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April 1972

DIVYA VANI

(DIVINE VOICE)

Editor:

SWAMI SATYA PRAKASH UDASEEN

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DIVYA VANI

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NOTICE

Due to shifting of Place of Publication of "Divya vani" from Rajahmundry, we request our Subscribers to note that there will be no issue for the month of May '72 and that there will be a combined issue in the month of June '72,

—Editor



AVATAR MEHER BABA

AVATAR MEHER BABA MISSION

3-6-417; Post Office Street
Himayatnagar, HYDERABAD-29
(Andhra Pradesh-India)

The NEW VENTURE AND AN APPEAL

Dear Sisters and Brothers ! Jai Baba !!

It is past three years since our Beloved Meher Baba, the Avatar of the Age, dropped His physical body. It was true that everyone of His lovers, near or faraway, has felt the shock and it took a long time for many to come to normality. Perhaps, there are still some who have not recovered from that shock as yet. Beloved Baba has warned us all, many times and more particularly over an year before He left His body, to cling tightly to His daaman, no matter what happened. But we find after the event that many of our hands are empty. Perhaps, it may be that we have lost our grip in this confusion. Many doubts have arisen and many answers were given but none seemed to be convinced. Only a blessed few, might be found free of this turmoil, constantly thinking of Him and following the way of life which He Has lived and the ideals and truth He Has propounded in His life. Earnest attempts are being made to restore courage and faith in our hearts and bring us closer to each other in His Love, so as to create confidence in ourselves and in the public, which alone can pave us the way for future progress in our own lives and in the work we undertake in His Cause.

We are among those who struggled hard to get out of this impasse and also awaited for a long time, for some guidance from those whom we believed to be more experienced and also some efforts were made in all earnestness for some united action and mutual understanding. But time has proved them to be futile and gradually we found that energies are being dissipated and divergent activities were seen shooting up and the horizon is appearing more cloudy and dark. But still, we do find in all this Maya-

ridden thunderstorm, the lightning glow of the hand of our Beloved, guiding us every moment, and showing us the right path. We were sure that our Compassionate Father is ever with us and if we choose to follow Him, He is with us, more near to us than ever before. Though our Beloved has slipped away from the moorings of our eyes into the silent ocean of Eternal Existence, He has more firmly gripped Himself in our hearts, so that we cannot but think of Him constantly, however much we may be drifted away by the winds of time and tide.

In this context, and with complete surrender unto His Will, we have allowed ourselves to be drifted till now, with the current but were fully aware of our duty and we earnestly awaited the opportunity, so as to enable ourselves to have a step further in our way of dedicated service in His Cause, which alone, we believe, will pave us the way for our future progress, granting us His Kindly Light. We therefore, decided to take a new venture and make this appeal to all our brothers and sisters, here in India and abroad, for their good wishes and for lending their helping hand for the Cause which is dear to us all, whatever be our shortcomings and draw-backs in this humble effort of ours.

With the Blessings of .Beloved Baba on the 2nd of August 1971, a public Charitable Trust by name "AVATAR MEHER .BABA MISSION" has been incorporated with Head-Quarters at Hyderabad, (A. P. India) for the main purpose of creating real opportunities for lovers of God to serve humanity without distinction of caste, creed, colour or nationality. At the outset, we propose to undertake to establish as early as possible, an abode for workers by name "Meher Ashram" and an Orphanage by name "AVATAR MEHER BABA SARANALAYA" and also a Residential School for children by name "Meher Gurukulam". Of course, there is more need for hearty co-operation and good will to make this humble effort a success, and we are glad that by Beloved Baba's Grace, every help is forth coming and we hope that our earnest efforts will be blessed with success, for we entirely depend on His lead and dedicate ourselves unto His service in absolute surrender.

We are happy that the inauguration of this new institution —"Avatar Meher Baba Mission" was done by our Revered Brother, Sri K. Brahmmananda Reddy, (Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh) on the 24th .of August, 1971 and on the occasion of the VIII Anniversary of the Meher Vihar Trust, which has been marked for its undaunted and unstinted service in His Cause all these years. We are thankful to all those who were giving us their loving help in every way, for all our efforts to make them a success and are sharing Beloved Baba's Blessings with us. We hope and do humbly request them all of Baba-fold and others who love God and humanity to render us their loving and hearty cooperation for our new venture and help us to make this effort a success . We take this opportunity to inform the public our preliminary estimates for the buildings etc., required for these purposes were about five lakhs of Rupees (about 67 thousand dollars). This amount, we think, is not too big for a few philanthropic rich lovers of God, but we are earnest that even a poor one shall have his share of contribution in this effort of Divine Work and especially, we are sure that every Baba-lover would be too happy to throw his weight and pull out his or her hand to help us in the name of our Beloved Lord of Love, Meher Baba and induce other lovers of God to share this opportunity of associating themselves in a Divine Cause and in the Name of the Avatar of the Age. At this moment we do not propose to press any one for their taking full snare in this work but we do expect the humble contribution of each and every brother and sister in Baba-family to give their best thought for this humble enterprise and decide their first love-contribution to be offered at their earliest so that theirs will be the earliest possible in order of the Great opportunity offered in His Cause, which is dear to every one of us. We indeed feel it our first duty to inform this every lover of Baba-fold and also as many lovers of God and humanity in general, in our contact through out the world and in our own country and in particular of Andhra Pradesh. So we try to give all publicity to our humble

(continued on page – 10)

AN APPEAL TO BABA-LOVERS

by NARIMAN NAVROJI MISTRI, BOMBAY.

Avatar Meher Baba loved and served the lepers. With His own hands He washed their feet and bowed to them, fed them, gave them gifts of money and cloth. He described them as beautiful souls in ugly bodies. By His actions He set an example to the world not to despise these unfortunate beings, nor to show just vain wordy sympathy about their lot and leave them to their fate, but to translate compassion into deeds to ameliorate their pitiful condition.

If lepers tasted the honey of divine love at Baba's hands, should not His lovers follow Him by showering the milk of human kindness on them? Of course, we cannot emulate the personal service Baba rendered, and Baba Himself has warned against it, adding that it was different with Him.

To-day, thanks to modern medicine, leprosy is preventable and curable, and this holds out high hopes to the estimated 15 million cases of leprosy in Africa, India, China and Korea and some of the South American countries. Meher Baba's gesture of love and service was aimed at correcting the social attitude of prejudice and superstition of people towards their long-suffering brethren.

From the reports appearing in Divya Vani we know that some centres do follow Baba in a small way by feeding lepers on certain occasions. But Baba lovers can and should do much more. Therefore, it is suggested that every year a week should be observed by all Baba centres everywhere, simultaneously, on some specified occasion such as Baba's Amar Tithi or Birthday, to collect funds by organising a fete and various other functions. The money collected is to be utilised by the centres either to feed lepers or, preferably, to donate to some already existing-

institutions running clinics of medical treatment for leprosy. In the latter case full co-operation of the institutions concerned may be depended upon, and the help of local social workers will also be forth-coming, if needed.

Baba personally served not only the lepers, the masts, the mad, the un-touchables and the poor and fully lived up to His motto 'Mastery in Servitude.' In no other known previous incarnation has personal service. very often even of a menial nature, been rendered to so many. This is an outstanding feature of Baba's mission of love known to so few outside the circle of His lovers.

The simultaneous observance of an Avatar Meher Baba International Leprosy Amelioration Week is bound to receive wide publicity, and will result in millions of people coming to know about the Avatar and His mission and His life and work. The leading lights of every country will willingly extend their patronage to such an international effort in so good a cause and this will ensure its success. The magnitude of the effort will draw world-attention, and it will prove to be a short-cut to world-wide propaganda for Baba.

The organisational ability of Baba lovers in various countries, especially of the Americans, will need to be utilised to draw up a plan of procedure. At first correspondence between leading centres may be initiated to ascertain views, and then a plan for action may be hammered out, flexible enough to be adapted to local needs and limitations.

This brings up the question of the necessity of an International Organisation, not just for the limited purpose of the suggested Leprosy Week, but for the much more, wider purpose of organised propaganda for Baba's cause. The efforts made by many centres in India and abroad are really praiseworthy. Especially the work done by the youth of America, England and Australia using all the modern media of publicity like television, radio and film, in addition to music, song, dance, drama, phonograph

records, lectures, etc., speaks volumes about the enthusiasm with which they are trying to spread Baba's message and retrieve lost sheep. But all this is just not enough.

High dignitaries like the President of our country, or the Governor of some state etc., believes in Avatar Meher Baba and even lends prestige to functions by presiding over them, but in the almost total absence of publicity how many people come to know about it? What advantage are we taking of the status and influence of these believers to impress and inform the general public that the expected one had become the accepted one even during His life-time, as Baba Himself had predicted? Are any efforts made to spread Baba's message to countries where little is known about Him?

Who should undertake the last-named activity? It is not the work of any particular individual or persons, for Baba has not appointed any, nor of any particular centre or centres, but the responsibility of all Baba-lovers throughout the world. And this calls for establishing an international organisation through the co-operation of lovers in all countries where Baba's message has already penetrated.

