, as you are near to me and connected with me, your observance of fast and silence, bathing of the lepers, etc. will affect the whole range of your work for me.

Questioner: You have said that to keep the love of your disciples for you unalloyed, you must humour the less noble aspects of their nature, such as pride, jealousy, etc. How great can their love be if they have to be spiritually bribed to keep it alive and up-permost? And by fostering the very things that can be destroyed, how can their progress be speeded up. Doesn't this hold it back, make it difficult all round?

BABA: Upto a stage, the love of disciples can never be said to be perfect. The beloved upto a point is constrained to humour the lovers (disciples) for the purpose of drawing them nearer. This nearness to the beloved in turn fans the fire of love which no sooner achieves perfection and automatically destroys in the lovers (disciples) the less noble aspects of their nature.

Questioner: How can I have happiness?

BABA: Everyone in the world, consciously or unconsciously seeks happiness in one form or another. You seek it now in your own way. Even a murderer seeks happiness which he hopes to find in the very act of

murder, and that is why he commits it. Why or when does a man commit murder? Either through hatred or jealousy, and because he thinks he will find happiness if he commits murder and takes his revenge for hatred or jealousy. Why does a man drink, because of the happiness he expects to derive from the 'drink'. But what happiness does he derive (from the 'drink') and how long does it last? Only as long as the effect of the intoxication lasts. No sooner it cools down, he feels broken, dejected and miserable. It is the same case, with lust and lusty actions. One does it all for the happiness one derives even for a moment. But it is all for the time-being that one derives happiness from one action or another, and when it is over, he is miserable again. Real happiness is quite different. It never changes, nor ceases. It is Permanent, Everlasting—and it lies there, there within you. It is sleeping (latent), and must be opened(unlocked). Once it is opened, it is always happiness. **I am the Source of Happiness, the Sun of all Bliss.** But there is a cover (curtain) that veils you from the Sun and you do not see it. Now, because of your inability to see owing to a curtain, you cannot say there is no sun. The sun is there, shining and spreading its lustre all over the world. But you do not allow its rays to approach you, obstructing them with the veil of ignorance. Remove that and you will see the sun. I will help you tear open the curtain and enable you to find happiness within. I love you, I love all.

Questioner: It is through many reverses in life that one learns and finds Light. I learnt a lot from this, and besides got time for doing Baba's work which I would not otherwise have got.

BABA: It is for your ultimate good....Everything else will adjust itself automatically for you. Do not worry and go on with the work entrusted to you. The Light is just behind the apparent darkness.

It is because people, out of ignorance, misunderstand and misjudge the "veil" for the darkness and get impatient that they are miserable. Otherwise there is nothing to be miserable about.

Questioner: Baba, I am intrigued by your ways of working. Could you please explain?

BABA: There are three principal ways in which I work, viz. (1) **individually**, (2) **collectively** (for crowds and masses) and (3) **universally**.

When I work **individually**, it is with (a) persons who are with me, (b) who are away from me and (c) who are connected with me.

In some cases, I work through their material downfall; in some, through their material welfare. In some cases, I deliberately bring about material downfall, but always having in the background their spiritual upliftment at heart. In some cases, I use them as "**mediums**" to efface their own "**Mayavik**" qualities, for their own salvation, and that's where I am misunderstood. But I don't mind it, I know why I do it. That is sufficient; because, when to the extreme, love and hatred, both have the same results. For example, A loves me extremely, means he thinks of nothing but me all the while and is lost in me. So also B is extremely against me, that is, hates me, but always thinks of me and is lost in me, though with antagonistic feelings....I always use the medium of thought....It depends upon the qualities that readily respond to the push.

When I work **collectively**, which is generally in theatres, picture-houses, sporting grounds and in games, etc. where people collect and concentrate on a particular object, it is easy for me to have my spiritual effect on their minds collectively.

When I work **universally**—through agents—mind being universal, it is linked up with every individual mind....Even with advanced minds, who are my agents, and so in every part of the world I am present and working through agents. That is why at times (a) while speaking to one person, my mind is working elsewhere. People have seen me stopping suddenly in the midst of conversation as if absent and away from the spot, and engrossed in something else.

(b) At nights, on many occasions, I make some of my devotees sit beside me and press the soles of my feet (that is, to have a physical touch) (c) sometimes,

my personal attendant abruptly sits up in his bed at night, noticing some signs or flash of light, which makes him nervous. At such times, there is special working which pertains to bodiless "spirits" only, who are entering the Path of Evolution. There are scores of such 'spirits', but in whatever stage of advancement, they hope to take form again, because the ultimate goal of every soul is to be one with the Infinite, and that is only possible in human form alone....

This is, in short, how I work.

Questioner: How do the agents know?

BABA: Only those who are on the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th planes, and who are conscious of me, know under and for whom they are working physically, and this knowledge they have through the medium of their subtle and mental bodies (one in Rishikesh, India never saw me but knows me). They cannot see me physically; but their subtle and mental bodies being detached from the gross, they see my subtle body which is similar to my gross, and the consciousness of the planes they are in, makes their spirits know the individual behind my subtle body. So they know that they work under me whose subtle body they see, and which is similar to my physical form. They also know that I am one with the Infinite.

For example, while I am sitting here, my agents are working in India, Persia, Africa and so on. This very moment, they see my subtle body, all at the same time, in the different planes, because the messages they send are sent through the mental plane where there is only the will to do a thing, and instantaneously it reaches the desired spot....

Questioner: How do they become agents?

BABA: Mostly, due to past connections with me. Those connected with me in the past lives become "agents". Those **deeply** connected become the "members of the Circle".

Questioner: What is a Circle?

BABA: A Circle means those of my deeply connected disciples, who are unconsciously one with me now, and will "consciously" be one with me in future, when I have completed the work which I can do during the period of their apparent ignorance. It is like a veil. They are one, but being behind the veil, they do not see. **Where Love, Lover and Beloved are one, there the work of duality ends.** So, for the sake of the work, this duality and ignorance exist.

The "agents" do the work for the people on the gross plane, and through the Circle, I work for the spiritual plane, without their (members of the Circle) being aware of it. Jesus worked through his apostles on the spiritual plane without their knowing it; but later on, they knew it. They knew that all the time, it was Jesus working and they were his instruments—mediums—and were all the time one with Jesus.

For example, you as W are one. W is in your hands, eyes, ears and feelings, etc. Now, if W wants to help N or K he uses his legs to make him stand up, his eyes to see, his hands to strike. It's a fact. All these, that is, hands, eyes, ears are one body, but made to work separately and individually for different work, at different times, in different circumstances.

