

Part III

I

3rd May, 1936.

Mama Dube (i.e.Kashinath Dube), Shopkeeper, Brahmin, Poona, age 70 (whose statement is also reported in Sai Leela Masik, Vol, V., parts 2 and 3, p. 607) says:

I was at first quite indifferent to sadhus, saints etc., One day about 1909, a lady took a loan of Rs.10 from me at Kopergaon where I was and she promised to return it after she came back from Aurangabad and she also told me that a great and powerful saint, Sai Baba, lived at Shirdi. That was the first time I heard of him and I vowed or thought that if the Rs.10 loan were returned (of which I was not sure), it should be devoted to Sri Sai Baba. I went to Aurangabad and unexpectedly the loan was returned. Later on, I went to Shirdi and saw Sai Baba but did not mention my vow to him. He asked me for dakshina 3 or 4 times on the first day of my visit, first Rs.5, next Rs.2, next Rs.2, next one and did not ask me anything for two days thereafter, though I saw him all the three days of my stay there. His demand totalled Rs.10, just the amount I vowed, I would give him.

II

23rd May, 1936.

Ramachandra Vaman Modak, B.A., Engineer, Seth's House (near Peru's gate) Sadasiv pet, Poona (Sai Leela Masik, Vol III, part 9, p.399: Udhi used to drive off snakes from the house) says:

I went to Sai Baba about 1909 and was impressed well enough to repeat my visits. My last visit was in 1916. The most momentous of my visits was in 1912. My employment was that of Senior Government Auditor of Municipal and lo-

cal accounts of West Kandesh Division and my headquarters was nominally at Bombay. My wife and children, however, were stationed by me at Dhulia. In 1912, I had some official troubles or foreboding of troubles especially with a particular higher officer, who was waiting for an opportunity to sack me. They were trying to force me to appear for a departmental test, in which of course that particular officer would have an excellent opportunity to sack me and even declare me unfit to continue in service. The question was, if I should face that danger and by passing the test qualify myself for higher appointments or simply remain safe on my pay of Rs.120 and refuse to go up for the test. At this juncture, having learnt of Sai Baba's omniscient kindness and vast powers of control I determined to make him my sole guide and Providence to help me in deciding aright on this matter of great importance. I left Bombay for Shirdi (which is outside my jurisdiction) informing no one and taking no leave from my department to enable me to be away from work. I hoped also to return quickly in which case no leave would be necessary. I went straight to Shirdi. It always gives me (and other devotees also) great relief to be in the presence of Baba. *Care leaves one as soon as he is in that presence and happiness fills his soul.* Next morning, at 7 A.M (i.e. the usual time to go to Baba to take leave), I was being put off. I could not start as Baba had given me no leave. He knew full well that I had gone there in an irregular way without the sanction of my superior and unknown even to my family. If there were consequences to be faced, Sai had to face them. But Shama i.e., Madhavrao Deshpande knew my difficulties and interceded on my behalf, telling Baba: "He has stayed several days. Give him leave to go." Baba gruffly answered him that I had gone to see Baba and not to see Madhav Rao. Turning to me also, he asked whether I had gone there to see him (Baba) or to see Madhav Rao. Baba gave me the assurance that all would go well with me regarding my official problem as in other matters. In fact he detained me at Shirdi when the test was going on at Bombay. The die was thus cast and Baba settled it as the best for me that I should not go up for the test examination.

On the night of my fifth day's stay, I had a dream. I saw therein that I was back at home, that my young daughter

was welcoming me, asking me where I had been all these days. I woke up and felt assured that Baba was going to give me leave. At once I prepared for departure. I dressed myself up and despite my friend's protest that there was no guarantee that Baba would give me leave even that day, I went to the gate of the mosque. Baba was in a towering passion fuming and fretting with a stone in his hand and was moving up and down at the mosque. He saw me standing at the gate. In ten minutes' time, he calmed down and took his seat on the *gadi*. That was the place where he should be approached and I went and prostrated. Of his own accord, he said "**Take udhi and go away.**" That was the way leave was granted for departure. "But," I asked Baba, "Where am I to go? Please tell me that" - as I wanted definite oral solution by him of my problem- whether I should go to Bombay direct, which would mean attending the test or whether I should go to Dhulia which would mean refusing boldly to attend the test. Baba's answer was "**Go home, You children are anxiously waiting for you.**" That confirmed my dream and settled my course. I went to Dhulia and only later on to Bombay.

