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June 1966

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June 2018

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Monthly:

June 1966

D I V Y A V A N I
(DIVINE VOICE)

Editor :

SWAMI SATYA PRAKASH UDASEEN

Phone: 36233

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(Continued on 3rd cover page)

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June 1966

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(DIVINE VOICE)

AN ENGLISH MONTHLY
Devoted to Avatar Meher Baba & His Work

Editor:

SWAMI SATYA PRAKASH UDASEEN

Hon. Assistant Editor:

Shri L. Venkayya, B.Sc., LL.B., D.P.A.

Phone: 36233
Volume 1]
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Editorial:

Let Us Drown All Sound in Baba's Silence

We are very fortunate to have the Avatar in our midst, whether we realise it or not. Though God takes human form again and again once in 700 to 1400 years for His creation, as Beloved Baba says, the present Avataric Form is the last Incarnation of this cycle of time. No doubt, it is not enough to be alive, when God is in human form; though it gives a definite opportunity to receive the Divine Grace and realise the TRUTH in this very life. In the words of Baba, "Avataric periods are like the spring-tide of creation. They bring a new release of power, a new awakening of consciousness, a new experience of life—not merely for a few, but for all. Qualities of energy and awareness, which had been used and enjoyed by only a few advanced souls are made available for all humanity. Life as a whole is stepped up to a higher level of consciousness, is geared to a new rate of energy.... The Avatar awakens contemporary humanity to a realization of its true spiritual nature, gives liberation to those who are ready, and quickens the life of the spirit in His time."

It is very significant that Beloved Baba is silent since the last 41 years. He has not spoken even a single word during this long and momentous period in the world history. Yet, He has been so active not only in this country, but also in several foreign countries and there are thousands, who look upon Him as the Saviour and are ever ready to implicitly obey and wholeheartedly and cheerfully, do anything that He orders. Baba has said that because man has been deaf to the principles and precepts laid down by God in the past, in this present Avataric form, He observes Silence. However His assurance to all those who respond to His Call is: "It is not through words that I give what I have to give. In the SILENCE OF YOUR PERFECT SURRENDER, My Love which is always silent can flow to you ... to be

yours always to keep and to share with those who seek Me." Hence the essential requirement for the seeker is 'Perfect Surrender.' Here again Baba has assured that He has come to help us in surrendering ourselves to the cause of God and accepting His Grace of Love and Truth. To surrender completely to His Will, the heart must be pure and the mind empty of all thoughts. With His Grace, it has been the good fortune of many a Baba lover to experience this state, even if it be for brief periods.

In His Infinite Compassion, Beloved Baba provides an opportunity to all of us to participate in His unique Silence. This year, for the occasion of the 41st Anniversary of His Silence, He has expressed His wish that all who love and obey Him and all who would want to do so should observe complete silence for 24 hours, since this is a very important event. No other alternative is given. There is no need for us to remind our brothers and sisters as to how important this Wish is and to what extent it is significant to the entire world, which is immersed in intense chaos and strife. Once a reporter asked Baba: "We have here many excerpts of messages concerning your Silence. Is there any one statement that is more significant than the other?" Baba replied, "There is one. When I break My Silence, the world will come to know that I AM THE ONE WHOM THEY WERE WAITING FOR." On another occasion, Baba has said, "When I break My Silence the impact of My Love will be universal, and all life in creation will know, feel and receive of it. It will help every individual to break himself free from his own bondage in his own way... You all who have come into 'contact with Me, will have some glimpse of Me. Some will have a little, some a little more, and some still more." This means that we must strive to be worthy of the Divine Grace and also must be ever prepared to receive it. And the flow of His Grace depends upon the intensity of our love towards Him. But, as He has often said, to love Him as He ought to be loved is impossible, and to obey Him is possible. So, let us all obey Him and observe silence for 24 hours on 10th July 1966, as instructed by our Beloved Lord. May Baba bless all of us to observe inner and real silence even if it be, just for a day! And may He also bless us to hearken His Word of Words which He will utter soon! Jai Avatar Meher Baba ki Jai !



"I have come to sow the seed of Love in your hearts so that, in spite of all superficial diversity which your life in illusion must experience and endure, the feeling of oneness, through love, is brought about amongst all the nations, creeds, sects and castes of the world."

—MEHER BABA

On the 10th of July 1966, the 41st Anniversary of His Silence, Avatar Meher Baba wishes all who love and obey Him and all who would want to do so, to observe complete silence for 24 hours beginning from midnight of the 9th of July to midnight of the 10th July in accordance with the local time.

Baba wants all His lovers to know that the 41st Anniversary of His Silence is a very important event and as such all His lovers should observe complete silence for 24 hours on this occasion.

Avatar Meher Baba has given the following message for the 41st Anniversary of His Silence:

"God's first Word was, 'Who am I?' God's last Word is, 'I Am God.' And the Word that I the God-Man will utter soon will be the sound of My infinite Silence."

Avatar Meher Baba sends His Love and Blessing to each of His lovers.

Meher Publications
King's Road,
Ahmednagar (M. S.)
India

Sd/- ADI K. IRANI
Disciple & Secretary
Avatar Meher Baba.

Notes: (as on the 6th page.)

Notes—for Life Circular No. 63

1. *Avatar Meher Baba wishes all His lovers to be informed that He wishes to remain undisturbed till end of 1967. During His stay in Poona (from April to June) for 3 months Baba will not see anyone, except those whom He has called or will specifically call for His work.*

Please circulate this message among all His lovers in your locality.

2. (i) Attractive Aluminium Plates in different colours of Avatar Meher Baba's Sayings—
 Size 18" x 5" @ Rs. 12/- each
 " 12" x 3" " " 8/- "
- (ii) Beautiful Book-marks of Avatar Meher Baba's Sayings in aluminium plates at Rs. 3/- each.
- (iii) Very attractive Baba Locketts available.

Please write to:—

Shri Jal S. Irani,
 Meher Moholla,
 765, Dastur Meher Rd.,
 Poona-1

OBEDIENCE TO BABA :

"Unquestioning obedience to Me, without consciously knowing Me, will bring you nearest to Me. But it is impossible to obey Me literally and spontaneously ... The best thing for you would be to obey Me cheerfully. In any case, though, to obey Me now when you have not yet consciously experienced My greatness is in itself a great thing. Much of the value of obedience is lost once conviction is transformed into actual, conscious knowledge of My reality ... Obedience is greater than all the spiritual experiences, but obedience for show is worse than no obedience."
 —BABA

*The Dinkum Oil**

BY FRANCIS BRABAZON

I came across a curious bloke
Who suddenly into laughter broke.
I said, "It must be a mighty joke!"
He eyed me off, and then he spoke:

"Indeed it is very funny—
One always IS what one would be.
You think life crook—just take a look
At your heart and see what you see."

I said, "I don't know what you mean."
He said, "That's pretty easily seen:
You have reaped the harvest—yet you glean
The paddocks the parrots have picked clean:

"For you have all true happiness,
But you prefer to doubt and guess
And have mistook the place to look
And your immortal Good possess."

I gaped at him, thought, Stone the crows!
He's loco sure—yet p'raps he knows
How the chips fall. Blister my toes!
The going was good—but it always GOES.

* With the kind courtesy of the author, from 'Let Us The People Sing'.

I had SAID nothing—and he said,
 "The chips fall tails, the chips fall heads.
 The Rose that blows, false and true knows—
 For it blooms from its own death-bed."

I thought I was right; I know I was wrong:
 I left him and took my way along
 The street where all live and none belong.
 And now I ever hear his song:

Indeed it is very funny—
 One always was what one would be
 Only Love IS, and by its kiss
 One comes to Truth's eternity.

"The Unstruck Music of Meher Baba": Compiled by Mrs. Maud Kennedy. This is a year book of permanent value (not for 1966 only) designed specially for busy people who would like to read a paragraph each day of the most beautiful and significant sayings of our Compassionate Father, Meher Baba. Price: Sh. 21/-. Copies can be had from Mrs. Maud Kennedy, Purcell Cottage, Heyford, Oxford, U. K.

BABA PUBLICATION RECEIVED:

An Introductory Sketch on the Life and Work of Avatar Meher Baba: This is a beautiful brochure by Sri A. C. S. Chari, Calcutta, and is very useful and valuable to all the devotees. As it gives a brief sketch on the life and work of Beloved Baba, it serves most admirably to induce the reader rather than introduce him to a deeper study of Baba literature and ultimately helps him to contact the living Avatar of the age. **Copies can be had from Author & Publisher, Sri A. C. S. Chari, Advocate, Komala Vilas 73, Rashbehari Avenue, Calcutta - 26**

NEWS FROM GURUPRASAD

(from one of the Mandali)

10th June, 1966

Dearest Family,

It is over nine weeks now since Guruprasad awoke from its long winter sleep to the dawn of Baba's presence; and in a few weeks' time when Baba leaves Poona, it will curl up to sleep again until His return next year. Our stay here this summer has been a quiet one, in utter contrast to that of last year when Guruprasad was constantly humming with swarms of happy darshanners from far and near, and the massive May gathering of Baba's eastern lovers. But if the great influx of last year spoke resonantly of the love of His many lovers, their very absence this year is more eloquent—for it is in obedience to the Beloved's wish that none should visit Him except those whom He specifically calls for His work. It is said that love is silent but not dumb—and surely, obedience is the tongue with which it speaks! The other morning, while listening to some verses composed by Francis, Baba was in the mood to dictate a message in verse. Rapidly His fingers spelt out:

HE WHO SEEKS MY PLEASURE
FINDS THE DIVINE TREASURE,

Among the very few whom beloved Baba was pleased to call for a visit was Maharani Shantadevi of Baroda, hostess to the Highest of the High during His stay in Poona. She maintains Guruprasad the year round, solely for Baba's three months' visit each summer. Every time when Baba tells her how happy He is at Guruprasad, He is saying how happy He is with her love for Him—and that is all dear Shantadevi asks for. Visits granted to a few of His other lovers, men and women, were as short as they were rare, lasting perhaps no more than a few seconds as measured by the clock. It was therefore quite surprising when

one afternoon Baba called a meeting of His workers from the Avatar Meher Baba Poona Centre. Seated before Him, they discussed the progress and problems of their efforts to spread the Beloved's message to more and more people in and around Poona. More surprising for us was to see Baba looking so lively and radiant during the longish session—listening to them, encouraging them, admonishing them, counselling them. At a time like this it is as though the infinite tiredness we witness in His dear God-eyes is put aside and our hearts are warmed with the 'fire' of former days when His physical health served as a sturdier companion in bearing the strain of His universal burden. Missing from this meeting was one of His finest workers, Bapusahib Shinde, who died last December, after a period of acute illness and suffering. Big and dependable, Bapusahib was a pillar of the Avatar Meher Baba Poona Centre, and a brother to all in need. He owned two Footwear stores, one of which served as the very first Baba-Centre in Poona many years ago, where weekly meetings were regularly held. There was a tremendous attendance at his funeral, and all footwear shops in Poona closed down for a day in his honour. The message that Baba sent to all His Centres, was: "Bapusahib Shinde has come to Me to rest in Me eternally. One of my dearest lovers and workers Bapusahib served Me wholeheartedly and shared in my suffering." But I'm sure Bapusahib could have wished for no dearer tribute to his love and service for his beloved Master than Baba's words to the mandali: "I have lost Bapusahib Shinde, but he has found Me."

