

THE WORK
of
MEHER BABA
with Advanced Souls and Sadhus



15th March to 14th May 1948

Copyright

PUBLISHED BY ADI K. IRANI, KINGS ROAD, AHMEDNAGAR (INDIA), FOR
MEHER PUBLICATIONS AND PRINTED BY F. BORTON FOR
G. CLARIDGE & CO., LTD., FREERE ROAD, FORT, BOMBAY.

Meherabad

24th April 1949.

1-701496



Maharaj prepares feed for a cow.

(See page 14.)

ALTHOUGH the final chapter of *The Wayfarers* closed on 7th March 1948, it was made clear in that chapter that the work of Meher Baba with advanced souls, sadhus, and the poor, would continue as a matter of course. While *The Wayfarers* has been in the hands of the printers, new work has been done that could not, therefore, be set into the book itself; and so this pamphlet is a kind of epilogue to the main volume, and a token that much work lies ahead.

The central theme of these few pages is a journey of Meher Baba to the Himalaya. The word Himalaya means "The Abode of Snow"; and from the Indus at one end to the Brahmaputra at the other, this mightiest of the world's mountain ranges sweeps for 1,500 miles. About 500 miles from their northern end lies a massif of snow-covered giants that are supremely sacred to Hindu tradition, and from the melting snows of these summits arises a network of innumerable streams that join to make India's most sacred river, the Ganges.

The true source of the Ganges, or—to give the river her true name—Mother Ganga, lies above Gangotri. Here, from an ice cave 13,800 feet above sea level, this sacred river starts on a course of more than 1,500 miles to the Bay of Bengal, into which it falls by a network of estuaries. From its source in the green ice cavern above Gangotri, until it joins the Alaknanda at Devaprayag about 120 miles downstream, the river is known as the Bhagirathi.

About half-way between the source of the Bhagirathi and this confluence at Devaprayag lies the village of Uttar Kashi, famous as a centre for spiritual aspirants, yogis, and advanced souls. Uttar Kashi is the focal point of this pamphlet, for it was to this little village that Baba went in April 1948. Uttar Kashi is not high by Himalayan standards, for it lies less than 4,000 feet above sea level; but to get there the traveller must ride or walk along the stony track from Tehri Garhwal, a distance of some forty miles.

Now to walk forty miles in a rather remote Himalayan valley is an entirely different thing from walking the same distance along a straight and level road in open country. To begin with, one must consider the transport of baggage, for no wheeled traffic can move over these rough tracks, and every ounce must be carried on mules, ponies or men. Most travellers, however, find pack animals tiresome and unreliable, and the backbone of Himalayan

transport (except in Tibet, where the yak is used), is the back of the Nepalese or the Dhotiyal porter. These tough little men will carry up to sixty pounds over the roughest sort of country, and I have seen them walk barefoot on hard snow for several hours, without complaint.

It is quite impossible to put the Himalaya down in words; they must be seen to be believed. Whether you view these great giants from afar, when they seem like clouds on a summer's day; or whether, from some turn in the lonely, water-riven valleys at their very feet, you gaze in astonishment at their walls of glittering ice that are measured in tens of thousands of feet—however you see them, they are incredible and indescribable.

That is the romance of the Himalaya; but all Himalayan travel is not so stimulating to the imagination, and there are many valleys in the middle reaches between the great heights and the plains, that are merely hot, oppressive, and dull. The track from Tehri to Uttar Kashi is something between these extremes, and the road is interesting only where a turn in the valley reveals a new vista, or where the path draws close to the roaring waters of the Bhagirathi.

For an account of the aspirants and advanced souls contacted by Baba in Uttar Kashi itself, and for the log of his itinerary, the reader is referred to the summary. Besides this work in the Himalaya, it will be seen that much other work has been done, and that the trek to Uttar Kashi was only a part of an extensive journey that almost touched at the frontier of Eastern Pakistan.