When the intellect discards what the heart accepts, or when the heart does not respond to what the intellect accepts, there comes "disharmony". It is here that the use of "discretion" is required. But discretion and emotion must go hand-in-hand. In every phase of life, material and spiritual, this is true. If you accept a thing without discretion, and later on repent, there is "disharmony". If you do not accept a thing through prejudice, and later on find, you ought to have accepted it, there is "disharmony" again.

People seem to seek happiness, but they make it so complicated that they become disgusted with the seeking. It is very simple. Let your head respond to the heart and then act accordingly. If your heart

says it is right to love God in everyday life, and if your intellect says it is not wrong, you must decide immediately.

Real happiness is within, once you know how to attain it, it is so easy and you will find it everywhere.

Questioner: Many people accuse you of mass hypnotism. Can you explain?

BABA: In mass hypnotism (by others), the effect on the masses is temporary, but my effect on them is permanent. In mass hypnotism by others, the effect is on the mind; but in my working, it is the soul that is affected and advanced. There are certain Yogis in India, who, for their self-interest, hypnotise the minds of people coming in their contact, and get their objects fulfilled. What happens? People whose minds are thus hypnotised, after being free from the temporary effects neither gain nor lose spiritually, even if, during hypnotism, they are made to commit the worst of sins or crimes. Their spiritual position however remains the same.

Once in the time of Janak, there was a typical incident. He had many enemies, and their ring-leader was one who was loved by Janak's courtiers. Janak wanted these very courtiers, who loved his enemy, to kill him. So he sought the aid of a Yogi and told him what he wanted. This Yogi had great powers. He summoned the courtiers, about ten of them, hypnotised and influenced them to such an extent that they went and killed the very enemy (of the State) whom they loved. Later, after the deed was done and the influence wore off, they repented for having killed one whom they loved.

What I want to point out is that for this action, even that of killing a man, they (those hypnotised) are not responsible. Their spiritual position remains the same. My spiritual influence is permanent. It is on a person's life, body, mind and soul, in short, on everything.

Questioner: Baba is fond of children.

BABA: Yes, I am but a child. Not until one becomes a child, does one achieve the slightest spiritual experience! When one becomes a child, one enjoys bliss. Nothing worries him—thoughts, words or actions.

(A merchant introduced a money-lender to Baba, with an apologetic explanation that the money-lender, unlike his professional brothers, was spiritual.)

BABA: (addressing the money-lender) When your mind is inclined to spirituality, it does not matter what line you are in.

Questioner: Can anyone get self-realisation all of a sudden, or does it come only through gradual spiritual progress and experience?

BABA: In some cases, self-realisation occurs all at once, as it is in my case. In other cases, experience culminates in Realisation gradually.

Questioner: What is Infinity?

BABA: That which is contained in your own self.

Questioner: Can the finite mind realise the Infinite?

BABA: There is nothing like finite. Even now, when you think that you are finite your conception of finite is not real. There is nothing like finite. As long as the sense of 'binding' remains, it can have mere glimpses of the Infinite, but when the Infinite is realised, it is found that the finite was the Infinite all the time. So there is no question of the finite finding the Infinite.

Questioner: Is it due to ignorance that the finite does not know that it is Infinite?

BABA: Yes. But this ignorance is the medium for the self to realise Self. And self-realisation means knowledge. Just as a bird which is ever free, does not know that it is free, but when it is imprisoned in a cage and then set free does it know what "freedom" is. And as this impression of its imprisonment has been the medium for the bird's knowing and appreciating 'freedom' is, so also, although you are All-Knowledge all the while, you do not know that you are All-Knowledge; and your present ignorance, like the bird's imprisonment, is the medium which will help you to comprehend that you are All-Knowledge all along.

Questioner: What is the cause of Ignorance?

BABA: The cause of individual ignorance is the result of evolutionary impression; and of the collective ignorance is the outcome of the very first Existence. All is Infinite. In Self-Realisation, there is no finite...but as long as you are not individually free from duality. Duality for you exists. The substratum of all this is Love. Love is the One and the Only Thing. Devoid of Love, everything is miserable. Love is God and everything that is Real. Lust is perverted love and so it is unreal.

Questioner: Is this your message to us?

BABA: Yes, for you and also for the whole world.

Questioner: Is "decent living" enough for attaining a "wider consciousness" or is any occult, spiritual or religious training necessary?

BABA: No general rule or process can be laid down for the attainment of the Ultimate Reality, or as you term it, the "wider consciousness." Every individual has got to work out his own salvation, and for that matter, he himself has got to create and choose the 'path', which is mostly determined and expressed by the collective force and momentum of impressions (called sanskaras in Sanskrit) acquired during previous lives.

The panaceas the world knows of, the so called religions for the guidance of humanity do not go a long way in solving the problem. As time goes on the founder, the one who supplied the motive force, is thrown and relegated more and more into the background of time and obscurity—the aftermath of his manifestations, either a religion or an organisation gradually loses its glamour and attractiveness and there takes place a mental revolt against the old order of things. A demand is created for something more tangible, substantial and practical, by contacting through which one may learn to live the true life, the life of the Spirit; and you know that supply is in proportion to the demand.

To say that only "decent living" is the only way of attaining "wider consciousness" is only giving one side of the picture. What you are today is the result

of your decent and indecent living as well. Occult, spiritual and religious training serves merely as means to an end and is a condition precedent to entering the Path, but the moment one has the contact of a Perfect Master no such disciplinary process is necessary. The only thing required is complete surrenderance to his supreme will and the unquestioning willingness and attitude of mind to suffer and accept things as they come.

Questioner: What spiritual work (training) do you suggest for modern Europe?

BABA: There is existing at the moment a universal dissatisfaction and an indescribable longing for something that will end this terrible chaos and misery that is startling the world just now. I am going to satisfy this craving and lead the world to real happiness and peace by making mankind more introspective, and see more to the inside of things, than what they have hitherto been accustomed to.

Questioner: Do you help individually or collectively?

BABA: As a rule Masters help individually according to the temperament and preparedness of the aspirant, but this being the Avataric period, i.e. the end of the previous cycle and the beginning of a new one which occurs every seven or eight hundred years, my spiritual help to humanity will be both individual and collective. The period of junction of the old and new cycle usually cannotes the advent of a Master who rejuvenates and infuses new life and meaning into the old order of things and besides imparting the highest state of spirituality, the state of Oneness with the Infinite Ocean of Bliss, Knowledge and Power, to the select few, a general spiritual push is given to the whole universe.