More than anything else, the absence of the Bombay Baba-group that flocked to Poona every summer for a long stay (filling all available hotel space within walking distance of Guruprasad so as "to be nearer to Baba even if we are not permitted to visit Him") reminds us how strict His seclusion is this year. And there is the viewpoint of the hotel-wallas too! One of them was heard to remark "Yearly we have two good seasons in Poona. One is Meher Baba season when we cater to the many followers of Meher Baba; the other is the racing season after June. This year we shall be missing our first season". Perhaps the Beloved has in store another Baba-

season as glorious as the one of November- 1962, for all the hearts that wait on tiptoe for His call, sometime, somewhere, after 1967.

This year the Birthday-season for His lovers everywhere was a rich and rewarding one indeed! If every place where beloved Baba's Birthday was celebrated—every city, town, village—were pinpointed with a light, the map of India would be as a starry sky. "Meher Pukar", the Hindi Baba-magazine, devoted three pages to listing the names of places all over India where the 72nd Birthday was observed in a special way—and even then we found that the list was far from complete! From reports and letters received, we had some idea of the immenseness of the Birthday programs held by His lovers this year. My problem is my inability to present it in a comprehensive sketch. Unlike the artist who can depict his subject with a few casual strokes of his brush, I find myself struggling with masses of fascinating detail, and despair at the thought of attempting to put it all on the canvas of a letter! If indeed these celebrations could be illustrated through the medium of a paint brush, the basic pattern would be similar to the previous Birthday programs, but appearing in much bolder relief and covering much more ground. And, running across it would be streaks of brilliant colour to mark the blossoming of a fresh idea, an unexpected achievement, a new opening for the longing of His lovers to carry the pollen of His Love to other hearts.

Take for instance the elocution competition held at the Model High School in Dahanu Road" (a holiday resort in the district of Thana, near Bombay). Each pupil was granted three minutes' time to give a talk on Baba, and the prizes given were lockets and coloured pictures of Baba. The fact that this most unusual proposition received the consent and co-operation of the school authorities, and the keen interest shown by these students of different religions in learning about Baba, speaks much for the love of the Baba-family who launched the project. Mr. K. A. Zaiwala, his wife and children. Another inspiration of theirs made it possible for cinema-goers to receive the Beloved's Birthday message. Every evening, for a week, slides

giving Baba's Message in English and in Gujarati were flashed on the screen of Chandra Talkies in Dahanu Road. An elocution competition for school children was also held at the Baba-Centre in Alamuru (Andhra State), arranged by His lovers during the Children's Meet. Attended by over 500 children, the competition was divided between the senior and junior classes, and embraced three subjects: Recitation of the Parvardigar Prayer; Talk on Baba; Songs on Baba. Many children from schools in and around Alamuru, coached in the subjects by their teachers, entered this unique competition and proudly carried off the prizes of books by and about Baba! All who participated went home with a photo of the Beloved.*

To cite another instance, picture the furore caused at Jhansi (in northern India) when Pukar, the 'giant' in appearance and spirit, went into action and was completely bowled over by the results. Only recently settled at Jhansi, he was nevertheless determined to have a big Birthday function there, and rounding up the few Baba-lovers set out on his campaign a month ahead of time. Going from street to street, often from house to house, into the market places and the maze of by-lanes and back alleys, he boomed out the message "God is here on earth. The Avatar is amongst us. Cleanse your hearts. Be ready to receive Him. Scrub your homes, white-wash the walls, decorate your door-sills. The Avatar's Birthday is on 25th February—be ready, be ready." As it turned out it was Pukar & Co. who were not ready for Baba's answer to their plea! On the Day, at the big grounds where the Birthday function was planned, they expected some hundreds to attend; hoped perhaps for a few hundred more. They were totally unprepared for the avalanche of men and woman who came in their thousands, along with their children, to hear Avatar Meher Baba's message. It well-nigh caused a stampede amidst that mass of humanity, and dismay in the hearts of Baba's men. The arrangements were pitifully inadequate to control and

* The school curriculum for 180 schools as planned by the Patherdi Baba-lovers (mentioned in my last letter) was carried off with a success as tremendous as the project itself!

direct such a colossal crowd, the lone mike failed at the crucial moment, and the thunder of Pukar's voice was lost in the storm about him. Then the inspiration came. Calling on Baba for help, Pukar jumped on to a chair on the dais, and rotating on it with arms held aloft he invited silence and order in the Name of the Avatar. The response to this mute gesture was incredible. In no time all were seated, the mike was working, the program began and went vigorously on into the early hours of the dawn! It was yet another revelation of Baba's presence whenever He is remembered whole-heartedly.

But not everywhere and by everyone can such a sweeping approach be made and carried off with success. However, there are as many ways to transmit His message to others as there are His lovers who have the will to do so. The spiritual soil and clime of every country are not equally favourable, and the fields that are snow-bound take longer to thaw to the sun of His Love. It warmed our hearts therefore, to perceive the first bright ray of conscious awakening in the continent of Africa. A Baba-lover in Uganda, T.S. Chowdhary, tells us that Baba's 72nd Birthday celebrated at his home (in Gulu, Uganda) was attended by 440 people—Europeans, Africans, and Asians of various religions (Sikh, Muslim, Hindu). He writes: "The aim of this celebration was that the name of Beloved Baba be made known to the people of this town." The swing of his aim appears to have carried beyond the immediate target, since an article on the Birthday was published in the 'Uganda Argus', a leading newspaper of that country. We gather that the program lasted for nearly two hours, included songs sung in praise of Beloved Baba, and the Parvardigar Prayer. Charts with sayings of Baba were put up, books on and by Baba were displayed. Mr. Chowdhary reports that just as they were about to recite the Prayer of Repentance "there was a sudden shower of grace," which caused some panic among the congregation seated in the Compound under the open sky. While reading this we were carried back into the delightful and nostalgic memory of the torrential shower of grace that poured from the skies during the East-West gathering in 1952, in presence of the Beloved, immediately after the recitation of the Parvardigar Prayer by Dr. Harry Kenmore.

On the 25th, flashes of the Birthday programs were broadcast by All India Radio from a number of stations—Delhi, Nagpur, Baroda, Jabalpur, Bhopal, Raipur and others. The longest broadcast was that of the Dehra-Dun programme, relayed from Lucknow station for half an hour! In many parts of India the celebrations were carried thru for 72 days, some planning it so that the 25th of February marked the 72nd day, some starting from the 25th to continue till 7th May. The variegated facets of these public Baba-programs had scope enough for different temperaments—the gay, the solemn, the artistic, the spontaneous. Catching up in popularity with Kavvali and Bhajans is the 'mushaira'—a meeting of poets who compose and recite verses in Urdu, woven round the theme line proposed for the occasion. A predominant motif of Birthday programs in the West is the showing of Baba-films—a most vibrant and moving form of being in His presence and 'sahavas'. Story-telling, ballad-singing, play-enacting, dance-dramas, all based on the life and work of Avatar Meher Baba, form an enchanting and integral part of the Birthday observance, specially in the state of Andhra. Another characteristic feature of that state is the magnificent Baba-processions conducted thru the streets, with a large (often life-size) picture of the Beloved enthroned on an elaborately adorned vehicle. The vehicle might be an ornate temple chariot, a country bullock-cart, a motor lorry, a horse buggy, a cycle rickshaw, just a white horse, or an elephant. (Or, it might be a tractor, as was used by His lovers of Malkipuram to carry His message from village to village on the 15th, covering fourteen villages before nightfall. So massive were the daily celebrations held by His lovers in Masulipatnam, that it was not so much like having a 72 days' program for His 72nd Birthday as celebrating His Birthday seventy-two times! Clothing and feeding the needy in Baba's Name, a gesture symbolic of the Compassionate Father's love for the poor, is observed every year by most Baba-Centres. Feeding the poor had a deeper significance this year in view of India's acute food shortage. One smallish place (in Andhra) intending to feed 500 poor people for which Baba-lovers contributed their share of rice, ended up by feeding three times as many! The report from this Meher Centre, Bheemunipatnam,

says ".....more lovers sent more rice, so that it added another 100 Kgs. (over 200 lbs.). Hence in all 1,500 people, including children, were fed by the Beloved."

The intellectual need of the knowledge-hungry was met thru the medium of Baba books and booklets printed and distributed by His lovers in the West and in the East. A. C. S. Chari of Calcutta has been remarkably active in this field. The Birthday booklet (in English) printed and published by him this year, entitled "The Uttering of The One Word", gives a dynamic dissertation on Baba's Silence by the Hon. Mr. Justice Mukharji, senior-most Judge of Calcutta's High Court. Justice Mukharji's understanding of his subject, as well as his logical and lucid style of presentation, has made his article as appealing as it is outstanding. Brother Chari has done full justice to it by sending out numerous copies of the booklet to Baba-groups all over India and abroad, and the clamour for more has already pushed a reprint under way. As Chari informs us, a fair portion of the first edition went out in individual copies to the nation's leaders and to dignitaries and newspapers all over the country.