The fact, that Baba has not preached a new religion and has even forbidden His lovers to establish one in His name, if effectively publicised, would render the work of propagating His message of love and truth much easier. This fact leaves no room for religious fanaticism to intervene and makes His message readily acceptable by all. Baba came to awaken people to the Truth already expounded in all religions but which is disregarded to-day. His mission is to awaken people to turn to this Truth once again so that a Christian will be a better Christian, a Mohammedan a better Mohammedan and so on. The choice is for people to heed Baba's Call and establish peace on Earth through love and brotherhood of man or rush headlong into the arms of evil through selfish pursuit of happiness at the cost of others, and court disaster and destruction.

However good and laudable the work done by individual centres, it is but limited to their own countries and it will take ages for Baba's message to slowly filter into various countries of the world through His books and efforts of inspired individuals. Baba wanted true devotion to be translated into active work for his cause. It is therefore, imperative for Baba lovers to come together and establish such an organisation for actively spreading His word throughout the world in a missionary spirit. Such an organisation will find support from all peace-loving people and will be the recipient of patronage from high-ups in every country. Our President will perhaps be the first to accord this.

It will utilise all the media of publicity available in each country, help and encourage centres to be established, display Baba's books and books about Baba and have them translated into national and regional languages, display and sell Baba's photos and Baba-magazines, give Baba's books to libraries and photos to religious and cultural institutions as gifts and hold essay and elocution competitions for school and college students in order to catch them young, besides observing the Leprosy Week and other functions.

It will send talented, eloquent speakers from different countries on lecture tours and encourage all Baba writers of note everywhere to contribute articles to newspapers of various countries, for it is a human trait to give more importance to what a foreigner has to say. This service of lecture tours etc., would help even all the existing centres very greatly in their work. Why such Co-operation between centers has not already come to be practised is rather surprising.

Various Indian spiritual missions are working successfully in many countries. This leaves no room for any doubt about the success of the suggested International Organisation with the co-operation of millions of Baba lovers. Baba Himself has already done some spade-work during

His many tours to the West and other countries of the world, and this requires to be followed up. If there is any activity in those countries we do not hear anything about them, excepting Iran once in a while.

Difficulties will arise at first, but tackled with faith and determination they will vanish, and sincere efforts will be crowned with the joy of experiencing Baba's unseen help. The co-operation of all centres will undoubtedly be forthcoming readily and even the poorest among His lovers will be eager to contribute his mite towards establishing an International organisation for beloved Baba's cherished work.

The truly blessed will not falter to come forward to tackle the admittedly immense task, and then their deeds will silently shout Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai !

(Appeal continued from page - 5)

enterprise of ours in the Name of "Avatar Meher Baba Mission."

We therefore propose to have a tour in Andhra now and there after through out our Country to explain in humble way our Divine Cause for which we are dedicated and seek their help in every possible way so that they can extend their helping hand to the possible extent at the outset and thereafter as may be convenient to them. We are sure that, everything will shape itself as He Wishes and our humble services in absolute surrender to Him in Love and Dedication will secure us the whole-hearted cooperation and loving coordination of all.

May Avatar Meher Baba Bless us all and may He bless "Avatar Meher Baba Mission" with success!

Jai ! Avatar Meher Baba ki Jai !!!

Ever in His Love and service,

Hyderabad
25 - 4 - 72

Yours faithfully
Swami Satya Prakash Udaseen
Sole-Trustee.

GLIMPSES

of

The GOD-MAN Meher Baba

Threefold Spiritual Work

1948 — Part I

By BAL NATU

First "Sufi School" In America.

Avatar Meher Baba exceedingly adored the God-intoxicated souls—the *masts*, immensely loved all who came in His contact and was intensely devoted to the service of the poor. In the year 1948, we find a delightful blending of this tripartite phase of His work. The journeys for contacting *masts* stretched from the Himalayas in the North to Madras in the South and from Calcutta in the East to the Girnar in the West. To the poor of Ahmednagar district, after washing and bowing down to the feet of each Meher Baba distributed over 4,000 bundles of food-grain. About this method of contacting the poor, Meher Baba once remarked. "Nothing makes me more happy than opportunities to bow down to God in all these forms." The formal opening of the Baba-House at Meherazad and the new Ashram building at Meherabad took place in 1948. After the middle of the year, every month there were small scale *darshan* programmes at Meherabad. Above all, this year marked the active participation in Shri Baba's great spiritual, work by His lovers—in East and West for about two months, twice for about two weeks each time, the like of which we do not find in the succeeding years.

The beginning of the year significantly marked a short visit to Meherazad of Mrs. Ivy Duce with her daughter Charmian. She had left America by the end of

1947, with the specific intention of meeting Meher Baba in India. From childhood Mrs. Duce had a "religious mind" which was "sorely tried" as she worked with the Red Cross in France during the First World War. Later, she met Ada Martin who was the Murshida of the Sufi school. The Sufi message was first delivered to the West in 1910 by the great mystic and musician Hazrat Inayat Khan of Baroda. He appointed Ada Martin as the Murshida of the Sufi school in America, whom he lovingly renamed as Rabia, The founder, Hazrat Inayat Khan passed away in 1927. So Rabia (Ada) Martin who believed in the spiritual hierarchy was in search of a Qutub, a Perfect Master. She heard of Meher Baba in 1945. Dr. Abdul Ghani Munsiff, one of Meher Baba's intimate disciples, was corresponding with her about Sufism in general and Meher Baba, the Perfect Sufi, in particular. Rabia Martin felt so convinced about Meher Baba's divinity that she expressed her readiness to place the Sufi school, in the States under Meher Baba's guidance. She expected Meher Baba to visit the United States in 1947. But Shri Baba changed the plan and postponed the visit.

Sufi Order Under Meher Baba's Wing.

Dr. Allan Y. Cohen writes*, "Murshida Martin carried out her dedicated work until 1947, when she dropped her body, having appointed Ivy O. Duce as her successor. Murshida Duce was quite aware of the spiritual hierarchy and the necessity of an illumined or perfect leader of the Order. Not experiencing illumination or perfection, she naturally turned to find the Qutub. Of course, before her death, Murshida Martin told Murshida Duce about Meher Baba. Murshida Duce was determined to meet him.

"Murshida Duce first met Meher Baba in late 1947**. Immediately struck with the conviction that Baba was the Qutub, she posed to him the problem of her leading

* Sufism - published by Sufism Reoriented, Inc. (U.S.A.).

** In fact, Mrs. Ivy O. Duce first met Meher Baba at Meherazad in January, 1948.

the Sufi Order in the West which she was loath to do. At that time, Baba told her that this was her destiny, that he confirmed her title and said that he wanted her to continue the Sufi work; that as long as she remained honest, he would do her work for her; that he would protect her students from her making any mistake with them, and that he would protect her from taking on any of their karma. The next day Baba told Murshida Duce, "You have to go home and reestablish this work all over again, and I want it on a safe, sound and stable basis so that it will last 600-700 years." (until Baba comes again).

Reorientation of Sufism.

In due course of time Meher Baba reoriented Sufism. With reference to the "Reorientation", I feel it necessary to give the following quote from Meher Baba, though given as late as 1952. It was at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina (U. S. A.). On June 17, 1952 He dictated the following from His alphabet board,* "Meher Baba is equally connected with Islam and its Sufism, Christianity and its Mysticism, the Orient and its Vedantism, broad Buddhism, practical Zoroastrianism, Jainism and many other such *isms* which all speak the same divine Truth and lead to the same divine Goal. Meher Baba is also detached and above all these divine paths. He has to awaken the followers of these paths to the real meaning of these *isms*, in their true spirit by reorienting these isms, and in this capacity He has reoriented Sufism in the charter, to be universally adopted."

The details of reorientation of Sufism contain instructions regarding the principles, practices and corporate organization of the Order. In November, 1952 Meher Baba sent His document from India which is called "Chartered Guidance from Meher Baba for THE REORIENTATION OF SUFISM as the Highway to the Ultimate Universalized". Sufism Reoriented has verily rendered great service in the cause of disseminating the message of Love and Truth

* Meher Baba and The Sufis - published by Sufism Reoriented, 1290 Sutter Street, San Francisco, California 94189, U. S. A.

of Meher Baba, to the English knowing people by publishing Meher Baba's books like "God Speaks", "Life At Its Best" and a few others.

Thus, in the first fortnight of January 1948 the seed of "Reorientation" was sown by Meher Baba. Mrs. Ivy Duce, during this short stay at Meherazad had the conviction of meeting the Perfect Sufi, God in human form, Meher Baba. She left Ahmednagar on 12th morning in Adi's car for Poona to catch a train for Bombay from where she returned to the States. Meher Baba is indeed, for all, as One in all and all in all. Dr. A. G. Munsiff wrote ".....Meher Babaon all counts, is the spiritual index of the time and if looked at dispassionately is assuredly the common denominator, who can be approached and claimed by all, without loss of prestige—cultural and religious." How true!

A Circular Containing Five Orders.

On 12th January, 1948 a special circular was issued to all Baba-people, wherein Meher Baba stipulated five orders. All the followers of Shri Baba were given a choice of observing any one or more or all the orders for a period of 25 days, provided he or she could do so without jeopardizing household responsibilities, job or business affairs. Shri Baba was very practical and yet very particular in asking His dear ones to follow the instructions. It had been the experience of many a Baba-people that a sincere wish and a suppliant heart had made things favourable whether at home or in the office. Observance of the orders was to commence from 1st February, 1948. The orders to be followed were as follows:

- (1) To take one meal a day and tea only twice.
- (2) To observe silence.
- (3) To feed every day, one new poor person with one's hands.
- (4) To abstain absolutely from any sexual relationship whatsoever.