Questioner: Do you think a possible spiritual "revival" (happiness) will be the outcome of individual effort, or rather a collective movement of nations (like the great religious movements in the past). Will certain nations achieve it sooner than others, and which?

BABA: The spiritual revival that you ask about is not very far off and I am going to bring it about in the near future, utilizing the tremendous amount of misapplied energy possessed by America for the purpose. Such a spiritual outburst that I visualize takes place every seven or eight hundred years, at the end or beginning of a cycle, and it is only the Perfect One who has reached the Christ state of consciousness that can appeal and work so very universally.

Questioner: Will you deal with such problems as politics, economics, sex?

BABA: My working will embrace everything; it will affect and control every phase of life. Perfection will fall far short of the ideal if it were to accept one thing and eschew another. In the general spiritual push that I shall impart to the world, problems such as politics, economics and sex, although they have no direct connection with the original theme, will all be automatically solved and adopted; and new values and significance will be attached to matters which appear to baffle the solution at the present moment.

All collective movements and religions hinge around one Personality, for without this centrifugal force all movements are bound to fail. Societies and organizations have never succeeded in bringing Truth nearer.

Perfect Masters impart spirituality by personal contact and influence, and the benefit that will accrue to different nations, when I bring about the spiritual upheaval, will largely depend upon the amount of energy each one possesses. The more the energy, however misapplied, the more the response; the Master merely diverts the current in the right direction.

Questioner: How can one get away from material things if one is forced by one's nature to put the main accent in life on them?

BABA: I don't believe in external renunciation, and for the West particularly, it is impracticable and inadvisable. Renunciation should be mental. One should

live in the world, perform all legitimate duties and yet feel mentally detached from everything; one should be in the world but not of the world.

Questioner: Why does one talk in connection with you of "performing miracles"? Don't you think this may lead people into the most "materialistic" and cheapest kind of belief?

BABA: In the West I find people very keen on the question of miracles. I must explain that the ability to perform miracles does not necessarily connote high spirituality. Anyone who has attained perfection and enjoys the Christ consciousness can perform miracles. Healing the sick, giving eyes to the blind or raising the dead to life is mere child's play to him. Even those who have not become one with the Infinite, but are only traversing the planes, can perform miracles and are able to do and undo things. It is not, however, to be understood that Spiritual Master perform miracles to order just to satisfy idle curiosity. Miracles have come to be performed, and will be performed according to existing circumstances. Masters have sometimes performed miracles when it is intended to give a universal push towards spirituality. I shall perform miracles when the time and situation demands it and not for mere sensational mongering.

Questioner: Have you been in touch with other "Masters" spiritually only, or even in "physical contact"?

BABA: Yes, I have been in touch with Spiritual Masters, even physically, before Realization. It is almost impossible to achieve the highest state of consciousness without a Master. It was the physical contact of my master Hazrat Babajan of Poona (India), a single kiss on my forehead that gave me the consciousness I now eternally enjoy. I now take orders from no one; it is all my supreme will. Everything is, because I will it to be. Nothing is beyond my knowledge, I am in everything. There is no time and space for me, it is I who give them their relative existence. I see the past and the future as clearly and vividly as you see material things round about you.

Questioner: I feel extremely grateful for this privilege of being allowed to meet you. I have been in India for years and I feel I belong to India. Do you feel so too, Baba!

BABA: Yes.

Questioner: Do you think I shall have to go there again, in my life!

BABA: Yes, you shall have to go to the mountains in the later years of your life.

Questioner: In India?

BABA: Yes.

Questioner: Oh, how wonderful!

BABA: And remember this thing that I am telling you now. Don't bind yourself to anything—to any movement or individual—not even to those whom you help. Don't make them too dependent on you so as not to allow you to leave them. This is my special advice.

Questioner: I will, I will abide by it, gratefully. And now Baba, what do you think one should do to gain inner peace and advance on the Path? Can one progress in a busy city and life spent therein.

BABA: Truly speaking, it does not matter where one lives. It matters how one lives. One can make no progress at all even living in mountains or caves if one's mind is engrossed in worldly Maya, while on the other hand, one living in the world, doing all his duties therein, can still achieve much if he is not engrossed in Maya, and thinks of the Path. So you could go on with all the good work you have been doing here in the world (city-life), but have the same longing for inner life and progress, even at heart.

Questioner: Have you met Annie Besant?

BABA: No, but I know her. She is an advanced soul.

Questioner: I know her since I was a child. They all started it (the Theosophy Movement) with good idea, but too much of "schism" and "personality" spoiled it. And there are so many diversions now.

BABA: That's the trouble. In spirituality, it is the heart that counts and not the head. Too much of intellectual discourses undermine the object with which these (movements and institutions) are started. So you may go on with the good work that you are doing, and keep your connections with the movements (organisations) etc., but **don't be bound** to anyone or anything. Keep yourself **FREE**.

Questioner: I am doing work for the last several years, helping the poor and needy.

BABA: Good work, but you have still much further to go. So I tell you, again, don't bind yourself to anything.

Questioner: I understand. Thank you, Baba, for your kind words and advice. I will do my work, but keep myself **FREE** as you say. Is there anything you could give me to do!

BABA: Yes, (here Baba gave her a certain thought and process for daily practice.)

Questioner: And do I continue my usual daily meditation!

BABA: Yes, but this is special. You will feel my help.

Questioner: Does this mean you accept me.

BABA: Yes.

Questioner: What's the solution of this world wide misery? Would it solve through martyrdom?

BABA: Yes, through martyrdom by many. But why is a question of collective efforts for many. What about you personally?

Questioner: I am not concerned about me personally.

BABA: But the personal question does come in, even with a desire to serve others selflessly, as you do, because your personal (individual) efforts for the good of others would have a collective effect. For example, a leper amongst a crowd of healthy people would spoil the whole atmosphere and surrounding with the infection of his disease. So also another scented profusely and emitting perfume from his person

would spread the fragrance all round him. That is, personal means collective, and collective means personal. So in order to be able to help others, you yourself must first have it (the knowledge and power). You can then better transmit this happiness to others.

Questioner: In spite of keeping one's "personal" question aside, trying one's utmost to help one's own, if they do not understand, what has one to do?

BABA: So it means the feeling of happiness is not so deep in them as in you. Because I saw your family (wife and children), but the happiness you experience is not experienced by them all. And it is the lifelong aim of every true soul to impart happiness to others, even if it is at the sacrifice of one's own.

Questioner: Perhaps, one who is not always encouraged by surrounding circumstances feels different (dejected) at times.