If every other place was so diligently occupied in giving out His message of Love, Meherazad was kept no less busy in receiving for Him the manifold messages of Love that came in cables, telegrams and birthday cards from His lovers all over the world. These bedecked the Beloved's breakfast table on 25th morning, along with flowers from the garden, a big cake in the shape of a clock with its sugary hands pointing to the hour of 5, and the one lighted candle. For the Best Day of the year we were dressed in our best; the house was dressed up in flower garlands hung across every doorway, and gay 'chalk' patterns drawn before every entrance. But apart from all the many Birthday gladnesses observed en famille, the really festive air that Meherazad wore was due entirely to the inspiration and labour of the Meherazad staff—the driver, the garden-boys, kitchen-boys, Kaka's boy, and mail-boys (who carry our mail back & forth from Ahmednagar). Pooling ideas, contributions and every spare moment of their time,

they were seen to be making endless rows of paper decorations and flowers to cover the place with. With the use of the car battery they rigged up electricity to light up Baba's picture in the Hall and to work the loudspeaker equipment brought over from Pimpalgaon village along with a gramophone. And so it was that on the morning of 25th, right after we had called out AVATAR MEHER BABA KI JAI in unison at the stroke of 5, Baba's Arti was heard all over Meherazad—and just about all over the village for that matter! After the Arti, ghazal records were played over the loudspeaker, so that while Baba was having breakfast He was regaled with songs from His favourite singer, the queen of ghazals, Begum Akhtar. The pride of the Staff's achievement was the Main Hall, whose entire ceiling was covered with a gorgeous canopy of 'jasmine flowers', lights, and other artistic ornamentation. As Baba went over to the Hall to be with the mandali, the pink of His coat seemed to reflect the glow of His smile, and the many-coloured buntings fluttering overhead seemed to whisper: Happy Birthday Beloved Baba, Happy Birthday to You.

For several days Meherazad had the look of a country girl set ready for a party at Buckingham Palace. And yet, just before the 25th when a couple from Hyderabad paid an unexpected visit, they were much surprised and puzzled to find it all so 'quiet and simple'! They told the mandali "We came because we thought that if the Birthday programs going on everywhere are so grand, how much more so it must be at the 'source' where Beloved Baba is residing!" Eruch replied: "Although Baba is residing at Meherazad He is actually with all His lovers, presiding at His programs wherever they are held; that is why Baba sent them the message 'I shall be present among you all who gather in my Love'. Therefore you should hurry back to your home town, so as not to miss being in His presence"!

The next great occasion for Baba's family, eastern and western, is exactly a month away. Leaving Poona on 1st July, we shall be observing the 10th of July at Meherazad as usual. The Beloved's instructions to His lovers for the observance of the 41st anniversary of His Silence will be sent out by Adi

(Continued on 43 Page)

AVATAR MEHER BABA

BY DOROTHY LEVY, U. S. A.

Avatar Meher Baba—our Compassionate Father is here on
earth again,
To help His children overcome their ignorance—and rise above—
Temptation, lust and greed—showering us with His Love.
These are the earthly sins—
That rob us of His companionship—and Love to win.

He has not come just for the few
But for all creation—if only all knew—
It is not to gratify the body with earthly pleasure—
But spiritual awakening—knowledge the treasure.

The Master has said, "My peace unto you I give" ...
Having come into His Divine presence—is first to live.
Good deeds reap their own harvest—
The language of the heart He understands,
Oneness, is brotherhood in all languages and lands.

God is, Life, Love, Truth, Intelligence, Principle, Spirit and soul—
It is only by Baba's Grace—can we become pure and whole—
For He, the Avatar has come again to help us grow—and know,
He suffers for our ignorance, because He Loves us so.

Art and Perfection

BY DANA FIELD, U.S.A.

(Continued from May 1966, Issue)

Speaking of the Avataric Theory, Shankaracharya says: "The highest Lord may, when he please, assume a bodily shape formed of Maya, in order to gratify his devout worshippers." And regarding God as Creator of the Universe, he says:

"On the vast canvas of the Self, the picture of the manifold worlds is painted by the Self itself, and that supreme self itself seeing but itself, enjoys great delight. This esthetic experience is attainable by those who can enter profound contemplation (DHYANA)."

The God-Man's Art is Sahaj, "effortless oneness," Baba says. It is spontaneous gracefulness, strength, knowledge, etc. They are manifested by Him without pre-meditation. Baba calls this 'Sahaj Dhyana'. It is His Lila or Divine Game.

Discussing the work of the God-Man, Baba says:

"In His universal work, the God-Man has infinite adaptability. He is not attached to any one method of helping others; He does not follow rules or precedents but is a law to Himself. He can rise to any occasion and play any necessary role without being bound by it. A spiritual aspirant cannot act as one who has attained perfection, since the Perfect One is inimitable, but the Perfect One can, for the benefit of others, act as an aspirant. One who has passed the highest academic examination, can write alphabets for teaching children, but children cannot do what he can do. For showing others the

way to divinity, the God-Man may play the role of a devotee of God; He may play the role of a Bhakta so that others may know the way.* He is not bound to any particular role, and can adjust His technique to the needs of those who seek His guidance. Whatever He does is for the good of others; for Him, there is nothing more to obtain."

("God to Man and Man to God," p. 44-45)

Baba has explained that whereas Sadgurus, who are men become God, act out their human role perfectly, the Avatar, who is God become man, actually becomes human in whatever role he plays. He once said:

"When I washed the feet of the seven poor, and bowed down to them, I did it with all My heart. I did not merely play the part of one who bows down and gives gifts: I became THAT. What did you see that day? This bowing down is due to Perfect Ones, according to Hindu custom, also the giving of gifts. I became by My act, the devotee and disciple of seven Perfect Ones. I placed My head on their feet and gave gifts. I am everything, but I became all this, and honesty demands that what I am, I must express."

("The Awakener," Vol. II, No. 3, p. 59)

Speaking of the highest perfection, which is the state of Sadgurus and Avatars, Baba says:

"All excellences are latent in spiritual perfection. Krishna was spiritually perfect. He was also perfect in everything. Possessed of perfection, it was not necessary for Him to exhibit it. The spiritually perfect can exhibit supreme excellence in any mode of life which they may be required to adopt for the spiritual upliftment of others, but they do not attempt to show themselves to be perfect in that respect. Excellence is used by them only when there is a spiritual need for it, not merely to satisfy curiosity, and only with utter detachment."

('God to Man and Man to God', p. 217)

* "Great Masters have taught us to think and act in all humility. Nanakji who was God Personified, acted as Nanakdas (servant)."

—BABA

("The Awakener ", Vol. I, No 2, p. 9)

We see, therefore, why Baba is not for those who seek fame and fortune through performance of miracles; which is motivated by selfishness and not out of selfless service. It involves in further illusion the miracle-monger and those who follow him.

Briefly, Baba tells us why love is the source of all creativity.

"Love is the reflection of God's unity in the world of duality. It is the significance of creation. If love were excluded from life, all souls in the world assume externality to each other, and their only possible relations and contacts would be superficial and mechanical. It is because of love that the contacts and relations between individual souls become significant; and it is love which gives meaning to every happening in the world of duality. But the love that gives meaning to the world of duality is a standing challenge to it. As love gathers strength, it generates creative restlessness and becomes the spiritual dynamic which ultimately succeeds in restoring to consciousness the original unity of being." (Ibid., p. 250)

Baba always connects art and everything else with the ultimate Goal of Life, and with love as the best means of attaining it.

Discussing the conditions of happiness, Baba strikes a social note. Meditation and austerities help to bring about the state of detachment, but something else is needed for happiness:

"When a man is desireless, he not only eliminates the suffering he causes to others, but much of his own suffering. But mere desirelessness does not yield positive happiness, though it protects from self-created suffering and goes a long way towards making happiness possible. True happiness begins when a man learns the art of right adjustment to other persons; and right adjustment involves self-forgetfulness and love." (Ibid, p. 257)

Baba's father came from Persia. The Persians have always been a very artistic people. They are particularly fond of music; spiritual songs and music, as well as dances, are often a part of Baba's programme, private and public. Once Baba remarked:

"I feel very happy to hear music. It reminds Me of the first Song that was sung ages ago, and that Song produced this phenomena called the Universe. God will make Me soon break My Silence, and that first original Song will be sung again, and the world will realize that God alone is real and that everyone of us is eternally one with God."

("The Awakener," Vol. V, No. 4, p. 36)

Baba's favorites are the 'Quawali' songs, which are about great lovers of God, like the Masts and their love for God. They can think of nothing but the Divine Beloved, but when their pangs of separation becomes unbearable, they would like to practise "forgetfulness" about God but cannot. "I now want to forget You; but the more I try the more I remember You," says one song.

("The Awakener," Vol II, No. 3, p. 44)

Now and then, usually in answer to a request for an explanation, Baba reveals the meaning of what He does, although during the New Life, when Baba played the role of a devotee of God, He told His disciples after touching His forehead to their feet:

"Don't try to understand the 'why and wherefore' of My work. Do as I say. When I touch your feet, try to imagine yourselves to be just stones."

("The Awakener", Vol. I, No. 2, p. 24)

When asked about the effect of Baba's Silence on humanity, Baba said:

"Universal Mind and Infinite Consciousness have infinite ways of working universally. So whichever work one of Infinite Mind and Universal Consciousness does, it reverberates throughout the universe and produces reflex action. If He fasts, the result of (His) fasting is felt by the whole universe spiritually. A Master's working is always for the spiritual end. If He observes silence, the same result is brought about.

"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 the lepers a wash, the effect will be that those of subnormal consciousness and lepers will either get cured or their future births will be greatly minimized."

("The Awakener," Vol. 6, No. 3, p. 31-32)

In His discourse "The Dynamics of Spiritual Advancement," Baba shows the need for the construction of a provisional and 'working' ego which will be entirely subservient to the Master. This 'artificial ego' retains enthusiasm with the pride and other faults of the personal ego. Eventually, through the Master's invincible ways, which have no parallel in the ways of the world, the goal of final surrender of separate ego-life is completely achieved.....the final union in which the aspirant becomes one with the Master. Baba says:

"The ego which is entirely subservient to the Master, is not only indispensable and spiritually harmless, but contributes directly to the spiritual advancement of the aspirant, because it brings him closer and closer to the Master, through the life of selfless service and love. The constant inward contact with the Master which it fosters (i.e., through identification, repetition of his name, thinking of him with love, imaging him, following his instructions, studying his teachings, etc.), makes him particularly amenable to the special help which the Master alone can give. The aspirant who

renounces the life of an uncurbed and separative ego in favour of a life of self-surrender to the Master, is, through this new subservient ego, operating as an instrument in the hands of the Master. It is, in reality, the Master who is working through him. And, just as an instrument has a tendency to go wrong while in use, the seeker is also likely to get out of order when working in the world. From time to time, the instrument has to be cleansed, overhauled, repaired and set right. In the same way, the aspirant who, during his work, may have developed new perversities, entanglements and shelters for the personal ego, has to be put into working order, so that he can go ahead in his spiritual sojourn."