When I went to Bombay, in the usual course, some trouble might have arisen on account of my unauthorised absence. But, strangely enough, everything went on smoothly. My clerks, who would have to go with me on my tours, wondered where I had gone away. My family fancied I was at Bombay all the time. Anyhow by Baba's grace, my absence was not officially noticed and did not lead to any official trouble. On the way from Shirdi to Bombay on this occasion, as usual, I had to go naturally via Manmad. The Deputy Collector of the Division was camping there at Manmad and he had sent me a letter asking me to halt en route at Manmad and I intended to meet the D.C. But when I started and thought of stopping in Manmad Baba said "**Pshew, Give that up. He is not here. There is no hurry,**" At that time, I did not understand what Baba meant. But, when I got down at Manmad I learnt that the D.C had got a wire from which made him suddenly break up his camp there and hurry away elsewhere. So Baba was right, as he always is. During these six days of my Shirdi stay, Baba was impressing my heart with spiritual experience, I felt that he was all in all for me and that I needed nothing more for my mundane or spiritual wel-

fare. That was a decidedly critical and precious period of my life.

I had, however, my usual inclination to rely on my Vedantic and religious studies. I had also not taken to Sai with the great earnestness which so many devotees evince. I was still very much in the world. In 1914, I had a confirmatory experience of what I had received at the hands of Sai in 1912. Another great saint gave me impressive hints of the value of Sai as a guide and of the experience he (Sai Baba) had imparted to me. A lady had asked me to go to Govind Bua at Sonagir, more especially as it lay on my way home i.e., to Dhulia. But, I had engaged a *tonga* to take me direct to Dhulia and fixed up a programme not providing for an intermediate halt. But, as fate would have it, the cart in which I and my cook travelled, broke down, the iron tyre came off clean and at least three hours would be needed to mend the wheel and continue the journey. The place where it broke down was Sonagir. My cook went, bathed and took *darshan* of the Bua and without any bidding from me asked him if I (his master) could come up for *darshan*. "Yes", was the answer, "let him come after a bath." So I bathed and went to him with a coconut and a rupee. Then, he said "Hallo, you rogue, you have had a precious thing given to you. You tasted it for a while, and yet, you run hither and thither after worthless things". That, of course, was a reference to Sai Baba's gift to me in 1912 during those six days. I understood it in that way. He further said "In any case, you have come to our own house" and thus identified himself with Sai Baba. Thereafter, he asked me to provide *biksha*. "Prepare *sira* and *puri* for me." That meant, I found, that I had to pay for that day's *prasad* or food at the Mutt. I did so. The Bua sat up for the meal at my request. We had a *lota* cup and filled it with water and placed it near Bua's seat. The Bua dipped his finger into the cup of water extracted from it miraculously a thin *puri* and ate it saying "Here also we prepare *puri*." The *puri* he brought out of the cup of water was thin and nice. That prepared for the *biksha* was thick and rough. How *puri* could be extracted from a cup of water was the wonder. It impressed us with his wonderful power. Such a mighty man

assured me of the value of the experience I got from Sai Baba in 1912.

I had not many opportunities of seeing Sai Baba. In 1916 was my last visit to him. Then, with my wife who also had great devotion to him, I went to Baba and returned the same day. In 1919, I retired. Sai Baba is not dead. He is still as ever. It is in a strange invisible ethereal manner. I feel his guidance, direction and control in my affairs. I have felt it on many occasions. For instance, in 1919, I retired on a pension of Rs. 81-8-0. But retiring was good for me. As soon as I retired, I joined a friend in working certain mills and from 1919 up to 1930, I had a monthly income of about Rs.250. This was Sai's provision for me.

I have always had indifferent health and actually my eyes have given me great trouble. I have lost one eye, and I am slowly developing a cataract in the other. But Sai Baba, whom I am worshipping every Thursday and remembering constantly has been looking after my interests here and hereafter. I feel no anxiety for my temporal or spiritual future. Both are in Baba's hands; and I am safe. Here is another instance of Baba's kind care for me and mine. In 1916, I was laid up with fever, cough etc., at Nasik. An old friend of mine in the medical service undertook my treatment and had prescribed chloral hydrate for my cough or bronchitis, as he diagnosed it to be. My wife had, however, a fear that my case was not so simple. She prayed to Sai Baba and sent for Col. Buckley. As soon as the colonel came and examined me, and looked at the bottle of chloralhydrate, he took the previous doctor (who was his subordinate) to task for his poor diagnosis and declared the case to be one of pneumonia- double pneumonia, and threw away the chloralhydrate as harmful, before it was administered to me. Then, under his treatment and by Baba's grace, I pulled through. It was really by Baba's grace that my wife was inspired to send for an able doctor and that the wrong prescription and treatment were changed at the very nick of time- just when the wrong and harmful drug was about to administered to me.