Finally, it will be observed that the summary opens with an account of more contacts in Bombay. It is obvious to many that Baba's contacts show phases of "regional concentration" at certain times. By this formidable expression I mean nothing more than this: that, at certain times, Baba goes again and again to a particular city or district and contacts masts and advanced souls there; often the same ones over and over again. Such concentration was obvious in Kashmir in 1943 and 1944, and in Hyderabad in 1945; and since the autumn of 1947 we find Baba focussing his attention on two new centres, namely, Bombay and Gujerat. It is impossible to say whether these phases of regional concentration are the results of convenience or whether, as many feel, they have a much deeper significance, because Baba is entirely reticent about the meaning of this strange work of his. My impression is that his work is either so personal that its nature and meaning are none of our business, or that the ins and outs of it are so intricate and obscure that even a detailed explanation would be quite beyond our grasp. Since, therefore, we cannot see behind the veil, we must rest content with a description of the veil itself—the mere record of the journeys and contacts—and so we shall proceed with the summary.

Summary of Contacts

From 15th March to 14th May 1948

*** = Of special interest

** = Of interest

15th March Meher Baba in Bombay, where he contacts certain new masts:

Haji Nur Ahmad Baba is an elderly Pathan. Many years ago he was a schoolmaster, and would teach his pupils about the Koran and about Shariat. It seems, however, that one day he became intoxicated with Divine Love, for he left the school and began to wander about stark naked. In those days he was in a suburb of Bombay known as Kurla, and he stayed there or thereabouts for some twelve years.

He now lives near the fire station at Bhendi Bazar in Bombay, in the house of a certain Haji Ghafur, a watch repairer. In 1933 Haji Ghafur took Nur Ahmad with him on a pilgrimage to Mecca; hence the handle, Haji, affixed to both their names. Haji Nur Ahmad Baba is a good mast. He is now in a salik-like state, and is held in high esteem by his fellow Pathans of Bombay.

There is a mast—and a good one—whose name is not recorded, who sits on some steps at the fire station in Bhendi Bazar. This was Baba's second contact with him.

Shah Saheb came originally from Hyderabad (Deccan), although he is said to have been in Bombay for the last forty years. He is tall, and his height is accentuated by a long black *kafni*. He wanders about Bombay, and although not widely known as a spiritual figure, he is in fact an advanced pilgrim.*

There is a ragged, tousle-headed, middle-aged mast near the petrol pump at Bhendi Bazar. He has a passion for chewing *pān*, and his clothes are sodden and stained with the rich brown colour of his spittle. His eyes, however, are bright and clear, as if his mind were lit up by some inner joy. He is a moderate mast.

*For the definition of an advanced pilgrim see Chapter One of *The Wayfarers* (page 38 *et seq.*)

Dhuniwala Baba is a good mast who collects rubbish, which he burns. He then sits before this fire and warms his hands over the flames. He is naked except for a loin-cloth. (A *dhuni* is a sacred fire.)

17th March

Baba still in Bombay, where his contacts continue:

Ahmad Mastan wears a sack round his belly, and his choice of a "home" illustrates how a mast not only does not care where he lives, but also how he is often drawn to place himself in offensive surroundings (see *The Wayfarers*, Chapter One), for Ahmad Mastan lives near a public urinal. He is a good mast.

Saiyid Nur Ali Shah is an old man, and a moderate mast, whose fingers are covered with rings. He wanders about murmuring to himself, and punctuates this perpetual burbling with occasional loud, staccato exclamations.

18th March

Baba still in Bombay, where his contacts continue:

Nuruddin Mast Baba is a good mast, and a very dirty one, who wanders everywhere and sleeps anywhere.

19th March

This was the last day of Baba's contacts in Bombay.

Ali Hussein is a moderate mast. All that is known about him is that he has sat in one place for many, many years.

Ismail Baba Mastan looks in his mid-fifties, and he, like Ali Hussein, sits all day and every day in a particular place.

Allah Dia Baba is a moderate mast whose only raiment is a shred of sackcloth. He roams about abusing people without any obvious provocation, and interrupts his wanderings by squatting a few moments here and there before resuming his walk.

After completing these contacts in Bombay, Baba returned to Ahmadnagar.

25th March

On this day Baba left Ahmadnagar for Bombay. He had with him Gustadji, Baidul, Kaka, Eruch, and Chhagan. The party left Bombay this same evening for Katni, Annupur, and Ambikapur (in the Central Provinces). The purpose of this journey was to visit an intimate disciple who holds an important administrative position in Ambikapur. No contacts were made with advanced souls, and the details of this visit to Ambikapur are therefore irrelevant to the subject of this pamphlet. One may only say that Baba was given an enthusiastic and loving reception. From Ambikapur Baba went south over the forest covered hills to Raigarh, where he entrained for Calcutta.

