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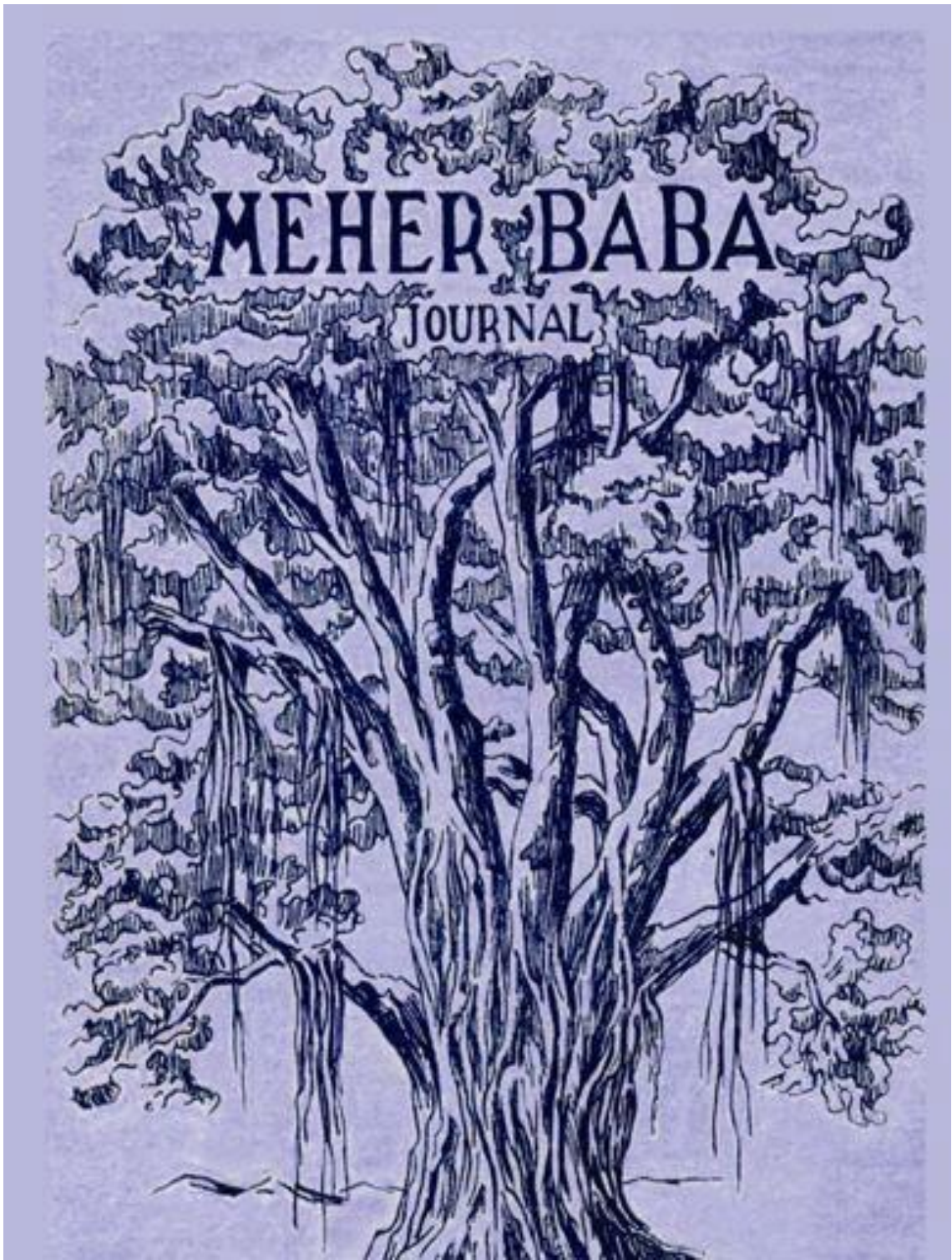
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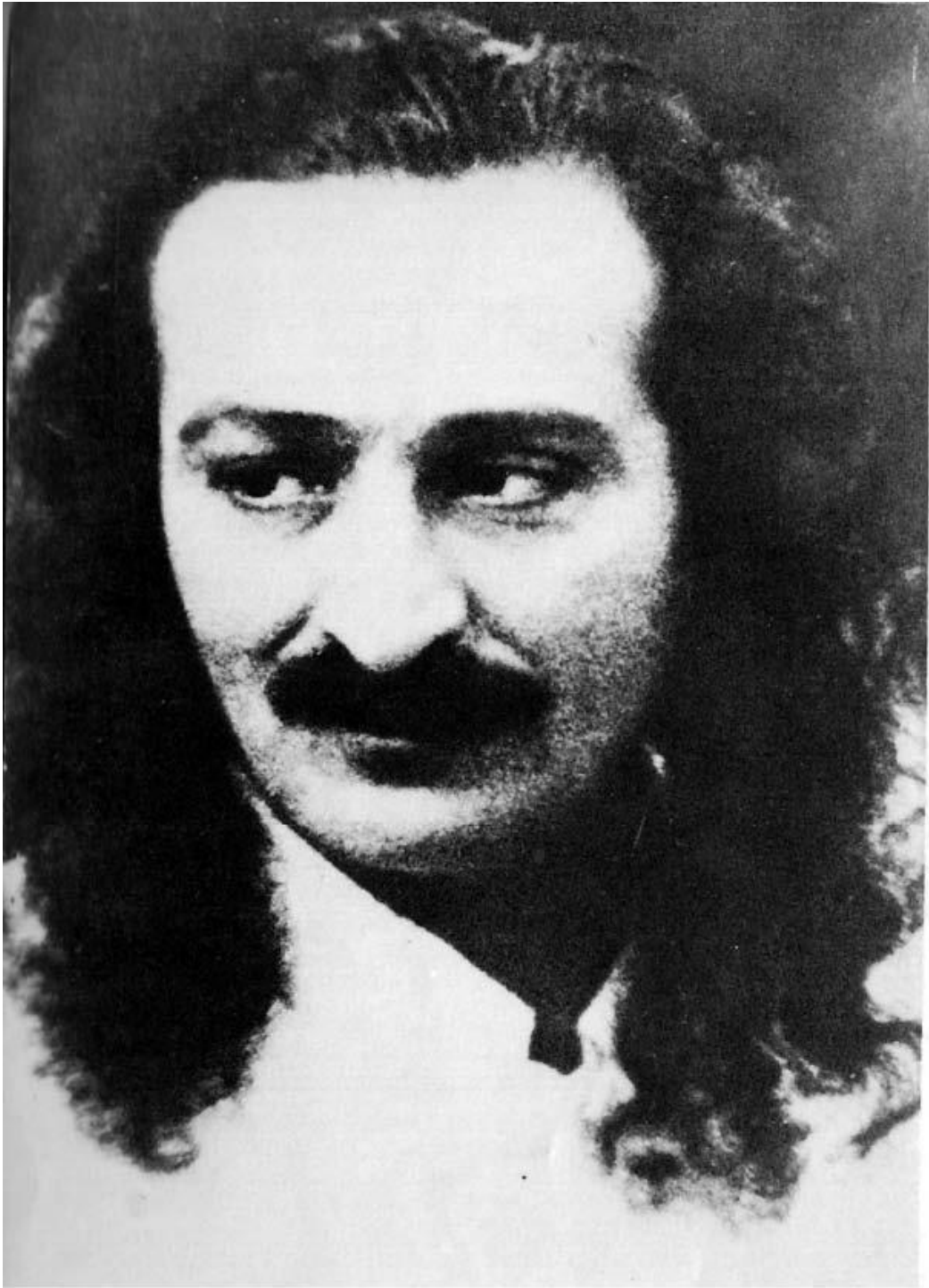


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“I have not come to teach but to awaken”
—SHRI MEHER BABA



Shri Meher Baba

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Shri Meher Baba on the Formation And the Function of Sanskaras

There are two aspects of human experience—the subjective and the objective. On the one hand there are mental processes which constitute essential ingredients of human experience; and on the other hand there are things and objects to which they refer. The mental processes are partly dependent upon the immediately given objective situation; and they are partly dependent upon the functioning of the accumulated *sanskaras* or impressions of previous experience. Human mind thus finds itself between a sea of past *sanskaras* on the one side and the whole extensive objective world on the other.

ANALYSIS OF
HUMAN EXPE-
RIENCE

From the psycho-genetic point of view human actions are seen to be based upon the operation of the impressions stored in the mind through previous experience. Every thought and emotion and every act is grounded in groups of impressions which, when considered objectively, are seen to be modifi-

cations of the mind-stuff of man. These impressions are deposits of previous experience, and become the most important factors in determining the course of present and future experience. The mind

SANSKARAS ARE
ORIGINATED IN
EXPERIENCE AND
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OF FUTURE
EXPERIENCE

is constantly creating and gathering such impressions in the course of its experience. When occupied with the physical objects of this world, such as, body, nature and other things around, the mind is, so to say, externalised, and

creates gross impressions; and when it is busy with its own subjective mental processes (which are the expressions of already existing *sanskaras*), it creates *subtle* and *mental* impressions. The question whether *sanskaras* come first or experience comes first is like the question whether the hen comes first or the egg comes first. Both are conditions of each other and develop side by side. *The problem of understanding the significance of human experience, therefore, turns round the problem of understanding the formation and function of sanskaras.*

The *sanskaras* are of two types—natural and non-natural—according to the manner in which they come into existence. The *sanskaras* which the soul gathers during the period of organic evolution are natural *sanskaras*. These NATURAL AND NON-NATURAL SANSKARAS *sanskaras* come into existence and gather round the soul as it successively takes up and abandons the various sub-human forms, thus gradually passing from the apparently inanimate state of the stone or

metal to the human state, where there is full development of consciousness. All the *sanskaras* which cluster round the soul *before* attaining the human form are the product of natural evolution and therefore best referred to as natural *sanskaras*. They should be carefully distinguished from the *sanskaras* which are cultivated by the soul *after* the attainment of the human form . The *sanskaras* which get attached to the soul during the human stage are cultivated under the moral freedom of consciousness with its accompanying responsibility of choice between good and bad, virtue and vice. They are, therefore, best referred to as non-natural *sanskaras*. For, though these post-human *sanskaras* are directly dependent upon the natural *sanskaras*, they are created under fundamentally different conditions of life, and are, in their origin, comparatively more recent than the natural *sanskaras*. This difference in the length of the periods through which they have gathered and in the conditions under which they are formed is responsible for the difference in the degree of firmness with which the natural and non-natural *sanskaras* are respectively attached to the soul. The non-natural *sanskaras* are not as difficult to eradicate as the natural *sanskaras* which have an ancient heritage, and are therefore more firmly rooted. The obliteration of the natural *sanskaras* is practically impossible unless the neophyte is the recipient of the grace and intervention of a Sadguru.

As explained above the non-natural *sanskaras* are dependent upon the natural *sanskaras*, and the

natural *sanskaras* are a result of evolution. The next important question is, "Why should the manifested life at the different stages

THE MANIFESTED
LIFE ARISES
OWING TO THE
WILL-TO-BE-
CONSCIOUS IN
THE ABSOLUTE

of evolution emerge out of the Absolute Reality which is infinite?" *The need for manifested life arises out of the impetus in the Absolute to become conscious of itself.* The progressive manifestation of life through evolution is ultimately brought about by the *will-to-be-conscious* which is inherent in the Infinite. In order to understand creation in terms of thought, it is necessary to posit this will-to-be-conscious in the Absolute in an involved state, prior to the act of manifestation.

But, though for the purposes of an intellectual explanation of the creation, the impetus in the Absolute has to be regarded as a will-to-be-conscious; to describe it as a sort of inherent desire is to

THE LAHAR
WITHIN THE
ABSOLUTE MAY
BE COMPARED TO
A WAVE IN THE
OCEAN

falsify its true nature. It is better described as a *lahar* or an impulse which is so inexplicable, spontaneous and sudden that *to call it this or that is to have its reality undone.* Since all intellectual categories turn out to be necessarily inadequate in grasping the mystery of creation, the nearest approach to understanding its nature is not through an intellectual concept, but through an analogy. Just as a wave going across the surface of a still ocean calls forth into

being a wild stir of innumerable bubbles, the *lahar* creates myriads of individual souls out of the indivisible infinity of one Oversoul. But the all abounding Absolute remains the substratum of all the individual souls. The individual soul are the creations of a sudden and spontaneous impulse, and have, therefore, hardly any anticipation about their destined continuity of existence throughout the cyclic period until the final subsiding of the initial tremor. Within the undifferentiated being of the Absolute is born a mysterious point through which come forth the variegated manyness of creation; and the 'vasty' deep which, before a fraction of a second, was icy-still is astir with the life of innumerable frothy selves who secure their separateness of a definite size and shape through self-limitation within the foamy surface of the ocean.