(5) To meditate one hour each day.

Before 1st February the Baba-adherents were asked to think thoroughly over the circular and then inform Shri Baba about their decision. They were to fill in the slip, the number of order or orders which they wish to observe, and sign it.

The Baba-people in the West received this circular in the last week of January. For want of time, those staying in the U.S.A., England, Switzerland, France and other countries informed their decisions to Meher Baba through cables. In America, on the Eastern side a group of stalwarts in New York was carrying Meher Baba's message to the sincere seekers. On the West coast in California, Malcolm Schloss and Jean Adriel had been instrumental in bringing earnest souls to Shri Baba. The day Malcolm received the circular, he held a meeting. Coincidentally Margaret Craske, one of Meher Baba's dearest disciples arrived by that time in Los Angeles, for a week's stay on a detached service for a Ballet theatre. It was a happy get-together. Malcolm wrote a very promising report about the responses of the Baba-people, attending the meeting. By the way, I may mention that Shri Baba liked to read or hear Malcolm's letters but his handwriting was so peculiar that one of the *mandali* had to go through it patiently and type out the matter for easy reading.

Enquiries about Observing The Orders.

Many expressed their feelings of joy and gratitude at this Baba-sent opportunity. One from the West wrote, "My heart rejoices that during these twenty five days of February, I am to be a part of your great spiritual work. It's a privilege and honour to be included in this spiritual undertaking." Some expressed their heart felt thanks to Shri Baba for the unique participation in the divine discipline, collaborating with the Master in His work, in howsoever a small degree.

There were also some enquiries regarding the meaning contained in the orders. One enquired if tea meant breakfast! Shri Baba conveyed, "Tea means plain tea, that's all!" Some wrote letters to Adi Sr. if Shri Baba would clarify the order about feeding the poor. Shri Baba explained, "You have to feed with your own hands as a mother would feed her own child." Personally I interpreted the order as serving food to the poor with my own hands. One of my friends felt that I was wrong in my interpretation. In the first week of February without my knowledge, he wrote a letter to Adi in connection with this rendering. Adi brought the matter to Shri Baba's notice. Unexpectedly, I received a postcard from Adi Sr. with Shri Baba's following instruction: "..... continue serving food to the poor as you seem to have been doing." In the content of my another letter Adi replied, "Shri Baba is too benign to mind seriously any shortcomings in us provided we are prepared to obey Him implicitly and whole-heartedly. Of course, we must try to get over the weaknesses but on no account should brood over them." To the general rules Shri Baba sometimes had a few individual exceptions. Ruth White from the States wrote "In our place no one is hungry or without food." She sent tins of food—a soy been product reinforced with powdered vegetables and vitamins to be given to the poor in India. Those tins were accepted as that was the only way for Ruth White to observe order No. 3.

"Try Your Best"

The house I stayed in was quite small. I was trying to observe all the five orders including that of silence. So, I preferred to pass most of my time in the closed verandah of my neighbour. Even there a few distant acquaintances dropped in to see me in that 'dumb-state'. It was a test to remain silent but the humour of the situation brought in joy which my heart enjoyed to the full.

One of the boys who had stayed in Meher Ashram at Meherabad during May, 1927 through 1929, wrote to

Shri Baba about his inability to observe any of the orders for the first few days. In those days letters regarding the orders only were brought to Shri Baba's notice. Adi Sr. wrote, "Baba read your letter and felt displeased; you who were connected with Baba since childhood, ought not to have treated the circular so lightly. But now, anyway Baba is glad that you have realised your mistake." Meher Baba's love in a sense, was very personal. Once He accepted any one as His own, the sincerity of the person would please Him and his negligence would displease Him. Did He not often remark, "Try your best and worry not over the results"?

About the order of meditation few devotees asked if they could conveniently divide the hour of meditation in parts. Shri Baba made it clear that it had to be done at a stretch. As for remaining celibate, one of my friends later related to me how sorry he felt for his wife failed to cooperate with him; Poor soul!

First Part of the Tripartite Work.

Meher Baba entered upon His tripartite spiritual work from 18th January the day He started taking one meal a day and twice tea. This He continued till 25th February, 1948. The first part of the work was related to the *mast* contact. Shri Baba had Ali Shah brought to Meherazad from Meherabad. And the silent sittings with this great *mast* continued for ten consecutive days, Ali Shah was a unique fifth-plane *mast*. There was in him an appealing restlessness and poise peculiar to those in love with God. He received Shri Baba's divine presence in the spirit of innocence and it was a benediction in disguise, for his intoxicated and dazed being. He would stop talking as abruptly as he had begun, He did not speak much but he had an unspeakably soft voice, for the sweet glance of God had pierced his heart, through and through. No wonder he has been the 'first' in many of Shri Baba's phases of spiritual working. At Mahabaleshwar, some months ago, standing before Meher Baba, Ali Shah mumbled, "*Bolenge, bolenge,*

lekin kab bolenge malum nahin, (He will speak; He will speak, but when He will speak is not known)." The depth and profundity of Meher Baba's silence was and is beyond the understanding of the saints too. At Meherazad, Shri Baba daily sat with Ali Shah for three hours each day. On 27th January, Shri Baba bathed him and sent him back to Meherabad, the next day.

By this time, a *sanyasi* (mendicant) and a seeker were brought from Poona. The mendicant was sent back the next day. The seeker presented a pathetic figure. Shri Baba shaved and bathed him. After bath he was given new clothes to wear; and the seeker looked a changed person. He generally preferred to sit in the sun for most of the day and Shri Baba sat alone with him for an hour in the morning and for few minutes in the evening. On 30th January, a mad-looking goofy Muslim from Ahmednagar was brought to Meherazad. After the regular procedure of shaving, bathing and the presenting of new clothes. he was sent back to the city. The seeker was sent back to Poona on 3rd February. Ali Shah was brought again on 4th in the morning and with this contact Shri Baba completed the present phase of His work with the *masts*.

Kumbha Mela, A Retrospect.

The second phase of Meher Baba's tripartite work was to contact *sadhus* at Allahabad. They had assembled there during the "Ardha Kumbha Mela." It was Meher Baba's second visit at the time of the Kumbha Mela (Fair). Few years before Meher Baba began His work with the masts. He had visited the Nilgiri Hills in the south of India. There, He casually remarked that He intended to contact about 7,000 *sadhus* in a day. It was a mild surprise to those who were with Him. Later, commenced His work of contacting *masts*. In the year 1941, the occasion of Maha Kumbha Mela at Allahabad provided an opportunity for the fulfilment of Shri Baba's wish. Holding of the Kumbha Mela (Fair) is connected with the astronomical position of the Kumbha—Aquarius, the eleventh sign of the

zodiac, in relation to the sun. It has some mythological background too. This is the greatest fair held in India. It is held at Allahabad, Hardwar, Ujjain and Nasik. Meher Baba decided to visit Allahabad by the end of December 1941 with the purpose of contacting 7,000 *sadhus*.

At Allahabad, the main place of pilgrimage is by the confluence of the two rivers—the Ganga and the Yamuna. It is believed that the mythical Saraswati river also joins the flow. So, it is called Trivcni Sangam (the confluence of the three). According to the Indian almanac, the new moon day in the month of Magh, is the momentous day when thousands of *sadhus* and pilgrims have a dip in the holy current during the stipulated timing. This is believed to be beneficial, spiritually.

Shri Baba reached Allahabad in the morning, on 29th December, 1941. First, He had round around the Meal grounds that stretched for over two miles in the sands on the banks of the rivers. At sunset He commenced the great work as He coincidentally encountered a *sadhu* whose beaming face failed to hide the exuberance of his heart. He was intently gazing at the setting sun, shouting with joy, "Jap! Jap!" (Meditate! Meditate!). He had put on Indian clothes and on his head was an old British sola hat. May be the combination of this dress was a symbol showing that Meher Baba's work of spiritual upliftment was intended for both, East and West.

The second contact was of a young, handsome person. He was completely naked and his body was covered with sand and dust. In him Shri Baba met a *mast* whose like the *mandali* had not seen before, His eyes looked alive with Joy and he seemed absorbed in communion with God. But when from a distance of about fifty feet he saw Shri Baba the Divine Beloved, he began to dance, gracefully moving his hands. Suddenly there came over him a rushing emotion that engulfed his being and he sat down. Shri Baba quickly walked on to him and extended His hands. The *sadhu* got up and gazed at Shri Baba dumbly. Shri Baba

looked immensely pleased and unmindful of the dirty body of the *sadhu*, embraced him most lovingly. With reference to this *sadhu*, Shri Baba later remarked: "Just as the state of the soul's union with the Over-Soul is beyond the realm of understanding, so also is the state of this perfect lover of God indescribable." After contacting over 300 *sadhus*, Shri Baba returned to His residence. The next day, from 6 in the morning till 9 at night He completed the Herculean task of contacting 7,000 *sadhus* as was indicated long long ago.

Second Visit To Kumbha Mela.