30th March ✨

On this day Baba arrived in Calcutta. This was the fourth important visit of Baba to this great city at the eastern gate of India. The first important visit was in June 1940, when Karim Baba, the great jalali mast, was contacted; the second was in 1943, at the height of the disastrous famine; and the third was in 1945. Baba has been to Calcutta at other times also, and the word important here refers to his work with advanced souls, the starving, or the poor.

This present visit was interesting in its own way because the very first thing that Baba did in Calcutta was to take a train for Dacca, the capital of Eastern Pakistan. When the train reached Ranaghat, however, which is the frontier station before entering Eastern Pakistan, Baba ordered those with him to get out of the train, and they then took the next train back to Calcutta, reaching there by 7.30 the very same evening. The critic will expostulate, "Why change your mind without rhyme or reason: is this a symptom of infinite power and infinite knowledge?" And, of course, such questions cannot be fairly answered. One can only say that one feels convinced that such sudden changes of plan *do* have significance, and that, at such times, Baba is working out an intricate plan of his own in which those with him must play their parts blindfold.

Thus, to the critic, this journey might seem a sterile escapade; but to those who know Baba well, the very pliability of his plans abounds with significance. It is a deep-rooted instinct that insists upon this significance; a conviction from within that overrides the protests of the critical intellect.

31st March

Baba still in Calcutta, where he begins to contact advanced souls.

Mastan Shah is a swarthy mast who is naked except for a loin-cloth. He potters about near the General Hospital in Central Avenue, and mumbles to himself. This mast was contacted once before by Baba, and is (probably) the Ali Shah Mastan mentioned in the supplement to *The Wayfarers*, of whom there was then no description. Mastan Shah is a good mast.

Ramdas Baba is a septuagenarian and a moderate mast.

Shamsher Data is another septuagenarian and also a moderate mast.

Sufi Saheb was first contacted in October 1945 (see *The Wayfarers'* supplement). He is a very good mast who lives in a tiny room in Butchers' Lane, near Park Circus.

Rahim Shah is an old man from Kathiawar; he is a moderate mast of no particular interest.

1st April

Contacts in Calcutta continue:

The first contact, at 4.0 a.m., was with a moderate mast, name not recorded, who sits outside a certain soda water factory.

Abdurrehman Baba is a moderate mast who keeps cats and dogs.

✱✱ *Shah Jehan* is a very good mast of the fifth plane. He sits in a dark and filthy room that is crammed with musty books and a congeries of junk. He has closed the door with a screen, so that there is very little light indeed; and there are no windows. *Shah Jehan* is as dirty as his room, and is clad in offensive and tattered clothes. A tale is told of him that he used to sit under a certain dead tree near the Narkuldanga Bridge, and that one day this tree came to life again. It is said also that the police, in the course of a beggar drive, once took *Shah Jehan* into custody, but that he was released within a few hours in response to the importunate petitions of those who revered him as a great mast. *Shah Jehan* now lives in this dark little room as the guest of a certain butcher who reveres him.

Haji Saheb Telwala was first contacted in October 1945 and is recorded in the supplement to *The Wayfarers* as Teliwala Mast. He was contacted again on 1st April, and he is a very good mast; one of the best contacted on this visit to Calcutta. He sits near the Narkuldanga Bridge, and, as his name implies, he loves oil (*tel*), drinks it, and smears it over his body and clothes, so that he is almost unbelievably dirty.

✱ On the evening of this day *Baba* and his men left Calcutta for Hardwar on the Doon Express. On this journey an "indirect" contact took place that deserves description. The line from Calcutta to Hardwar passes through Benares, and, on Benares station, *Baba* pointed out a venerable old man in ochre-coloured clothes who was surrounded by three or four younger men dressed in the same kind of clothes. The old man and his companions entered the compartment next to that in which *Baba* and his men were travelling, and *Baba* pointed out the old man as "a very good soul."