III
26th May, 1936.

Gopal Bhaskar Datar, B.A, L.L.B., Brahmin, Pleader, (Station Road), Thana says:

I am now a Sai Bhakta. In 1917, when I was at Ahmadnagar, I had opportunities to see Sai Baba. But I was deterred by the accounts I had heard of him. He demanded and took much money as *dakshina* and the water in which he bathed was taken and given as *tirtha* for devotees to drink. These repelled me. I contrasted them with the conduct of Narayan Maharaj for whom I had regard. The latter, when I and one other each gave him a rupee, he returned the rupee, adding to it some sugar candy as prasad. Later, after reading Upasani Baba's life and listening to his lectures, I saw him at Bombay and went to Sakori. His, U.Lilamrita which I read in 1931, gave me a good impression of Sri Sai Baba and after my visit to Sakori, I went to Shirdi. There the gleaming eyes of Sai in the portrait, the *dhuni* and the mosque impressed me greatly and I said to myself: 'Here is a Master!'. Next, I read Sai Lila Masik and especially Anna Dabholkar's book, as it appeared in that Masik with the "Anubhavas" i.e, experiences. I was convinced that Sai Baba was my destined guru. I have stuck to him ever since.

Some experiences that I got confirmed me in my faith. A lady in the house who was suffering from internal pains for a long time and had vainly tried some medicines, was listening to me as I read Dabholkar's book aloud. There was the incident of Sai Baba intervening to save a frog that was caught by a snake, in what I read. She had heard it half dozing. She prayed in that half dozing state to Sri Sai Baba thus: "Oh Sai Baba, you have pity and help for humble suffering creatures like a frog, have you no mercy for me- a human being?" She then heard a voice that seemed to emanate from a peg on the wall, - "Will you give me Rs.5 dakshina for the Dasserah?" And she answered that she would, in case she got cured. At once, she woke up from her dozing condition and narrating the above, wanted Rs.5 to be sent up as her contribution for Sai Baba's Dasserah celebration. That was done at once. She improved and her agony

abated by evening. This was in 1931 or 1932.

Some time later in 1932, I used to get Sai Baba in my dreams wherein he would play with me as he would play with little children. In one of the dreams, Sai Baba was requested by Upasani Baba to help me and he agreed. Still later, I was in a great fix. I had lost or mislaid the letter of a wandering client, whose presence was urgently required by the court. I tried to learn his whereabouts by inquiries-in vain. At last, in despair, I prayed to Sai Baba. The next day, I chanced to place my hand on the rack in my office room and I found the missing letter and that enabled me to secure the party's presence in proper time. Two or three years ago, I was given a commission to examine some witness on interrogatories sent by a distant court. The interrogatories and other papers were one day missed by me. I searched in various places for them and was much dejected at my failure. I expected then I would have the mortification to inform the Court of my negligence and ask for fresh copies of the interrogatories, etc. A 'Varkari' (one constantly going on pilgrimage to Pandharpur Vittal) had come to my house then; and having served him with zeal for some days, I told him of my worried state. "It will be found" he said. There was always my daily service to Sai Baba also. The day after the Varkari left, I discover the missing papers amidst the papers of a totally unconnected case.

I was formerly ignoring *Shradha* and other ceremonies, being carried away by the social reform ideas that these were meaningless superstitions. I had no faith in them. But my faith in the revived as I revere Sai Baba and as one Mr.Nana Nachane, (a Prabhu) clerk in the Presidency Magistrate's Court, Kurla, Bombay and devout Sai Bhakta gave me the following account of his experiencing the kind mercy of Sri Sai.