But all this is merely an analogy. It would be a mistake to imagine that some real change takes place in the Absolute when the *lahar* of the involved will-to-be-conscious makes itself

THE ABSOLUTE BEING IS UNAF- FECTED BY THE <i>BHAS</i> OF MANI- FESTATION	effective by bringing into existence the world of manifestation. There can be no act of involution or evolution within the being of the Absolute; and nothing real can be born from the Absolute as any real
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change is necessarily a negation of the Absolute. The change implied in the creation of the manifested world is not an ontological change or a change in the being of the Absolute

Reality; it is only an apparent change. In one sense, the act of manifestation must be regarded as a sort of an *expansion* of the illimitable being of the Absolute, since through that act the Infinite which is without consciousness seeks to attain its own consciousness. But, since this expansion of Reality is effected through its self-limitization into various forms of life, the act of manifestation might, with equal aptness, be called the process of timeless *contraction*. But, whether the act of manifestation is looked upon as a sort of expansion of reality or as its "timeless contraction", it is preceded by an initial urge or movement which might, in terms of thought, be regarded as *an inherent and involved desire to be conscious*. The manifoldness of creation and separateness of the individual souls exist only in imagination. The very existence of the creation or the world of manifestation is grounded in *bhas* or illusion, so that, in spite of the manifestation of numberless individual souls, the Oversoul remains the same without suffering any real expansion or contraction, increment or decrement. But, though the Oversoul undergoes no modification due to the *bhas* illusion of individuation, there comes into existence its apparent differentiation into many individual souls.

The most original *bhas* or illusion into which the Oversoul was allured synchronises with the first impression. It, therefore, marks the beginning of the formation of *sanskaras*. *The formation of sanskaras starts in the most finite centre which becomes the first*

focus for the manifestation of the individuality of the soul. In the gross sphere, this first focus of manifestation is represented by the

THE MOST ORIGINAL
BHAS APPEARS IN THE
STONE PHASE

tridimensional and inert stone which has the most rudimentary and partial consciousness. This vague and undeveloped form of consciousness is hardly sufficient to illumine its own shape and form, and is hopelessly inadequate to fulfil the purpose of creation which was to enable the Oversoul to know itself. Whatever little capacity for illumination consciousness has in the stone phase, is ultimately derived from the Oversoul and not from the body of the stone. But consciousness is unable to enlarge its scope independently of the body of the stone, because the Oversoul first gets identified with consciousness and then through it to the stone form . And since all further development of consciousness is arrested by the body of the stone and its langour, evolution of the higher forms or vehicles of manifestation becomes indispensable. The development of consciousness has to proceed side by side with the evolution of the body by which it is conditioned. Therefore, the will-to-be-conscious which is inherent in the vastness of the Oversoul seeks by divine determination *a progressive evolution of the vehicles of expression.*

Thus the Oversoul forges for itself a new vehicle of expression in the mental form in which it becomes slightly more intensified. But it is even at this stage very rudimentary. And so it has to get transferred to still higher forms of vegetation and trees

in whom there is an appreciable advance in the development of consciousness through the maintenance of the vital processes of growth, decay and reproduction. Emergence of a still more developed form of consciousness becomes possible when the Oversoul seeks manifestation through the instinctive life of insects, birds and animals who are fully aware of their bodies and their respective surroundings, and who develop a sense of self-protection and aim at establishing mastery over their environment. In the higher animals intellect or reasoning also appears to a certain extent, but its working is strictly limited by the play of their instincts like the instinct of self-protection and the instinct for the care and preservation of the little ones. So even in animals consciousness has not had its full development, with the result that it is unable to serve the initial purpose of the Oversoul to have self-illumination.

The Oversoul finally takes the human form in which consciousness attains to its fullest development with complete awareness of the self and the environment. At this stage the capacity of reasoning has the widest range of activity and is unlimited in its scope. But, as the Oversoul, through its consciousness, gets identified with the gross body, consciousness does not serve the purpose of illuminating the nature of the Oversoul. However, since consciousness has had its fullest

development in the human form, there is in it a latent potentiality for self-realization, and the *will-to-be-conscious with which evolution started becomes fructified in the Sadgurus or Man-Gods who are the fair flowers of humanity.*

The Oversoul cannot attain self-knowledge through the ordinary consciousness of humanity, because it is enveloped in a multitude of *sanskaras* or impressions. As THE WINDING OF SANSKARAS con-sciousness passes from the apparently inanimate state of the stone or the metal, then to the vegetative life of the trees, then onwards to the instinctive state of insects, birds and animals, and finally to the full consciousness of the human state, it is continually creating new *sanskaras* and getting enveloped in them. And these natural *sanskaras* get added to even after attaining the human state by the further creation of non-natural *sanskaras* through manifold experience and multitudinous activities. Thus *the acquisition of sanskaras is unceasingly going on during the process of evolution as well as during the period of later post-human activities.* This acquisition of the *sanskaras* may be likened to the winding up of a piece of string round a stick, the string representing the *sanskaras* and the stick representing the mind of the individual soul. The winding up starts from the beginning of the creation and persists through all the evolutionary stages and human form, and the wound string represents all the positive *sanskaras*—natural as well as non-natural.

The fresh *sanskaras* which are constantly being created in human life are due to the multifarious objects and ideas with which consciousness finds itself confronted; and these *sanskaras* bring about important transformations in the various states of consciousness. The impressions created by beautiful objects have the potency of arousing in consciousness the innate capacity for appreciating and enjoying beauty. When one hears a good piece of music, or sees a beautiful landscape, the impression caught from these objects gives him a feeling of exaltation. In the same way, when one contacts the personality of a thinker, he might get interested in new avenues of thought and be inspired with an enthusiasm which was utterly foreign to his consciousness before contacting the thinker. Not only the impressions of objects or persons but also the impressions of ideas and superstitions have great efficacy in determining the conditions of consciousness.

The power of the impressions of superstitions might be illustrated by means of a ghost story. Of the different realms of human thought there is perhaps none as abounding in superstitions as the realm which is connected with ghosts who, according to popular ideology, are supposed to harass and torture their victim in curious ways. Once upon a time during the Moghul rule in India, a highly educated man who was very sceptical about the

stories of ghosts made up his mind to verify them from personal experience. He had been warned against visiting a certain graveyard on the night of *amavasya* (the darkest night of the month), for it was reported to be the habitation of a very dreadful ghost who unfailingly made his appearance whenever an iron nail was hammered into the ground within the limits of the graveyard. With the hammer in one hand and the nail in the other he walked straight into the graveyard on the night of *amavasya* and chose a spot uncovered by grass in order to drive a nail in. The ground was dark, and equally dark was the cloak he wore hanging loosely. When he sat on the ground, trying to hammer the nail, an end of his cloak got between the nail and the ground, and got tied to the nail. He finished hammering and felt that he was successful with the experiment without encountering upon the ghost. But, as he tried to rise in order to depart from the spot, he felt a strong pull towards the ground, and he was panic-stricken. Owing to the operation of previous impressions he could not think of anything except the ghost who, he thought, had secured him at last. And the shock of the thought was so great that the poor man died of heart-failure. This story illustrates the tremendous power which sometimes resides in the impressions created by superstition.

The power and the effect of impressions can hardly be over-estimated. An impression is solidified might, and its inertness makes it immobile and

durable. It can become so engraved upon the mind of man that despite his sincere desire and effort to have it eradicated it takes its

FREEDOM FROM SANSKARAS IS THE CONDITION OF HARMONIOUS EXPERIENCE

own time and has a way of working itself into action directly or indirectly. The mind contains many heterogeneous *sanskaras*, and while seeking expressions in consciousness, they often clash with each other. The clash of *sanskaras* is experienced in consciousness as a mental conflict. Experience is bound to be chaotic and enigmatic, full of oscillations, confusion and complex tangles, until consciousness is freed from *all sanskaras* good and bad. *Experience can become truly harmonious and integral only when consciousness is emancipated from the impressions.*

The *sanskaras* can be classified according to the essential differences in the nature of the spheres to which they refer. As referring to different spheres of existence they are found to be of

THE THREE TYPES OF SANSKARAS GIVE RISE TO THREE DIFFERENT STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

three kinds: (1) Gross *sanskaras* which enable the soul to experience the gross world through the gross medium and compel it to identify itself with the gross body. (2) Subtle *sanskaras* which enable the soul to experience the subtle world through the subtle medium and compel the soul to identify itself with the subtle body. (3) Mental *sanskaras* which enable the soul to experience the mental world through the mental medium

and compel it to identify itself with the mental body. The differences between the states of the individual souls are entirely due to the differences existing in the kind of *sanskaras* with which their consciousness is loaded. Thus the gross-conscious souls experience only the gross world; the subtle-conscious souls experience only the subtle world; and the mental-conscious souls experience only the mental world. The qualitative diversity in the experience of these three types of souls is due to the difference in the nature of their *sanskaras*.

The self-conscious souls are radically different from all the other souls, because they experience the Oversoul through the medium of the self, whereas the other souls experience only their bodies and the corresponding worlds.

THE SELF-CON-
SCIOUS SOULS
ARE FREE FROM
SANSKARAS

And this radical difference in the consciousness of the self-conscious souls and other souls is due to the fact that whereas the consciousness of other souls is conditioned by some kind of *sanskaras*, the consciousness of self-conscious souls is completely free from all *sanskaras*. It is only when consciousness is unobscured and unconditioned by *any sanskaras* that the initial will-to-be-conscious arrives at its final and real fruition, and the infinity and the indivisible unity of the absolute is consciously realized. The problem of deconditioning the mind through the removal of *sanskaras* is, therefore, extremely important.

I Believe in God

BY JEAN SCHLOSS (Hollywood)

In these troubled days, it seems to me to be incumbent upon everyone who believes in God and in His supreme omnipotence, to reaffirm that faith and to surrender more deeply to His guidance. In so doing, we shall not only strengthen and fortify our own souls against the onslaught of doubt and despair which, in many parts of the world, is, even now, rampant; but we shall also be conscious co-operators in God's plan for the world.

We have heard so much of man's plans and ideas for nations and peoples, and have seen so much of their failure, that perhaps the time has come when, not only a stray individual here and there is willing to surrender himself to a higher mind than his own, but when vast numbers of people may call upon God for guidance, and, having called, be willing to carry out His orders.

In spite of the fact that the forces of greed, cruelty and dishonour seem,

at the moment, to have the upper hand, I believe that God permits these things merely to show man how small and ineffective is his own sufficiency, and that when the lesson is deeply learned, He will turn the key by injecting into the life stream a new consciousness of Himself and His power.

Thus, when we hear of innocent people being persecuted; of small but honourable nations being sacrificed to the force and greed of unscrupulous leaders; of peace-loving people being forced against their wishes into war; let us not despair, or feel that God has forsaken His creation. Such are the times when we should look up and even rejoice; for always, *without fail*, God permits the darkest night to precede the most radiant dawn. With confidence, we may know that His hour draws near.

What we are witnessing to-day is simply the logical outcome of man's attempt to organize himself and his world

on a purely materialistic basis. In the material world, intellect is God, and the laws of the spiritual world, such as love and faith, are denied and scorned. God, we are told, is a remnant of the race's childhood, when it was not strong enough to stand on its own feet, or when it had no highly developed intellect to guide it.

Well, presumably, the race can now stand alone, since so many reject the idea of God, and the enthroned intellect rules man's activities with such results as we have only to read the daily newspapers to see. Does it encourage us to continue to base our lives on this hypothesis? Or, have we come to the place where we are willing to try another way of life—God's way—in which we, as individuals and nations, surrender our wills, our lives to Him?

Certainly the need at this time is for people whose intensity of spirit is great enough to compel their unqualified surrender. But this kind of capitulation cannot be made to an Impersonal Principle. It must be made to that Divine Incarnation, whose "glory the heaven of heavens

cannot contain", yet whose love may dwell in every humble heart. An abstract principle never turned a self-centred man into a God-filled one. For this kind of transformation, man's heart must be awakened by deep inner experience with the *personal* aspect of God, that four dimensional personality inherent in all life, yet at the same time transcending it; that personality which, from time to time throughout the ages, takes form as perfect man, and through that form makes himself the Way by which others may find liberation.

Some there are who, in coming into physical life, never completely lose their contact with this personal God. For them, whether He is incarnate or not, He is the great Reality of their lives. But others need to contact Him in the *flesh* in order to have their lives attuned to His. This Holy One many of us now recognize in our beloved Master, Baba.