He then told Eruch to visit the next compartment and ask this man about saints and yogis in Uttar Kashi. Eruch did as he was bid, and was surprised to learn that the old man came from Uttar Kashi itself, and that he was on his way back there. His name, he told Eruch, was Devigiri. The men with him, who were his disciples, addressed him as Devigiri Maharaj, as an indication of the esteem in which they held him.

It will be seen later that Baba contacted Devigiri Maharaj on the last day of his stay at Uttar Kashi. The old man left the train at Ajodhya in response to the invitation of some devotees there, and remained at Ajodhya for a few days. His return to Uttar Kashi was therefore delayed so that he only reached his headquarters there on the day before Baba left to return to Tehri.

3rd April

On this day Baba set foot in Hardwar, the pilgrim city on the banks of the sacred Ganges. This was the last city of any consequence before Baba and his men set out for Uttar Kashi, and Chhagan and Kaka were therefore instructed to buy provisions for the mountain trek, while Baba, Baidul, and Eruch set forth in search of masts.

* On the main ghat they found a middle-aged mast known as Hanuman Baba. He has an extraordinary mouth with three (*sic*) rows of loose and dirty teeth in each jaw; but he is a good mast who loves to give money to children, although no one knows whence he gets the money, because he never begs. Thus, when Baidul tried to give Hanuman Baba one anna, he refused to take it, but gave Baidul one anna instead.

After this contact with Hanuman Baba, a seeker* was contacted.

** While Baba and his two men were roaming the crowded lanes and ghats of the city, they observed an old man in rags sitting upon a wooden platform at the side of the street. Baba gave a sign that they should approach this man, and indicated that he should be asked about masts and advanced souls in Hardwar. After a brief exchange of remarks, Baba and his men went on their way, but soon observed that this old man was following them through the streets. Since the tenacity of his pursuit seemed not to be relaxed, Baba ordered Eruch to go and ask him why he was following them. He replied that he was in search of a Guru, and quoted the words

*For the definition of a seeker see Chapter One of *The Wayfarers* (page 38 *et seq.*)

of Kabir that there could be no Realization of the Truth without the help of a Guru. He then went on to say that he was an old man, and that he feared to die without having achieved Realization. Finally, he addressed Baba directly, and said, "I find you to be the right man to guide me." Baba, in reply, told him to love God more and more, so that his love became like that of a fish out of the ocean, whose only desire is to return to the ocean.

This meeting, however, was not the last, for an hour or so later, when Baba was returning through the streets after having contacted the masts described above, he suddenly turned to the subject of this old man and began to praise the measure of his love for God. After some minutes of this discussion, the old man himself was seen across the street, and was called to Baba. Baba ordered three oranges to be bought, and he gave these to the old man with his blessings. The old man, observing that he was to receive *prasad* at Baba's hands, first washed his hands and feet before coming before his chosen Guru. Baba told him to seek God within himself with an ever-increasing love, and said that, if he did so, he would soon see God.

It should perhaps be made clear that Baba's name was never divulged, and that the old man had apparently no external means of knowing who Baba was.

4th April

On the morning of this day Baba and his men left Hardwar for Rikhikesh (Rishikesh) by bus. As soon as they reached Rikhikesh, nine Nepalese coolies were engaged for the transport of the luggage to Uttar Kashi. While these arrangements were being settled, Baba contacted a certain *Tapowan Swami* at Brahmashram. Tapowan Swami is widely respected in the Rikhikesh valley.

5th April

Baba and his men set out by bus for Tehri Garhwal. The road climbs over two passes, but to the average passenger the splendour of the scenery is almost neutralized by the execrable state of the road, and by a natural doubt of ever reaching Tehri alive. The nine coolies also set off to Tehri, but they went on foot, for they have a quick way over several passes that enables them to reach Tehri in one day's march from Rikhikesh. On the evening of this day Baba and his men reached Tehri Garhwal.

6th April

✱ In the introductory paragraphs of this pamphlet an attempt was made to build up a simple outline of the Himalaya in general, and

of this part of them in particular. Think, then, of this little town of Tehri buried in a hot and steamy valley, with the milky torrent of the Bhagirathi thundering along its centre, swollen by the melting snows from the great heights that lie seventy or eighty miles away. See, in your mind's eye, the terraced fields cut into the mountain sides above you like giants' staircases, interrupted only by irregular patches of forest, by deep-cut gullies, or by outcrops of sheer rock. And as you read the prosy details of place-names and the mileages between them, do not forget the hot stones underfoot, or the desiccation of your mouth and pharynx that the tepid fluid in your water-bottle does little to assuage. And do not forget the blister that stabs your toe with every weary step, or the pitiless sun that beats upon your back. Remember, in short, that the journey from Tehri to Uttar Kashi, though only about forty miles long, is hot, and rough, and steep.