BABA: But it gradually expands. You have a good heart. I like you very much. Every human being has some weakness. But it is the heart that matters.

Questioner: How is 'selfishness' caused and why?

BABA: At the root of all is selfishness, self-interest, want, desire. If two dogs see a bone, they fight because they both want it. Both have a desire to possess it. Even if they do not see and do not fight, all the same, the desire is latent there.

Questioner: Is there fear?

BABA: Why do people fear? Because they are afraid of losing the thing they want to possess.

Questioner: What are the means to be fearless.

BABA: The only possible means is the spiritual change (of heart) That only will make people satisfied. They want to be "satisfied". They themselves do not know what they want. When they get that, they will be satisfied. For instance, why do people drink? Those (say peasants or labourers) who labour hard all day, when they come home after the day's work, drink for stimulation. But if they get something else instead, they would be satisfied with

that and so on until the desire for "stimulation" disappears. So for all material satisfaction (created through desire and want), spiritual upliftment is needed.

Questioner: But how could spiritual upliftment come when selfishness and desire are so very deeply rooted?

BABA: And what will be done by universal love. Love has such powers as to unite all hearts. So, the first spiritual universal push will be through love.

Questioner: What are the hours and time when you have concentration for spiritual work?

BABA: There is no fixed time. I do it when I feel like doing. It is Infinite. There is no limitation (for the Infinite)

Questioner: Is life a battle?

BABA: Yes, it is a battle and if rightly fought, would bring infinite **anand** (bliss).

Questioner: Why should it be a battle?

BABA: Necessarily, otherwise existence would be a drag. If there is no darkness, one cannot appreciate light—if there is no ignorance, one cannot appreciate knowledge—they can't exist without the other. Both are essential on the opposite poles.

Questioner: Why is there so much evil in the world?

BABA: It is as one takes it. In reality there is nothing but God, Good and Bliss, but because of ignorance man doesn't see it and takes the different degrees of expressions of good—as evil. Even so it is essential for the eradication of duality. Passing through different phases and experiences of this duality, man evolves in consciousness and understanding of the One Reality—which alone exists.

Questioner: But what I mean to say is that there are certain periods or epochs when this evil is at its height, and people who were eager to know Truth and were trying to find it do not understand why evil should spread throughout the world at such an alarming extent.

BABA: These are the real periods which clearly show signs of the real burning point approaching....When evil predominates, it is a sure sign of the good that is coming. It must rise to its highest before it is eradicated and destroyed root and branch. The various signs of evil which are at present in vogue all over the world are preceding an era of good that is to immediately follow.

Questioner: Do you think it will lead to that?

BABA: Sure. It will and must. It is a law—law of duality—good and evil—light and dark—knowledge and ignorance—two forces working in opposites for the attainment of unity. And there are always good souls who help humanity through their good thoughts, words and actions.

Questioner: But they are few.

BABA: Yes, but these few do a great deal in helping humanity through these good thoughts and acts. And at certain times leaders do appear for the salvation of humanity. Such a time is approaching and the world will find its leader that it now seeks.

Questioner: Do you accept the principle that science and religion are separate?

BABA: It depends upon how it is understood. Science if it deals only with material advancement, then such science would be said to have nothing of spirituality. But when the same science is expressed to make the meaning of life clear then it is also a branch of spirituality; just as art if expressed rightly is spiritual, if expressed wrongly is material.

Questioner: Are scientific truths and principles to be fitted in with spiritual doctrines?

BABA: They can be fitted in. What is the gross world after all but the medium to realise spirituality? For example the body is purely material, physical and gross, but it is the medium for the soul to know itself provided it is dealt with and handled rightly, otherwise it becomes a hindrance in spiritual progress. Similarly scientific principles and truths if used

rightly help in the spiritual progress of the universe, but if improper use is made of them they are bound to be the source of hindrance on the spiritual Path.

Questioner: Has astrology anything to do with spirituality? Can astrological problems be proved as scientific problems?

BABA: Everything has something to do with spirituality, only it depends upon how it is worked out and that again results in advancing or retarding spiritual progress.

Science is a mass thing, while astrology is individual, so science itself cannot be proved to be wrong while astrology can be proved to be wrong. If a truth is established scientifically you do not think of doubting it. It does not occur to you to doubt it. If you are told that the earth is round and if it is proved to you, you never think that it is flat. But if an astrologer tells you that you will get a million rupees after some time, you will think of it a million times.

Spirituality has no room for doubts. For example, if someone were to ask me, "Are you sure you are one with God?" I would ask him "Are you sure you are a man and not a dog?" He would say that he is a man because he cannot think of himself as anything but a man. In the same way I am equally sure that I am one with God. Even if the whole world tells me otherwise I do not feel anything about it. Spiritual surety is something which nothing affects.

Questioner: Is it impossible to understand spiritual matters intellectually?

BABA: Spiritual doctrines can be stated in intellectual terms. Intellect is a great help in the experience of the heart. If someone who never had a headache asks you to explain it to him, you will try to explain intellectually what it is. But to make him understand it you would have to hit him on the head. He gets a headache and knows what it is.

There is nothing irrational in spirituality. Christ said, "Leave all and follow Me". It means leave your limitations and live my life. He meant that it

was the practical way. Mysticism is thought to be something supernatural and out of human grasp. It is not so. You may be doing all your worldly duties and at the same time be a mystic. It depends on how you arrange your actions and how you lead a proper life.

Questioner: Is Mahatma Gandhi a mystic?

BABA: He is a mystic in a way. Everyone is a mystic in his own way. A real mystic life is practical for every one leading life properly.

Mysticism has connection with every phase of life if properly expressed; if not, there is a reaction which cannot be called mysticism. Thus love when handled badly through jealousy is converted into hatred. Mysticism if adjusted rightly can help all nations now at war, while if handled otherwise it would make matters worse.

Mysticism means experience of the Soul on higher planes. God, the Highest, is attained through this experience.

Questioner: Is material adjustment amongst nations practical to bring about peace?

BABA: Material adjustment can be made with spiritual understanding. If people are made to realise that all the trouble is due to self-interest then automatically material adjustment would follow.

Questioner: Is economic adjustment possible so long as human beings are what they are?

BABA: Economic adjustment and human nature are co-dependent. If it is realised that the trouble is due to self-interest, the problem would be solved. It is easy and simple yet because of this case and simplicity the task is also difficult. For example, if praise and insult do not affect you, you would be always happy. If not, you are bound to be unhappy. How easy the remedy is, yet the simplicity itself makes it difficult.

Questioner: Is faith in God essential?