He comes, as He has always come, to free man from his bondage to self, and through this freedom to lift him to a higher plane of being. He comes to demonstrate anew God's love for His children by

making Himself the Living Way. He comes as the great Awakener of man's heart, and through the love that is thereby quickened, He binds the souls which He redeems fast to His own heart.

And probably He comes to the world as a whole, because its belief in the personal God has grown faint or become overlaid with encrustations of formalism and conventional religion.

Being what He is, His power in human lives who place their trust in Him is limitless. But, just as we have always been taught, it is most effective in those lives who seek *nothing*, ask nothing, but His will. There are some who have come to Him asking for certain spiritual graces. Perhaps He has vouchsafed them glimpses of these things, or perhaps He has not. But often it is just these people who eventually turn from Him, with *their* sense of justice outraged, that He does not fulfil their requests in the way *they* think best.

Though our desires may be of the highest, spiritually, yet when He proceeds to clear away just those things in us which impede our spiritual freedom, how often we cry, "Not this

Lord, not this!" It is a human cry and one which was felt even in the heart of Jesus, as He hung upon the cross. But it is important for us also to remember the cry which followed it. "Nevertheless, not my will but *Thine* be done!"

Until we have this kind of faith in God, we cannot get very far as individuals or as nations. Imposing upon God *our* idea of what is best for us is a bastard kind of faith. Yet we see today whole systems of religion and philosophy based on this principle of impressing upon the mind of God our needs, our desires. Physical well-being, material prosperity and *our* idea of personal happiness is assumed as our right, and God is worked upon to produce these things for us. And often He does, for this method can be made to produce the desired results. But does it necessarily follow that these things are what we need to liberate our souls? And can we honestly believe that God is interested in anything but that one supreme objective? Can we seriously think that God who has created the wonders of this universe, who has given to man the form of

Himself and the capacity to realize in his soul the fullness of God, is really concerned with our desire for a new car, or relief from that pain? The pain may, in fact, be an evidence of God working in us to effect in *His own way* our greater freedom.

Just as the intellect will never open the door to the kingdom of the spirit, so will this self-seeking kind of faith never bring to our earth the kingdom of heaven. For that we need an unquestioning faith which asks nothing, yet receives everything, for in abandoning ourselves *wholly* to God we make it possible for Him, not only to bestow upon us the lesser gifts of the spirit, but to give to us the supreme gift of Himself.

It is very simple, yet very profound, this *yoga* of God surrender, this ultimate in faith. It brings into play in our lives the highest protection, the wisest guidance and the most amazing working out of any problem or question which confronts us. It operates in ways which would confound the rational mind, but its results are sure and far-reaching.

Not in a moment shall we achieve this complete surrender, but, as we advance towards it, we have increasing confirmations that our faith is not misplaced or misguided. In fact, the more we exercise this spiritual sinew of faith, the more speedily we carve our way on the road to Reality. Life now becomes a glorious thing, a superb adventure which offers us the utmost of joy and complete satisfaction. The senses, which normally contact but the surface of things, now penetrate to the inwardness of life, to the essence of the rose's fragrance, the joy within the song, the light beyond the sunset. Nor are the confirmations we receive merely of a subjective order. We see human relationships harmonized; conflicts resolved; problems untangled; love awakened or reborn.

Now that He dwells with us again in human form, the magic of His love is vastly accelerated. One need not meet Him outwardly to feel deeply the contact with His spirit^[SEP] and to experience in one's life the transformations He makes possible, *if we*

surrender our lives to Him.

It is belief in this One which I proclaim, that lovely One whom I have known for many years, and whom I now serve in the human

form of my Master, Baba. It is belief in this One which I would have others share in order that the day of His manifestation may be hastened and that the world's misery may be turned into spiritual joy.



Shri Meher Baba's Tour

OF NINE DAYS THROUGH CENTRAL INDIA*

BY PRINCESS NORINA MATCHABELLI

The 27th of December. The second day's performance begins with the usual duties. Washing of the mad-child. Answering of the mail. Interviews. Tea in the afternoon at the poetess' home. Open *darshana* in the evening and concert.

A peculiar incident happens during the hours of the morning. A woman, speaking broken English, looking the real type of the Indian soil, walks up to me. She tells me this most extraordinary story I here repeat in the same naive style it was told to me. This child of nature,

crude in 'I' but real in Being, all her life has been seeking for God. She had a daughter who, impatient to see God, committed suicide. Before dying she gave her mother the solemn promise that she would send down God to her. Adorable fool, sweet ignorant child! No doubt her unconscious act God has forgiven—no one dies for Him in vain! This wonderful woman whose truthful story I took into my heart, led by the spirit of her visionary daughter, comes to Nagpur where she finds the God. All

* Continued from February 1939 issue.

day I saw her standing as close as she could to where Baba was, silently taking in the sweetness of His presence. Her own sister, a similar type, solid, staunch, peasant-like woman with a heart of gold, arrives in the afternoon. She asks to meet me; no doubt she wants to convey to Baba that she believes *He is the right One*. She said: "I have recognized Him. He is the Avatar. I do not need to ask Him any questions. I do not need to touch Him. I hear His Voice. I see Him within my heart."

In the afternoon we are expected at the home of D., the young poetess. Baba is received in a beautiful clean bright room which serves also as a bedroom. Her own bed was prepared like a throne for Baba to sit upon. Over the immaculate white embroidered bedspread she had placed flowers and fruits. At the end of the bed stood a small table which had been made into an altar at Baba's feet, and on it are the shiny silver vessels that serve for the ceremony—a candle is burning dim and sweet and incense forms a blue spiral around Baba's feet. After these

holy offerings Baba asks her to read some of her poems. She reads with a loud voice and with the authority of a strong personality which affirms itself in art. She becomes a different woman. Baba greatly admires the depth and beauty of her thought. With unexpected simplicity which was prompted from the sincerity of her spiritual longing, she implores Baba that He would reveal to her Divine Love. The solemnity of her request creates a moment of suspense. ...Baba, taking her arms into His, gives the promise. Present at this initiation, performed in a human free manner, are all of us who form Baba's party.

Baba leaves, and with Him, in His car, are B.. and J. K., Baba's brother Jal and myself. B.. drives in serpentine on perfectly paved asphalt roads, between lovely gardens, bungalows with Eastern facades, palaces for the official ordinances and so forth. We see many elegant and good looking women wearing bright coloured *saris*, promenading babies in go-carts of English make through the neatly planted public gardens.

We drive out of town, pass the beautiful summer swimming-pool, no doubt a club for the fashionable world. At this moment, Baba, who so often uses humour to attenuate outwardly the inner shock of His word in Truth, turns abruptly to J. B. who is sitting at His feet, "Do you swim?" "Yes," he answers. "Well," continues Baba, "one day you will swim in the infinite ocean of Love—I am the Ocean of Love."

Later on, passing by the house of one of the foreign magnates, Baba again remarks: "Lust wants possessions. Love gives possessions."

We return home to find new people standing, waiting in rows. Baba retires to His room for a few moments. The police are at the gate to make clear the way. The doors have to be kept shut to hold back the people who had been untiring in waiting during the afternoon. Special precautions are taken to prevent the overflow from breaking in. B.'s son and a few of the devotees have to form a chain with their strong arms to give free passage to a few to enter at one time.

It is 7-30 p.m. The hall is already packed when Baba walks in to take His seat on the beautiful couch richly decorated with pillows, shawls, carpets, representing the donations of the day. The feast of Love is in full swing. The music begins to storm: the Indian music is like nature, it swings, it thrills in forms of all rhythms; it is a bird song; it is the human sigh, the exode of the soul; it contains the echo of life itself.

A remarkable individual suddenly enters the room, drawing the attention of the entire audience. Huge in stature, young, powerful in appearance, loud in manners, this man seems to be well-known, as many cheer at his coming. When he laughs his mouth opens like a huge crevice in crude dark earth. But visible in his expression is the inner divine child that makes his eyes glow with joy unfathomable. "Who is he?" we were bound to ask. Someone whispers, "He is a saint." With the unself-conscious attitude of a child, he places himself at Baba's feet. He does not ask for Baba's *darshana*, but, unconventional and free, releases

with loud voice sentences that must have been prompted from within, swinging in subtler rhythm. Baba, who was working, doing, forming, acting, unendingly bending in Mercy over the perpetual streaming flow of humanity who came to call for the Divine Gift, knew this 'passer-by'. He indulges his presence for a short while, giving him time and space to react in his own individual way to the 'Truth-shock' that unconditionally had to strike this personality, too, who was hailed as a saint, but whom Baba knew to be only midway. ...At a *due moment* Baba makes him feel that he should change his place and sit at the other end of the hall. The man responds instantaneously, and withdraws, taking his seat near the orchestra. The breeze of Love that Baba arouses in that soul works like storm, giving vent to his spiritual emotion: he takes one of the drums and begins to beat. Fiery, like a volcano in eruption, he throws off into space his ringing voice. After a while Baba passes another intuition order which makes him stop and leave. Calm and peace reign again after the exciting

interlude which is balm to all.^[SEP]

On the 28th of December the expected telegram from Navsari arrives giving the announcement of Sorabji Desai's death on the 27th of December, twenty minutes after the marriage ceremony, precisely timed by Baba as the cause of events proved. None of us feel surprised, as, on the prescribed day, Baba in His executive way persistently kept inquiring about news from Naysari. His mind was visibly set upon this work. The work was to suspend death 'at will'. The day is spent in apparent excitement of external action. To serve Him, in these executive moments of His work, we practise continuous concentration and attention, we consciously keep vigil upon the point on which He is focussing. At different occasions we may have to travel. We may be ordered to run back and forth between His place and the spot or the form on which He directs His divine spark. We have to speak to people on the subject He will design. Baba directs the drama of life and death using His unfathomable humour! Sorabji Desai's death had to be timed to conform

also with external circumstances. The ceremony should be performed at the ordained hour and have the natural course of events without interruption by external shocks; the family should be satisfied and the guests should rejoice. For this the miracle of suspending death 'at will' had to be performed with subtle tact and discretion. While reading the telegram Baba appeared very satisfied, and said, "Well done."

During the intense working hours of the morning an interesting incident happens. From the other side of the city of Nagpur, came a man who is the guardian of Baba Tajuddin's resting place. Tajuddin Baba was one of the five Perfect Masters who belonged to the powerful hierarchy that governs the inner affairs of mankind on our material plane. He is accompanied by a young Parsi of prominent family who, in his life of affairs, tries to fight for honesty and justice but whose life is utter misery and unhappiness. This young man has become a fervent seeker of Truth. Every morning at four o'clock he would take his car and drive to the tomb of Baba Tajuddin. The

young man, who is used to prayer, loves these hours of worship and holds to it with unusual steadfastness and determination; but thinking practically he realized that he was speculating on the Unseen, and, one day, questioned the guardian whether it would not be wiser for him to meet the alive Perfect Master. This pleased the guardian to a certain point only, as he did not like to see the grave of his Beloved Sadguru deserted. He advised the young man not to let his mind swerve with unnecessary considerations, but go on with his regular routine of worship for the Great Master who, in consciousness, is always present.

A peculiar uncertainty and inner restlessness brought a decision in a moment of desperation. The young man made up his mind to challenge the power of Tajuddin. He placed his wish before the still monument which so far had revealed very little to him, and said: "If you are who you are, you will make it true that I meet the alive Master."

The guardian did not want his Beloved Sadguru to disappoint the young worshipper

of Truth, so he, too, joined in his wish. With persistent prayers he invoked the Beloved One to demonstrate and fulfil the young man's wish. So it happens one morning the guardian hears the Voice of Tajuddin, speaking through intuition, that within three months a living Sadguru would be in Nagpur. Three months later Shri Sadguru Meher Baba arrives in Nagpur. While the young Parsi stood before the holy monument, he was sure that Truth really is this Impersonal Being who in Him gives the sign to react, but, through the inner order in intuition, is calling to purer order in conscience. He believes that it is the Voice of the same Pure Order in Being, as the Impersonal One that gave the signal within to the guardian who is to lead the young man to meet Shri Meher Baba, the personification of the Impersonal One. We are all present in the room when the young Parsi and the guardian call on Baba's Grace. The young man *now knows* that Truth is reality which becomes a fact and takes form in the alive personified Impersonal One. He knows that God is

consciousness in Being; and when he sees Baba he knows that Tajuddin, or Baba, is the same Truth, the same Power, the same Life in conscious order in Pure Substance.

The young man realizes that the lives of these Pure Beings are *One Life* in perpetual will-function, creating perpetual attraction to Light of Life unconscious. The fact to have met Shri Meher Baba becomes, for the young man, an event of great importance. No doubt this Parsi will experience in himself the way to Truth and, in himself, become conscious of the unconditional importance to be a subordinate in Being of one who is the Divine personified Pure Existence, as is Shri Meher Baba.