Aware, therefore, of the wearisome march ahead, Baba and his men rested in Tehri on 6th April in order to husband their strength for the coming days. In Tehri itself, however, Baba contacted two masts on this day:

Mast Ahmad Sufi Saheb is a very good mast, sometimes salik-like and sometimes majzoob-like, who sells soap to earn a living. He is much respected in Tehri.

Mast Yogi lives in some mule stables in Tehri, and is heedless of physical needs.

7th April

At 5.30 a.m. on this day Baba, his five men, and the nine coolies, set out on foot journey to Uttar Kashi. That afternoon they reached the Syansu Forest Bungalow about twelve miles away.

8th April

Left Syansu at 5.0 a.m. for Dharasu, fourteen miles ahead. At Dharasu the party stayed in the Kali Kambliwala Chetty (*Dharmashala*).

9th April

Left Dharasu for Uttar Kashi, about sixteen miles away—the journey's end. This final day the scenery was impressive and the track full of peasants moving up to the high pastures for the summer with their goats, sheep, cows, dogs, and tents. The path, however, was rough, and Baba's feet, and the feet of those with him, were painfully blistered by the time they reached Uttar Kashi in the late afternoon.

At Uttar Kashi they settled in Birla House, a massive *dharmashala* built by the famous philanthropist of that name.

10th April

Baba's contacts in Uttar Kashi begin:

Falhari Baba eats only fruit, flowers, and roots, and is naked except for a loin-cloth. He used to live in Gangotri, but now stays on the Mani Karnikan Ghat at Uttar Kashi. He is an initiate pilgrim.

Digambar Avadhut is a sadhu.

Nanga Baba, known also as Ramanandji, is completely naked and has been silent for many years. He stays at Laksheshwar, about three miles from Uttar Kashi, and comes once a day to Uttar Kashi for his food.

These three men were invited to Birla House and were contacted there by Baba.

Ganganand Maharaj is an old man who sits reading something in a very dark room in the Kailas Ashram at Vajali. The local people respect him very highly, and Baba liked him so much that he visited him twice. He is an advanced pilgrim.

Ramji Maharaj is in the Satbela Ashram; he is a seeker.

Chaitangiri Maharaj is an old man, and a seeker.

Nepali Swami Maharaj is an old sadhu and is also a seeker.

Birgiri Maharaj is an aged sadhu who lives in the *math* of Devigiri Maharaj. He is a seeker.

Brahmanandji Maharaj trains children in spirituality. He also supervises the construction and maintenance of buildings for sadhus: he is an intellectual type, and is a sincere seeker.

✻✻ *Niguanandji Brahmachari* is a Bengali and a very good mast. He is about eighty years old, is cadaverous and energetic, and wears very dirty clothes. He lives in a diminutive room in Durga Devi's temple at Uttar Kashi. When Baba came to contact him it was already almost dark, and Niguanandji took Baba with him into his little room in the temple. The mast then lit a match and examined Baba's face by the light of its flame, and, as he gazed at Baba's face, Niguanandji's features filled with joy. Baba was very pleased with his contact with this fine mast.

Rudragiri Mahatma (Naga Panthi) is an old man and seeker, in Vishvanath's temple.

Sibpuriji Naga Panthi was contacted in this same temple of Vishvanath. He, also, is a seeker.

Dandi Swami was also in this temple, the third seeker here.

Maneshanandji Swami is the *mahant* of Uttar Kashi, its official spiritual head.

Mangalgiri Maharaj is said to be 104 years old, and his back is so bent and his body so thin that when he squats his head almost touches his feet. He lives in a dark little room on the Kedar Ghat. He is an initiate pilgrim.*

Pandiram Maharaj is a sadhu.

Dnyani Maharaj is also a sadhu.

Chitambaranandji is a seeker in Koteshwar, near Uttar Kashi.

Gangapuriji is a sadhu and a seeker in the Kailas Ashram.