(*'Awakener'* Vol. III, No. 4, p. 5-6)

Here Baba speaks, not metaphorically but literally, as every disciple of Baba can testify. Without the disciple's being aware of it, it is Baba who does all through him, incredible as it may seem. Thus also Baba is responsible for all the disciple does. All he needs to do is to 'make a real effort to surrender himself to the divine will of the Master.' The provisional ego can do this, i.e., get itself out of the way of the Master's will.

To the group of Western disciples who came to live at Baba's Ashram in Nasik in 1936, Baba gave a keynote discourse on how to live with and for Baba:

"Divinity is not devoid of humanity. The infinite embraces all expressions of life. Spirituality does not mean renunciation of worldly activities. It means internal renunciation of mundane desires.

"Mere asceticism does not lead to spirituality. Perfection cannot be perfection, if it shrinks from the dual expressions of nature and tries to escape from entanglements. It must assert its dominion over all illusion, however attractive and however powerful. A Perfect Being functions with complete detachment in the midst of the most intense activity, being at the same time in contact with all forms of life.

"Divinity includes all that is beautiful and gracious. How, therefore, could you expect a Perfect Being not to have a sense of humor?"

"Each one of you has to help in My work according to your individual capacity, and be in touch with Me as the Infinite Being.

"You will have to experience both the comforts of Nasik and the discomforts of Rahuri and Meherabad, and be detached from each. Don't worry and don't hurry!"

("The Awakener," Vol. 7, No. 4, P. 18)

Baba, being the first known Avatar to live in a scientific era, has shown great interest and has utilized some aspects of it... His followers possess hundreds of His photographs and there are many films taken of Baba. Baba's early concern and vision about the wonderful possibilities of films for the spiritual cause brought Him to Hollywood on several occasions. In 1932, while a guest at "Pickfair House", Baba gave an important message of orientation for the film industry to a select gathering. We quote in part:

"I do not need to tell you, who are engaged in the production and distribution of moving pictures, what a power you hold in your hands; nor do I doubt that you are fully alive to the responsibility which the wielding of that power involves.

"He who stimulates the imagination of the masses can move them in any direction he chooses, and there is no more powerful instrument for stimulating their imagination than the moving pictures. People go to the theatre to be entertained. If the play is strong, they come away transformed. They surrender their hearts and minds to the author, producer, director, stars, and they follow the example which they see portrayed before their eyes more than they themselves realize.

"Both the press and the radio influence thought, but both lack the power of visible example, which is the greatest stimulant to action and which the moving pictures offer better now than any other medium."

Baba told them that the then current depression had to do with the need of awakening man to his true nature. Baba continued:

"He (man) must see that all material expression depends upon and flows from spiritual being. Then he will be steadfast and serene under all circumstances.... Now how can the moving pictures help man to attain to this realization? The character of the pictures exhibited need not be changed. Love, romance, adventure are fundamental things. They should be portrayed as thrillingly, as entertainingly, as inspiringly, as possible. The wider the appeal the better.

"What needs to be changed is the emphasis or stress. For example, courage is a great virtue, but it may if misapplied, become a vice. So it is with love, the mainspring of our lives, which may lead to the heights of Realization or to the depths of despair. No better example can be given of the two polarities of love and their effects than that of Mary Magdalen, before, and after meeting Jesus....

"To lead men and women to the heights of Realization, we must help them to overcome fear and greed, anger and passion. These are the result of looking upon the self as a limited, separate, physical entity, having a definite physical beginning and definite physical end, with interests apart from the rest of life, and needing preservation and protection. The Self, in fact, is a limitless, indivisible, spiritual essence, eternal in its nature and infinite in its resources. The greatest romance possible in life is to discover this Eternal Reality in the midst of infinite change. Once one has experienced this, one sees oneself in everything that lives, one recognizes all of life as his life, everybody's interest as his own. The fear of death, the desire

for self-preservation, the urge to accumulate substance, the conflict of interests, the anger of thwarted desires, are gone. One is no longer bound by the habits of the past, no longer swayed by the hopes of the future. One lives in and enjoys each present moment to the full. There is no greater romance in life than this adventure in Realization. There is no better medium to portray it than the moving pictures.

"Plays which inspire those who see them to greater understanding, truer feeling, better lives, need not necessarily have anything to do with so-called religion. Creed, ritual, dogma, the conventional ideas of heaven and hell and sin, are perversions of the truth and confuse and bewilder, rather than clarifying and inspiring. Real spirituality is best portrayed in stories of pure love, of selfless service, of truth realized and applied to the most humble circumstances of our daily lives, raying out into manifold expression, through home and business, school and college, studio and laboratory—evoking everywhere the highest joy, the purest love, the greatest power—producing everywhere a constant symphony of bliss.

"This is the highest practicality. To portray such circumstances on the screen will make people realize that the spiritual life is something to be lived, not talked about, and that it—and it alone—will produce the peace and love and harmony which we seek to establish as the constant rule of our lives."

("Messages," pp. 97-101)

Baba's conception of spirituality is not complicated, He says, "it is simple." One needs common sense, honesty and self-control, because human nature tends to go to extremes and excesses, especially under conditions of crisis and tensions such as characterize our times. We cannot eat our cake and have it, i.e., we cannot indulge our instincts, emotions and appetites and still remain spiritually-minded. As Baba says, "Wants are not needs."

The God-Man, the greatest Playwright, Producer, Director and Actor of all time, is competent to appraise the work and value of the film industry. Baba often has great artists come to perform before Him, not for money nor fame, but only for His love, His grace, His blessing. The humility and wholeheartedness with which they do this is touching. As Baba puts it, "Only that which is done from the heart is useful." Baba uses their talent for His universal work.

Because of the importance of the subject as it effects all mankind, we are sorely tempted to quote from another, more recent message by Baba, titled "The Spiritual Potential of the Film-World." Here, Baba's challenge is more explicit and direct.

"There are specific claims and privileges as well as specific duties and potentialities that no actor can afford to ignore. An actor who may be technically faultless in his part, is yet trivial and worthless if he tries to evade his inherent spiritual potential. The film-world cannot escape its obligations to the larger world on which it makes so substantial an impression, and these obligations demand that its spiritual potential take precedence over the desire to make money. The script-writers, the producers and the actors should realize their spiritual potential instead of looking at their art as merely or mainly a business. The more vividly they realize this, the more dignified and satisfactory will the result of their efforts be, and their inner account with themselves will be vastly gratifying, even though the same might not be said of their account in the bank. If the film-world cannot or will not give the greatest importance to this spiritual potential, it is a failure.

"The ordinary man, whose urgent need is to relax from the stress of life, to lessen the sense of insecurity and try to fill the emptiness within (for which greed and war are mostly responsible), turns instinctively to the fleeting diversion of entertainment—and the

film-world affords this to a great extent. The film-world, therefore, which still has one of the greatest scopes for influencing the lives of myriads, should ask itself whether it is utilizing its spiritual potential to the full so that man may be helped in his search for Truth, or merely pandering to his pleasure in the false; whether it is encouraging and inspiring youth to face the responsibilities of the world of tomorrow, or retarding youth's inner growth with an overdose of sex and crime films; and whether it is striving after wealth and fame at the cost of man's inherent thirst for the spiritual and uplifting.

"The correct solution of every problem can come only from indivisible Truth. There can be no fictitious cleavage in the unity of life by magnifying the often fallacious distinctions between theory and practice, the artificial and the natural, the real and the false. The emphasis of every aspect of the One Indivisible Life must be on the underlying unity, and not on apparent difference—and this applies with as much force to those in the film-world as to those in the outer world.

"The great initiator of the Truth of your being is Divine Love—Love that burns the limiting self, that disarms all fears, that rises above temptations, that is deaf to the voices of lust and jealousy, that expresses the infinite spiritual potential. Those in the film-world have also to play their part unreservedly in the divine game of life, aspiring to the highest within them; then only can they find real beauty, and then only can they fully express it.

"The spiritual potential of those in the film-world, though in no way different from that of those outside it, must often be differently expressed. You can, even as an actor, experience and express divinity. In the world of the motion picture and by its means you can learn and you can teach. But, if you do not find

love or happiness, truth or fulfilment in yourself, you cannot truly impart them to your audience. You cannot inspire, unless you are yourself inspired; nor can you awaken love in insensitive souls without yourself being pierced by it.

"The actor has to realize that real and living beauty is made manifest only by discovering and releasing the spiritual potential within himself. Artifice can, no doubt, do much to heighten the fresh and radiant beauty that is natural to youth. But this is artifice, and not art, and such transient beauty is poles apart from real beauty. Without vision your art will be shallow; do not therefore hesitate to glean that vision from the great Ones. This will give you a living inspiration, bringing fulfilment in your life.

"So My message to the film-world is: Do not play to the gallery or the salary, but play also to the Infinite within. Live in the presence of God, even while acting your part, so that you can be true to yourself, to your partners and employers, and to the larger and one Indivisible Life of which you are each an inseparable part. If the world is a stage, God is the only producer, and you can never be anything but a trivial actor if you are not in unison with Him."

("The Awakener," Vol. 6, No. 1, p. 3-5)

As part of their Ashram life with Baba, His disciples are sometimes asked to do something impromptu, entertain Baba by dancing, impersonation, singing, playing a game, etc. Sometimes Baba Himself shows how it should be done. If one says he or she can't, then Baba might counter with: "What! You say you love Me, and when I ask you to dance, you say you can't."

Ordinary self-consciousness is a protective device of the ego, and to do something we are not prepared for, in public, is a good way to overcome it. When Meherabad Ashram was disbanded during Baba's New Life, some of the women

mandali were able to apply for work in Bombay, thanks to the training they got while there—typing, short-hand, etc.