To be the disciple of a Perfect Master means to have in life no desire to satisfy the 'I'; to have no want in Being but the profound longing to expand in Him as the Beloved and to exist and serve Him as His subject. To be or not to be—therein lies all the difficult question. It is hard to learn to live in subordination, but it is supreme experience to

realize resurrection of the Divine Part in Being as the want unfathomable that marks time in spiritual evolution. Life in selfless subordination in Him, the

Beloved, is the wish of all who dedicate their very lives to him, ready to accept any challenge for the fulfilment of the long-lived dream to unite in Him with Life Eternal.

(To be continued)



Question Baba Answers

BY DR. ABDUL GHANI MUNSIFF

Question

What is the propriety and significance of worldly activities in the presence of a Spiritual Master—such as schools, hospitals, asylums, etc. which already are numerous in the world?

Answer

It is true the world abounds in similar institutions, but they are invariably philanthropically inspired. Institutions under my care have a spiritual purpose to serve. Worldly benefactions are demanded and created

solely by society. My activities are nothing if not an objective manifestation of that divine dispensation which sustains the phenomenal world. Divine wisdom full of love and compassion has been known to incarnate from time to time in answer to the call of humanity when faced with hopeless unredeemable bankruptcy in all departments of life—moral, material and spiritual.

For eyes that can discern clearly unmistakable signs of

disintegration, social and economical, usually preceding the advent of divine manifestation, are in evidence all around. Rehabilitation of the world morally and spiritually, with the automatic readjustment of economic and social structure, is the avowed mission of divine manifestation on earth. To achieve this, universal mind and infinite consciousness does universal work in infinite ways. Whatever objective work is done by one of universal mind and infinite consciousness, affects the whole scope of his working. If he fasts, the result of fasting is felt by the whole universe spiritually; if he observes silence, characteristic spiritual benefit accrues to the universe. Just as fasting and silence by an individual results in spiritual gain to the individual concerned, likewise fast and silence by one of universal mind and infinite consciousness amounts to an ordeal or penance suffered by the universe itself,

resulting in spiritual betterment of the whole.

Besides moral and spiritual disruption, the world today is experiencing terrible economic chaos. To invite or tempt the world to things spiritual, the material needs (individual or collective) must be satisfied before the mind can dispassionately accept the spiritual. When I give food and clothing with my own hands, it will result in the world gaining its economic and material welfare. When I wash the God-mad and the lepers, the effect will be that those of sub-normal or abnormal consciousness will be restored to normal or sub-normal consciousness; while the lepers will either be cured, or their future embodiments will be considerably minimized.

Accept it as a spiritual fact that every living spiritual Master, charged with duty, affects his surroundings according to the scope of his work. As the Master, so the atmosphere around.



Meeting

BY MANI DESAI

To realize God, to know Him and to have knowledge of His Divine Power is the aim, the chief aim of every human being; therefore in our search for the Light we must come in contact with a Perfect Master. For example: a student wants to learn the French language; he searches for that person who has complete knowledge and mastery of the language to instruct him; so if one wants to obtain knowledge of God it is necessary to search for that Master who, through His experience of the Light, has attained knowledge of God.

It depends upon the intensity of our desire for Divine knowledge that will eventually lead us to the Master. To crave, to yearn, to long, to feel the union with one who has perfect understanding leads us to the experience of Oneness and is the first step of a student of spirituality in attaining his chief aim in life.

This is a sign that the time of 'meeting' is near.

Often a scholar is not pleased to meet a spiritual Master, because the

poor soul is not yet ready to do so. If a soul is ready for 'meeting' and if its time is near, the soul goes automatically to the Master. Again we find the soul, although fit for the 'meeting', is careless and procrastinates in postponement to procure this Divine knowledge.

I will now try to inform my readers how the soul draws near to God. Even though the soul is careless, it is the Supreme Light which, regardless of everything, eventually draws the soul to the ultimate Goal.

I will explain through a very interesting incident. Some of my readers may have been acquainted with the late Sorabji Muncherji Desai, the devotee of Shreeji Meher Baba Sahib, who was most fortunate in having the holy visit of Shreeji in his last moments on earth. From early youth he was a seeker of Truth and always searching for a Master. In this era it is not easy to find a Perfect Master, as so many claim to be; so this quest became the problem of his life.

And just as I have said before, *if* the time of 'meeting' is near, then automatically the soul finds the right Path.

Sorabji Desai had never seen Baba or even heard the name "Meher Baba". But always in his heart was this keen desire that the knowledge of God would be unfolded to him, and now his answer was already on its way.

One day Shri Meher Baba sent His disciples to see Sorabji Desai with definite instructions that he was to write a book about the life of Shreeji Upasni Maharaj of Sakori, and Shri Baba had provided him with the necessary information for this work.

When the disciples first went to Navsari, to the home of Sorabji Desai, he answered them rudely: "Why should I trouble myself for him whom I have never known? Go back with all your papers and tell your Master that I do not want to do this and I am not bound to do his work."

Reluctantly the disciples returned to the Master and related what had happened. Thereupon the Master again sent them to Mr. Desai with His strict orders, "Go and tell him that he must

do my work and only he, himself, can do this. If he refuses again, do not return to tell me, but leave the papers with him."

Once more the disciples went to Sorabji Desai and gave him the Master's order. This time he agreed to do the work but quite unwillingly.

The disciples then described the mission of their Master and exemplified the strange ways of Saints which, they said, he must not impute nor be wrathful against. Saints always have their reasons for the necessity and conformity of their commands, and when the Master reprimands or chides anyone, it is always to improve their ignorant souls. Mr. Desai replied: "If he is a Master, he is yours and not mine; so why must I bear a stranger's presumptuous tyranny? If he would write me one insult (offence) I would use four words for it!" Finally it became his good fortune to write the famous book entitled "*Sakorina Sadguru*" (Saint of Sakori), and all this was due to the Beloved Babaji.

It is a fact that whenever Mr. Desai found difficulty in writing the book he would

always receive help from Shri Meher Baba: either in letters, or Baba would send his disciples to him on the same day when his difficulty would be most severe. Gradually through his earnestness he gained the understanding of the Divine Power of Shreeji Meher Baba Sahib. Since this time Mr. Desai and his family have had many wonderful experiences which they attribute to their Beloved Babaji in sweet remembrance.

It is a truth that in the beginning Mr. Desai found difficulty in writing. One day while he sat concentrating over his manuscript, a huge crow (the largest he had ever seen in his life) came into his room. Mr. Desai stared at the crow quite unconsciously, being oblivious of all except his work. The crow advanced dancing and jumping into the room, utterly without fear, and soon began to dance on his bed. Mr. Desai tried to make the crow go out, but the fearless crow continued his dancing steps and then flew away. The same moment as the crow disappeared Mr. Desai felt it was no ordinary crow, and there must be some motive for its call. Later he was told that if a huge crow,

such as the one who went to Mr. Desai, should come into a house, it is certain that good luck will follow and bring to that home the august visit of Sainath Baba (the Master of Shreeji Upasni Maharaj).

From now on all difficulties concerning the work of Mr. Desai were removed, and the way was made clear for his pen.

Here let me persuade all my wise and prudent readers to wake up and prepare their soul for the 'meeting', the everlasting meeting with our Lord whom we have forgotten in our eagerness for the false pleasures and joys of the world. Do not follow the shadow, but find the reality which casts the shadow of your hope fulfilled. Forget the dreamland and go into your own unexplored land. Polish up yourself, your inner self, for *within* lies the value of this priceless jewel—your soul. As the goldsmith knows how to polish gold and a blacksmith to clean iron, so the soul needs the cleansing and purifying of a Perfect Master. May Shri Meher Baba help us to see His Divine Light.



Shri Meher Baba's Teaching as the Kernel of Upanishadic Wisdom

BY DR. C. D. DESHMUKH, M.A., Ph.D.

Of the Bhagwadgita it is said that its teaching is the milk gathered from the cows in the form of the Upanishads. We can also say about Shri Meher Baba's teaching, that it represents the kernel of Upanishadic wisdom. Shri Meher Baba is the Ancient One and his teaching reveals the Truth which is as old as the cosmos. The spiritual wisdom which he brings has had its echoes even in the hoary past of the Upanishadic times. The superficial trend in modernism would seem to require that the Truth should be new. But Truth does not change from time to time like the fashions of the day. The unspeakable grandeur with which it is hallowed does not fade with the rolling of years. That which is eternal cannot become stale with time. In Shri Meher Baba's teaching the kernel of the ancient wisdom of the Upanishads is being presented to the world again,

with divine authority. India is a land of philosophers and seers, and the place of the Upanishads in Indian philosophy is unique. From the historical point of view the brilliant and imposing systems of the later periods had their roots in the Upanishads, and almost all of them derive their inspiration from the wisdom treasured in them. The important position which the Upanishads have in Indian philosophy and also in the philosophical thought of the world is due to the fact that they are a fruit of an age which is vibrant with the most earnest and critical search for the Truth. They are not the product of arm-chair speculation. The sages and the seers of the Upanishads are wrestling with problems which are as real to them as the problem of bread is to the masses in modern times. We have striking examples of wisdom-loving kings like Janak who were

willing to sacrifice all their possessions for the sake of the highest knowledge. Even ladies had caught the enthusiasm for philosophy as is shown by the example of Gargi and Maitreyee. Further the spirit of the period is not dogmatic but rational. No philosopher could hope to receive recognition or become pre-eminent without answering the criticism of rival thinkers. He had to give the exposition of his views in assemblies which were resonant with keen controversies.

The Upanishadic thinkers have seriously tried all the avenues of the Truth. There are questions which cannot be conclusively decided except by means of the scientific method. For example, knowledge about pre-existence or re-incarnation, or about the conditions of existence in life after death, can be based, not on speculation, but on direct information or inference from the facts of experience. In this connection the method of psychical research which is essentially scientific in spirit was not unknown to the Upanishadic thinkers. Attempt to establish contact with the other world through

mediums is referred to in the *Brihad-aranyaka* in the story of the lady possessed by a *Gandharva*.

Such problems were attacked through the scientific method. For many persons testimony of experts can be the only available method in certain fields. As Shri Meher Baba once told his disciples, the knowledge of the hidden side of life has to be gathered by "believing those who know the secrets of life and death". Unless there is a general unfoldment of occult powers, the testimony of experts will have to be accepted as the best scientific data available.

While problems of the nature and the laws of the other world are to be tackled through the scientific method, there are many metaphysical and ontological problems which require to be approached through methods which are essentially philosophic. In Upanishads, these important problems are attacked along four distinct lines: (1) Speculative, (2) Ethical, (3) Psychological and (4) Religious.

There are two main speculative queries in the Upani-

shadic literature: (1) What is the innermost principle in man? (2) What is the ultimate nature of Reality? With regard to the first query they soon came to the conclusion that the soul is neither the body nor the mind but some principle which transcends both. Those who in modern psychology identify the soul with the mind will be startled by the penetration of their initial question, "By whose inspiration does the incited mind go to its object?" (*Kena*). And in reply to this question the ultimate principle in human life is described as "something which is incomprehensible to the mind but which at the same time comprehends the mind". (*Kena*). The second query was about that primary and unitary principle of the cosmos by knowing which everything else which is not known becomes known, just as by knowing the earth in one earthen pot we know the essence of all the earthen pots, since earth is the only true substance, and its various forms are merely distinctions of speech. (*Chandogya*). The conclusion of the second query that the "pure being alone existed in the beginning, one

without the second", and that the world with its multiplicity and differentiation came into existence because "it desired to create itself and become many". (*Chandogya*). The source of individuation is thus not to be found in any other foreign principle. It is in the original principle itself.

The next important question which naturally confronted the Upanishadic thinkers was, "What exactly is the relation of this cosmic principle to the innermost principle in man?" And it is at this point that they have taken the boldest and the most unique step of identifying the two principles. "O child! All creations are rooted in the Truth. The Truth is their home and in the Truth they abide. *That Truth, that Atman thou art—O Swetaketo!*" (*Chandogya*). This basic Truth is given to the world in a new form when Shri Meher Baba proclaims that "you not only possess but actually are Soul, which is but one Paramatman", or when he declares that "*to realize the Supreme Being as your own self is to realize the Truth*".*

The question of explaining

* Sayings

the nature of the identity between the individual soul and Universal Atman is not capable of being tackled through the intellect alone. At this critical point the Upanishadic sages deliberately give up ratiocination, and have no shadow of regret in doing so. The human soul seems to have a separate and self-sufficient unity and independence of its own. How exactly is it merged or swallowed up in the Absolute? Here the Upanishadic thinkers openly and clearly give up the attempt to explain the fact by means of ratiocinative thought. All that we get from them as an aid to our imagination is a few brilliant analogies. Just as all the juices of flowers lose their distinctiveness in the honey stored by the bees in the honey-comb, and the rivers have no separate existence when they pour themselves in the ocean, the creatures in the Absolute can have no private and limited self-consciousness. And this all devouring Absolute Truth is not merely transcendent or isolated from the creation, but is immanent in it like the vital juice which nourishes the leaves, the branches, the fruit and the flowers of a living tree, or like the salt

when dissolved in water pervades it in all the parts. (*Chandogya*).