11th April

Baba's contacts in Uttar Kashi continue:

Maharaj Juganandji Puri is a seeker of the Udasi type.

Nirgunanandji

Nischchaldasji

Avadhut Naga Panthi

Praginathji

Ramdasji Maharaj

Atmanandji

Govindanandji

Nathji

} All these men are seekers.

} These were three sadhus in the Rama-krishna Library.

Swami Santanandji lives in Joshimath, over the river; he is a seeker.

* *Vishnu Datt Digambar* is about eighty years old, although he looks much younger. He is a very high type; and Baba said of him that he was three in one—a mast, a saint, and a child; and that he was one of the best contacted in Uttar Kashi. He is quite naked and has been silent for many years. He begs for food from five houses only, and accepts only what he needs. He was very happy to contact Baba and made gestures of “flying kisses” towards him. He lives in Tilot village.

Dr. Swareshanandji is a very old man, a Bengali doctor, who lives in Devigiri Maharaj's ashram. He is a seeker.

12th April

This was the last day of Baba's contacts in Uttar Kashi.

Nanga Baba Ramanandji has been silent for many years and is quite naked. His hair is blond from the constant application of

* For the definition of an initiate pilgrim see Chapter One of *The Wayfarers* (page 38 *et seq.*)

ashes. He was called to Birla House for contact with Baba. He is a seeker.

Shri Shankar Ashramji is a sadhu.

* *Devigiri Maharaj* is an adept pilgrim.* This was the old man who had travelled in the same train as Baba from Benares to Ajodhya (see note of 1st April). He arrived in Uttar Kashi on 12th April and was contacted by Baba in the Vishvanath Temple. It was then learnt that this journey of Devigiri Maharaj to Benares was the first that he had made from Uttar Kashi for many, many years. This contact with Devigiri was the last of all the contacts in Uttar Kashi before Baba and his men departed the next morning on their return march to Tehri. During these three days in Uttar Kashi about twenty-five sadhus were also contacted, but they are not listed in detail here; they were simply sadhus, and were of no particular spiritual interest.

At Uttar Kashi Baba bought a fluffy black and brown hill puppy and named her Gol-gol: the rough equivalent in English of this name would be Roly-poly. Baba himself fed and cared for this pup all the way back to Ahmadnagar.

13th April Baba and his men set out from Uttar Kashi on their return march to Tehri. Night halt at Nakori, six miles away.

14th April Left Nakori for Dharasu; slept at Dharasu that night.

15th April Left Dharasu for Syansu; slept at Syansu that night.

16th April Left Syansu for Tehri. The party set out at 4.30 a.m. in the dark, carrying lanterns to light their way. It appears that a road is being built in this valley so that motor transport may eventually get up as far as Uttar Kashi. The men at work on the road toss tons of earth about with the result that the original path, where it passes below the embryonic road, is blocked in several places. The party had to cross two such drifts of steep rubble between Syansu and Tehri; tricky and perilous obstacles in the dark. These piles of rubble were not there on the way up to Uttar Kashi.

At Tehri the nine coolies were paid off and dismissed.

17th April On the morning of this day Baba and his men left by bus for Rikhikesh, and departed thence to Hardwar. They reached Hardwar the same evening and left by the first train for Delhi.

* For the definition of an adept pilgrim see Chapter One of *The Wayfarers* (page 38 *et seq.*)

18th April

Left Delhi for Agra, reaching there the same evening.

During the next three days Baba contacted masts and others in Agra :

Gharib Nath is an initiate pilgrim.

Fateh Mohammed is noted down as having been contacted, though there is no record of his characteristics.

Bullah Shah is a good mast.

Mohammed Hussein is a sufi.

Hillan Baba was contacted first in 1944, and is described in the supplement to *The Wayfarers*. He has sat at the side of a certain lane for many years.

✱✱ *MajzooB Baba* is a very good mast who sits opposite the mental hospital. He is dressed in a very dirty *kafni* and mutters constantly to himself. He generally repeats any question put to him, and he calls himself the Emperor of Agra. This suggests, perhaps, that he should inhabit the institution opposite which he sits, but *MajzooB Baba* is, *Baba* tells us, a very high mast.