Very recently, Mr.Nachane's wife died, leaving him her little child to take care of. The loving husband wished to be assured of her getting *sadgati* and therefore, resolved to go to Nasik and perform all the required ceremonies on the bank of the Godavari. But, being unaccustomed to these, he hardly knew what steps should be taken and whether he would have sufficient funds to cover all the expenses. With

such fears, he started, taking 80 rupees with him. In the train he suffered other troubles and a fellow passenger gave him great help. That passenger, learning of his fears, told him that he would see to every ceremony being properly performed within the funds in hand. This kind friend accompanied Mr. Nahchane to all places and directed the ceremonies and controlled the expenditure- displaying a knowledge very wonderful for one, who belonged to a *Sudra* (Mahratta caste) and was merely a peon in some Bombay institution (the address and particulars of which he gave) as the friend described himself. After a great deal of self-sacrifice, that friend, without gaining a single pie or advantage, accompanied Nachane for several days and parted company with him promising to meet him again within a fortnight. But he did not. So, Mr. Nachane went to the place described by that friend and found there was no such peon in the institution mentioned by him. Mr. Nachane was convinced that the kind and very wise 'peon' was only a form taken by Sai Baba to help him in his distress. I felt sure that as the all-wise Sai Baba helped this devotee to perform the funeral ceremonies successfully. Such ceremonies must have a real use and must be worth performing. I am now performing them ever since I heard Mr. Nachane's account.

IV

26th May, 1936.

Kasinath Kander Rao Garde, B.A., L.L.B., 65, Retired Sub Judge of Nagpur, Congress Nagar, Nagpur, says:

Our family guru is a Ramachandra Tikotkar. My own personal guru is Ramanand Bidkar Maharaj. He was deep in wisdom and possessed marvellous powers and knowledge. After giving me *upadesh*, he told me that I should go round seeing a number of great souls, i.e. saints, taht he had seen in his tours, and he gave me a list of them. He told me taht all these saints would feel they are of one family and they would recognise me as connected with their stock and accord me a hearty welcome. That would confirm me, he said, in the belief of the truth and value of his instruction to me.

One of these saints that I was ordered to visit was Sai Baba of Shirdi. My guru Bidkar Maharaj in 1898 told me to visit him, saying that he himself (B.M) had seen that saint (Sai Baba) 25 years back, i.e., about 1873. I went to see Sai Baba in 1912 or 1913 during the May vacation, as I was then SubJudge at Khamgaon. As soon as I went and saw him, without any introduction or announcement, Sai Baba welcomed me heartily saying i.e., **“Welcome Ramdas”**. Ramdas is not my name. But, the hearty welcome he gave me was in accordance with that my Guru Ramanand Bidkar Maharaj asked me to expect and the word ‘Ramdas’ I took to be reference to that guru, by whose order I went to Shirdi and also to the earlier family guru, whose name was Ramachandra. I stayed there with my college chum (of the Deccan College) Bala Bhate, who lived there, at Shirdi, a life devoted to Sai Baba. Each succeeding day, I tried to go but the journey was put off, for 6 days as Baba said **“Wait till tomorrow”**. Meanwhile, I had kept with me Rs.6 or 7 for the expenses of my return journey.

Sai Baba asked me first time a *dakshina* of Rs.2 and Rs.1 each day for four days thereafter. On the next day thereafter, when I had got Rs.0-3-6 left in my pocket, Baba said of his own knowledge, **“Why keep that Rs. 0-3-6 with you? Give that up as dakshina. God will provide you with plenty”**. I at once gave up the 0-3-6 I had. Before I started for Shirdi, I was at Poona Reay Market and I purchased three excellent ‘Payari’ mangoes for presentation to Sai Baba, and as soon as I saw Sai Baba, I presented them. Sai Baba then took them up, eyed them with joy and said they were nice looking and ordered them to be cut up and he distributed the pieces as *prasad* (taking a piece himself). Before cutting the fruit, Sai Baba, out of his own vast knowledge, said **“Hallo! These fruits he (i.e. Garde) had purchase in the market for me and has brought the whole lot to me, without tasting any part of it. This is the opposite of what a pandit did the other day. Pandit had got a whole packet of laddûs intending to give them to me. But, on the way after bathing at the Godaari River, he got hungry and ate away some of the laddûs and brought me the remainder. These fruits are not or sesha like that”**.

This narration showed us (1) that he appreciated the pure and strong bhakti that we, devotees, should have towards the guru, avoiding the slight involved in presenting him with *sesha* and (2) that by his (Sai Baba's) knowledge, even of unseen events taking place far away from Shirdi, he deepens and strengthens the faith and reliance we place in him and in our guru. My faith in my guru's teaching and my adherence to him was deepened by all that Sai Baba said and did.

On the 8th day, I got Sri Sai's permission and left Shirdi with money lent me by Bala Saheb Bhate. Once, during those 8 days, I saw a strange sight. Hari Sitaram Dixit had returned, after conducting some big case and with a trunk full of solid silver rupees which were his fees- it may be Rs.1000. He placed the trunk before Sai Baba as an offering to Sai Baba. Baba dipped both his palms into the silver heap and gave away palmful after palmful of rupees from the trunk to fakirs and others, who were gathering there in crowds waiting for such windfalls. The entire money was in a few minutes thus gifted away. H.S.Dixit felt in no way disconcerted at the disappearance of his hard-earned cash.