Baba points out the importance of differentiating between the real and the false in one's spiritual progress. The awakening of occult powers is often a concomitant of spiritual unfoldment and their use can be a sidetracking from the true path. Baba says:

"The new elements often play an important part in helping or hindering the emancipation of consciousness, and the aspirant has to understand the value that belongs to occult experiences such as unusual and significant dreams, visions, glimpses of the subtle world, and astral journeys, and to learn to distinguish realities from hallucinations and delusions."

("God to Man and Man to God," p. 154)

Masters sometimes grant occult experiences to encourage a disciple, but the craving for them is due to the ego. They are gifts of the Masters, and give an insight into the subtle world. Baba says:

"...the aspirant makes real progress by putting into practice the best intuitions of his heart not by the passive acceptance of occult experiences."

(Ibid, p, 158)

For the spiritual novice it is good to realize that his personal contact with the Master "does not yield its significance except in the context of the inner planes," (Ibid, p. 159)

Baba says. Hence his receptivity to the Master's love and advice when having His Darshan is the condition for getting the most benefit from this contact. But the help of the Master is not limited to personal contact, for He can reach the disciple through the inner planes wherever he is.

"By infinite ways, the Master draws the aspirant into His own being, so that He may get disentangled from the mazes of the universe and come to desire God."

(Ibid, p. 162)

For it is the Master's mission to reveal God through inner sight and experience, i.e., to give the fullest possible realization of God.

Baba distinguishes between occultism as a science and as an art. He says:

"Occultism is a branch of knowledge concerned with the study of the universe and human personality, and in this respect there is no difference in principle between occultism and other sciences also concerned with the study of these subjects. The difference arises because other sciences are concerned with such aspects as are directly or indirectly accessible to ordinary observation. The development of occult knowledge is conditioned by the unfoldment of the latent and hidden powers of the human spirit

"Occultism as a science may be considered to be more or less on the same footing as other sciences, but occultism as an art stands by itself. Even the spread of purely theoretical information about occult facts may be attended with mischief, since it may arouse curiosity and stimulate the desire for acquiring control over unknown forces for selfish ends. There is nothing spiritual about occult power as such. Like any other earthly powers or scientific inventions, it is capable of being used for good or bad ends. It gives immense scope for cooperative work on the higher planes, but this necessarily implies spiritual preparedness for special responsibility....

"Occultism as an art derives its justification from its use for spiritual purposes, any diversion of occult

power from this end is a misuse. Its function is in securing the purification of the human heart.

"As an art occultism is relevant and necessary to those who are about to unfold their latent psychic powers or who are already possessed of psychic powers but are not fully alive to the material world owing to the withdrawal of their consciousness to the higher planes. They have to be spoken to in a language they can understand. Many advanced aspirants develop occult powers, but are often as much in need of spiritual help as ordinary humanity. Since they are in possession of occult powers they can be helped by the Masters irrespective of distance. When the Master's help can be consciously received on the higher planes it becomes more fruitful than the help given through the physical medium...

"No occult phenomena have any intrinsic value in themselves, for the value that seems to belong to phenomena—occult or non-occult—is either illusory or relative. Illusory values arise when anything acquires importance because it stimulates or promises to fulfil desires and the purposes born of ignorance. If the thing is taken out of the context of these desires it is immediately deprived of the meaning with which it seemed to be surcharged. Relative values arise when a thing acquires importance because it serves the realization or the expression of the Truth. The importance of such things is derived from their being the essential conditions of the game of divine life, and though it is relative it is real and not illusory.

"Most persons consciously or unconsciously attach undue importance to occult phenomena and mistake them for spirituality. For them, miracles and spirit-phenomena are of absorbing interest and this is taken to be an indication of interest in the true life of the spirit. But, there is a very clear distinction between occultism and mysticism, spiritualism and spirituality, and

any failure to grasp this difference leads to confusion.

"All miracles belong to the phenomenal world, which is the world of shadows. As phenomena they are subject to change, and nothing that changes has lasting value. Realization of the Eternal Truth is initiation into the unchangeable Being, which is the supreme Reality; and no acquaintance with the occult world or capacity to manipulate its forces is equivalent to the realization of the Truth. The occult phenomena are as much within the domain of false imagination as any other phenomena of the material world. The one important thing is to realize the Divine Life and to help others to realize it by manifesting it in everyday life. To penetrate into the essence of all being and to release the fragrance of that inner attainment for the sake of the guidance and benefit of others by expressing in the world of forms, truth, love, purity and beauty alone has intrinsic worth. No other happenings, incidents or attainments have importance."

(*God to Man and Man to God*, P. 164-169)

As a rule, Baba prefers to take His disciples under a veil, giving occult knowledge and experience only as incentive and only when the disciple is ready. Mani, Baba's sister, who is undoubtedly an advanced soul, says she rarely has occult experiences but that when Baba was brought after the 1956 'Accident', the young man who brought Baba appeared with angelic wings. It was the intuition of the medieval artists to depict Christ at His birth and crucifixion as surrounded by angelic beings.

Anthropology tells us that man's religion arose from the instinct of self-preservation, which led him, through fear, to human sacrifice and other cruel practices to propitiate the supposedly angry Gods—exactly the opposite of true religion,

which demands self-sacrifice, psychologically and socially, with the thought of a loving God. The spirit of self-seeking is often brought to the mystical search for Truth by aspirants who have not been able to shake off this age-old attitude of the race. In one of His sayings, Baba warns us that "We cannot witness even the threshold of the divine path until we have conquered greed, anger and lust." ("Sayings," P. 16)

Baba has said that these root-instincts go back to man's animal heritage; they are the result of red sanskaras. So, along with man's artistic creations, expressing devotion to God—in the form of mosques, temples, cathedrals and the plastic arts as well as religious songs, and poetry,—he has that darker side of his nature which only the Masters and the Avatar can help him overcome.

In His illuminating discourse, "The Religion of life," Baba describes mankind as vacillating between darkness and light, hope and fear, search for God and fleeing from Him when He appears as the God-Man. He prays for light but resists in the practice. In the words of Baba:

"Afraid of the flooding forces of Light, which his own prayers have released, man seeks to perpetuate his ego-life, by embracing self-delusion (or "ego-life") and by clinging to word rather than meaning, to form rather than spirit."

"Man cannot permanently escape his own Divine Self and must inevitably yield to the life-giving Truth, which finally overtakes him, not in the form of a skillfully woven structure of dry and intellectual tenets, but in the form of an Incarnation or Living Manifestation. It then becomes an irresistible and emancipatory power, challenging the false, without compromise, and releasing the limitless Divine Life of Love and Understanding. Man can be dislodged from the sandy

land of empty words only when he voluntarily and wholeheartedly surrenders himself to a Perfect Spiritual Master, who in his example brings to him the Religion of Life. The Religion of Life is not fettered by mechanically repeated formulae of the unenlightened, purblind intellect. It is dynamically energized by the assimilation of Truth, grasped through lucid and unerring intuition, which never falters and never fails, because it has emerged out of the fusion of head and heart, intellect and love.

"The Master is important and indispensable in spiritual life, not only because he shows the Path, but also because he takes the disciple to the goal. Because of his unity with the One Divine Self, which is in all selves, the Master becomes the Divine Beloved for the disciple. The Master as Truth represents the highest Self of the disciple and therefore has supreme and unquestionable claim to the undivided loyalty and unqualified surrender from the disciple. It is only when the disciple dedicates his entire life to the Master, with complete and unswerving faith, that he can fully benefit from the unfailing and abundant life-current which flows to him from the Master.

"Those who desire to invite upon themselves the psychic transformation that brings them in tune with the Infinite, should, after satisfying themselves about the spiritual perfection of their Master, unhesitatingly and unreservedly surrender themselves to him. The complete transformation effected by the contact with the Master has a very instructive parallel in the metamorphosis in the life of insects. Just as the caterpillar goes through the transitional encased stage of chrysalis before it becomes a full-fledged butterfly, the aspirant has to go through the transitional stage of self surrender to the Master, before he is spiritually reborn in the image of the Master and becomes Truth-conscious.

"When a man becomes a serious aspirant for God-realization, his entire mind is thrown in utter confusion by the new and irresistible impulsion to unchain itself and be initiated into the undivided and boundless life of true values. While attempting to overthrow the burden of the false and restricting ego, the mind needs the direction and help of the Master. The process would be higgledy-piggledy and chaotic unless it is under the controlling guidance of the Master, who knows the ins and outs of the Path. The consciousness of the disciple with all its darkness and limitations, may be compared to the undeveloped state of a bird in the egg. During the period of incubation, the mother-bird has to sit on the egg and hatch it with the warmth provided by its wings, before the bird attains to full development and comes out in unrestricted freedom. In the same way, the disciple has to receive from the Master all his loving protection and direction before he can become spiritually perfect and inherit the complete emancipation of God-realization.

"But the Path to the summit of Truth is not strewn with roses. Deep-rooted attachments, in all their uncanny forms, must be courageously and ruthlessly plucked out, so that the crystal purity of the heart may reflect the unutterable sweetness of Divine Life. Selfishness in thought, emotion and action must be completely driven out so that there may be an unretarded release of unimpeachable Divine Love. Not by seeking individual happiness or safety, but by again and again offering one's life in the service of others is it possible to rise to the unsurpassed completeness of realized Truth. God is not to be sought by running away from life but by establishing unity with the One in the many. Purity, love and service are the watchwords of spiritual life.

"The vision of life which I bring can never allow anyone to remain engaged in the limiting life of the narrow self with its myriad desires. The false separa-

tive ego has to be annihilated and the individual soul has to realize consciously its original and inviolable unity with God or the Oversoul. Only through the complete dispersion of separative ignorance is it possible to come into one's own divinity. Thus and thus only shall the soul get established in the unfading and boundless bliss of the undivided Life in Eternity. Thus and thus only shall the soul open itself to the immeasurable Divine Love of Truth-consciousness, unobscured by attachment, unretarded by fear and unrestricted by the changing shadows of illusory duality."