✱ *Haji Baba* went to Mecca some years ago; hence his title of *Haji*. He is a good mast who lives in a room in a mosque and constantly gives money away. While *Baba* and his men were with him, *Haji Baba* gave five rupees to a girl, telling her to return one *pice* to him. He also gave one rupee to an old woman who asked him for some matches; and she was given a box of matches also, from the shelf in *Haji Baba's* room. *Haji Baba* speaks of his room as a tavern, and tells people that he drinks there; but he drinks only the wine of God's Love. After contacting these masts in Agra, *Baba* and his men left for Ahmadnagar at noon on 21st April, reaching Ahmadnagar on the afternoon of 22nd April.

Besides those listed in this summary, many sadhus and masts of exiguous merit were contacted in the various places visited, but these men were of no special interest and no record was therefore kept of them. At the end of this tour *Baba* explained that he had planned to contact fifty-six advanced souls, that this had been done, and that he was, therefore, satisfied with the successful conclusion of the tour.

9th May ✱✱ *Maharaj*, a mast from Nagpur, is brought to *Baba's* bungalow in Ahmadnagar by *Babadas*.

✱✱ Meher Baba has worked conspicuously with God-intoxicated souls since the early part of 1939, so that most of those who live and work with him have had opportunities to observe some, at least, of the characteristics of these eccentric pilgrims. And yet, were you to ask a disciple of Baba why such and such a man was a mast and not a madman, he would probably simply reply; "Because Baba says so." In other words, the average man or the average disciple is not in a position to judge these people because his only measure is to assess them by their external actions. There is, however, one quality in masts—in those, at any rate, who have had much contact with Baba—and this is that, however strangely they may behave, they make one feel unmistakably happy in their company. They do not exhale any of that subtle antipathy that seems to emanate from the insane, but actually kindle a sense of harmony in one's self, a harmony of which one may not be immediately aware, but which becomes eventually a real and obvious thing. Thus, if you were to ask the men at Meherabad whether they liked or disliked Mohammed and Ali Shah, the two masts sharing the life of the *mandali* there, you would find, I believe, that everyone felt spontaneously attracted by them.

If we accept, therefore, that a genuine mast somehow touches the roots of one's being in an agreeable way, we may speculate whether animals, with their sure instinct for friend or foe, do not feel drawn to them too: and the answer is that, in many cases, animals do live in close sympathy with masts, as a study of the supplement to *The Wayfarers* will show. This present example of Maharaj, a mast from Nagpur, is also a vivid instance of a reciprocal attraction between a mast and animals of different kinds, and deserves, therefore, to be described in some detail.

Maharaj was said to be about eighty years old, although he looked perhaps ten years younger than this. He was naked save for a loin-cloth, and had a tousled thatch of black hair and a white beard. If you spoke to him he would look at you and smile in the kindest way for a moment, and then resume his reverie or turn his attention back to his animals. It was said that in Nagpur he had about twenty-five dogs always round him. As soon as he was brought to Ahmadnagar he began to collect various animals—he would go for a walk, and these animals would follow him back to the house—and by the end of the first day there were eight or ten cows and five or six dogs in the bungalow garden.