A few words on Balasaheb Bhate may next be mentioned. At college, he was a free thinker, a free smoker, a veritable *charvaka*, whose creed may be thus summed up, "Eat, drink and be merry today, for tomorrow we die'. Katr yatra Bhante tatra Dhumaha I used to remark jocularly at his inveterate smoking being myself free of the tobacco habit. He became *mamlatdar* and was a very efficient officer much liked by his collector. He was Mamlatdar of Kopergoan for about 5 years (1904-1909). All that time he was scoffing at his educated friends (who met him on their way to Shirdi) having any respect for Sai, whom Bhate described as 'as a mad man'. The friends asked him just to see Sai Baba once and then form his judgement. In 1909, Bhate camped at Shirdi and saw Sai Baba day after day. On the fifth day Sai Baba covered him with a *gerua* garment. From that day, Bhate was a changed man. He did not care for earnings or work. From that day up to his death, he only wished to be at Shirdi, to do *seva* to Sai Baba, to live and die in his presence. Sai Baba made his friend Dixit draw up an application for leave for one year and with Sai Baba's help, Bhate's signature was

gut to it. The Collector gave him one year's time to see if he would return to his old self. But, at the end of the year, he still continued to be 'mad after his guru' and was granted compassionate pension of about 30 rupees as one afflicted with 'religious melancholia'.

Asked fro the reason of his change, Bhate told me the putting of the (Bhagawa) *gerua* garment on him by Sai Baba marked the crisis. 'By that' he said, 'my original frame of mind was removed and in its place quite a new frame of mind was put in'. After taht attending to worldly duties- especially official duties- became unthinkable. He then lived at Shirdi, attending to his *Nitya Karma*, *Upanishad*-reading etc, before Sai (Sai would offer remarks on that reading occasionally). His wife and family came to Shirdi and lived with him.

I have written a short account of my visit to Sai Baba. The reasons for the visit and the reception I got at his hands are published in the Mahratti biography of my guru.

V

1st June, 1936.

Minathai Ganesh Kulvalekar, daughter of Nanasahab Ganesh Chandorkar, age 49, near Kasba Ganpati Temple, Poona, says:

I am the elder of N.G.C's daughters. I have two younger brothers. Bapu, the younger is aged 40. When I was 12 or 13 years of age (i.e. 1899-1900), I went to see Sai Baba long with others of our family and went often late, not after 1918.

Chidambar Rao Gadgil Chitnis introduced my father to Sai Baba when he was mamlatdar at Ghodnadi. An early incident was this. We were staying at the *chavadi*. Leaving my father behind, the rest of us were starting to leave Shirdi. Sai Baba came up and asked us for *biksha* and said '**Do not go**'. Our journey was stopped. We gave Baba, the wayside food we were taking for the sake of the children. Baba's eyes sparkled like jewels.

I remember one or two instances of Sai Baba's signifi-

cantly stopping or delaying my father's journey. My father was starting at the proper time to catch a train at Chitali, as he had to meet the Collector. Baba permitted one Haridas to go for that train, but stopped my father. Haridas in a hurry left without a meal. My father took his meal leisurely and half an hour later than Haridas, My father was permitted to go. He went and found that he was in time for the train as the train was arriving late that day as timings had been changed that day. My father told me about this later. This was about in 1900.

Myself and family were starting from Shirdi to attend a marriage at Nasik, Baba first did not give us leave but said "Do not go". We had not got ready cooked food for the children to eat on the way and thought that at Manmad, we might try to feed them. But the train was derailed at the station before we reached Manmad and we stopped there for three hours. Baba's stoppage evidently indicated this stoppage on the way and his final permission indicated all would be well.

My husband died of plague at Poona in 1904, when I was but 17 and there was no help for me. My mother arrived in time to see him alive. I had just then conceived. In 1905, when I was in advanced pregnancy with serious difficulty at Jamner, was the Gosavi incident and Baba's *udhi*. But, I knew nothing of it then, in my pain. In 1908, we were at Pandharpur. My brother Bapu Rao, as a little child of 4, went daily in the morning, placed a flower on Sai Baba's head and worshipped him. That was the beginning of the regular worship of Baba, as others were not permitted till then to do what Bapu did. Before that there was no regular system of daily worship of Baba.