The Upanishads clearly and openly recognize that there are many inevitable and insuperable difficulties in the attempt to understand the Infinite Atman through the mind. Shri Meher Baba brings out this point unambiguously when he says "intellect is the lowest form of understanding...",* and that therefore "you must surrender yourself to a Sadguru if you want God- realization."† We find this doctrine anticipated by the Upanishadic seer when he says, "This knowledge cannot be obtained through reasoning. O beloved one! *Only when it is told by another is it really understood.*" (*Katha*). The master of wisdom is thus indispensable for arriving at this supreme understanding. Hence the clarion call of the sages is, "*Arise! Awaken! Obtain understanding by approaching the Supreme Teachers!*" The wise men say that "the Path is difficult like walking on the edge of a knife". (*Katha*).

Before, however, the disciple can derive any benefit from the Master, he has to undergo

* Message 1932

† Sayings

certain moral discipline. As emphasised by Shri Meher Baba, the way to realization is "*from God to God*".* The Upanishadic sages also required moral preparation of the aspirant before they considered him fit for highest knowledge. At times they enjoined celibacy as a precondition of the supreme knowledge of the Atman. Sometimes moral precepts are given to the disciples, e.g., "Speak the truth. Follow religion. Do not be negligent in your studies." (*Taittiriya*). This was their clear commandment. A high degree of moral attainment is, according to them, absolutely necessary to make a person fit for receiving the knowledge of the Atman. Thus in *Katha* Upanishad the god of Death tests Nachiketas by making him tempting offers, and congratulates him for choosing the good in preference to the tempting; and says, "The courageous one accepts the good rather than the tempting." (*Katha*). The moral life in itself is not sufficient. It has to be further supplemented by a life of psychological discipline and religious devotion. In his discourse on

repeating God's name Shri Meher Baba says, "Concentrate your mind on the repetition alone, and breathe regularly while doing so." He often indicates for his disciples different forms of meditation, and in his pamphlet on "Meditation" recommends concentration on "the mere form of a God-man, or some simple formula such as 'I am neither *sharir* (gross body) nor *prana* (the subtle body which is the seat of desires and vital forces), nor *manas* (mental body which is the seat of the mind): I am Atman (Soul)'".

This emphasis on the need for a life of meditation and constant search is prominent in the Upanishadic philosophy as will be seen from the enjoinder, "The Atman should be seen, heard of, thought and meditated upon." (*Brihadaranyaka*). The psychological discipline is not to be looked upon as a kind of mechanical psychic exercise on the analogy of physical exercise which is wholesome for physical culture, but it is meant to bring out and illumine the hidden possibilities in the human hearts. Thus we are gradu-

* My Master and His Teaching, P. 23.

ally led to the life of religion as a necessary supplement for the other approaches to the truth.

(To be continued)



"Tunes in Words" Inspired by Baba

BY COUNTESS NADINE TOLSTOY

If I am a fading flower dying in thirst for water and light, deprived of pure air and fertilizing substance, should I seek one who will come and tell me in words what I need and what I lack, then perhaps would point out all my short-comings and failings? Should I listen to such advisers who only *speak well* about things to achieve? How great is the irony of their advice, for they have nothing to give and to show, failing in example and acts. Would you not rather seek regions of all abundance of light and take from One who will spread light and vivifying substance, who will feed the very roots as well as all its branches and leaves?

Why waste time on vanity of empty words! Let us thirst for Him alone who

awakens all life. What is the use of good precepts which come from a dry heart helpless to fulfil its promise? Where is the art and the power of 'giving'?

It is a day of days when one can meet the awakener who is the source itself and gives from itself. Who is like Him! Why lose time on indirect channels when He is here to give it all Himself!

So drink, drink! Open your lips to receive the nectar! Still your heart to let His heart in! Still the waves of thoughts and emotions to let the in-flow make you new, filled with the Divine! What else there is, when one has met Himself—the ever-awaited for real Perfect One, the Beloved of all times!

Drink, drink, feed your heart and soul on this Source of all life and joy! Who can give 'feed' unless they have it themselves? Give your soul in full emptiness, drink to the point of saturation, and then go and feed others. Make your light bright to radiate it far and around.

Why gather dry leaves of faded beauty, dropped from a tree into decay, or sleep to dream of the far off spring and a new awakening! Why not live and rest in cooling protection of the Eternal Life-Tree itself! He gives us its sap, its refreshing fragrance, its protection and quiet, its full beauty.

Seek none but Him . Let us walk through life carrying the most precious 'gifts' with care and joy. Sure in divine contentment and calm let those marvellous 'gifts' unfold us and live within till all distinctions are no more.

Oh, be aware of His soundless whispers, do not let the thought talk so loud. How can you hear His voice when He will need you? Will His call remain then in vain? Still your waves of noise, lest they raise to chaos and

havoc. Make the strings ready for His touch! Oh, become His instrument!

What does it matter what you do; in doing *empty* yourself—then you may be used at the call of His voice. Then you may be at service for the need of His cause! Be in Him until you become all His—then all is One, pure and true! Oh, let Him speak and sing and do through you! Why remain apart! Open all the gates, as He may enter unaware, keep the space free!

How clear and simple and how beautiful is this Truth, the Truth of all times; cease the trouble and care of yourself; why this delusion! Release the wearing out ties and clasp Him when He comes near! Loosen the strings so they may be tuned to His bow! Let Him play the divine tunes. Be still and let the worship raise your heart to Love. Love—for this is the only ritual of *a living* God!

How simple it is, how wonderful are His subtle ways! With His breath He blows away unseen the web of the net in which we are caught living veiled in the twilight. How suddenly He makes one

light and full of new joy—and the whole world is changed around! This is the mystery of His Love, which 'burns all impurities away'. What seemed before so real—is gone, no more, a smoke dissolved in pure spheres. Oh, the breath of the true existence of the Beloved! What a miracle and a wonderful mystery—the invisible Reality! The invisible Reality unseen, yet manifest in its true creativeness!

Nothing can equal this power of all existence. What else matters? Where can our desires turn after we have discovered Him and 'This'?

* * *

Listen! The heart is tapping—do not let other noises overwhelm the voice of the 'new born'.

* * *

Where shall you go now when all barriers have melted away and all is becoming One? When the heart

'speaks', who can remain deaf to its voice? When the beauty floods the soul, who can remain blind to its Radiance and Truth? His Love wins all of the heart and soul. What remains of the old, when new life gives the bloom of eternal youth! Let the dead sleep with the dead if they so choose, why this concern? It is all His Will and His Way. Follow Him in this life; delay not; He alone matters in the whole universe!

He brings you nearer and nearer, He persists with calls, draws and irresistibly winds you closer; the mist of separation becomes thin and transparent. The Rhythm of His Being holds you in His enchantment, revealing more and more the hidden meaning, the sacred beauty of Himself in us—the awareness of One Soul!

This is His Love's work.

Love brings to life the ageless (age-long) flower to full bloom—the Soul of One God in all!





I was dreaming. I was lost in some wild mountains in a strange country. Mysterious, silent and terrifying rocks fantastically shaped surrounded me from everywhere. I climbed and laboured from rock to rock, slipping and falling and getting up again, jumping and crawling higher and higher. I ignored my destination. To move further and further seemed to be the only object. At last I came to a stop. I was on a narrow sort of ledge, and a tremendous high wall of a solid rock was facing me, and behind me was a drop of many hundred feet... There was nowhere to go...But suddenly I saw that on the face of that rock there was a small iron door...I was stretching my hand to open it, but before I could do so, it swung open, and a blazing light poured out of it. A man was standing there and smiling at me. I could not see the features of the man, because they were drowned in light. But I saw a pair of eyes sparkling like black diamonds. His hands were small

and thin with long fingers. He held a short stick in one of his hands, while the other was slightly raised with long fingers apart. He was so calm that it was terrifying.

"Who are you?" I asked.

"I am Shri Meher Baba," he answered. "You can't go through that door—not yet."

"Why not?"

"Because you have to climb a little longer." "But I tried; I want to rest," I exclaimed.

"Don't worry. You will rest when the time comes. You remember, when you left Sais in a hurry, I promised you would rest for 1000 years; and then, do you remember what you did in Rome?"

"No, I do not. But tell me where does that door lead to?"

"It leads to a place from where people do not come out but are sent out."

You seem to know a lot. If so, will you tell me, Shri Meher Baba, what is a man and

** This dream appeared to Mme. X in England before she met Shri Meher Baba personally. It was written in a letter to one of the disciples of the Master.*

where does he come from?"^[SEP]"Man is one of the results of the Universal Mind. He comes from the same source of all that exists."

"You mean that I—a human being—I come from the same source as my dog?"

"Yes. When in primitive state of larva in its original form, you not only come from the same source, but you are alike."

"And then?"

"Then the evolution is operated, each in its destined circle. You remember that design of Amon," and here the man of light traced with his little stick a design on the rock. He drew a circle, and wrote within it "Universal Mind", round it drew another circle in which he inserted three words, "Consciousness", "Love" and "Creative Power". Then from that circle he drew lines going out like sun rays. He wrote at the end of each a word, but as he was writing very quickly, the words were obliterated. I could hardly follow. I remember "Air", "Matter", "Minerals", "Animals", "Man"...

"And who made the soul?" I asked.

"It was not made—it was given," came the answer.

"And where does evil come from?"

"There is no place for evil in the circle—it comes from freedom of action. There is a clash in the evolution of mind, as air, fire, water and earth clash in the evolution of matter."

"Yes. I understand. But now tell me one more thing—is there anything I ought to do?"

"Yes. Though since I saw you last, you have progressed and you have mastered your mind by capacity of concentration, and you have awakened your spiritual self; however you are standing now in front of a blank wall. From that spiritual consciousness which you have attained you have still to go further. To climb this wall higher up to the Ultimate Reality is the highest consciousness. You have mastered many of the *sanskaras*, but not all—not all..."

The door closed, the light vanished; but it seemed to me that high, high up above my head and above the rock, a gleaming hand was waiving to me pointing upwards!



□□□□ *Meher Baba*

BY KEMALI

To paint a picture of this Man Divine^[1]_[2]
lies but through inspiration sent from God.
"This is My beloved son in whom I am well pleased."
Could colours blend as words
Which, voiced through God, descend into our hearts,
Thus would I take my pen, and,
With God's guidance, paint Him in the glory of the
sunrise. The dew on verdant grass
Absorbed in adoration; and the chorus of the birds
Hosannahs sing. The day dawns in ecstasy
To rise again from death.

Behold and see, through thine own eyes, the glory
that doth here abound. The ocean deep,
The sea, resound in colours and reflect His promise
in the rainbow. In the sky,
The meadows vast of heaven, are strewn forget-me-nots.
The angels there abide
To sing Him praise. The sun and moon He set in
motion. In all of these He reigns supreme
To keep it pure. He is in all—all is in Him as
One. His blessing gave
The world was perfected.

The shadows fall across my pen. In humbleness I
kneel. There on the horizon the setting sun
Proclaims the end of day. The pantomime of colours
enhance in brilliancy; and in the clouds
I see His face—Baba the Man is God. The tide
of the sea swells in exultation and throws
From waters deep its foam upon the sand. Slowly
the moon sheds its pure silver light.

Impressions on Shri Meher Baba

BY DELIA DE LEON (London)

All my life I have had two intense desires—the first came to me when I was very young (about nine). I was then at a boarding school in the West Indies; so perhaps it was the beauty of a warm tropical star-spangled night that stirred my imagination to wonder what was beyond, and my childish fancy picturing God as sitting on a throne just behind the stars started a train of thoughts in me that, though often dimmed, still persisted and gathered force and intensity as I grew older—to know and understand about God.

The second desire came later. I wanted to act—to be a great actress. Both desires ran parallel and were the pivot of my life. The first haunted me; I could not escape it. Not being attracted by conventional forms of religion, I investigated all the 'isms' and strange cults. I read avidly books and poems that told of mystical and spiritual experiences. Jesus especially attracted me but quite outside the

Church. I travelled a great deal, and although I enjoyed life with its many experiences, deep down I was restless and dissatisfied. I mostly did as I liked, for I was spoilt and self-willed.