BABA: That depends on how you interpret faith. Some who have faith and believe in God lead a life without character and fail to make any spiritual progress, while there are others who do not even believe in God but lead such a noble life that they automatically come closer to God.

Questioner: What is the goal of creation?

BABA: To know the Self as the Infinite Eternal Existence and to enable others to realise this same Self.

Questioner: How did the Universe come about?

BABA: Universe if understood as created has an entirely different meaning from our viewpoint that universe does not exist. Actually it is only God who appears as universe. But it is necessary to creation to have this dual idea of God and Universe.

To know the exact meaning of the "awake"-state, one has to experience the "dream"-state. Dreams can be good and bad. In dreams you can suffer or enjoy. But when you wake up you find it all a dream. But this dream should be so adjusted that it awakens you soon. Sacrifice, character and selfless service help in waking you soon.

Questioner: Why do forces of evil predominate over forces of virtue?

BABA: It is all in the scope of Universal Law. The suffering that appears so grave is necessary for happiness; as binding is necessary to experience freedom. Unless evil temporarily triumphs, happiness cannot be experienced. This universe is based on duality. Binding and freedom, good and bad, evil and virtue, are interdependent. If only one aspect existed there would be no interest or meaning in life. For the attainment of ultimate freedom and happiness, temporary victory of evil over virtue is necessary.

Questioner: Why does God who is so kind and merciful give suffering and pain to so many?

BABA: God has nothing to do with this. God is all One-in-One. He is aloof and yet so attached that

whatever is done is by His Law of Love and Will. For example, when you sleep you enjoy a dream and the enjoyment is so intense that this dream of happiness does not wake you soon. But if in the midst of the dream you suddenly saw a snake you would at once wake up. This is the Law of God. God is neither merciful nor cruel in your "awakened" state.

Questioner: Is renunciation of the world necessary for spiritual attainment?

BABA: Internal renunciation is necessary but not external renunciation. It is not the outward escape from the world that leads you to God. You have to live in the world, do all your duties and yet feel as detached as if you were living in seclusion in the midst of intense activity. How can you renounce this body and mind by retiring into the jungles?

Questioner: In a slavish country like India is it not the duty of every Indian to work for the liberation of his country?

BABA: Yes, but the aspect must be from a spiritual standpoint. If material freedom binds you to Maya and leads to spiritual avoidance it is no freedom. You must try heart and soul to have India free but it must be the freedom that helps you towards Truth and spirituality.

Questioner: Will India come in the forefront, as in the days of old, to lead the world?

BABA: It is the duty of India to lead the world spiritually.

Questioner: When will you manifest yourself?

BABA: The time is very near.

Questioner: Is the path shown by Mahatma Gandhi the only path to attain India's freedom?

BABA: In some respects it is. It depends on the circumstances. If India were not so disunited internally as it is now, the policy of Gandhi would bring freedom in a few moments, but it is so difficult for the Hindus and Mohammedens to unite. Gandhi saw me four times and I said the same thing to him that unless the hearts of Hindus and Mohommedens are united, little progress can be expected.

Work with all your heart, with the one motive of making India truly free, but do not think of the results of your work. Men like you can do what millions cannot do, as you have heart, intellect and sincerity. This selfless service of yours in striving for India's freedom will lead you ultimately to God.

Questioner: It has been said that by breaking through the different hindrances of lust, hate etc. one can develop true love. But your teaching is that by developing true love one can break through these hindrances.

BABA: The method of love is direct. The other method is indirect and round about. It is like reaching the mouth (for eating) with your hand from behind the neck.

Questioner: It has been said that a person can by increasing his own intensity of awareness and effort break through his bonds and attain freedom. If one can thus free himself why is a Master necessary?

BABA: How can you free yourself when your hands and feet are bound? I can set you free because I am free. If you think that by relying upon yourself you can attain the truth you depend upon a teaching; but then why not rely upon the Ocean of Truth? The living embodiment of Truth—rather than a dead formula or principle.

Questioner: When a young aspirant meets young women he is susceptible to thoughts of lust; on the other hand if he avoids them entirely he is likely to withhold a great deal of love. Is there any way out of this dilemma?

BABA: Free mixing of sexes, as in the West, is on the whole good, but if the aspirant feels within his mind the slightest flutter of impure thoughts he should stand aside. But he must love, and in order to avoid the arising of impure thoughts he should keep in his mind the thought that in the other person he is loving the Master.

Questioner: The aspirant must undoubtedly eliminate lust and release love. But lust as well as love are facts of inner life (i.e. modes of consciousness) and cannot be taken as being identical with any specific acts of the physical body. Will the aspirant be wrong if he tries to express and develop love (instead of lust) through sex union?

BABA: If the aspirant thinks that through the sex-act he is expressing love he is sadly mistaken. It is lust which prompts him to it. It is not possible to express pure love through the sex-act because of the clash of impressions involved therein.

Questioner: What is your teaching concerning marriage?

BABA: For an aspirant celibacy is better than marriage. But if he cannot control himself he should marry. To pursue a spiritual life, it is much better to marry than to go from flower to flower.

Questioner: How can the aspirant use marriage for spiritual progress?

BABA: In the beginning the aspirant will, in relation to the partner, feel lust as well as love. But he can, with conscious and deliberate co-operation with the partner gradually lessen the element of lust and increase the element of love, until love becomes utterly pure and free from lust. But in order to achieve this purpose he must strictly limit himself to his partner in matters of sex.

Questioner: Does it not go difficult for you to express yourself clearly in your high mission and noble undertaking?

BABA: No, because internal and external, both mediums are at my disposal.

Questioner: Have you concentrated your attention to the uplift of Zorastrians?

BABA: I am actually working for universal upliftment which includes Zorastrians.

Questioner: Is it not time that you should be annoyed by press representatives at home and abroad?

BABA: Never annoyed with anything or anyone.

Questioner: Have you any political aim besides a religious one?

BABA: Spirituality embraces religion, politics, social matters etc.

Questioner: What might be according to your opinion the reasons and future of the present financial depression?

BABA: Self-interest is the reason of financial depression which will pass away in future.

Questioner: What is your line of work?

BABA: Love and Service.

Questioner: Are you of the opinion that the present civilisation is degrading humanity?

BABA: No. That which degrades is no civilization.

Questioner: Do you take trouble to be in contact with political developments of India and of other Western countries?

BABA: Of every department of life of every nation.

Questioner: Is it true that foreign countries like America and England are in a position to supply the world with industrial education that has so much accounted for their prosperity in the long run, but failed to produce effect this time (in 1933)?