On 7th February, 1948 Meher Baba left Meherazad with a few *mandali* for Bombay, to board a train for Allahabad to contact a number of *sadhus*. It was the period of Ardhha (Half) Kumbha Mela (Fair) and in honour of this periodic astronomic occurrence hundreds of *sadhus* of different sects—*sanyasis*, *nangas*, *bairagis* and some others had collected and camped at different places, over a campus of three miles, on the banks of the Ganga and the Yamuna. This was Shri Baba's second visit during the Kumbha Mela (Fair).

At the touch of dawn on 9th February, Shri Baba with the *mandali*, left the residence for the Mela grounds. Over a million pilgrims and thousands of *sadhus* had flocked together. The different camps of the *sadhus* were known as *akhadas*. Some *sadhus* had matted and braided hair, reaching right to their knees; some had top-knotted them and some were clean shaven. Some, especially the *mahants* (the heads of some ashrams) wore rich and costly clothes, most had plain white or ochre coloured *kafanis* and a few no clothes at all. Some were short and plump; some tall and thin; some strong and hefty and a few lean and emaciated. Some had applied vermilion on their foreheads while the foreheads of others gleamed with different coloured powders and pastes. Mostly the *bairagis* had ash daubed bodies.

Through different sects, the ancient Indian culture has provided a variety of traditions and rituals that aimed to invoke real devotion to God. But the rituals instead of making things easy often make the heart hard and unreceptive. The outward forms of the rituals, when followed blindly are prone to invite deception. You can put the flowers in a vase but not the scent. Rituals of some kind seem necessary but ritualism becomes a hindrance. In fact one has to discover for oneself the way of Life, as a wakeful meditation, to make God one's constant companion. In spite of the above kaleidoscopic pomp and show of different sects at Kumbha Mela, there have been some spiritually advanced souls too. Again, a lot of spiritually minded persons assemble on this occasion. So it was the fair field for Meher Baba to give a spiritual push in that religious atmosphere. He also remarked that Allahabad from the days of old is known for its spiritual atmosphere.

Contacting *Sadhus* And *Masts*.

After reaching the main premises of the Mela grounds by morning, Shri Baba had a rapid survey of the place. The *mandali* were acquainted with the location of different camps—*akhadas*. As per Shri Baba's discretion, He was taken to the entrance of different camps. *Mandali* stood at the gates and Shri Baba used to move briskly in the soft sands, to contact the *sadhus*, He had to bend down in quick succession, to touch the feet of each. It was an ordeal for His delicate frame. Selection of *sadhus* was left to Shri Baba's on the spot discretion. Some were moving, some were squatting, some were praying, some were resting. Like a lightning, Shri Baba moved through the camps. Some were greatly taken up by Shri Baba's presence for He carried some incredible power beside His person. But by the time, the amazed *sadhus* were restored to their senses Shri Baba had gone far ahead, perhaps even out of sight. Within three hours Shri Baba touched the feet of about 4,000 *sadhus*. By ten o'clock He declared that His work in the Kumbha Mela Fair was over. He also remarked that He felt happy to contact seven really advanced souls,

among the *sadhus*. He looked fatigued but soon felt fit and fresh as ever and expressed a wish to contact some *masts*, in the city of Allahabad.

Here, Shri Baba contacted four *masts*. Vishwanath was adept in closely imitating the sounds of harmonium and *tabla* (drum). This mimicry as much pleased Shri Baba as the *mast* himself. Shah Saheb had a gipsy streak in his blood. He roamed about the city, with a book under his arms and glasses well below the nose. The lenses were neither used for reading nor for clear vision. It seemed that he was just fond of having a frame on. The naked Qamruddin who loved dogs as pet was also contacted. About each of these three *masts*, Shri Baba remarked, "A good *mast*, a good contact." Mardan who was excessive in smoking was a moderate *mast*. He too was blessed with Shri Baba's touch. Thus, having completed the great work at Allahabad, Meher Baba left the place, the same night for Bombay.

The Great *Masts* of Bombay.

While paying a visit to and returning from Allahabad on 7th and 11th February, Shri Baba passed some hours in Bombay. In fact He had passed through this city a number of times. But these two short stays have a special significance. With first group of His *mandali*, He had stayed at Dadar (Bombay) in Manzil-e-Meem, from 7th June to 31st December, 1922. It was during this period that He contacted some advanced souls in Bombay. Then there was a long break in this type of work: after 25 years Meher Baba resumed this work by contacting some high *masts* in Bombay. In a way, it was a Silver Jubilee celebration of His stay in Manzil-e-Meem!

Shri Baba reopened this account on 7th February, 1948 by visiting a unique God-intoxicated family of seven sisters and two brothers. All of these were born *masts* and *mastanis*. The family lived in Mahim, a locality near the shrine of Maqdam Shah. The eldest brother who lived a

normal life was able enough to provide and attend to the material needs of his wonderful brothers and sisters. The *mastanis* never came out of the house but could manage to cook food and wash the clothes too! One of the brothers had shut himself in a room and the food plates had to be pushed inside. The other, named Ali Akabar lived on the verandah. Formerly, he was very aggressive and was kept in chains. At the time of Shri Baba's contact, though quiet, he looked very filthy. He belonged to that "holy band" for whom any filth was a thing of beauty. It can well be said that he was fond of filth for if sweets were offered to him, he would not eat them unless "plastered" with some sort of dirt! Shri Baba visited the house and was with Ali Akbar for some minutes.

Then He motored to the southern part of Bombay—Colaba, to see Pathan Baba. This *mast* had a stately bearing. With his white, long flowing hair and beard, he presented an impressive personality. His peculiarity was to anoint his hands and feet with the paste of flour and butter. He was on the fifth plane. The choice of his "seat" was behind the Municipal Conservatory Carts and just by the public urinals, How these souls could continue to live in such stinking places for years, God alone knows! Shri Baba remarked that Pathan Baba was three fourths *salik*-like. Prior to this visit, Baidul had tried to take him to Meherazad for Shri Baba's contact but Pathan Baba knowingly turned his sparkling eyes to Baidul and replied, "I am always with Him (Baba); let Him be here once." In fulfilment of his wish Shri Baba visited him twice, the same day.

On 11th February, while returning from Allahabad, the Baba-party arrived at Bombay, early morning. It was a long tiresome journey but on the station itself Shri Baba expressed His wish to contact Umar Baba, a *mast* of the sixth plane. He was in a complete *majzoob*-like state residing in the old graveyard (Qabrcstan), on Grant Road. During the day time the *mast* would be seen pacing to and fro like a restless tiger. When Shri Baba reached the place

it was yet dark and Baidul had to wake the *mujawar* (attendant). From his India-wide experience, Baidul had learnt how the attendants knew the ways of bringing the *masts* in good mood. Many a time, this way of approach had worked well as a time-saving device. Baidul asked the *mujawar* (attendant) to persuade Umar Baba to sit with Meher Baba, for a secluded contact. Soon the *mast* drew himself up to his height, glanced at Shri Baba and agreed for the contact. This silent meeting with Umar Baba must have been very satisfying for Shri Baba looked extremely happy. As He came out He seemed to radiate cheer all around. After this significant meeting Shri Baba contacted three more *masts* in the different localities of Bombay. Without having a good rest at Bombay, Shri Baba immediately left by car for Meherazad where He reached before evening.

A Chance For The *Mandali*!

In the early years Meher Baba's birthday was privately celebrated according to the zoroastrian calendar. Some Baba-devotees used to enquire with the *mandali* about the date of Baba's birthday which varied every year with the English calendar. In 1948 it was on 13th February. While replying the loving enquiries Shri Baba was pleased to add a line by way of a message: "Here, there and everywhere for you my love and blessings." The Baba-House at Meherazad was to be reconstructed. So, by 15th February Shri Baba, with all the men and women *mandali*, left Meherazad for a stay at Ahmednagar, in Rustom Jehangir Irani's (Rusi's) bungalow. Soon, one more bungalow adjacent to this house was hired. It was in the premises of an old Ice Factory. On 26th February, Meher Baba broke His partial fast of forty days. While attending to the correspondence He dictated to send the following cable to Delia Deleon, "If your coming in India in July is difficult, cancel coming. We will meet sometime, somewhere." Delia however, managed to visit India in July with Jean Adriel.

The great Indian leader and Father of the Indian nation, Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated at Delhi at 5-30

p.m. on 30th January, 1948. He was on his way to the prayer ground, in Birla House. According to the Hindu funeral rites, after the nation-wide mourning, his ashes were immersed in the confluence at Allahabad, following Shri Baba's sanctifying visit to that place. In those days the newspapers published special articles on the life and work of Gandhiji. Gandhiji first met Meher Baba in September, 1931 on the steamer Rajputana, He was on his way to London to attend the Indian Round Table Conference. Shri Baba always praised Gandhiji's sincerity and honesty in life. In February, 1948, in an informal sitting with the *mandali*, some articles on Gandhiji's life were brought to Shri Baba's notice. He casually remarked, "People regard Gandhi as Mahatma. What do you think me to be? And do you wish to hold on to me till the very end?" He also added, "If any of you really feel confused or disappointed (over my status) you would be rendering me a great service by leaving me. I want you to be honest to yourself and to me. I am what I am, what I really was and will ever be. So, once for all think well before you decide." He instructed each of the *mandali* to give Him a written and signed reply.