We go to school to learn the three R's and to develop such talents as we may possess. Similarly it takes time and effort, even with the best of training, to learn a trade or profession. Baba wisely suggests that we seek out a Perfect Master for our spiritual development, so that there be no question of regression or ego-involvement. Baba says:

"The relationship between the disciple and the Master is utterly different from legal relations which create rights and liabilities through verbal transactions or formal agreements. Discipleship is one of the fundamental features which characterize the life of the advanced aspirant, and it does not come into existence through any artificial procedure. IT ARISES OUT OF THE BASIC LAWS OF SPIRITUAL LIFE..... It is primarily a relation between the lover and his Divine Beloved: and it is from the spiritual point of view the most important relationship into which a person can enter. The love which constitutes the core of discipleship stands by itself among the different types of love which obtain in ordinary social relations. Mundane love is an interplay between two centres of God-unconscious; but THE LOVE IMPLIED IN DISCIPLESHIP IS THE LOVE OF GOD-UNCONSCIOUS FOR GOD GOD-CONSCIOUS."

("Discourses," Vol. II, pp. 50-51)

In answer to a question as to "Why is it necessary to have the aid of a Perfect Master in order to attain to Perfection?" Baba replied:

"Only a Perfect Master, who is the veritable incarnation of Divinity, can awaken in the individual the fire of Divine Love, which consumes in its flames the lesser desires of the body, mind and world, all of which must be completely relinquished before Perfection can be realized."

("Questions and Answers", p. 20)

Baba's conception of Perfection is something special. It is the Life of God on earth, whereas generally the body is dropped upon Realization. In discussing the subject of Perfection, Baba reveals its beauty and balance:

"THE SPIRIT MUST AND EVER WILL HAVE AN INVIOABLE PRIMACY OVER MATTER, but the primacy is expressed not by avoiding or rejecting matter, but by using it as an adequate vehicle for the expressions of the spirit.

"THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT DOES NOT CONSIST IN TURNING AWAY FROM THE WORLDLY SPHERES OF EXISTENCE, BUT IT CONSISTS IN RECLAIMING THEM FOR THE DIVINE PURPOSE, WHICH IS TO BRING LOVE, PEACE, HAPPINESS, BEAUTY AND SPIRITUAL PERFECTION WITHIN THE REACH OF EVERYONE. THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT IS TO BE FOUND IN COMPREHENSIVENESS WHICH IS FREE FROM CLINGING, AND APPRECIATION WHICH IS FREE FROM ENTANGLEMENT.

If there is lack of happiness or beauty or goodness in those by whom the Master is surrounded, these very things become for him the opportunity to shower his Divine Love on them, and to redeem them from the state of material or spiritual poverty. So his everyday responses to his worldly environment become expressions of dynamic and creative divinity which spreads itself and spiritualises everything on which he puts his mind."

('Gems,' p. 15-16)

It will be very rewarding for those interested in reading further about Perfection in Baba's literature not only the art of arts but also the science of sciences—especially 'GOD SPEAKS'.

One of Baba's qualities is Sahaj, spontaneity and naturalness. It is due to His Dhyana or Infinite Knowledge. The spontaneity of the best artist is a lesser perfection. Baba's idea of perfection is the proper use of Maya.....not to be dominated by it but to master it, to have control, poise and balance at all times. Maya is illusion and the principle of ignorance (Avidya) but it is based on universal law, and cannot be neglected with impunity. Maya is not a hindrance to the spiritual aspirant if he uses it as an opportunity, as a training, for perfection.

To a disciple attached to his diet, Baba said, 'Eat well.' This meant not only not too much and not too little but also the proper food at the proper times, and not to 'meditate' and worry about it. To get away from the attachment and the old habits one may have to go to temporary extremes, but Baba wants balance and non-attachment, 'mental renunciation' rather than austerities. 'Do everything, but don't be attached to it. Put your mind to it and forget it.' Only thus is it possible to enjoy inner and outer freedom while living a normal life in the world.

Baba says of Maya:

"The body is but the outer covering of your soul. It is Maya that makes you identify yourself with the body and which makes you forgetful of your eternal, indivisible, resplendent Divinity."

"A human being comprises Godhead plus Maya. When man liberates himself from the chains of Maya completely, he is sure to realize his original pure Godhead."

"The chief props and agents of Maya are KAMA, KRODH AND LOBH (lust, anger and greed). Unless and

until you subjugate them, it is impossible for you to enter upon the path that leads to union with God "

"Maya signifies ignorance. It is Maya that drives man to think of the universe and its charm as realities."

"If worldly desire and anger take hold your mind, then no matter how much you may practice tapa-japa (austerity and asceticism) and meditation, you are still entangled in the toils of Maya. Maya is the source of all worries, anxieties and troubles.

"Just as darkness becomes invisible in sunlight, so to those who are in the darkness of Maya, God, who is present in all places and at all times, is still invisible. As soon as the clouds of sanskaras* pass away, we begin to see the Sun of God in His pristine glory.

"All those who experience the gross world as real are asleep. Only those who experience it as unreal can realize God and become awakened.

"In order to enter upon the divine path it is necessary to purify the mind, to abstain entirely from carnal pleasures or sense enjoyments, and to love truth. He is a real aspirant who escapes the snares of Maya, speaks the truth, holds by the truth, and seeks truth only."

("Sayings" pp. 26-28)

The ideal of Confucius was Excellence but he did not speak either with the Authority or elegance of Baba. His "Sky" (T'ien) is probably not equal to God nor did he speak of love for God. No wonder that 2,500 years after Confucius China is further from God than ever.

* Sanskaras are impressions on the mental body of actions, desires, tendencies & thoughts bound up with our egoism; they may good or bad, important or unimportant.

Mo Ti, who followed Confucius, did supply the idea of love for God, and an awakening followed for a time, but it failed because it was not combined with, or applied to spiritual understanding, via a spiritual philosophy.

Well, at this end of a Cycle of Cycles, even the Chinese stand a good chance to turn to God, though slowly. Baba said: "Baba is in the Chinese too!"

THE WAY

BY MAUD KENNEDY, U. K.

The fact that we are thinking can be
more important than the facts which
we are thinking about or discovering.
Thinking implies seeking.
Seeking implies finding.
Finding implies loving (we love what we find)
Loving implies acting in a new way.
Action implies suffering.
Ideas put into action (Karma) bring us
into conflict with the world; we become
bound to follow them through.
Suffering implies evolving (growth).
Evolving implies finding the way towards the Light.
The Way implies reaching the source of All—the One.

D I V Y A V A N I

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—Editor & Publisher.

(Contd. from Page 16)

circular to Easterners. And, it is reproduced here for you each of His dear Westerners. (Please note that no one is permitted to communicate here in regard to it – Baba's wishes are clear, and it is for those who love Him to carry them out).

ATTENTION

"On the 10th of July 1966, the 41st anniversary of His Silence, Avatar Meher Baba wishes all who love and obey Him and all who would want to do so, to observe complete silence for 24 hours beginning from midnight of the 9th of July to midnight of the 10th of July in accordance with local time.

Baba wants all His lovers to know that the forty-first Anniversary of His Silence is a very important event And as such all His lovers should observe complete Silence for twentyfour hours on this occasion.

Avatar Meher Baba has given the following message for the 41st anniversary of His Silence:

God's first Word was 'Who am I'.
God's last Word is 'I am God'.
And the Word that I the God-Man
will utter soon will be the
sound of My Infinite Silence.

Avatar Meher Baba sends His Love and Blessing to each of His lovers."

My Beloved Meher Baba

BY A. S. HUSSAIN

My heart sings with joy,
As I think of Thee,
Like a baby clasping to its mother,
I yearn for Thee.
Much have I traversed,
The pierce agonies of Life,
Shower upon me Thy Compassion Great,
To set my Soul Free.

One may ask a question: why should we have Meher Baba at all? But I may ask a counter-question: Why do we require food. And the answer is in affirmative. Because it is our necessity. And to live without it is a psychological absurdity. All our possible human relationships manifest themselves in our urgent necessities of one sort or the other. Similarly, to keep us spiritually fit and alive there is needed the mediation of one who is highly spiritualised and a truth-realized being. And such is Meher Baba, who, by His captivating simplicity, and high mission, has won universal recognition. To a casual observer, at the first glance, He must appear as deceptive. But this is not so. There is some magic—some dancing divinity in His two gleaming eyes. There is something remarkable about this personality.

Every one of us longs for happiness in this world—happiness which is materialistic and hence ephemeral. But Meher Baba's grace is to cleanse our hearts from sinful impurities. It ennobles and transports one to the blissful regions of perfect happiness—happiness which is ever-lasting. For long have we

wandered in the thorny mazes of this shadowy world and blind-folded are we treading on the beaten tracks of carnality. Should we not, then, merge ourselves in the personality of one who has come "not to preach us, but to awaken us," and who is helpful in removing the thick veil of ignorance that has clouded our intellect by manifold desires and ambitions?

To earn money, to maintain family is the hum-drum business of every earthly being. But after all, why do we so devoutly cling to it? Everything in this world is transitory and perishable. It is immutable that a transitory object can never give us perfect happiness, for all enjoyments are painful in the end. Why should we not crave for that which is eternal substance? And for this the guidance of a Sadguru (Perfect Master) is necessary. For true spiritual discipline the aspirant has to seek the shelter of a Sadguru. But, unfortunately, in our trying times there is a great dearth of really selfless and experienced spiritual guides. There is a mushroom growth of the hypocrites who are immoral, covetous and fortune-hunters. Their very assertion of a true devotee is symptomatic of gross evils. Their silver-tongued oration is never the test of their genuineness. And here is Meher Baba who has gone into seclusion for the peace of the world. What He stands for, is a case unparalleled in the history of human civilization. There is a soul-enthraling beauty in Him. He never gives an undue publicity to His spiritual practices,—He never makes a false display of them. And there is absolutely no harm in following the instructions of this selfless divine being who does not covet money on any account; whose dealings are straight-forward honest and whose precepts are conducive of real good.

We all quarrel in the fair name of religion. But our cry is in the wilderness. That religion which has lost sight of humanity at large is worth the name of a religion. It is nothing beyond a figment of our weak imagination. It is nothing short of a fabricated myth to delude people by its allurements. And I quite agree with Meher Baba when He says that, "All this paraphernalia of the priest-ridden churches is not only superficial but positively misleading." Really speaking, all antiquated traditions, certain unpunctured dogmas, and religious conven-

tions are ungrudgingly gulped down by us. And the result of this is simply horrible.