BABA: The West can teach material things to the East, and East can teach spiritual things to the West.

Personal Interview

Questioner: What was your score in the match in which you went first and remained not out?

BABA: 33.

Questioner: What was your highest score?

BABA: I don't remember.

Questioner: Were any predictions regarding your future made by any of your teachers and professors?

BABA: No.

Questioner: In which subjects did you take great interest?

BABA: All, except arithmetic.

Questioner: Were you fond of reading any newspapers and magazines?

BABA: "Union Jack", upto matric.

Questioner: What were your political opinions?

BABA: None.

Questioner: Did you take any interest in politics?

BABA: No.

Questioner: Were you proud of being an Indian?

BABA: I was proud of being liked by all.

Questioner: Had you any special regard for Hinduism and the Hindus?

BABA: No idea then.

Questioner: For your present position, do you owe any obligation to your school teachers and college professors?

BABA: What connection has education with Truth?

Questioner: Did you visit any saints before you called on Babajan?

BABA: No.

Questioner: Were the schools you attended open to all communities?

BABA: Yes, excepting Dastur's.

Questioner: Was religious instruction imparted in them?

BABA: No.

Questioner: Were you ever superstitious?

BABA: Yes, about cats in early age because of my grandmother.

Questioner: Among historical characters and poets, who were your heroes?

BABA: Hafiz.

Questioner: When did you study Marathi?

BABA: Never.

Questioner: Which language was used in conversation in your house?

BABA: Dari (Persian dialect)

Questioner: Was your memory very sound?

BABA: And sharp too.

Questioner: Did you ever copy in the exams.?

BABA: No.

Questioner: Did you attend any tuition class?

BABA: No.

Questioner: Was any private tutor engaged for you?

BABA: No.

Questioner: Did you every copy in the exams?

BABA: No, but helped a friend once.

Questioner: Did you think it wrong to copy?

BABA: No.

Questioner: Did you ever suffer from a serious illness?

BABA: No.

Questioner: Did you learn swimming?

BABA: No.

Questioner: What were your prejudices?

BABA: Meat-eating; women, a sort of fear and nervousness to talk with them.

Questioner: Had you any difficulty in controlling your passions?

BABA: No lust, but at times anger went out of control.

Questioner: Were you ever desirous of marrying?

BABA: No.

Questioner: Were you very fond of tea or milk?

BABA: Tea, Yes.

Questioner: What were your favourite vegetables?

BABA: None.

Questioner: When did you openly become vegetarian?

BABA: After Realisation.

Questioner: Did you become member of any societies?

BABA: No.

Questioner: Were you mischievous like Vivekananda in your early childhood days?

BABA: Very mischievous in childhood.

Questioner: Did you frequent gardens?

BABA: No.

Questioner: Which was your favourite flower?

BABA: None.

Questioner: What was your age when you began falling at the feet of your parents?

BABA: After 16.

Questioner: What was your age when you ceased doing so?

BABA: After Babajan's giving the thrill.

Questioner: When were you put to school?

BABA: 5 years old.

Questioner: When did you pass the matric examination?

BABA: 16th year.

Questioner: When did your poems appear in the "Sanj-Vartman"?

BABA: 1911, matric time.

Questioner: In which language were they composed?

BABA: Urdu, Persian, Gujarati.

Questioner: Is the Cosmopolitan Club still existing?

BABA: No.

Questioner: Were you its President?

BABA: A Bengali who was a graduate.

Questioner: Vice-President:

BABA: The President was Mr. Dick, a European.

Questioner: In which year was it established?

BABA: When in matric class.

Questioner: Did you often go to the fire-temples and the Tower of Silence?

BABA: Rarely.

Questioner: Were you the favourite child of your parents?

BABA: Of my father.

Questioner: Did any teacher ever punish you unjustly as Vivekananda was punished?

BABA: No. It was not necessary.

After overcoming a little nervousness in the beginning, an elderly man questioned Baba about the main "turning point" in his life which, he felt, had arisen, even at the age of about 60, after so many minor failures he had already experienced in life.

BABA: Once the "turning point" has to arrive in the life of everyone, as it has arrived in your case now. It is like a war. Every day, every hour, and every minute of man's life, it is a sort of minor war (petty scuffles) between mind and heart, emotion and intellect, good and bad. And when these individual conflicts spread out and develop, the collective result eventually takes the shape of a big world wide war, which can never be avoided by any number of peace conferences, unless and until the very root cause is removed.

Questioner: Should I hurry up affairs, or go steady?

BABA: Slowly, step by step.

Questioner: Shall I continue what I am doing now?

BABA: Yes. It is alright. Only if you do it with confidence, because whatever one does with confidence has the desired result. Even things which apparently are bad, if done with the right motive, bear good results because in that very action "selflessness" exists.

Questioner: How to be a true Christian?

BABA: By following the teachings of Christ, by living the life that he lived and wanted you to live. People talk of Christianity but are not prepared to follow Christ's words "to present the other cheek when one is smitten", saying it is "impracticable", and fly at one another's throat at the slightest provocation, creating hatred, when Jesus wanted them to create an atmosphere of 'love' and 'brotherhood' everywhere. No wonder the world is in a muddle about everything?

Questioner: I am concerned about the grave crisis coming over in the near future and wish to ask you if there is going to be another war?

BABA: Yes, there will be another war . . . and what a war? But it will be nothing but a "turning point". Before the major "turning point" (worldwide) there are minor "turning points". For example, take war. Before the actual war between nations with arms and ammunitions on a large, worldwide scale takes place in the near future, people have minor wars to undergo (quarrels)—a war (conflict) between mind and heart, emotion and intellect, good and evil, also economic war all over—all these gradually growing to such an extent as to develop into a great, major war, like the last World War. And rest assured, there will be one in the future.

Questioner: And that will demand my duty towards my country. Shall I stick to it?

BABA: Yes. Duty always stands first, whatever it is. And the very feeling and desire for duty means spirituality, because it is "selflessness" and sincerity of heart that calls for duty.

(The answers given by Baba seemed to please the interviewer very much. He asked for Baba's help, and Baba said, "I will help you spiritually".)

When a questioner talked of conflict between emotion and discretion Baba gave this answer:

BABA: When the intellect discards the dictates of conscience, or when the heart does not respond to what the intellect says, there is disharmony. So discretion and emotion must go hand in hand. In every phase of life, material and spiritual, this is true. If you accept a thing without discretion, and later on repent for it, there is disharmony. Similarly, if you don't accept a thing through prejudice, and later on find you ought to have accepted it, there is disharmony. People seem to seek happiness, but they make it (the seeking) so complicated that they become disgusted with it. Yet, it is so simple. If discretion (head) and emotion (heart) act together, it is better, —say best. But if preference is to be given spiritually it is first to conscience (heart)...If your heart says it is right to love God in everyday life, and your intellect says it is not wrong, you are to decide immediately to act in preference to your heart...Real happiness is within. Once you know how to attain it, you will find it everywhere.