Baba Is All In All

Some of the replies from the *mandali* are given below:

Norina: In you I BELIEVE. For you, I am ready to live and die.

Elizabeth: One thing I know: if you had not come into my life, there would have been no other Master for me. Having come, there is no other way for me.

Kitty: Your love brought me to you, your love has kept me with you and your Love will bind me to you till the end.

Rano: The one certainty in my life is you, Beloved Meher Baba. I am yours and always will be yours.

Kaka: Happen what may, I will always stay, with Baba I say.

Chanji: Baba is BABA; so there is nothing to be said.

Pendu: I know one thing, that I have to serve Meher Baba.

Padri: For me, Meher Baba is God. I am born to serve Him.

Vishnu: To me Avatar means God, Meher Baba is God.

Nilu: I do not doubt the Avatarhood of Meher Baba.

Sarosh: Philosophy or spirituality is not my line. The only one to whom I bow down with open heart as God, is Baba.

Jal S.: I shall stick to Meher Baba till the end.

Meherjee: I have totally surrendered to you. I will never leave you.

Nariman: Beloved Baba, I had pledged to be yours and for you for ever.

Adi K.: Meher Baba is the Avatar. I am dedicated to Him and will continue to serve Him till the very end.

Eruch: For me Baba as BABA is all in all.

It was this deep, unshakable conviction that Meher Baba evoked in the *mandali* which had helped them to lead the life of literal obedience to Him, as God in human form.

Personally, I hold high regards for Gandhiji. His faith in God and his sacrifice for the country were matchless. His violent and brutal death considerably upset me. His autobiography—"Experiments With Truth", his utterances and explanations about the importance of remembering God and the place the prayers have in everyday life, had influenced me to a considerable extent. When I heard the news of his assassination I felt greatly ill at ease. It was Friday. In some way I was reminded

of the life of Abraham Lincoln. Coincidentally just a day after this tragic event, I commenced observing silence as per Meher Baba's circular. The reading of Shri Baba's words of wisdom poured sunshine in the dark confused chamber of my heart and I felt much relieved. As one comes in contact with Meher Baba, one's love for the "great personalities of the world" slowly gets transformed in the love for the God-Man who is the One in all and who represents the Divine Life.

Distribution of Bundles At Katol

After the two phases of the tripartite work, Meher Baba commenced the third phase of His work connected with the poor. From the beginning of January, 1948, the *mandali* at Meherabad were given the duty of tying bundles of *jowar*, in a piece of white long cloth. Within a month more than four thousand bundles were bound and stored neatly in a room at Meherabad. Each bundle contained eight pounds of *jowar* (millet) wrapped in one and a half yards of cloth, As per Shri Baba's instructions some of the *mandali* selected some parts from the economically undeveloped areas in the district of Ahmednagar. Through the local contacts of responsible persons and social workers, they delivered over 4,000 tickets to the needy persons, irrespective of caste and creed. The word "*prasad*" was printed on each ticket. These persons were instructed to collect the *prasad* at selected places on different dates. The name of Meher Baba was not disclosed. They were under the impression that a wealthy philanthropist was offering the food-grains as charity to them.

On 16th February the work commenced with a visit to Katol, which lies at the foot of the Western Ghats, 80 miles to the north of Ahmednagar. The advanced party reached the place fairly early. In the compound of the Oak Bungalow (Rest House) there were giant mango trees. Under these trees the invitees began to gather in groups. In one of the corners water was being warmed for washing the feet of the poor. Meher Baba arrived by 8 a.m.

The people were led first to the bath-room, Each one was asked to stand on a low stool. With one hand, Shri Baba poured a mugful of lukewarm water over the feet and the other hand gently swept over their feet. With a soft towel one of the *mandali* sitting at the exit would dry the feet. Some of the *mandali* members requested the people to sit in lines, to get the bundles of food-grains. When Shri Baba washed the feet of all the "ticket holders", He occupied the seat in the next room where bundles were piled. He sat midway between the narrow corridor by which the villagers were to enter and leave. None from the *mandali* members was allowed to wait inside the room. Thus, in absolute privacy Shri Baba distributed those bundles. Over a thousand people were benefitted and blessed at Shri Baba's hands.

"Just Like Christ"

On 18th February Meher Baba paid a visit to Parner 25 miles to the west of Ahmednagar. The work of distribution was arranged in the local primary school. The procedure of washing the feet of the poor and distributing the bundles was outwardly the same as at Katol. One small incident is however, worth mentioning, * "While waiting for the washing of feet, one of the crowd—an old man in rags, was overheard to say in English (pointing to Baba at work), 'Just like Christ'." And it was very rare to have English speaking poor persons in the Indian villages. On 20th February Kharda, a remote village to the southeast of Ahmednagar, was visited. The school provided the place for the work. Over a thousand people received Shri Baba's *prasad*, Two days later a similar programme was arranged in a refugee camp at Visapur. The refugees were mostly from the Hindu families in Sind (now in Pakistan) who had migrated to Bharat. At Visapur the secret somehow leaked out that a 'Saintly personality' was going to wash their feet, prior to their receiving of the *prasad*, The refugees argued that in fact, they should be given the pri-

* The Wayfarers by William Donkin.

vilege of washing His feet. On arrival Shri Baba was told about the intention of the refugees. He cancelled the programme of distribution of the *prasad* and instead donated a good sum as a contribution towards the camp welfare-fund.

On 20th February about 800 villagers were collected in the premises of Meherazad. They received the bundles at Shri Baba's hands. One humorous event in the solemn programme gave Shri Baba a hearty laugh. An old person after receiving *prasad*, very solemnly blessed Shri Baba! Later Shri Baba remarked with a smile, "For a long long time I have been wanting some one to bless me!" Meher Baba's humour was a delightful, inseparable aspect of His life. To compensate the work that was expected to be done at Visapur, Shri Baba instructed the Mandali to choose some other place. Vambori, twenty miles off to the north, was selected. On 7th March Shri Baba visited this place and completed the work of distributing 4,000 bundles of food-grains to the poor persons. At the above four places He also gave money in cash as *prasad*, to more than two hundred people. Thus, the tripartite work of forty days which was expected to be concluded by 25th February, was over ten days later. About such work Meher Baba once remarked, "As Baba I gave; as the poor I received." His is the non-dual life, a Life of Love that knows no separation.

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(To be continued)

In "Divya Vani", March 1972 issue, Page 8, Para 2, Please read it as follows:

In Sufi terminology, Meher Baba once explained the spiritual state of a real *Majzoob* like Chacha's, in the following words: * "A true *Majzoob*—a God-merged soul on the seventh plane—is a *wali*; and also in the sense that he enjoys the blissful intoxication of a God-united soul he is also a *mast*. A *Majzoob*, however, although he is automatically both a *wali* and a *mast* is never a *salik*. In the *Majzoobiat* of the seventh plane, *wilayat* and *masti* are already there, but not *suluk*". From another angle *Majzoob-e-Kamil* passes from the sensations of flesh to the Reality of the Spirit. He enters Light to be Light Itself that He already was but now consciously *knows* it and merges in It; so He is called the God-merged. On the other band, for discharging the Divine duty, the Sadguru—the Perfect Master, having become Light also has the consciousness of *Tribhuvan*—the entire creation of *Maya*, His own shadow.

* The Wayfarers by Dr. Donkin.

MY HUMBLE APPEAL

**To All Meher Parivar on the Blessed Day
of 25-2-72**

By Dr. T. DHANAPATHYI RAO

Let us all glorify the 78th Birth Anniversary of our Divine Beloved, Avatar Meher Baba, in a befitting manner, chant His most precious and potent Name "BABA", for our own elevation with all love and joy as frequently as possible, and invoke His mercy to keep us always in the right path and to awaken us all from our slumber of ignorance.

Baba has given us enough of spiritual push already and has left behind a rich legacy to all humanity, and to all posterity the eternal message of Truth, Love, Freedom, Peace and His blessed Name Repetition.

1. His message of Truth is that all mankind is intrinsically One and undeniably One. It is always the inseparable part and parcel of God's Reality which is the only One eternal infinite Truth.

The so-called divisions and religions are all the made up by our perishable human mind.

In fact there is only one religion to reach God. It is the ancient religion of Love—for God's innate nature is Love and Mercy.

This is the real spirituality as taught by the God-man. But His followers, at every time of His advent, out of their love and adoration for their Master have given an outer form to His teachings and activities in the shape of a religion composed of rites and rituals, which in course of time, by outward show and glamour have eclipsed the true spirit of love. Thereby the real spirituality sinks low and low and is finally shelved. Hence the seeming distinctions and differences. The apparent jumble of contradictions

and the so-called fights are all the results of our ignorance, habit, tradition, pride and the imagination of our egotistic mind which ultimately perishes when once the Truth is realised.

2. His message of Love is that all people should love one another as their brothers and sisters without any disparity, with all selflessness, honesty, compassion, mercy, forgiveness and equality, regardless of colour, creed, caste, country, rank or condition if they want to realise that Truth.

3. His message of Freedom is the spiritual Freedom, which alone matters and not any other freedom.

It is the eternal Freedom from all bondages and it is the freedom above all other freedoms. It is not the freedom from our slavish mentality or from the prison bars of our habit and tradition or from the shackles of our rites and ceremonies or from the oppressive pressure of our religious bigotry or from the clutches of Maya.