The second desire led me through various channels to become part proprietor of a little experimental theatre. Strange fact that it was in a theatre that the event took place which was to change the whole current of my life, for I only started to be alive from that moment.

In the theatre work I was happy and busy; after many ups and downs success came, but it lasted only a short while; suddenly everything started to go wrong. I lost practically all my money, and I eventually reached a period when I was at a low ebb, physically, mentally and spiritually. It was just at that psychological moment, though what at the time seemed a mere chance—the reading of a letter in a weekly paper—that I was

drawn to a place where people told me of a great Spiritual Teacher and of His impending visit to the West. My instinct to go to this place had been so strong that I knew nothing could prevent it. As I climbed up the hill at the top of which stood East Challacombe, I felt very exhilarated. Was I not on the threshold of a strange and thrilling adventure?

While I was there came a wire that He was already on His way. He arrived in September 1931, and it was at the Coliseum during a performance of "White Horse Inn" that I first met Shri Meher Baba. I was to have seen Him the following day, but it was suggested that I should come that evening. Some friends took me into the box. I felt shy and nervous. He looked at me kindly and made me sit next to Him. I had seen His face before in my dreams; the eyes were startling in their beauty, the face seemed of luminous honey-colour, framed by a halo of long dark hair. The hands were most noticeable—they kept up an incessant pantomime, and were strong, slim and sensitive.

Someone said, "This is your surprise, Baba." He patted my hand, and I

think from that moment I must have intuitively recognized Him as my Master, for I suddenly wanted to cry. I felt stunned. The stage, the actors seemed to recede and to become vague and far away.

At the end of the performance I knew I must see Him again, and He nodded to my request. I went home as if in a dream. That night I slept very little. I kept thinking of Him, and next morning, much to the astonishment of my family, I rushed off at an incredibly early hour for me.

During the week of His stay in London I saw Him every day. Time and place seemed not to exist. Everyone and everything faded from my mind except Baba. He alone seemed real—the Perfect Human Being. Compared to Him everyone else was like a shadow. He drew me irresistibly, His love melted me, and His humour and charm attracted me. His silence was more potent than words. It is not what a Master says but what He is able to convey of Truth and Love that is important, what He is Himself—the fact

that He embodies in Himself the Christ qualities.

In a world where everyone is shouting and talking, what we need is example. Something deep within me recognized these qualities in Baba—I could not explain or analyse it. I just knew (for myself) with certainty. I had nothing to say to Him. I felt I loved Him and had faith in Him, and knew I could not be disappointed.

When I looked at the people passing in the streets, I thought Baba is in the world and they do not know it, and it seemed strange that it should be happening to me. As the poor barber said of his meeting with the Buddha:

The Blessed One passed by my house,

My house, the barber's.

I ran, and he turned and awaited me,^[L]_[SEP]

Me, the barber.

I said, "May I speak, O Lord, with thee?"

And He said, "Yes."

Yes, to *me*, the barber!

And I said, "Is the Peace for such as I?"

And he said, " Yes."

Even for *me*, the Barber!

And I said, "May I follow after thee?"

And he said, "Yes."

Even *I*, the barber!

And I said, "May I stay, O Lord, near Thee?"

And He said, "Thou mayest."

Even to *me*, the poor barber.^[L]_[SEP]

During the time I have followed Baba, I have been asked many questions about Him from people who are curious, antagonistic, interested or friendly. They want to know why I follow Him, what does He teach and what does He intend doing for humanity, etc. I can only answer from my own understanding which is naturally very limited, for how can anyone understand a Perfect Master? But if people ask out of antagonism or interest, they have a right to be answered. Baba definitely claims to be a Perfect Master. So the approach to Him should not be along conventional lines or preconceived ideas as to how He should carry on His work. Those who turn against Him usually do so because He does not act according to their ideas of right and wrong. They cannot stand the pace or the tests He sets, and fall away blaming Him for

the weakness that is inherent in themselves.

Pipa says, "When the true Master in the world appeareth He shows Himself to man as man." It is Baba's humanity that makes Him come down to our level to raise us up to His. He gives to each individual according to one's needs. So the ordinary modern man coming to Him gets practical common-sense advice; for what would be the use of a Divine Being so remote as not to be able to help us to live our everyday lives?

He says that He has come to give a Spiritual Push to humanity and to awaken the individual to his real Self, that is, to reach the same state of consciousness that He has attained; this He will do, not by teaching new dogmas and creeds, but by the inspiration of His Love.

He brings Peace, but it is edged with a sword. For this process of "dying" or the elimination of the "ego" is painful, and He has often to destroy before He can rebuild. He works through *maya* (illusion) to overcome *maya* and uses our vices and virtues to

get us to that state which is beyond all duality. Most people, not understanding this, expect an immediate outward change in Babs's disciples. They do not realize that, although at one's first meeting the change is definite and fundamental, it has to be worked out in life along normal lines.

In the same way that a sculptor chisels at his stone and knocks off all knocks and excrescences until he gets the likeness he requires, so Baba seems to do the same with human beings. He breaks down all attachments, even of ideas—He tests in all sorts of ways. He makes promises and breaks them, and will go on breaking them, until you can stand on your own feet and not ask for anything. For a Master will make use of even lies if it is necessary for your ultimate good. Sometimes He will blame you for something you have not done before the guilty person, just to see how you react. He expects you, when He asks, to be prepared to give up all ties and material considerations for Him. He uses your strength and attacks your weakness.

One of the main faults of the

West and the cause of most of its troubles is the greed for wealth and possessions. So Baba makes it one of His chief points of attack. Most people are full of fears and amass money for their future safety and security; so Baba by releasing this fear does what all the psychologists cannot do, however much they stir up the subconscious. For He helps people to transmute their baser desires through love which alone can free. I have watched this happen over and over again, and seen people give up the habits and desires of a lifetime. So when people ask me about miracles, I tell them that Baba's greatest miracle is to change the human heart. This He is doing, and as He does it in individuals, so will the world gradually experience a change in consciousness.

For even if Baba speaks or does something startling to draw the world—or whether He is rejected as most Avatars—it is really His work on the individual which is enduring and permanent.

What is there about Him that not only holds me, but so many other men and women of various types, some for more than fifteen years? For myself I would say, His humaneness, His power to transform the most common-place things of life with beauty—and above all His Love, and the Love that through Him I am able to feel and which has made me more of a human being.

All these things bind me to Baba, but the deepest experiences are beyond words, for as Baba says: "Things that are real are always given and received in silence."



*Hazrat Sai Baba of Shirdi**

BY DR. ABDUL GHANI MUNSIFF

Hazrat Sai Baba (1856-1918), although an outstanding figure of the saintly hierarchy of the last and the present century, like the majority of his kind, leaves behind no authentic record of his antecedents and early history. This may sound strange to historians of this our age who allow no unique incident or a great personage to pass away unrecorded. But saints are a class by themselves, and baffle both the historian and the biographer who naturally wonder at the paucity of personal information to be gleaned about saintly personalities like Sai Baba, in spite of their spiritual reputation and large following. In order to understand this seeming anomaly, the conditions governing the mutual approach of a saint and a devotee must be borne in mind. In the eyes of a devotee a saint:

Is not a person but a personality; Is not a preacher but a teacher;

Is not what he was but what he is;
Is not one who hopes for but achieves;

Is not one who promises but gives.

The saint also typifies a state of spiritual being that:

Is never concerned with the past or future, but lives and works in the active present;

Is not concerned with the problems of the hereafter, but is for the solution of the riddle of life here and now;

Is not concerned with what a disciple possesses, but is alive to what he surrenders;

Is not concerned with the seeker's impersonal faith and belief, but takes cognisance of his personal actions and motives.

Thus it is that a saint is invariably never communicative with regard to his personal antecedents, and the devotee is less inquisitive in such matters,

* Shirdi is a village in Kopergaon Taluka of Ahmednagar District, Bombay Presidency.

feeling convinced that the grace of a saint is to be induced by service and love alone and not by knowledge of personal facts and history concerning him. This state of affairs is particularly true of Muslim saints, and the only personal information that is deemed worthwhile knowing is the saint's spiritual lineage, the *Murshid* (Master) and his Order of Sufism, which details greatly help in determining the quality and potentiality of his gnosis (*Irfan*).

Like others of his class, the birth and parentage of Hazrat Sai Baba also is lost in obscurity and has¹ given rise to conflicting conjectures in this respect, particularly so amongst his Hindu admirers and devotees. One section* considers him to be born of Brahmin parents brought up by a Muslim *faqir*, and another† affirms unequivocally that he was Muslim born. The fact, however, is that Sai Baba was a Muslim by birth, and the presence of a temple near to a mosque at Shirdi, brought into being by Sai Baba, was out of deference to his

Hindu *Guru* (Master) Gopalrao Deshmukh.

Hazrat Sai Baba hails from Selu, a village in Jantur Pargana, Nizam's Dominions, and passed his early childhood near about Aurangabad. Sai Baba's parents were *very* poor, and the cruel hand of death having removed the paternal protection, the mother took to mendicancy for a livelihood. While begging her way through life, she (the mother) happened to come to Shelwadi to the house of Gopalrao Deshmukh with her son, aged five years, who was destined to be our future Sai Baba. Gopalrao, the renowned saint of the place, was at once struck by the spiritual potentiality of the child, and very lovingly offered both the mother and the son protection and shelter which they sorely needed.

A short account of the antecedents of Gopalrao who initiated Sai Baba into the spiritual path would not be amiss here. Gopalrao's father, Keshavpant, was extraordinarily religious-minded, and, as is usual with such beings, penury and want dogged his

* "*Sai Baba of Shirdi*" by B. V. Narasimhaswami.

† "*Bhakta-Lilamrut*" (in Marathi) by Das Ganu.

footsteps. The only valuable property which he was proud to possess in the world was the household deity, Shri Vyankatesh, whom he worshipped very regularly and devoutly. When Gopalrao grew up, his birthplace, Jamb, offered no prospects of a decent and honourable living, and the chronic poverty of the family compelled him to migrate to a nearby district where he selected the village Shelwadi as the venue of his future enterprise.

Religiosity being in his blood, Gopalrao soon established his reputation as a very high-minded and spiritually attuned soul. In course of time, the Government, also in recognition of his humanitarian activities, gifted him the village of Shelwadi as *Jahagir* (hereditary tenure of land). The severity of his asceticism may be gauged from the following incident related about him. Once, when having an outing, his eyes fell on a beautiful woman, giving rise to evil thoughts in his mind. He at once retraced his steps home, and, standing before the deity Shri Vyankatesh, pierced both the eyes blind with an iron poker. This incident, when it came

to be known, enhanced considerably his inner light and also his outer reputation in the world. It is said of him, that after this self-inflicted blindness, Bhagwan (Shri Vyankatesh) would himself arrange for him the ceremonial paraphernalia of worship at *puja* (prayer) time. Such miraculous incidents carried Gopalrao's spiritual reputation far and wide, and Shelwadi became a place of pilgrimage for people high and low.

The loving care of a Master like Gopalrao is the only solace-giving factor left to Sai Baba, when at the age of 12 the mother also departs from the world, leaving him a complete orphan. This last link with the material world having been snapped, the orphan boy was unconsciously drawn more more close towards Gopalrao who made no secret of his special predilection for him. This unreserved love and attraction towards Sai Baba roused the ire and jealousy of the Brahmin followers of Gopalrao, and they all resented in no unmistakable terms the preferential treatment accord-

ed to a Muslim boy by their Master who was a Brahmin. An innocent creature of the situation, Sai Baba came in for a good deal of persecution and harassment by the local populace.

The *Guru* (Master) and the *chela* (disciple) went about their work unperturbed, and adopted a very tolerant attitude towards the misguided malefactors of the village. Matters came to a head when a few fanatics decided to do away with the Muslim disciple who, as they thought, monopolised the favours of the Brahmin Master. With that end in view some fire-brands of the place followed Gopalrao and Sai Baba into the jungle outside Shelwadi which both of them used to frequent very often in each other's company. Finding them asleep underneath a shady tree, they approached them stealthily, and one of them aimed a big piece of stone at the sleeping boy's head. Happily the deadly missile missed its mark, and instead of hurting Sai Babs, it hit the Master Gopalrao Deshmukh resting by his side.

This was too much for Sai Baba to put up with, and out of sheer love for

his Master who had to suffer so much for his sake, he begged permission of Gopalrao to be allowed to leave him and go elsewhere. Gopalrao, however, would hear of no such thing, and pacified the loving disciple by saying, "I have this day decided upon you as my sole chargeman, and one day you will succeed to my spiritual heritage."