Questioner: If you are the Christ why do people not know?

BABA: It is because people cannot know that I have to take this (human) form. Jesus was not known in his time, even by his own intimate and immediate companions. Judas who was all the time near him and kissed him could not understand him. So do you all not understand me externally in my physical form; because as the Real, Infinite Christ, I am within you, as in everybody.

Questioner: If God is in everything why is this evil prevalent in the world... this sort of "disproportion"?

BABA: God is One, Infinite, and as you now said, is in everything. But this good and evil, virtue and vice, suffering and happiness, are all apparent, and not real. It is a "delusion"; and yet it is necessary and

- serves its purpose. It is through this duality of good and evil that one has to realise the Oneness (Infinity). This duality is the medium, because, in reality, bad is not bad as you (world) think. It is a degree of goodness. For instance, love and hatred, though opposite in terms, when carried to the extreme, both have the same result. You feel surprised. But I will explain. Suppose, A loves me extremely. It means he thinks continually of nothing else but of me and is perfectly lost in me. Now, there is B who hates me extremely. His extreme hatred makes him think of me always, though in the other way, and is all the while absorbed in me and continually thinks of me. Thus, love and hatred, though poles apart apparently, have the same result in their extremes. So this (duality of) good and evil are necessary to know what Oneness (Reality) is. A bird, free from its very birth and never caged, does not know what "freedom" really is, because it has always been free, that is, in the same condition from its very birth. If it is once caged, that is, the condition reversed, and left free again later on, then alone will it know and appreciate the value and meaning of "freedom". The cage therefore becomes the medium for the bird to realize "freedom."

Questioner: Why all this misconception about "duality" in all things?

BABA: It is not misconception, because in reality, only one exists. What appears as two (duality) is delusion due to ignorance. Once this delusion about the apparent duality of all things disappears, there remains nothing but the One Infinite Existence.

You are perfect, but you are not conscious of it, due to the darkness of ignorance. Yet this apparent ignorance is the necessary process to get that consciousness of Perfection.

Realise the One Indivisible Unity everywhere and in everything and help others . . . Everyone is Christ, but very few can become Jesus.

MEHER BABA'S COMPASSION

While lunching at an Indian restaurant in London, arranged by Meher Baba's devotees, leaving aside certain important work and keeping many others waiting, Baba expressed a desire to go to the Eastend. to see Mrs. B. who had been recently operated upon. Mrs. H.F., who was also at lunch, offered to drive Baba and party in her Rolls Royce.

The party drove to Lockyr Street, Long Lane, S.E. 1, which was a very narrow lane and the big car could not get in. It was made to halt outside in a corner and Baba walked to the invalid's home. It was a pleasant surprise for the poor occupants. The bed-ridden lady, with tears in her eyes and a voice hardly audible, uttered, "It is awfully kind of you to have come here all the way, . . ." Baba's presence and loving touch gave her much relief. Her children, especially B and N who love Baba intensely, were very surprised and happy at his sudden and unexpected visit. Mrs. B's case was so pitiable. She was helpless, unable to move out of bed, and was asked to go home within three days after the operation, due to lack of rooms in the hospital and was in a delicate state after the operation. Her condition was very poor, but she took it all so boldly, so cheerfully that it was indeed praiseworthy. Her great comfort was her dear children who were so nice, kind, loving and sympathetic and Baba's surprise visit of the day was such a relief. She felt so grateful. Baba said that he loved to be with such good souls, however poor. "Poverty is no sin," he said, and added that he loved the poor for their poverty and said that they were dearer to him all the more. That's why he came today to this end of the city.

While returning, he saw a crowd of young kids enjoying a treat of icecream from a hawker distributed free by the two ladies in the car (Mrs. F. and Countess P) and Baba was so pleased. He embraced and kissed some of them.

Questioner: Very, very happy to meet you.

BABA: So am I.

Questioner: How kind of you to come all this distance from India.

BABA: That is my work, and I am pleased to meet true, sincere, and loving souls here.

Questioner: I have felt for a long time India has much to give to the West.

BABA: India is a land of spiritual birth.

Questioner: But the West is practical which is essential too, I believe.

BABA: Life would be ideal if India's spiritual mind would be put together with the practical mind of the West.

Questioner: I would love to visit India and see you there.

BABA: You will, one day.

Questioner: Mr. deMille (the film-maker) has a deep interest in Eastern philosophy and at present he is thinking of producing a picture on the Crusades.

BABA: I have a message on 'Universal Religion' to give to the world. But it would be very dry if the bare truths were laid before the masses who can hardly take interest in it. It has to be interwoven into a screenplay and given to the public as quinine in the form of sugar-coated pills.

Questioner: I am sorry, Baba, for all this, but you know I couldn't help it and was much afraid I would miss seeing you, being so late. It is such a privilege to see you.

(As she was tired and excited for the rush she had to make to see Baba, she was allowed to sit quietly for a couple of minutes, after which she herself continued.)

I met Krishnamurti once. He took off what I didn't need, but could give me nothing instead, so that I felt quite empty after I left him with no interest in life.

BABA: It is all **there in you**, waiting to be unlocked.

Questioner: The East is mystical, the West practical.

BABA: The practical mind of the West and the mystical mind of the East must go hand in hand. Then only is the real balance of the head and heart achieved.

Questioner: And when will that be?

BABA: Soon. There has been a marked awakening in the West for the inner life and Truth, and time will soon come when the world will know the real value and purpose of life.

Questioner: I felt that life was a mathematical problem, dry, cold and shallow, with nothing real, substantial and deep inside.

BABA: Let me explain. Truth is not to be intellectually understood, but is actually to be felt, experienced and realized. And for that no intellectual gymnastics or logical arguments are necessary, but a clean, open, receptive heart that accepts what is given and poured in.

Questioner: Yes, Baba, I now understand. But how could I achieve it, receive it?

BABA: I will give it to you.

Questioner: Oh, how grateful!

Here Baba gave her a certain thought to meditate with his explanation of the process how to do it, avoiding the pitfalls. She was so pleased with the central thought given her for meditation that she exclaimed, "How wonderful" in an ecstatic mood. And when Baba said, "You will feel my help," tears filled her eyes and trickled down her cheeks. She felt Baba's presence and words so strongly that she was trembling all over, and with quivering lips uttered, "Yes, Baba, I feel it even now;" and she couldn't apparently stand in his presence any longer, she left the room and rested for a while before leaving the house.