When I was 18 or 19 , in about 1906, some one was taking *darshan* of Sai, with spectacles on and they dropped. Someone present said that the glasses should be offered to Baba as a gift. But Baba said, **"I do not want glasses. My glasses and worth Rupees 40."** My father interpreted to us "glasses as self-realization and worth Rs.40 as occurred 40 years ago". Baba looked about fifty and was gray when I went first in 1900 to Shirdi. He continued more or less the same up to 1918. His death was during the influenza epidemic (1918-19) that raged throughout India.

The following facts I learnt from my father:

1. Sai Baba had known him for 3 or 4 generations.
2. Sai Baba was constantly using the word “*Narayan*” in his talks thus -Narayan Teli, Narayan Dhobi &c. N.G.Chandorkar inferred that Sai Baba must have been a Brahmin *Sanyasi*, as Brahmin *Sanyasis* must constantly be saying ‘*Narayan*’.

3. Gita was repeated by Sai Baba. Sai Baba knew Sanskrit.

My father was orthodox and never drank the *tirtha* of Sai Baba. H.S.Dixit and others took it. About 1899 or 1900, my mother’s sister’s husband Balasaheb Binnewale (who died 5 or 6 years back) went to see Sai Baba without any faith in Sai Baba, out of a desire to oblige my father. Balasaheb was a worshipper of Datta. When he went and saw Sai Baba, he saw him as a figure with three heads (i.e.) as Datta himself. He, at once, believed that Sai was Datta himself and continued a devotee of Sai till his death.

VI

10th June, 1936.

Vinayak Daji Bhave, Brahmin, aged 37, Shirol Kolhapur State, says:

I was a clerk in 1932 in the B.B.C.I.Rly.Co.on Rs.90 per month. I was anxious to find a guru and read *Guru Gita* from 13-4-32 for one month. I had not found any guru or obtained a vision of Datta in that period as I had hoped to find. Then, one Thursday sacred to the guru- I went to a Datta temple. There is an image of Datta in that temple. But, when I went there in the place of that image, a samādhi neatly sculptured was what I saw. Next morning, I went to a friend’s house and opened Anna Dabholkar’s book on Sai Baba and my eye lighted on the picture of Sai samādhi found in that book - a picture I had not seen before. That was an exact picture of the tomb I saw at the Datta temple. So, I inferred that Sai baba was to be my guru. For a time, I took his *udhi*

and read some books about him. But I soon got dissatisfied. A tomb is not a guru. I wanted a living guru to go to and to commune with. So again recognising that the devoted study or *parayana* of Guru Gita was the surest method of obtaining a guru, I began my *parayana* once again and went on with it for a week. Then I saw Narayan Maharaj of Khedgaon in my dream. Inferring that he was to be my guru, I went to Khedgaon. There, at night, I had a dream in which Narayan Maharaj appeared and told me "I and Sai Baba are not different from each other. Why do you not go there?" I replied that there was none to direct me. I woke. Later, I went to Shirdi and took Sai Baba as my guru. My palm was read by one *sādhū* and he said 'Sai Baba is your guru'. In 1933, my son had plague and he recovered by the use of Baba's udhi alone.

My sister had given away a silver cup and Rs.100 to one Dutta Maharaj, who promised that she would have Ram darshan. She did not get any Ramasakshatkar and she feared that the Maharaj would not return the silver cup. I told her that if she vowed to make a gift of it to Sai Baba's Sansthan, in case the Maharaj returned it, Sai would make the Maharaj return it. She vowed so; the cup and Rs.100 were returned and her vow was fulfilled by presenting it to the Sansthan. Her name is Durgabai Kakatkar. I knew of Sai Baba even in 1916. My mother Annapoornabai Daji Bhave went to Shirdi. There when she tried to enter the mosque, Sai Baba prevented her saying it would pollute the mosque. When she returned to yeola, she received a card from Yootmal that her daughter-in-law (i.e., my brother's wife) had died on a particular date- which was the day before my mother's visit to the Shirdi mosque. She had to observe ten day's pollution from that day and was under 10 days pollution when she was at Shirdi. She did not know it then. But Baba knew it evidently.

At my mother's death, we offered the rice ball "*pinda*" but no crows would touch it. My sister then vowed that she would send 50 rupees to Sai Baba's tomb if crows should come and take the *pinda*. Then the crows came and ate the *pinda*.

VII

17th June, 1936.