It is universally admitted that spiritual personages never have recourse to retaliation or revenge, either physically or even mentally, for whatever persecution they undergo at the hands of ignorant people. Prophet Mohamed prayed for more light to the enemy responsible for the loss of his tooth in one of his early conflicts with his persecutors, and Lord Jesus, while being crucified, said: "O Lord, forgive them; they know not what they do." And yet there are numerous instances of people coming to harm as a result of their misbehaviour towards saints and prophets. Why is this so when the light of spirituality bears no ill-will towards the darkness of ignorance? The reason is not far to seek. The physical presence

of a Perfect Master is the focal point round which divine powers—*shaktis*—(which the orthodox personify as angels) are very active, and react very forcibly to good or bad thoughts and deeds. It is these divine entities round the personality of a saint that respond very quickly and ruthlessly, yielding results good or bad according to the stimulus imparted. Such results, good or bad, accrue to people often times unknown to the saint himself, and the laity term these as miracles. To this effect there is a dictum among Sufis which says: "With God (impersonal) do what you dare; but with saints forsooth beware."

This dictum stands verified In the case of the miscreant who threw the stone at Gopalrao with murderous intent. The man was taken ill, and after a few days died. The people of the town were awe-stricken, and the death of the man under the circumstances was interpreted as a miracle in vindication of Gopalrao's spiritual status. The relations of the deceased approached Gopalrao, and prostrating before him begged to be forgiven for misunderstanding his saintliness.

Furthermore all of them invoked Gopalrao's divine mercy for restoring the dead culprit to life. Gopalrao very benignly evaded this request by saying, "I am one like any of you, and have no such divine powers that you attribute to me," and pointing towards Sai Baba suggestively added, "That Muslim boy may perhaps do something in the matter." Sai Baba, finding the question being referred to him by the Master, confidently took a little dust off the feet of Gopalrao and applied it to the dead body, and miraculously the man came to life. This incident greatly impressed the populace and brought to light the true spiritual relationship between the Brahmin Master and the Muslim disciple. In token of their regenerated *bhakti* and faith in Gopalrao the people arranged a great ceremonial function. The *Guru* and the *chela* were taken out in a procession, and thousands paid homage to them.

The death of Gopalrao took place under circumstances strangely touching. Although he had declared it off and on that he would soon be discarding

his earthly existence, nobody took him very seriously. One day he gathered the *mandali* round him and declared it was time for him to go. Having finished his daily bath, *sandhya* (prayers) and the recital of Gita, he beckoned to Sai Baba to approach him. When the latter went near him, Gopalrao presented him his wearing apparel (*dhotar*), and delivering his last sermon to those around gave up the ghost.

The gift of clothing by Gopalrao was symbolic of the transference of spiritual charge to Sai Baba. The old and worn out clothing, the spiritual significance of which only Sai Baba knew, he tailored it into a wrapper for the head and an apron (*kafni*) to drape the body.

Soon after the demise of Gopalrao, Sai Baba who was now sixteen years of age left Shelwadi with the marriage party of a Mohamedan Patel bound for Shirdi. He did not stay here for long, and again took to a wandering life of a *faqir* (mendicant). In this itinerary Sai Baba retired into a cave in a mountain

near Aurangabad (Nizam's Dominions), and practised severe asceticism, going without food and water for a number of years. Thereafter he contacted another saint* near Akkalkot who helped him to regain normal consciousness.

At the age of twenty Sai Baba once again returned to Shirdi, this time to stay permanently. He was very ascetic in his habits, and was extremely indifferent to bodily requirements and comforts. For a period he passed his nights underneath a margosa (neem) tree, but later took up his residence in the local mosque. In the beginning he led a very secluded life and avoided company, only emerging now and then to play the Samaritan amongst the poor villagers whose bodily ailments he tried to cure without remuneration, with a working knowledge of Indian herbs and drugs that he possessed. The necessary but meager food for the sustenance of the body he sought by daily begging at only five different houses by uttering in

* The renowned Swami of Akkalkot was Sai Baba's contemporary, and though the latter was spiritually connected with him, no other relationship as that of a Master or disciple existed between them.

the Marathi language the words "*mai bhakar wadha*" (mother, give a little bread), as most of the villagers were Hindus.

This daily programme of begging at five different houses with the peculiar slogan, "mother, give a little bread", Sai Baba kept up to the end of his days, and this, according to Hazrat Meher Baba, possessed deeper significance than what meets the eye from the outward act characteristic of a mendicant. Sai Baba's every act and movement possessed a spiritual significance depicted in numbers, and here the five houses he made a point of visiting daily were symbolic of the five Perfect Masters (Sadgurus) of all times at whose doors the whole universe is supplicating for spiritual salvation or material welfare.

Whilst begging for food as stated above, Sai Baba would very often stop for urination anywhere, oblivious to the people and surroundings, and the most awkward and funny part thereof was that he would invariably give seven jerks to the genitals during the act of micturition, thereby indicating

that the seven spiritual planes were completely under his control and command.

Whilst answering the call of nature, he would spend several hours in the lavatory. When later his saintly reputation was firmly established and attracted a large following of admirers and devotees, the daily visit to the lavatory became quite a ceremonial affair. At a fixed hour daily Sai Baba used to visit the "Lendi" as the lavatory was called by him, accompanied by a few people, with the village band playing music as loud as possible. Explaining this apparently eccentric vein in Sai Baba, Hazrat Meher Baba gave a very illuminating explanation: "Perfect Masters who control and direct the spiritual and material welfare of the universe, usually do so through their agents who are scattered in different parts of the world and who hold different spiritual jurisdictions in accordance with their spiritual status. Some of these agents from the higher planes are vaguely conscious of the source of directions and orders that they carry out, but the

majority of those from the lower planes are unaware of the source of the orders from which they implicitly and automatically carry out. It is for this reason that many of those from the different planes who are known and worshipped as saints cannot and do not recognise the Sadgurus or Perfect Masters who direct and control the affairs of the universe. To come to the point under discussion, Perfect Masters like Baba, whilst engaged in the act of evacuating the bowels, at such a time dispense altogether with the agency of saints and directly control the universe. Believe it or not, it is possible for Sadgurus, while thus engaged, to determine and calculate numerically all the forms and stages of the evolving creation in detail."

Because of his wandering habits and baffling moods Sai Baba came to be known at Shirdi as a "mad *faqir*". He was chary of company, and the only people whom he contacted were of a saintly character. At first the people of Shirdi found it difficult to understand him, and treated him indifferently. But a few incidents of a

miraculous nature dispelled all doubts as to Sai Baba's spiritual greatness. On one occasion the villagers who used to supply oil for the Masjid lamps refused to provide the daily quota. Sai Baba that night filled the lamps with water and kept them burning the whole night, thus supporting the Sufi belief that "even if the winds from the worlds assail, the light of saints will never fail". This incident afforded the villagers a glimpse as to what Sai Baba really was, and thereafter they were all eyes and ears to all his behests. Once some people saw Sai Baba lying in a field outside the village with all the limbs of the body—head, trunk, arms and legs—all detached and separate. When he returned to normal consciousness, his apparently severed limbs got automatically assembled once again, and he became his original self. This is a rare phenomenon of spiritual ecstasy to be witnessed in saintly personages, and connotes, according to Sufis, a certain stage of spirituality (*Ghousiyat*) wherein the divine aspect of love is so very intense and over-

newcomers, and would uncannily name the exact amount possessed by the party, and which, when parted with, would create a serious problem for the return journey. Not that Sai Baba had any attraction for lucre, but this was one of his ways by which he contacted to himself the evil *sanskaras* of people coming to him. He would very often confound the parents by asking them all innocently if the baby was a boy or a girl even when the sex organs were visible to him. The typical Hindu ceremonies like *arti* and *puja* Sai Baba would have them performed in the mosque, and the recitation of Quran by Muslims he would listen to in the Hindu temple.

Those familiar with matters spiritual will read a world of meaning in some of the utterances of Sai Baba given below, and they would thereby be able to gauge the standard of his gnosis and the height of his spiritual perfection. Sai Baba on different occasions has been heard to say:

"Those who see Baba in Shirdi have not seen him at all."

"I am formless and everywhere."

"I am not this three cubits and a half height of the body that is called 'Sai'."

"I am God and the *Brahanand* (universe)."

"I am all and in all—saints, criminals, animals, etc. I pervade the universe. I created *Brahma* or *Khuda* (God)."

"Nothing moves but by my grace."

"My race is that of *Parvardigar* (God), my religion is *Kabiri* (after the saint Kabir) and my profession is to bestow blessings."

Sai Baba, as stated in the beginning, was one of the five Perfect Ones of the time, and possessed all the characteristics of a Qalander. His spirituality was that of *Salik-Majzoob* which is a state of realization wherein the aspect of divinity predominates over the aspect of gnosis. Like all Perfect Masters (Sadgurus) he had a circle of twelve disciples, and his successor, the spiritual chargeman, is Shri Sadguru Upasani Maharaj of Sakori in Ahmednagar District. Hazrat Meher Baba once stated that as a matter of fact he was directly connected with Sai Baba spiritually and indirectly with Upasani Maha-

raj. The fact of his (Meher Baba's) being brought to normal consciousness by Upasani Maharaj was due to Sai Baba's earthly mission approaching its end, and hence Upasani Maharaj performed the duty towards him on behalf of Sai Baba.

Another duty of a most outstanding character that Sai Baba performed at the fag end of his earthly mission was the conduct and the termination of the Great European War of 1914. The scientific Western mind would laugh at this fantastic claim, but to the spiritually minded East there is nothing new about it. Perfect Saints known and unknown do and have performed duties which have oftentimes changed the map of the world and shaped the destinies of mankind in general and nations in particular, although the latter are ignorant about it. While delving into the domain of spirituality the West has yet to learn and unlearn many things. Whenever Sai Baba used to leave the mosque for going to the temple, his *arti* was usually performed midway between the two places;

and on such occasions Sai Baba's face always shone with a peculiar lustre and radiance which was noticeable to all. In this condition he used to make signs in the air with his fingers, and this unique and strange feature of his behaviour continued regularly throughout the period that the European War lasted. In this respect it is also significant that the end of Sai Baba's physical existence on earth synchronises with the termination of the War in 1918.

Conclusively, Hazrat Sai Baba was the *Qutub* (Sadguru) of his time, and amongst the hierarchy of saints of the period he was the accredited presiding authority of their conferences. Such meetings of saints are very often held at a moment's notice in different parts of the world. Another special feature with Sai Baba was his ability to appear simultaneously at different places in the same gross form. Numerous miracles are attributed to him, and it is hoped to recount a few most unique and interesting ones in a future issue of this Journal.



Notes from my Diary

F. H. DADACHANJI

BENARES

From Jubbulpore, in Central Provinces, our big bus wended its way towards the holy city of the Hindus — Benares—on the river Ganges which is one of the largest rivers in India, besides for untold centuries considered very sacred. The highly reverential feeling for the sacredness of both the river and the city rising above its bank could be judged from the fact that throughout the year hundreds of thousands of pilgrims come here from every part of India's great continent to bathe in its holy waters, and, at certain times in the year during festivals, the number of these pilgrims goes beyond count.

The live desire of every religious-minded Hindu is to visit this sacred place and have a bath in its purifying waters, at least once if not every year. There is still a belief among the religious masses of the Hindus that dying and being burnt on the *ghauts* (river banks) of the Holy Ganges wipes

out one's *sanskaras* (impressions) of lives, and the soul gets *Mukti* (liberation from the chain of births and deaths). If for want of means or for any other unavoidable reasons, going to Benares and dying there is not possible, the ashes of thousands of Hindus who die elsewhere, even in the remotest parts of the country, are, whenever possible, brought over great distances to be thrown into the holy waters of *Ganga Mayya* (the mother Ganges who liberates). A fresh incident may be worth mentioning. H. H. the Maharaja Gaikwad of Baroda recently died in Bombay, and his body was taken to his capital (Baroda) to lie in state for the last homage of his subjects, and afterwards burnt there. The ashes, however, were taken by a special train to a distance of over a thousand miles to be interned into the sacred waters of the Ganges, at Allahabad, a city situated on the junction of the two rivers—the Ganges and the Jumna—both of which

have their sources in the Himalayas. (A junction of two rivers is considered very sacred by the Hindus, this particular junction of two of the most important rivers being considered highly sacred.)