All these fetters bind us to physical and material things and to the fancy and fantasy of our egotistic mind through all ignorance and innumerable desires with a view to nourish and preserve our little self. Our present life should be freed from all political, economic, religious dominations and multiple cravings. This Freedom should not be hit back by anything. Such Freedom is possible only when we unceasingly commune with Baba through constant resignation and surrender. Then all our bindings are easily cut down, and we are freed absolutely and eternally to enjoy that infinite Bliss and Peace.

Baba always wants that we should inherit our inviolable oneness with everyone and with everything, and live in a harmonious and universal fellowship with all, through His grace, completely freed from our self-centred egotistic will and mental projections and from the manyness of this Maya or illusion, by surrendering our everything including our little selves completely to His Divine will

through constant 'Namajapa' = 'Baba' and spontaneous obedience.

4. His message of peace: It is because of our constant worry and unhappiness resulting from multiple desires, cravings and from the severe oscillations of our mental pendulum that our peace and happiness are greatly disturbed. Hence Baba says: "Don't worry – Be Happy" "Think of Me constantly through all love, concentration, poise and surrender without falling a victim to the lure of Maya."

Invariably we will be then led by His grace to the Paradise of Peace, which passeth all understanding. This is the Real Realm of Light.

5. Therefore constantly invoke Baba's mercy, for He is the only Hope for all mankind to give this eternal Peace and everlasting Happiness.

Repeat His blessed Name "Baba" not less than 14 times a day till the end of our life through all love and complete resignation to His Will without seeking anything in return and without expressing our little self in any form, by offering our everything to Him fully, without any mental reservation and serving Him whole-heartedly with all self-effacing sacrifice.

"You and I are not we—but ONE."

—*Avatar Meher Baba.*

Obituary:

We regret to announce that Shree Manikyam Naidu, aged 24 years, son of Shree A.S. Naidu, Secretary, Avatar Meher Baba Raipur Centre, expired at 2-55 P.M. on 8th March 1972 in the Medical College at Raipur.

May Beloved Baba Bless his soul with eternal Peace!

—*Editor.*

Children's Corner

By Aunty SREE LATHA

My dear Children,

"If we understand and feel that the greatest act of devotion and worship to God is not to hurt or harm any of His beings, we are loving God" says our Beloved Baba. Oh! how easy! What an easy opportunity has Baba given us to love Him!

Dear children! the bird and the beast cannot speak to you in the language you know. Yet they are like us in many ways. Like us the bird builds a home, like us it has affection for its mate and care for its child, like us it tries to bring food and provide for the family, like us it is alarmed at the approach of danger and like us it finds peace in the thought of security. Many children find pleasure in hunting down nests of little birds. So if we understand that they are like us in many ways, why should we be so cruel as to deprive them of their homes? Knowing well that their mate will be unhappy if we separate them, why should we capture them just for the sake of fun?

The celebrated Russian novelist, Turgenieff, when he was a boy of 10, one day went along with his father for bird-shooting. With all the enthusiasm of his newly learnt skill he shot a bird. It fell fluttering at his side. Life was ebbing fast. But the mother bird which was hurt, was so fond of her little children that, with a feeble flutter of her wings, she tried her best to reach the nest, but soon her head dropped, as the dead body of the mother shielded her nestlings. The sight of the motherly love of the bird so moved the heart of the little boy that he felt guilty and began to repent.

"Father, father, what have I done?" cried the boy with a horror-stricken face.

"Well done my boy" his father said. "That was a wonderful shot, you will soon be a fine sportsman".

"Never father; never again shall I destroy any living creature. If that is sport, I will have none of it. Life is more beautiful to me than death. Since I cannot give life, I will not take it" said the little boy determinedly.

All of us should learn a lesson from the true life story of this little boy and be compassionate to our mute brothers. Religion is nothing but a compassionate heart.

'Birds and beasts' says Koran 'are people like you and to their Lord they shall return'.

"And what so ever ye do unto the least of these My brethren ye do it unto Me. For I am in them and they are in Me. Therefore I say unto you, be ye kind to another and to all creatures of God", taught our Lord Jesus. "Ahimsa" or non-violence is the doctrine of Hindus as compassion is the watchword of Christians.

Know ye little children that life sleeps in plants, life dreams in animals, life wakes in man. So injure not the creatures that creep or fly.

"Love is the light of life, my child!
Oh! brightly let it burn each day,
To bird or beast be ever mild,
To love them is to truly pray".

Shri Shalig Ram Sharma,
Public Prosecutor,
64, Khatniana, Manik Chowk,
JHANSI P.O., (U.P.)

Wants to Please note that Bro. Sharma is now posted at Jhansi as Public Prosecutor and his present address is as above.

—*Editor.*

THEY OCCURRED TO ME

By Mrs. USHA NANDA.*

1. In spirituality, you respect those who have a strong character based on truth.
2. It has been a long time and the hearts of human beings have gone to sleep. Meher came to touch the hearts and awaken them.
3. We are everything – good and the evil, God and the Ghost, Life and the Death. All is within us. We can call ourselves anything we like.
4. Worship and Love are two different things. We worship Rama and Krishna. (Then a little distance remains between us and God). But we love Meher Baba, like we love a friend or mother or father. (The distance between us and God vanishes completely).
5. The world may call one a hypocrite or a Lover of God—it matters little. What matters really is what BABA thinks of one or calls one.
6. When BABA tells us not to worry, we should trust Him, and quit worrying. But we continue to worry, thus, not trusting Him. We are actually insulting God by disobeying Him, who looks after us every minute of our life.
7. BABA makes all the clever ones into Masts and the thick headed ones remain thick headed.

JAI BABA !

* In February issue of Divya Vani, the title of the article by Mrs, Usha Nanda may be read as "THOUGHTS" instead of "STRAY THOUGHTS".

THE TREE OF LIFE

By DOROTHY L. LEVY

The TREE of LIFE never dies—
The branches grow because the ROOTS are alive...
Those having seen our Beloved's FACE carved on the tree—
Know, Avatar Meher Baba IS in the heart of creativity ...
December 25th. is celebrated as the day of the Christ Child's
birth—
Many yet unaware God-Man has been with us seventy-four
years again on the earth ...
February 25th in this age is the Christ Child's Birth ...
When celebrating Christmas as the wonderful day—
Every day is His to be lived in a thankful way.
When exchanging gifts—lighting the trees—
Let us understand God IS the TRUE GIVEN-GIFT for
all eternity!
Avatar Meher Baba, came back into the world again with ...
THE MESSAGE of LOVE and TRUTH...
We are the branches of the TREE—He the ROOT.
His Light remains shining over the earth ...
When awakened in His LOVE—this is the Christ birth—
To be celebrated in praise of His HOLY NAME ...
For, it is for us that God-Man came.
The same Ancient ONE—today, tomorrow and yesterday—
He IS the DIRECTOR-ACTOR—and AUDIENCE of
this Universal play ...
Christ in all—the LIFE, LIGHT, TRUTH and WAY
Avatar Meher Baba—our Savior-Ki Jai !

Worship of The Silent One. Leads To His Darshan

by W. D. KAIN

The Church Bells on Sunday the 11th July 1971 pealed to announce in the morning the observance of the 46th Silence Anniversary of The Silent One—Avatar Meher Baba—in Delhi. A public meeting held in the evening at Lajpat Bhawan heralded a chain of programmes for silent worship of the Silent One for over three months.

The inaugural meeting, which was presided over by Kumari Surrender Saini, Senior Vice-President of the New Delhi Municipal Committee, started with a message of Greetings sent by Shri Eruch Jessawala on behalf of the Meherazad Mandali. Devotional songs by the Meher Singing Group, led by Shrimati Kusum and Qawaali by Shri Ram Avatar and Party served as a prelude to that panorama of devotion witnessed on the stage, where one speaker after the other poured forth his heart to pay tributes to the Avatar of the Age. Kumari Surrender Saini, after garlanding Baba's picture, released the book "Yuga Avatar"—the first volume of Avatar Meher Baba's Biography by professor B. N. Bhasin—with the following remarks:

"I am sure this Volume will be read widely by the people to improve their lives and also of the Society, based on teachings of Rev. Avatar Meher Baba."

In her Presidential Address the distinguished speaker emphasised the need for following and living up to the teachings of Baba. The poems recited by Shri C. L. Bhatia, Advocate, and Shri B. D. Dikshit were very much appreciated by the public. A vote of thanks by Shri W. D. Kain was followed by the Parvardigar Prayer and Arti and distribution of Prashad.

Every day showed fresh enthusiasm on the part of Baba lovers as meetings were arranged one after the other in the Capital and its suburbs in the ensuing weeks. These meetings were held sometimes in the bedecked mansions of Baba lovers and on other occasions the spacious lawns in Sarojini Nagar and Press Colony (Faridabad) etc. served as venues of the functions. Musical entertainment through devotional songs and Qawaali's and Refreshments served on conclusion of the functions added a spirit of joy and devotion to the celebrations of the Silence Anniversary. Series of lectures explaining the Silence of Avatar of the Age were delivered by Shri W. D. Kain.