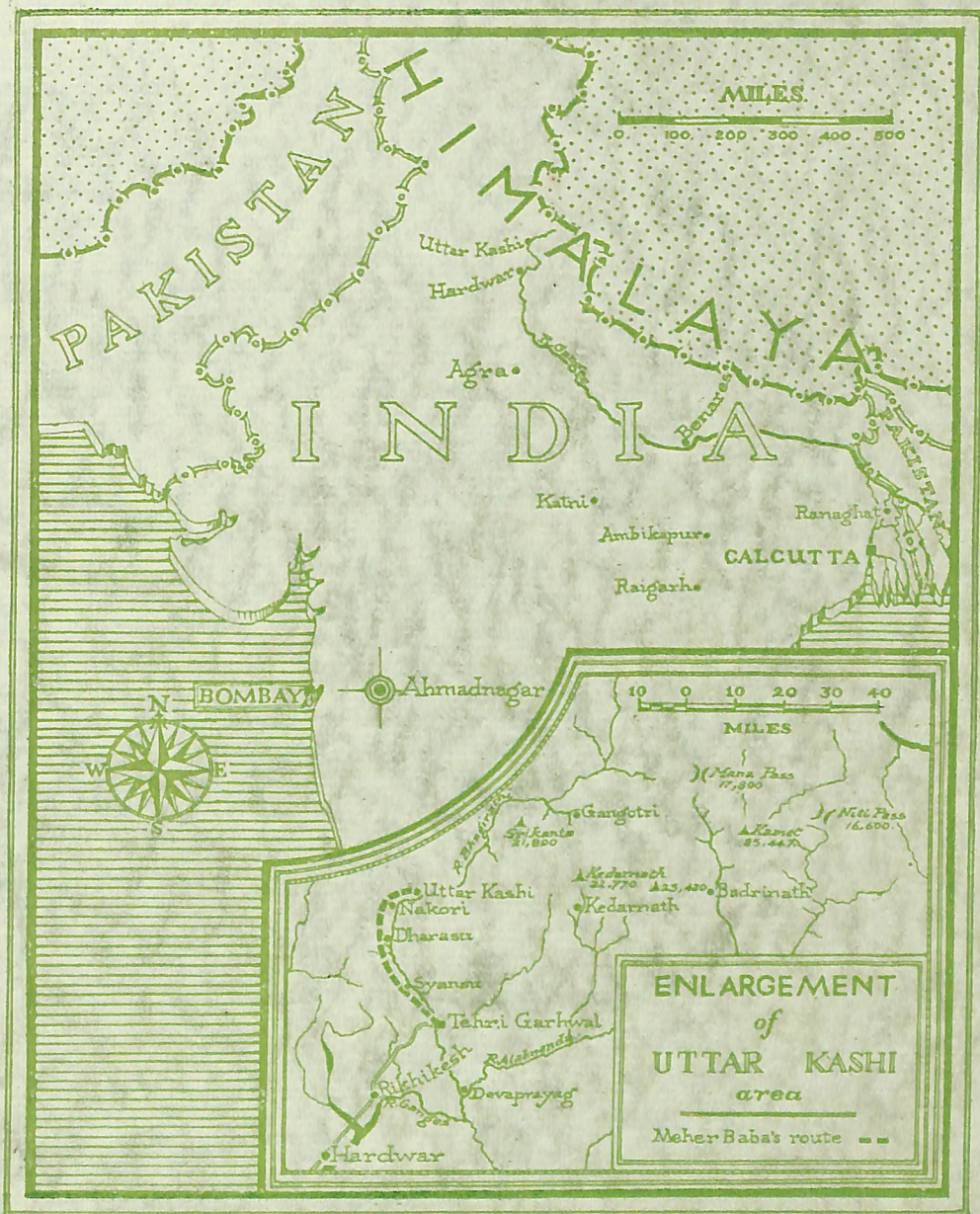
The untiring occupation of Maharaj was to ply these friends with food, and in order that fodder should be available at all times, the house underwent a sudden yet an unmistakable metamorphosis into a storehouse. The budget for forage and milk for the animals at this time was about fourteen rupees a day.

Maharaj, in order to be near his animals, spent most of the day out of doors under the trees. About him was a confusion of plates, buckets, and earthenware dishes, into which fodder or milk was put several times a day, and there were many saucers slung from convenient branches from which birds might feed themselves. The dogs and cows, when not eating, would lie in an irregular circle about Maharaj, and there was one spirited brown and white bullock that would lick him all over with his tongue. The mast would screw up his eyes when his face was being licked, or would lie supine between the forelegs of the bullock while the front of his body was licked from head to foot. He seemed, indeed, to take pleasure in these abrasive yet loving baths, for while they were in progress he would lie with his eyes closed and his hands behind his head.

Baba said of Maharaj that he was a "freak mast" who would not fit into any of the eight categories described in Chapter One of *The Wayfarers*, but that he was also a high mast, and was entirely cooperative in his work with him. He never washed and never fed himself, so that every morsel of food was fed to him by Baba. The mood of Maharaj seemed to be entirely dependent upon the presence of his animal friends, for when he was in their midst and seeing to their needs, he was lively and gay, and when he was taken into the house away from them, he became bored and withdrawn. He stayed at Ahmadnagar until 14th May, when Babadas took him back to Nagpur.

Meherabad, 1948.

W. D.



A map of places mentioned in this pamphlet.