It is for reasons of such life offerings that numerous shrines and temples, dedicated to various gods and goddesses of the Hindus, have been built there by the Rajas and Maharajas (Indian princes) as well as by other wealthy Hindus who, on several occasions in their lifetime, visit Benares on pilgrimage. Some make this pilgrimage almost every year, and have their palaces built there overhanging the *ghauts* where they stay during the sojourn. It is customary that after these rulers of Indian States and other well-to-do Hindus complete their ritual of purification in the holy waters, free distribution of sweets and food, especially to the poor, is made in their names. Some rulers have erected resting houses for their poor subjects to stay during their pilgrimage, so have other Hindus built many *sarais* (resting houses) for pilgrims. Benares has thus

become the greatest place of pilgrimage for millions of Hindus every year. Yet for each who comes here, there are many who, for some reason or another, are unable to make the journey. They have the holy waters brought over, at times even hundreds of miles, by a returning pilgrim from the holy place, and these less fortunate ones thus have the consolation and satisfaction at least of having tasted the holy waters of *Gangaji* (Ganges) that wash off their *sanskaras* or sins and purify their souls. This general description is meant to give our readers, especially the Westerners, an idea of the highly sanctified environments of this place which is mostly included in all itineraries of India for its great religious importance. A few words, however, related from Baba's explanation regarding the *spiritual* significance of such a place which is held so sacred by millions, are worth mentioning. Asked as to the spiritual significance behind this religious importance given by millions of Hindus to the shrines and temples erected in Benares, Baba explained that:

"Since times of old, there have been endless numbers of *Rishis* and *Tapaswis* (ascetics) who have lived there for years, practised penances, meditated and were in high states of *Samadhi* (spiritual trance)." Baba also added that "GREAT SOULS SUCH AS RAMA, KRISHNA. BUDDHA AND EVEN JESUS HAD BEEN HERE DURING CERTAIN PERIODS OF THEIR LIVES. It is due to these highly evolved souls and Masters of their age that the place is surcharged with spiritual atmosphere. True sanctity does not lie in the dead walls of *brick* and *stone* or even the waters, but it is in the great living beings who stayed here and filled the environment with the fire of their devotion, love and worship, and in the great spiritual forces released by the Masters during their stay here..."

Baba and party stayed at Benares for some days, and visited places chosen by him. One of these was a short ride in a sailing boat on the Ganges. Those of the group who accompanied the Master on this trip along the river bank at an early-hour of the day felt that though Baba was

physically with them, he seemed to be away elsewhere spiritually working. Another interesting place to which Baba took his disciples was Sarnath, a few miles away, where are preserved interesting Buddhistic remains. It is here that Buddha had his first centre with his disciples around him.

Baba also went around the city in a *tonga* (horse-carriage) with two of us driving through the busiest thoroughfares, streets and lanes thickly inhabited by the natives, especially the poor. During the drive, we would come across certain types of *faqirs* (God-intoxicated souls) and such other persons in beggarly attire. Baba would just cast a glance at particular ones amongst these, would order a coin or more to be given in certain cases, thus establishing an inner contact which they would faintly feel conscious of in their spiritually-dazed state. No words would pass, and the meeting would be in passing for only a moment in silent recognition between the two. It is a privilege to watch the Master work thus, in a most wonderfully subtle way, in which he would contact them,

instructing us to drive in certain directions, and spotting out of the crowds the right person on whom he would bestow a momentary yet significant glance—all too subtle for description.

From here, we move on to our next halt, Agra, the city of immortal Taj. En route, Baba and party pass through Allahabad, the capital of the United Provinces. Here, the Master got out alone and looked upon the junction of the two rivers, the Ganges and the Jumna.

AGRA

One of the world's most beautiful and inspiring sites is the "Taj Mahal", that "dream in marble" which, for its exquisite symmetry and grace and for its marvellous richness and beauty of its materials, is unequalled. It is the tomb of Mumtaz Mahal, wife of the great Moghul Emperor Shah Jehan, by whom it was raised in memorial and tribute of their love. The following lines give one an idea of this great love that inspired an Emperor to erect this world-famed mausoleum which perpetuates the memory of his beloved queen:

That great tomb, rising
prodigious still,

Matchless, perfect in form,
a miracle

Of grace, and tenderness,
and symmetry.

Pearl pure against the
sapphire sky,

The proud passion of an
Emperor's love

Wrought into living stone
which gleams and soars

With body of beauty, shining
soul and thought.

So is the Taj.

While one greatly appreciates and admires the love aspect of this inspiring monument that needed enormous wealth and resources of a great Emperor, one cannot but pause to wonder why humanity is so indifferent towards the greater and deeper aspect of love—the Love Divine—that needs no wealth or riches of the world but the simplest dedication of one's self to the Divine Beloved! Of what use would all the wealth of the world be if it but creates a curtain of delusion that keeps one away from Divinity that is everyone's birthright! If *Maya's* hold is so strong, why not shake it off with the aid of a Spiritual Master?

Our stay at Agra was for about a week during which the ancient Fort was visited besides the Taj. Fatehpur Sikri (the city of ruins), about 20 miles away, was also amongst the historical places viewed by the group.

After summary glances at all these century-old monuments of history and works of art, when the presence of Baba would make one feel the transient aspect of things of matter, however great, grand or beautiful, Baba would just touch the point with his typical gesture and words: "It is all a big zero—a dream." These words, uttered at the right moment, would touch the tenderest chords of each heart, and everyone would realize the great difference of the life of matter from the life of spirit. All the feeling of appreciation of the greatness of the Emperors who flourished in their times would fade away, and a true feeling of appreciation of things of eternal value in life—the life of the spirit—would hold. And it is for this particular reason that a spiritual Master like Baba takes his closest group of disciples even to these places of importance in history, splendour and glamour to give them a

clear contrast between life of matter and life of the spirit.

A whole day was specially given to visiting places directly connected with the life of Lord Krishna; *Muttra* where he was born; *Gokul* where he was taken to save his life directly after his birth in prison and where he spent part of his early childhood; and *Brindaban* which is the sacred scene of his life and play with his *gopies* and where he drew towards himself even the cowherds with the melody of his flute. A great spiritual significance is attached to these places because of the name and work of the Great Lord who lived there and redeemed humanity in his time.

DELHI

Delhi, the Imperial Capital, was the next place we moved to stay. No other city, it is said, has seen so many ups and downs and ravages of time, of bloodshed in furious battles that decided the destinies of so many dynasties ever since the times of Rama, Pandavas and Kauravas. It is said to be built out of "seven cities" and has numerous

buildings of historical importance in an area of about 45 square miles, which the ruins of the ancient cities cover.

But Baba took the party to only a few of the monuments of outstanding importance—the Jumma Masjid, the Fort, and the Qutub Minar which, according to Baba, has importance even in the subtle world. One of the most inspiring of all is the famous tomb of Hazrat Nizamuddin, the Qutub, who lived here centuries ago. Fuller details of this visit, in the words of a Westerner, are given at the end of this instalment.

Baba's special work with the God-mad continued.

It must be remembered that Mahomed, the principal inmate of the Master's Ashram of the God-mad at Meherabad, has also been accompanying us since the beginning, and even during the tour, Baba gives him his daily bath, food and personal treatment as usual, thus keeping in touch and maintaining the link of this special work he has been doing through the God-mad ever since the establishment of the Ashram at Rahuri

in 1936. And it is this particular work, we noted, that, even during our constant movements, seems to be his preferred work in consideration of its special importance as he alone knows. He spends about two hours almost every day with Mahomed who has now formed the habit of constantly calling for "Dada", as he calls Baba. Although, as Baba stated, he is between the 3rd and 4th stage of spiritual advancement in the planes, and his normal consciousness is not properly balanced, Baba's contact and his personal touch gradually restores him to normality. His progress in coming down to this normal consciousness is very remarkable. With it also unfolds his unique love for the Master.

But in Delhi, Baba wants some other God-mad to wash and feed. Our *mandali*, therefore, start the search for these derelicts of humanity in this Imperial Capital City of India. Baba says there are many here, and confident in his words the disciples move about particular spots where these peculiar types of God-mad gather and are found loitering. They manage to bring one,

though with great difficulty. To get hold of such apparently crazed lovers of God moving about in rags in a big city like Delhi and to persuade them to come with us to our place is a job indeed, known only to those who do it. And in this city, where we are quite new, our talks with these peculiar types of humanity do certainly create a curiosity for the regular residents of this place, many of whom gather around and inquire as to why and where we are taking these people. It becomes a task indeed when we have to explain to them vaguely, keeping Baba's identity undisclosed. But any way, when Baba wants a thing done, his inner guidance and help come and enable the workers to accomplish at times the impossible. Baba felt very happy when he washed and fed the one who proved to be the exact type he wanted and who needed a Master's touch and treatment most. Apart from the internal benefit he derived with the spiritual push he got through this personal contact and touch of the Master, his external transformation was also remarkable. Washed, cleaned,

and shaved with a new white *kafni* (long robe) on, changed him entirely into a new being from what he appeared a few hours ago. With a blank expression he meekly submitted to all the loving care bestowed on him, and appeared blissfully happy when he walked out. Tears however were seen in his eyes when he was left at the place from where the *mandali* had brought him.

On the day of Baba's arrival with his party to India's Capital, and in the very proximity of the place where he put up during his short stay in Delhi, a new temple was inaugurated and opened for the public. Apart from the beauty and grandeur of its structure combining modern art with the ancient, the special significance of this temple lies in its very cosmopolitan and universal outlook being left open to ALL classes, the highest and the lowest, including even the untouchables. It seems thus to mark the advent of a new era of religious tolerance that breaks all the rigid barriers of caste and creed, admitting the right of every human being to enter the House of God.

Although not having any external connection with Baba, the inauguration and opening of such an unique temple at the exact time of the appearance of a Spiritual Master on the spot, whose gospel of teaching imbibes the same underlying principle of a brotherhood of humanity irrespective of caste, colour or creed, connotes, if anything, the subtle working and influence of the powers that mould the destinies of mankind in these times—example again of the timely and significant movements of Baba.

We finish this instalment with a description of our group's visit to the tomb of Hazrat Nizamuddin, in the words of an American lady who accompanied the party:

"An example of the Master, Meher Baba's spiritual way of working while on this tour, was witnessed during our visit to the tomb of Hazrat Nizamuddin, a great Saint who has been buried outside of Delhi, which ostensibly might seem like the visit of thousands of other travellers to this holy shrine, but turned out to be most unusual due to Baba's presence.

A young man of studious appearance and fine features, who seemed to be the attendant in this holy place, showed us around. We noticed that his demeanor was not like the ordinary attendant, for he had such true feeling for the sanctity of this spiritual environment which conveyed a living quality instead of the reliquary of a dead saint. As we passed by a pool within the enclosure, a number of ascetics were seen seated on the terraces above the water, and one or two of them asked us for alms. Baba, however, singled out a man, clad in rags, who evidently was not privileged to be seated among the ascetics. He stayed most inconspicuously in a rather dark corner, yet one would have thought him a beggar; but, as we passed, he did not ask for money. Baba bestowed upon him a glance, such as we who are with the Master know so well its regenerating effect. When we came to the gateway on our way out, this lone man was standing a little distance away and rapture was in his eyes as he gazed at Baba; it was a spiritual understanding which needed no words. Baba,

in gesture to one of the gate-keepers, inquired who this man was. And the reply came, "He is only a mendicant." But I could not but feel that Baba perceived the soul of this man beneath his ragged exterior. Just as we were returning to the bus, the young attendant inquired of one of Baba's disciples who Baba was, as evidently he could feel that Baba was not like the many other visitors to the place. Although on this part of the trip, Baba's identity was not to be revealed to outsiders, the disciple was surprised to see the Master nodding to him in assent; so it was told that he was Hazrat Meher Baba. Soon the reason for this departure from the otherwise strict injunction, came to light. This young man was the son of a saint who is acknowledged by many, who lives a completely secluded life, and sees few. What was so extraordinary was that, due to Baba's presence, all twenty of us were permitted to see the saint in his cell-like chamber. He seldom eats or sleeps, and his only garment was a blanket.

In the semi-darkness with light seeming to shine upon his face, we could see his noble features with grey beard and eyes that appeared to gaze transcendently on paradise. To me who had come from the West his counterpart had been only seen in the inspired Russian icons and Italian paintings of the Prophets of old. Why should one believe, however, that such great souls lived only in the centuries past?

The recollection came swiftly to my mind that Baba had foretold us, before starting, that we might meet a saint that day, but we had no idea when or where, and our driving around Delhi was rather extensive. Later Baba informed us that this evolved soul was on the fifth plane of consciousness and did great spiritual work in connection with Baba's own. I could not help but feel that the silent interchange that passed between the Master and the saint as we stood for a moment in the secluded stone-chamber, was one of the underlying reasons why Baba passed through Delhi."



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