Some of the important meetings held during the period under review are listed below:-

- 12 Jul : B.171 Greater Kailash.
- 13 Jul : T. 29 C. 11 Baljit Nagar
- 14 Jul : Flat No. 22 Prithvi Raj Market
- 15 Jul : Sheesh Mahal, Bazar Sita Ram
- 16 Jul : D. 425 Sarojini Nagar
- 17 Jul : E. 29 Press Colony, Faridabad.
- 18 Jul : G. 92 DDA Colony, Naraini
- 24 Jul : X-38 Green Park
- 25 Jul : 5 Basti Nizam-ud-Din
- 31 Jul : E-356 Greater Kailash-1
- 1 Aug: 16 President's Estate
- 3 Aug: 204-A,N – Greater Kailash-1
- 7 Aug: E, 323 Greater Kailashi
- 8 Aug: 2711 Churi Walan.
- 22 Aug: Basant Nagar
- 5 Sep : Kucha Chelan
- 12 Sep : C – 48 HIL Colony
- 28 Sep : 15 – A President's Estate
- 10 Oct : Baird Square.

These programmes were followed by weekly meetings in different parts of Delhi until one fine morning the denizens of Delhi were suddenly shaken out of their slumber by the most welcome message which declared that

the Avatar has come to awaken. This formed part of the devotional music sung in the early hours of the morning. It was on 2nd December 71 when Baba lovers led by Shri R.V. Gupta, went round the streets of Bazaar Sita Ram, Delhi, inviting the public to participate in the "Darshan Programme" of Baba. In the evening a meeting was held from 5 to 8 P.M. in Beriwali Dharamshala, Bazar Sita Ram, to celebrate the "Darshan Day" of Avatar Meher Baba in Delhi. A profusely decorated and artistically illuminated hall served as a stage for unveiling a new portrait of Avatar Meher Baba. Speeches were delivered by Shrimati Krishna and Shri C. L. Bhatia Advocate on the life and teachings of Baba and musical accompaniment was provided by the Meher Singing Group led by Shrimati Kusum. The following message of Avatar Meher Baba was delivered by Shri W.D. Kain in his Presidential Address:-

"We have gained our National freedom. Let us now try to gain our Spiritual Freedom, beside which every other kind of freedom is a binding. Spiritual Freedom is marred by the binding of lust, power, greed, anger, hatred, jealousy and low desires. When the prison of these bindings is torn asunder, the heritage of freedom which is born of Infinite Power, Wisdom, Peace, Love and Bliss, is gained. To attain this Freedom, we must realize God who is the source of freedom. To realize God we must love Him, losing ourselves in His Infinite Self. We can love God through intense longing for union with him. We can love God by surrendering to the Sadguru who is God's personal manifestation. We can also love God by loving our fellow-men, by giving them happiness at the cost of our own happiness, by rendering them service at the sacrifice of our interests, and by dedicating our lives at the altar of selfless work for the down trodden. When we love God intensely through any of these channels, we finally know Him to be our own Self."

"The purpose of life is to realize God within ourselves. This can be done even whilst attending to our worldly

duties. In the everyday walks of life and amidst intense activities, we should feel detached and dedicate our doings to our Beloved God."

"I give my Love and blessings to one and all, for the understanding of the One Infinite God residing equally within us all and beside whom everything else is false and illusory."

—Meher Baba – 2 Dec. 52

As soon as the Parvardigar Prayer had been recited by Shri B. D. Dixit, special lights were put on for the Arti. And lo! The newly unveiled portrait of Baba was engulfed in a halo, the splendour of which charmed all present in the meeting. Men and women, old and young all cried in loud acclaim: Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai. Baba was all smiles and it seemed that the months' long worship of the Silent One had rewarded the devotees with His Darshan. And then a tune came on the air. Someone was singing "Namo Meher Baba – Namo Dev Deva" – Salutations to Meher Baba : Salutations to the God of gods. Perhaps the gods had descended from Heaven to have the Darshan of the One, whom so many worship and yet so few realize.

OBITUARY

Rama Rao's mother passes away:

Sri V. Rama Rao, Rishikutur, Bilaspur reports: "Living a full life of three score and ten years, my mother V. Seetamma expired on 19-3-72 at 1-15 a.m., peacefully after prolonged illness for three months. She had the darshan of Beloved Baba in 1954 during the Avatar's tour of Andhra Pradesh. On 16-3-72, the Telugu New-Year Day, UGADI, she became seriously ill and went into coma. During the early hours of 19-3-72 she regained consciousness, which lasted only for a few minutes, and during which time she uttered something inaudible. She never recovered again."

We pray to God that may her soul rest in Peace at the lotus feet of Avatar Meher Baba. =Editor

News & Notes :

In the February issue of Divva vani. the reports received from some Avatar Meher Baba Centres, on the Celebrations of Avatar Meher Baba's 78th Birthday, were presented under this item. The rest of the reports from some more centres are presented here under, along with other news items also:

DELHI:

Baba lovers who had observed a night long vigil the previous night, went round the main-streets of Sarojini Nagar during the early morning hours of 25th February 1972, singing the Glory of the Highest of the High—Avatar Meher Baba.

The prelude to the function was provided by a programme of devotional music presented by Shrimati Kusum and Krishna. Shri S. P. Datta, Jhompi Ram and Ram Avatar entertained the audience with selected songs and qawaalis, specially composed for the occasion. A message was received from Meherazad Mandali. along with other messages of good wishes for the success of the Function from Shri A.C.S. Chari, T.K. Ramanujam and Ram Rao.

Shri Madhukar of Akash vani, Calcutta, recited a poem entitled Meher Sanghita which was much appreciated by the audience.

Dr. G.S.N. Moorthy then delivered his speech, in which he emphasised that due to the confusion prevailing in the minds of several persons after the dropping of physical body by Beloved Baba, it was necessary to explain the "Personality & Power" aspect of Baba. "Baba", he said, "has ordered me to spread His Name and Messages amongst all those whom I meet or visit. It is for this reason that I continue coming here". "I wish to kindle in your hearts a little spark of that fire of love which Baba has ignited

in my heart", he added. He told the audience that Baba's message in a nutshell is: "I am the Ancient One—Love Me—Love God". By referring to various personal experiences, the learned speaker explained how very difficult it was to love Baba. He concluded by saying that we should, nevertheless, hold fast to His Daman.

Shri Madhukar came forward with another Poem devoted to Baba entitled Vardaan, which was followed by Parvardigar Prayer recited by Shri B.D. Dikshit. After the Arti, Prashad was distributed.

On the following day a meeting was convened at G-92 Naraina Colony, New Delhi, from 3 P.M. to 6 P.M., where Amateur Artists like Shri S.P. Datta and Amar Singh sang the glory of the Avatar of the Age. Shri Madhukar recited a poem devoted to Baba and Dr. G.S.N. Moorty spoke on the life and teachings of Avatar Meher Baba. Dr. Moorty further elucidated the "Personality and Power" aspect of Avatar Meher Baba as set forth before the audience on the 25th Feb 72 and emphasised that Baba did not want us to rely on miracles, quoting the following message from Baba:

"My miracle will be to make you become me".

The Parvardigar Prayer and Arti was followed by a Dinner Party.

Sunday the 27th February brought Baba lovers with their families and friends to R. 736 New Rajinder Nagar, New Delhi, at 9 A.M., where a Qawaali Programme had been arranged to celebrate the 78th Birthday of Avatar Meher Baba. The function started with devotional music. Dr. G.S.N. Moorty gave a soul stirring speech in continuation of his previous talks and referred to an incident when Baba dictated:

"I want to rid you from the slavery of miracles and wish you to resign absolutely to the will of God".

The Parvardigar prayer and Arti were followed by Refreshments.

The same day a Public Meeting was arranged in the evening in Raja Bazar Square, New Delhi. As Shri S.P. Datta and Ram Avatar and other artists started their programme of songs and qawaalis people thronged to the artistically decorated Pandal to participate in the function, Shri Madhukar recited a beautiful poem in honour of Baba. Dr. G.S.N. Moorthy in his Talk explained that it was only for a few lucky ones to have accepted Baba, the Avatar of the Age, because it was usual that a 'Prophet is not recognised fully in his own country of birth'. It was however heartening to note that Baba's name was being televised by over 4000 TV Stations in U.S.A. He added how Baba had travelled all over the world and laid the foundation of Universal Brotherhood through His message "I have come not to teach but to awaken". "Baba", he said, "knew from which ailment the world was suffering and like an expert physician He injected the seed of Love in humanity ridding the people of all disease and distress". The Doctor of Divinity knew how to treat the ego-conscious modern individual. The only prescription he thought to be most effective in this case was SILENCE". He concluded by saying that Baba gave us the Universal Religion—the Religion of love through His silence. The recitation of Prayers by Shri B.D. Dikshit and Arti was followed by a Tea Party.

The venue of the next function was fixed at B-171 Greater Kailash on 28 Feb from 5 P.M. to 8 P.M. A splendid programme of devotional music by Shrimati Kusum, Shri Ram Avatar and "Nidan", Shri and Shrimati K.C. Mathur, followed by recitation of poems by Shri Madhukar, B.D. Dikshit and C.L. Bhatia, offered a befitting prelude to Dr. G.S.N. Moorthy's speech, which happened to be the last of the series of talks initiated on 25 Feb. The Parvardigar Prayer and Arti were followed by a Dinner. Vermilion Mark was put on the forehead of all those who attended as a token of Holi Greetings!