Mukunda Sastri Lele, C/O Krishna Sastri, age 58, Vydik life, Konkanast Brahmin, Sanivar Peth, Poona, says:

In 1912, I was often at Shirdi with Sai Baba. I once went with Nanasaheb Chandorkar in a *tonga*; the horse reared. The carriage fell down. I and Nana came off without hurt. Then Baba at Shirdi did the Sanka sound and said (-----) (i.e., "Nana is now about to die. But, will I let him die?") 8 days later, I and Chandorkar went to Shirdi. Then Bapusaheb Jog told me that Baba cried out as above 8 days back and asked me 'Was that true?' 'Yes', I replied and narrated the facts.

In 1914, my wife was pregnant, 8 months with child. Baba gave me two (pieces barfechivadri of *Barfi*) and said 'Go'. Then I went home and my wife had a delivery. I have three or four children now.

Sai Baba told me to recite Narayan Upanishad (Taittiriya Bhaga) at the *pooja* of Baba at the masjid and I did so for 10 days. I taught that Upanishad to H.S.Dixit. Baba recited before me etc. (froarpichent sudurachar m Bagavad Gita) and some more at times. He knew Sanskrit.

VIII

7th July, 1936.

Cursetji Shapurji Pestonjamas, Parsi, aged 75 Kolaba Khusrubad, Baug, formerly in Railway Service and Yard Master, Reclamation, says:

I went to Shirdi and saw Sai Baba, and stayed there for three or four days. That was the only time I saw him. I and my brother-in-law went there and were accommodated on the ground-floor of Dixit's Wada while mine owners and other rich people were accommodated upstairs. As we went and sat at the mosque before Sai Baba, this thought was in our mind, though we did not express it (viz) "What sort of justice is here, in this *darbar*! Big people enjoying comforts

above and poor people left downstairs to suffer inconvenience'. Then Sai Baba told some one present: 'Take these people up', and we were given accommodation upstairs. This was at once proof of Baba's reading our hearts and of his love of equality and justice. When we left him finally, he came out and graciously waved his hand, as sort of 'God speed' to us.

Except this, I have no experience of Sai Baba. I believe he is God.

IX

20th July, 1936.

B.Laghate Esq., B.A., L.L.B., Ex-Sub-Judge, Brahmin, aged 70, Shaniwarpeth, Poona, says:

I went to Sai Baba about 1913 or 1914. I was in trouble and I went to get his *ashirwad* (i.e.) blessings to get rid of the trouble. When I approached him, he asked for *dakshina* and I gave it. He said to me of his own accord 'sow margosa and afterwards cut off that tree'* I could not make head or tail of this utterance. I was evidently not the *asirvad* I went to him for. I was disappointed and I never went to him again, though at about that time, I lived with Mr.H.S.Dixit (who was a staunch devotee of Sai Baba) for three years.

X

20th July, 1936.

Kusha Bhav' (alias) Krishnaji Kasinath Joshi son of Kashinath Padmakar Joshi, Joshi Vattandr, Brahmin, aged 70, (10 miles off Ahmednagar) Mirazgaon, says:

I was given a mere elementary Vernacular School Examination education to qualify myself for a school Master's place on Rs.5 or 7 per mensem. I got trained also for the hereditary duties of the village priest. I did not care for either. We were poor. In these circumstances, I wanted to devote myself to a life of *bhakti*. I found a Guru in Datta Maharaj, a truly great and *Satvic* soul. He took me away from time to time and trained me in yoga. Under him I learnt Asanas, *Pranayama* and the rousing of the *Kundalini* Sakti. But, in my youthful waywardness, I was not contented with all that and asked my Guru to impart to me the mantras he knew which gave worldly power (e.g) creatin maran, unchatan, vasikaran g spells and breaking spells, exercising devils and invoking them & c. The Guru very unwillingly imparted the *mantras* to me, on account of my importunity and I went through the necessary japa and *sadhana*. I wore an iron bangle, repeated the *mantras* as prescribed for the required number of times, I succeeded in getting possession of the coveted powers. I could simply utter a mantra and order the production of sweetmeats, *pedhas* and the like. And the articles I ordered would at once appear and be filling my hands. These I would show to others and distribute. The *pedha* etc., I could not use. I could not and should not eat or sell them but I gave them away to the admiring or wondering people about me. I could also destroy the evil spells of others. The production of *pedha* etc., was not by the use of evil spirits (e.g.) Yakshas, Jinns etc., This latter method is dangerous. It will extinguish one's life. The spirits might even begin to cause physical harm to the man, who uses them. In my case, the articles required were produced purely by mantric power without the use of these evil spirits.