Churches, mosques and temples are needed in their own way, but certainly, they are not the pass-port for human salvation. A regular visitor of them need not be a God-man; contrariwise, he may be the worst scoundrel on the face of the earth. It is the intrinsic human values that count and not the mere external show. These places are not an end in themselves. What is my conception of religion then? Certainly it is not erroneous religious ties which blur our true spiritual vision. These ostentatious religious conventions, ceremonials and rituals—deceptive as they are... are the treasures of the hoary past when men were not so spiritually enlightened. The only religion that can appeal to a modern mind is that which helps the purification of Soul. And, therefore, Meher Baba is just when He preaches to the world that God which we want to realize is not to be sought away from life but in life. And the only religion that I have got from Him is to introspectively visualise on the sub-conscious screen of my mind the divine glory and fathom out the Omnipotent from the innermost depth of the heart itself.

Meher Baba's attitude towards the inquirer is simply marvellous. One is simply enraptured to notice with what gentleness and delicacy of feeling He responds to the intellectual problems of the inquirer and the divine sparks that emanate from Him are so pure and glorified.

What Baba's mission stands for is not the sectarian dogmas but the Universal Truth. His aim is at a synthesis of the warring creeds. So His preachings are not hackneyed, out-worn formulae but something which believe in a living understanding among the people. He extends His helping hand to all—irrespective of caste, colour, creed, sex and age—who are earnestly after Truth. And He has said, **"If the aspirant loves and tries to understand the Master, he attains the Goal very rapidly."**

Baba never attaches importance to miracles. Curiously enough, we never admit a man's spirituality unless he bears the effigy of a large string of miracles. For a Perfect Master like

Meher Baba, the miracles are of lesser significance, though He has exhibited them many a time. It is His own self that breathes divinity is enough to captivate one: To put in the words of Meher Baba: EVEN IF WE SUPPOSE THAT A PERSON IS INTELLECTUALLY CONVINCED ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF GOD BY MEANS OF MIRACLES OR SOME SUCH OBJECTIVE DATA, THIS WILL NOT NECESSARILY RELEASE HIS HEART..... THE ALLEGIANCE WHICH HE MIGHT PERHAPS GIVE TO GOD AS A RESULT OF SUCH COLD REVELATION WILL BE EITHER THROUGH FEAR OR THROUGH THE SENSE OF DUTY." Undoubtedly, the intellectual search after miracles may stamp the superiority of the supermost but this is not the right channel for realising God. God, according to Meher Baba, has to be known through love and in our factual knowledge about God, *we* should not be predominated by fear. Reverence to God out of fear is no true seeking. For spirituality does not merely consist in intellectual knowledge but in their realization. Baba's concern is not with the body but with the soul.

To me it appears that Baba is Messiah of the age. For messiahism means salvation. And Baba's attempt is to save us from earthly sufferings and to awaken from our intellectual stupor. His is a supreme Voice that reigns in my heart for it has untied my mind with such earthly limitations. For this Universe is only a gigantic system of intricate maze in which all roads ultimately end at the grave. He is an enchanting benefactor of mine; for He has fully convinced me that the world is entangled only in the juggler-like feats of the grossest materialism where we all grope and fail.

Let those who have studied this Man from different angles of visions find out for themselves His true worth that His mission transcends not only human nature but the entire world.

NEWS IN BRIEF

AVATAR MEHER BABA BILASPUR CENTRE:

At Bilaspur (M. P.), a special meeting was arranged on 1st May '66 under the presidentship of Sri S. P. Chatterji, Chief Personnel Officer, S. E. Rly (Calcutta). Sardar Amar Singh Saigal, M. P., Dr. G. S. N. Moorthy and Dr. C. D. Deshmukh were the main speakers on the occasion. During the course of the presidential speech, Sri S. P. Chatterji said that Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa referred to three types of doctors, one of which forces the medicine down the throat of the patient, for his good and then compared Sri Saigal with this type of doctor. He added further: "...I am so glad that he (meaning Saigal) almost dragged me to Meher Baba—the Avatar which has been a great experience to me. I am convinced about His divinity..."

Speaking about the advent of the Avatar and His mission, Dr. C. D. Deshmukh said: "Beloved Avatar Meher Baba's ways of helping the world are beyond comprehension... It is wrong to assume that the idea of the Avatar is present only in Hinduism. The idea of the Advent is there in religious consciousness itself and appears in all world religions... We have been waiting for God to come. World needs not mere teaching but new uplift and new life-impulse, today more than ever. And God has not failed us. But we must have the simplicity and the courage to receive His Truth and Love and realise Baba's central gospel that all life is divine and one beyond man-made distinctions." In the end, while referring to his meeting with the late Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Sastri, before his departure for Tashkent and presentation of Baba's books by him, Dr. Deshmukh expressed his conviction that Baba's unchallengeable Truth of the inviolable unity of all Life will be the beacon light for the whole world. Dr. G. S. N. Moorthy, in his inspiring speech said that the Silence of Baba takes one to real spiritual understanding, which is beyond words.

And Sardar Saigal stressed on the necessity to pool together our energies to emphasize the Avatarhood and the universal teachings of our beloved Meher Baba in the entire world. At the end of the speeches, at the request of Smt. Zaibunnisa Ali Maqfi, Sardar Saigal conducted the Meher Baba 'Mushahira' (recitation of poem), in which poets from the adjoining places also participated.

DRUG (M.P.): On 2nd May, 1966, before a huge gathering in a specially erected pandal, Sri Sethi, Central Dy. Minister for Iron & Steel, inaugurated a new Baba Centre at Drug. Sri Shankar Rao, a Railway Contractor presided on the occasion. Sri Sethi while presenting a framed coloured photo of Meher Baba for the new Centre, expressed his profound thanks to Sardar Saigal for bringing him into Baba's contact through His literature. While Dr. Deshmukh spoke on Baba's Love, Sardar Saigal explained the significance of His unique Silence to the large audience. Smt. Zaibunnisa Ali, while paying high tributes to Baba's divinity and His Avatarhood in her speech and also 'gazals' said that God has to be realised in man alone, who has the highest place in the entire creation. Sri Hem Naraiu Singh, Mech. Engineer and Secretary of the Avatar Meher Baba Centre Railway Colony, Bilaspur not only attended the function, but also contributed towards its success.

ALIGARH: At the instance of Baba-lovers in Aligarh, Sardar Amar Singh Saigal, M.P., Sri W. D. Kain and Sri T. N. Dar, specially arrived from Delhi on 23rd April 1966 and addressed a number of meetings at different places. On 24th morning, a meeting was arranged at the Satsang Bhavan of Sanatana Dharma Sabha under the chairmanship of Sardar Saigal. Sri W. D. Kain spoke on the life and teachings of Avatar Meher Baba and made it clear that the quickest way to realize God was to love Baba whole-heartedly and surrender to Him completely without any reservation. Sri T. N. Dar, quoting Shankaracharya and also from Gita said that mind was the greatest hurdle and as it was too difficult to control the mind through renunciation and penance, the easiest way is to recognise and love Baba as God in human form.

The next meeting was held at Swami Rama Tirtha Ashram Vedanata Bhavan, where Pandit Bhu Dev Sharma introduced the speakers. Sri Saigal, while speaking on the dynamic Silence of Meher Baba, narrated briefly the meeting of Pt. Gopinath Mahamahopadhyaya of Benares with Baba on a day, when the former was also observing silence. After this memorable meeting in silence with Baba, Pt. Gopinath said that the language of Silence is supreme and added, "Baba is the Highest of the High." Sri W. D. Kain made an appeal that all real seekers who wish to escape the shadow of illusion should turn towards God who is right in our midst in the form of Meher Baba. Sri T. N. Dar gave a graphic account of how he first came into Baba's contact, his wonderful dream which ultimately led him to see Baba, to know Baba, to understand Him and love Him more than anything else in the world. The venue of the next meeting was the Brahmin Higher Secondary School, and was attended by the teaching staff, members of the managing committee, students and several others. Sri Kain, Sri Saigal and Sri Dar addressed the meeting on various aspects of Baba's life and His teachings.

Under the auspices of the Theosophical Society, a special meeting was held at the residence of Dr. Chand Behari Lal. Sri W. D. Kain spoke on the teachings of Baba with special reference to Universal Brotherhood. Sardar Saigal and Sri Dar also addressed the meeting, which lasted for more than two hours.

AGRA: Sardar Amar Singh Saigal, M. P., Sri W. D. Kain and Sri R. L. Kapur visited Agra and delivered a series of lectures on the life and teachings of Avatar Meher Baba. The programmes were arranged by Sri M. M. Aggarwal, an old and ardent devotee of Meher Baba. On the 9th April, in the morning a meeting was arranged in the Gita Mandir, Paliwal Park, under the chairmanship of Sri S. N. Gupta, Vice-president of the Gita Mandir. Sardar Saigal spoke on the Great Silence, while Sri Kain spoke on the Avatarhood of Meher Baba. Sri Kain narrated a beautiful anecdote as to how the search of a devotee for Lord Krishna for a number of years resulted in the 'darshan' of Lord Meher Baba. The same day, at 4-30 p.m., a Press

Conference was convened at the residence of Sri Gopal Narain Shiromani, where Correspondents of Times of India, Statesman, Hindustan Times, Hindustan samachar Agency, local and State press were present along with several eminent writers and poets. After an introductory Speech by Sri Saigal, questions from the Press Representatives were answered by Sri W. D. Kain. Later Sri Kain gave a talk about his experiences in Baba's contact to a group of ladies gathered there. In the evening another meeting was held at The Satsang Bhavan Bijli Cotton Mills, presided over by Sardar Saigal. Sri B. N. Khandelwal introduced the speakers and Saigalji to the large audience, which was more than 1,500. The hall and the big courtyard were all full and there was hardly any space left. It was just a spontaneous response, apparently an inner urge that had brought so many people—rich and poor, old and young, men and women, the elite and the laity, etc., all gathered to know about the Avatar of the age. Sri Kain spoke at length on Baba's life and Sri T. N. Dar spoke on Baba's message of Love and Truth. In the end, Sri Saigal made an appeal that all and everyone irrespective of religion, caste, creed or sex should endeavour to profit by His holy presence, His Darshan and study of His divine works.

On 10th April, a meeting was convened at Vedanta Mandir and was presided over by Sardar Amar Singh Saigal. Sri Kain emphasising on the aspect of Love, said that Divine Love alone could save humanity and Baba had come to awaken that love in man. He reiterated that all people could love Baba without in the least, endangering or jeopardising their religious convictions. Sri T. N. Dar also spoke on the occasion. In the end, or Sri Saigal requested the audience to accept the declaration that Baba is the AVATAR, as so many people had seen Krishna, or Guru Nanak or Christ in Baba. He declared his firm conviction that the Avatar has come and that He is Meher Baba.