On 29th February the Birthday Celebrations Programme was observed at T-29/C-2 Baljit Nagar, New Delhi, from 6 P.M. to 8 P.M. as declared on the 25th February.

Here a number of amateur artists vied with each other to entertain the audience with melodious songs devoted to Baba and the poets paid tribute to the glory of the Avatar. A brief introduction on the Life and Teachings of Avatar Meher Baba was followed by Parvardigar Prayer. After the Arti refreshments were served. As the audience left for their homes they could still hear repeated joyous Hail—Avatar Maher Baba Ki Jai—carried by the loud speaker to every nook and corner of the Colony, which was all steeped in the Divine Glory and Love of Baba.

GUNTUR:

By the Grace of Beloved Avatar Meher Baba, over two thousand poor persons ate sumptuously the delicious food with sweets and Ghee in front of Meher House, from 10-30 A.M. to 5-00 P.M. on 25-2-72 Friday, the Beloved's 78th Birthday. Special Pendals were erected in front of Meher House for the occasion and the seven coloured flag was fluttering on the top of Meher House. Advance advertisement was given that there will be poor feeding at Meher House on 25-2-72 from 10-00 A.M. in the morning.

Though all items were ready by 10-00 A.M. according to programme, no poor man turned up by that time which created anxiety. A lone crippled person arrived at Meher House just after 10-00 A.M. He demanded to serve food immediately saying that he was asked to come at 10-00 A.M. and why there should be any delay in serving. All were surprised at his commanding tone and felt the presence of Beloved Baba and requested the guest to take his seat. By 10-30 A.M. serving was commenced by which time hundreds of poor people gathered.

The Guests were seated in orderly rows in the Pendals and food was served in a very organised manner to make every one comfortable and happy while taking food. There were joyful cries of Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai throughout and over two thousand poor people ate sumptuously by 5-00 P.M. when the poor feeding was concluded.

May Beloved Baba shower His Divine Blessings on all the poor souls who ate His Prasad and all those that worked for the success of the Divine celebrations.

JAI AVATAR MEHER BABA KI JAI !

BHOPAL:

Avatar Meher Baba Bhopal Centre, Bhopal celebrated Avatar Meher Baba's 78th Birthday from 24th February 1972 to 26th February 1972 in a specially erected awning. Beloved Baba's photo was placed in beautifully decorated dais. The programme started with Bhajan by Datta Bhagini Samaj on 24th After Noon. Bhajan Party of Shri Madhusudan and family, Poona, and Shri Rajnikant Upadhyaya of Jabalpur, participated in the function. Shri Madhusudan and family recited Bhajan on 25th morning at 5-00 A.M., 25th Night and 26th Night.

Brother Rajnikant Upadhyaya of Jabalpur gave very interesting talk on 26th on his own experiences with Baba. A dinner was arranged to all local Baba Lovers on 26th and food packets were distributed to about seventy poods, The function was largely attended and great Baba Love was distributed by the guests to the local Baba Lovers. Jai Baba!

SAMBALPUR:

The Birth Day Anniversary of Beloved Avatar Shri Meher Baba was celebrated with great joy and enthusiasm by the members of the Meher House, Sambalpur on the 25th February, 1972.

On the 24th February, 1972 decoration of the Baba-room was completed. On the night of the 24th February, 1972 Bhajans to Baba were sung and prayers offered. On the 25th February just at 4.30 A.M. Bhajan started again and exactly at 5 A.M. Tea and Bhog was offered to Baba and Arati was performed. The Parvardigar Prayer and the Repentance Prayer were recited. Then with joyful shouts of Avatar Shri Meher Baba Ki Jai

for 78 times, the function came to a close. Little kids below ten years flocked and had Baba's Darshan and prasad. Prasad was also distributed to the neighbours.

There was great peace, joy and still-ness throughout the day. A special feature of the function was that as in previous years a flower placed on the forehead of Beloved Baba fell down as if in acknowledgement of the Beloved accepting our hearty prayers and cheer us with the feeling of His Loving presence with us and His blessings and Nazar on all of us.

Jai – Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai!

MADRAS:

As usual, beloved Baba's Birth-day was celebrated on the 25th February, 72, in the Centre Premises of 84, Appa Rao Gardens.

Celebration started with Nam Japam, seventy eight minutes before the Birth time of Beloved Baba. Beloved Baba's birth day was marked by calling AVATAR MEHER BABA KI JAI. Then Arati was performed by 5-15 A.M. Astothari was read out by all by performing Pada Pooja with flowers. Devotional songs were sung in Hindi by Mr. & Mrs. T. K. Ramanujam and his 4 years daughter Meher Veena. Those who participated in other Bhajans sung in Telugu were Dr. V. Sreerama Murty, B.V.Sc., Mr. G. Subba Rao and Mr. C. Mohan including all his family members. Dr. Sree Rama Murthy came all the way from Palamanir, Chittor District to attend Beloved Baba's Birth-day celebrations in Madras.

Morning function came to a close after distribution of Prasad. Mini Love feast was also arranged by loving old lady, Mrs, Shyamalamba, mother of Sri K. Appa Rao, President of the Centre.

In the evening, a public function was arranged at 8th Cross street, Shenoyanagar, Madras-30, the Present residence of Mr. D. C. Engineer of Dunlop Co., Madras. Old stal-

wart, Mr. Siganporia of Bombay Presided over the functions. During his short talk, he made it clear to the audience that this Programme is not for any Propaganda of our Beloved Meher Baba but a Love gathering in the name of our Master, whose birth-day falls to-day. At the request of Mr. Siganporia, Mr. T. K. Ramanujam introduced the lovers of our Beloved Baba to the advance and also made it very clear that only beloved Baba is the Highest of the High and none else. He said Beloved Baba had come not to teach but to awaken us by leading the life of Love, Truth and Sacrifice. He stressingly repeated that in this world of confusion, time has come to put the following words of Baba into practice:

"Let your life itself be my message of Love & Truth". The time has come when the lovers of Beloved Baba must come out to give that love to the people. That Love, received from the Ocean of Love—Meher Baba.

Melodious Bhajans in Telugu were sung by the lovers of Local Royapetah Centre. After Bhajans and short speeches, a mini Love-feast sweets were also served by this Loving couple to all, which sweetened the whole function. Fortunate ones who participated, fully enjoyed this Birthday of the Birthless ONE.

During the interval, Mr. T. K Ramanujam distributed the Pamphlets "Meher Baba—Compassionate Father" out of the parcel received by him from Mr. Rames Taylor of Berkeley, California; Beloved Baba's life Sketch in English, Telugu, and Tamil were also distributed along with a lovely Baba card to those present.

After this, two minutes silence was observed to meditate on Beloved Baba. Then Arati & Prayers were performed before the function came to a close. In this connection, old lovers of Beloved Baba Mr. C. C. Naidu, Mr. K. Jagannadharao, Mr. Shyamalamba, Mrs. Hymavati were also present. Dr. Vasumati, professor Kasturi, Miss Meher Kanthi and Mr. T. K. Ramanujam tried their best to make this function a success.

*AYATAR MEHER BABA ROYAPETAH CENTRE,
MADRAS-14.*

Beloved Baba's 78th Birth day was celebrated by this new centre of Madras, with a great zeal. The room was nicely decorated with balloons, coloured paper flags flowers and candle sticks by all the family members of Sri Jiddu Venkata Rao of Kakinada. The programme started with Bhajans. At 5 A.M. Arti was performed, and Bhajan continued till 5-30 A.M. Baby Meher Vani (1 year old) danced as the Bhajan was in progress repeating Baba's name Loudly.

Halwa was served as prasadam at 7 A.M. after Arati. Group Photo was also arranged by the Baba lovers.

VILLI WAKKAM – MADRAS-40.

Beloved Baba's 78th Birth-day was celebrated at No 30, Vellala street, Villivakkam, Madras 40. at the residence of Sri S. P. Rama Rao of Ashok Ley Lands, on Monday the 28th Feb. 72, at Villivakkam on the outskirts of Madras city where a few lovers of Beloved Baba attended the function. Dr. V. Sriramamurthv of Palamaneer presided the function. In his presidential talk, he narrated Beloved Baba's life sketch in brief. Chorus was sung by Mr. Manga Raju Mr. & Mrs. Ramanujam, Mrs. C. Nagarathnam. A minute's silence was observed, A dinner was then served by the mother and sister of Mr. Rama Rao to all the lovers who attended this function from the main Centre.

This year Avatar Meher Baba's centre at Temilnadu extended its activities to the outskirts of Madras city and tried its best to spread Baba's message of Love & Truth in its own humble way.

Unexpected appearance of Mr. Siganporia in the gathering proved to be exciting and a Blessing from Beloved Baba.

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1. I belong to no religion. Every religion belongs to me. My religion is love.
2. I am the divine beloved that loves you more than you can ever love yourself.
3. I am the Lord of Love and Servant of My lover.
4. Let *Principle* in work and *honesty* in life prevail.
5. One penny extracted, in My name, without true basis is dishonesty and will be the cause of *millions of births*.
6. Think well of those who think ill of you.
7. If you truly and in all faith accept your Baba as the Highest of the High, it behooves you to lay down your life at His feet.

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