Questioner: I am trying to realize the greater things in life, but find it extremely difficult to reconcile myself with the surroundings which are all so material and to which I feel so apathetic.

BABA: It is alright if you feel that way.

Questioner: And should I still continue doing it even if I think it is not right?

BABA: You needn't worry, if you feel the way you do—**outside** the world of matter, even though in it. And even while living with others and doing things as they like, if you feel the real inner thing deeply that it is all wrong, it is splendid. Let me explain. In India there are places like the Himalayas where the rishis, ascetics and mystics retire in seclusion, be away from the world and meditate for years. But after years of such secluded life in the mountains and caves, when they return to the world they find it very difficult to adjust themselves to its surroundings, and in many cases there is **reaction**. In the West it is different. Yet there are sincere souls, here too, who seek Truth. There is an awakening even in the West. But it is difficult to reconcile the two—material and spiritual living. I know how you feel and tell you that you shouldn't feel disappointed with this situation or conflict as you say. You must always remember that in spirituality it is not the intellect and external life that matters but it is the feelings and inner experiences that count. You can live **in** the world, do all your duties and yet be spiritual. You shouldn't run away from the world nor shirk your duties towards your own and others, but live in the world doing all your legitimate duties, but keeping your mind always toward the goal, having a longing for inner life and experiences and it will surely come to you gradually.

Questioner: Oh, I didn't know that. I thank you for your advice. I thought I was mistaken in living a life I didn't want to and was puzzled. You know it is so difficult to live with the people, even with the family who do not understand; and out of their regard for me, they all persuade me to a life of ease and comfort that they live, but which I know and feel is not real. We must suffer, and yet I have to do it all for them, though all the while I feel it wrong.

BABA: I understand and as I have already told you it is quite alright that you feel that way. The external life doesn't matter if you feel differently internally. So don't worry for this inner conflict. You will be helped. This contact will help you.

Questioner: Thank you, Baba, I think it will. Is there anything you think I should do?

BABA: Do you ever meditate?

Questioner: Yes, I do.

BABA: Then do one thing.

Baba gave her a certain thought to meditate on, explaining the simple process of doing it, avoiding all the hard and stiff methods and strain of yoga practices and the like, and doing it in a relaxed position; but sincerely, and said: "You will be helped."

Questioner: One who has to live in the world has to look out for the necessities of life, and in the pursuit of that misses something that is behind it all. For instance, a man of my type who has to work with the outside world of matter, I have to adjust myself to their way of living in spite of my desire to attain to something substantial behind all this, which from my little reading and knowledge I know others have achieved. But I am afraid also to take a jump right at the top of a mountain (meaning by this to take great strides on the Path).

BABA: I understand. You mean 'spirituality made practical'.

Questioner: Yes, that is it exactly, to put it in short.

BABA: And it is very easy, very simple. Its very simplicity makes it difficult.

Questioner: Is it really? How strange!

BABA: People's ideas about God and spirituality are so far-fetched, fantastic and funny.

Questioner: You see, Baba, I call my highest ideal the "Life Substance". I don't want to call it God, for that would be connected with the rigid church diction and dogmas even though my belief and ideal would be greater. So I call it the "Life Substance", whatever it is.

BABA: Names and terms do not matter. It is the feeling that counts.

Questioner: Then what should I do to feel, as you say, and get a glimpse of it, if not get deeper into it?

BABA: I will explain. For a man of your position in life, in a civilized country (like America) of modern ideals and age, it is alright to live a life as you do keeping your mind always towards higher aspirations. To speak frankly, you **are** spiritual, without being conscious of it.

Questioner: Am I really?

BABA: Yes, I know you really are more spiritual than you know yourself. But you could do much more still.

Questioner: And what must I do to get deeper into it and gain greater knowledge? Can you tell me anything?

BABA: Yes, I will. And as I told you already, it is very simple. One must **do** it.

Questioner: I would be delighted.

(At this stage Baba gave him a certain thought and explained to him how to concentrate on it).

And may I think of you? Would it be alright?

BABA: Yes, do. I will help you. I will, that will be easy too.

Questioner: I am so grateful, grateful for the privilege of this meeting, for the very interesting talk and for the invaluable help given.

MEHER BABA

MEHHER BABA, recognised as the Avatar, was a Persian, born February 25, 1894, in Poona, India. His father was a Zoroastrian and a true seeker of God. Baba's name was Merwan Sheriar Irani, and he signed himself M. S. Irani (never Meher Baba). In 1913 while a student at Deccan College, he met Hazrat Babajan, an ancient Mohammedan woman and one of the five Perfect Masters of the age. Babajan, gave him God-realization and made him aware of his high spiritual destiny. During the next seven years another Perfect Master, a Hindu named Upasni Maharaj, gave him "Gnosis" or Divine Knowledge, and in 1921 he gathered his first disciples. They gave him the title Meher Baba, which means "compassionate father".

Baba eventually established a colony near Ahmednagar, India, called Meherabad, which included a free school stressing spiritual training, a free hospital and shelters for the poor. He trained his disciples in moral discipline, love for God, spiritual understanding, and selfless service. He himself has cleansed lepers, washed the feet of the poor as a demonstration that he was one with them, and distributed grain and cloth to the destitute, always with his own hands.

Baba was not an ism. Baba did not profess any particular religious faith but all religious faiths. Baba's followers are not followers of him so much as they are followers of God through him. Baba demands no more than love and obedience.

One of Baba's tenets is reincarnation, but always within the human species. He has been, he said Christ, Buddha, Mohammed and all the other Avatars the world has seen, because they were all what he was, an incarnation of God. He remained silent for forty four years because "throughout eternity I have laid down principles and precepts, but mankind has ignored them. Man's inability to live God's words makes the Avatar's teaching a mockery. So, because he has come "Not to teach, but to awaken," Baba lay down no precepts. When I release the tide of Truth, which I have come to give, men's daily lives will be the living precept. The word I have not spoken will come to life in them ... My present Avataric Form is the last Incarnation of this cycle."

Meher Baba's insistence that he could take his followers "higher" than any drug, considerably alleviated the drug-problem in America. A lot of young people have shed some quite serious drug hang-ups by accepting Baba instead.

Baba dropped his physical body to take on the Universal Body on January 31, 1969.

THE GLOW is a quarterly magazine on the life and work of Meher Baba.