AVATAR MEHER BABA LUCKNOW CENTRE: At Lucknow, a film show about beloved Baba's visit to U.S.A. in 1956 and 1958 was arranged on 22nd May 1966 by the local Centre of Sri Ramakrishna Mission in their own public hall. Since the films were silent, the opportunity was availed to let the audi-

ence know about Baba's life and His mission for about an hour and a half, during the show.

AVATAR MEHER BABA CHITTOOR CENTRE:

It is a unique privilege of this Centre to have a very active, tenacious and selfless leader in Sri M. B. G. Sastri, Executive Engineer, Zilla Parishad. It was a brilliant and daring idea of this Centre to celebrate Sri Ramanavami, which fell on 31st March '66 in a fitting manner as the birthday of Baba in His previous Avataric form as Sri Ramachandra. On receipt of intimation, Bro, Eruch wrote to Sri M. B. G. Sastri as follows:

"The leaflets of programme on 31-3-1966 were received by me and were presented to Beloved Baba. He was happy to find the right understanding of His lovers in Chittoor about His Avatarhood. He was Rama, He was Krishna, and He was the same one of the past Avataric advents and He is the Avatar. Meher Baba now..."

On 31st March, the celebrations commenced with Prayer, Sankirtan, etc. in the morning. Poor feeding was also arranged on the occasion. About 500 persons including 80 lepers enjoyed the feast, amidst loud cheers of Avatar Meher Baba ki Jai. The entire expenses were borne by Sri B. V. Neerajakshulu Naidu, Village Munsiff of Cheelapalli. In the evening, a public meeting was arranged at the Centre premises, when Prof. G. S. N. Acharya, Principal, Govt. Arts College presided. Sri V. V. R. Aswathama and Sri V. Sathyanarayana, a close disciple of late Sri Jagadguru Chandrasekhara Bharati of Sringeri Sarada Peetham, were among the main speakers. Being a staunch believer in Impersonal God, Sri V. Sathyanarayana was very diffident in the beginning. But strange are the ways of Baba, as they have always been and Sri Sathyanarayana actually spoke on Baba, with great emphasis, on His Avatarhood, drawing parallels and quoting from Vedas and Upanishads.

In the course of Sri Ramanavami Celebrations organised by the residents of A.R. Police Top Line, the Centre's Bhajan Mandali availed the opportunity on 6th April, and rendered several songs on Baba for more than 2 hours and thus introduced beloved

Baba's name and message to several hundreds of persons gathered there. Similarly Baba lovers were invited by the organisers of the local Rama Bhajan Mandali to join the celebrations on 16th April. The Centre Bhajan Mandali conducted Baba Sankirtan for nearly two hours in the presence of Beloved Baba whose portrait was kept in the 'Garbha Griha' of Sri Rama Temple. Sri M. B. G. Sastri and others explained the advent of the Avatar of the age and the need to hold onto His daaman.

The 3rd 'Masa Sivarathri Sammelan' of the Chittoor Centre on 19th April was celebrated at Cheelapalli village, about 14 miles from Chittoor, and was arranged by Sri. B. V. Neerajakshulu Naidu. This synchronised with the opening of the newly constructed Rama Bhajan Mandir in the village. Sri M. B. G. Sastri and other devotees from Chittoor participated in the function. A procession with Baba's portrait was taken out along the streets of the village, when, nearly 86 families offered flowers, etc. and performed Arti in the traditional style. It was a strange experience to witness the spontaneous love and devotion of almost all the families in the village, though it was for the first time they have come to hear of Baba. After the procession, Baba's portrait was seated right in the centre of the newly constructed Rama Bhajan Mandir and Baba Sankirtan was performed for nearly two hours. Later, Sri P. Srinivasulu Naidu, President of the Chittoor Panchayat Samithi spoke on Baba's Avatarhood. Sri Sastri, Sri M. Narasimha Rao and others also spoke on the occasion. The function was so impressive and touched the hearts of the people that after the programme, several persons from the neighbouring villages came forward and requested to conduct similar meetings in their villages and enable the people there, to know about Baba and His Avataric mission.

At the invitation of Sri Ramapuri Swami of Sivananda Ashram in Venganapalli, the Chittoor Centre Bhajan Mandali participated in the Sankarajayanti Celebrations in the Ashram on 25th April, presided over by Sri Nityanandagjri Swami. Sri V. R. Aswathama, an ardent Baba devotee, introduced Baba to the learned audience and explained the Seven Realities in his eloquent speech. After stressing on Baba's Avatarhood,

he said that love alone would lead a person to God-realization. A portrait of Beloved Baba presented to the Ashram by Sri M. B. G. Sastri was prominently kept alongside the Sivalinga in the temple by Sri Rampuri Swar.

AVATAR MEHER BABA VISHAKHAPATNAM CENTRE: With a view to propagate Beloved Baba's message of Love and Truth, the Centre arranged 'Burrakatha' (ballad) on Baba's life and His mission by Sri B. Bhaskara Raju and party at ten different places in Vishakhapatnam and Srikakulam Districts from 15th to 25th May '66. This is the third time that such programmes have been arranged to cover the two districts. Twice before, lecture programmes by Sri B. V. S. Patrudu and Sardar Amar Singh Saigal were organised on behalf of the Centre. The 'Burrakatha' programmes were tremendously successful at all the places, as thousands had heard with great interest and devotion, about the Avatar of the age.

AVATAR MEHER BABA CHALLAPALLI CENTRE: The Centre organised the first Poornima Sammelan on 5th April, at Kodali, five miles from Challapalli, at the residence of Sri Tummala Seshadri. After bhajans and prayers, Sri Bh. V. Ramana Rao explained to the audience about Baba's life and His messages.

On 10th April, the Workers Union of Challapalli Sugars Ltd., Lakshmipuram arranged a function to unveil the portrait of Beloved Baba in their premises. A large number of devotees attended the function.

PIPPARA (A. P.): During the 3rd week of April, the Samithi Conference was held at Pippara, under the presidentship of Sri T. S. Kutumba Sastri. More than 70 delegates from different places are reported to have attended the meeting. There was a very lively symposium and review of work done in Baba's Cause. Many prominent Baba lovers participated in the deliberations.

SRIKAKULAM: At Srikakulam in the course of Sri Ramana-vami celebrations organised by Sri Surampalli Brahma-

jee, a new feature was introduced this year. On 30th March itself, at the commencement of the celebrations, a big size portrait of Beloved Baba was unveiled in the Rama Mandiram at the hands of Sri R. L. Narasimham Dora, Ex-speaker Andhra Legislative Assembly. Later a procession with Baba's portrait along with the idols of Sir Rama was also taken out. On 5th April, Sri Brahmajee, arranged Poornima Sammelan at the same place. Sri V. V. L. N. Prasad Rao, Sri Parama Sivananda Saraswati wami and other prominent devotees spoke on Baba and His messages. It may be mentioned here that Sri Brahmajee is a prominent businessman and a very ardent devotee of Sri Rama, who now finds Sri Rama in Baba.

KOVVUR: At Kovvur, Sri Ala Sathiraju, a prominent Baba lover celebrated the marriage of his grand-son Ramalakshmana Rao with Ramalakshmi in the presence of Beloved Baba in Mehersthan on 2nd June '66 in a unique way, without the observance of usual rites. Bro. Eruch writes in his letter to Sri Sathiraju: "It is very heartening to note that you do not wish to have the formalities of rites and rituals for the wedding. This is sure to please Beloved Baba..." Beloved Baba sent His Love blessings to the couple on the occasion. Greetings were also received from many prominent persons including the Chief Minister Sri K. Brahmananda Reddi,

HYDERABAD AND SECUNDERABAD: In the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad, Beloved Baba's 72nd birth day anniversary was celebrated under the auspices of 'The Meher Vihar Trust' for 71 days, commencing on 25th Feb '66. The 1st day (25th Feb '66) and the last day (7th May '66) functions were held at 'Meher Vihar' and on other days, the functions were held at ten different places, seven days at each place, on 23rd and 24th Feb '66. However special functions held by the Ladies centres to celebrate Baba's birthday. Besides the usual day long programme, more than 1,000 poor persons were served with food on 25th Feb '66. During all the meetings, at different places, Swami Satya Prakash Udaseen, Dr. H. P. Bharucha, Sri M. Butchilingappa Sastri, Sri N. Bhimasankaram, Sri Sista Subba Rao, Sri M. S. Koteswaran and Sri Chaganti Subba Rao, Sri B. Bapirauj,

Sri R. S. Prakasha Rao were the main speakers. Sri N. Suryanarayana, Sri R. B. Rao and other devotees rendered devotional songs during the celebrations.

For the last day, Beloved Baba in His infinite compassion gave special permission to Bro. Adi K. Irani to grace the occasion and preside over the function, and also to inaugurate the "Building Fund & Printing works Special Donation" Scheme of the Meher Vihar Trust. Many prominent devotees from Masulipatam, Vijayawada etc. participated in the celebrations. On 7th May, 1966, in the morning, there was a Baba-lovers' gathering at 'Meher Vihar' under the presidency of Bro. Adi K. Irani. He gave a very inspiring, most analytical and thought-provoking talk on Baba's Avataric mission, for more than two hours. (We hope to publish a summary of the talk in our next issue) Sardar Amar Singh Saigal, who especially arrived for the function also addressed the gathering. In the evening, the public meeting was held at Y. M. C. A. Hall when Bro. Adi inaugurated the 'Building Fund & Printing Works Special Donation' Scheme. Greetings wishing success of the function and the work undertaken by Swami Satya Prakash Udaseen, were received from many prominent Baba lovers from different parts of the country. Sardar Saigal, Sri M. S. Kotiswaran, Sri T. S. Kutumba Sastri and Sri N. Dharma Rao addressed the gathering. In the end, there was a Baba-film show.

On 8th morning also, Bro. Adi K. Irani addressed a large gathering of Baba lovers at Meher Vihar and in the afternoon, he visited various Baba Centres in the twin cities and left for Ahmednagar the same night in the midst of ever grateful cries of Avatar Meher Baba ki Jai, by the several devotees gathered at the Railway station.

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—Editor & Publisher

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