When I was aged about twenty two and fully armed with these magical powers, my Guru resolved to go away from our society into the Himalayas and live there alone right up

the end of his life. He started north and took me with him up to Delhi. There he wished to part company with me finally. As to what I should do, after he went away, he told me that there was one Sai Baba of Shirdi, whom he referred to as his elder brother "maja badila Bhai" and that I should go to him and do whatever he directs. Saying this, the Guru went away and disappeared from me and this part of the country, and I have not seen or heard anything more of him since.

Then (i.e) in 1908, I went to Shirdi and found Sai Baba. He would not allow me to be with him till I should throw away my iron bangle and stop the production of *pedhas* etc., by mantric means. As his order was strict; I broke and threw away my iron wristlets and stopped my mantric production of articles like *pedha* etc. To sustain myself I begged food here and there at Shirdi. I had no abode. He ordered me to sit in a corner of the mosque and go on reading Dasbodha during the day, and I did so. At night, I would sleep in any place I could find space to lie on. He gave neither me nor anyone else any *upadesh mantra* etc. The town people from Bombay etc., were not coming to him then. Only the villagers would go to him now and then, and ask him to remedy their trifling complaints (e.g.) stomach ache, fever etc. He gave his *udhi* to all these from his ever burning fire (*dhuni* which he maintained at the mosque). He was not asking for *dakshina* from all but only a few pice (e.g) 4 or 5 he would ask for and getting these, he might buy fuel for his *dhuni* or some such article of necessity. As for big people I remember that Nanasahab Nimonkar was obtain with him, and as for his talks, I never heard him say anything about *maya* or *Brahma* or *Mahavakya tatwas* or *Viveka*, and *Sadhana Chathusthya*. He imparted faith to those resorting to him faith in Ishwara, by exercising his wonderful powers; they would go on with their devotion to their *Ishtadevata* and finally, he would grant them *Sakshatkar* of that particular *ishtadevata*.

As for myself, I stayed three full years at a stretch with him and then went on visiting him during the nine years that followed. During that period of nine years, he told me to see a person with three heads. That of course, I took as a direction to go and see Datta at Gangapur. Every year I visited Gangapur twice once in *Guru poornima* and next in *Magha*

poornima. Then, once he told me to do 108 parayanas of Guru Charitra, taking three days to finish each parayana. I did this at Gangapur and stayed there 10 or 11 months for this purpose. As my powers, he had interdicted their use. But, out of his kindness, he gave me some other power. It came about thus. One *Ekadashi* day, I sat by his side.

Baba: What do you eat today?

I: Nothing, today is *Ekadashi*?

Baba: What does *Ekadashi* mean?

I: It means a day for *upavas*

Baba: What does *upavas* means?

I : It is just like *rojas*

Baba: What is *rojas*?

I: We take nothing except *kandamula*.

means root and usually 'Sweet potatoes' and is the food that is eaten (onions should not be taken by the orthodox) on *Ekadashi* day. Then Baba picked up some onions, evidently having a phonetic equivocation, and told me to eat it. Seeing Baba was persistent and not wishing to run counter to his wishes, I yielded, but added 'If you eat it, I will eat it'. Then Baba ate some onions and I ate some. Then as visitors began to arrive, Baba was enjoying some fun at my expense.

Baba: look at this *Bramniya* (a contemptuous corruption of the word Brahmin), he is eating onions on *Ekadashi* day.

I began to defend my conduct or justify it.

I: Baba ate it and I ate it.

Baba: At one stroke, was having humour at my expense and the manifestation of his powers and he declared that he had not eaten onions. At once, he vomited out something. That was not onion but sweet potatoes (*Ratale*)

Baba: See, it is not onion but sweet potato I had eaten.

Now here was my opportunity. By his miraculous powers, he had produced sweet potatoes from his mouth. I treated it as *prasad*, fell upon it, seized it with my mouth and

ate it up. Baba abused me, kicked me and beat me. But I did not thiamind all in the least, as I was overjoyed at having got his *uchchishhta* as prasad. I knew also that as with Akkalkote Maharaj, so with Baba his beating and abuse were auspicious and beneficial. If Baba kissed a man and sent him off, as he did sometimes, that was not auspicious, But in an instant, Baba's mood was changed, His anger, real or pretended, gave way to warm appreciation of my unquestioning faith in him and he lovingly placed his hand on my head and blessed me. He said that I would thenceforth have the power by barely thinking of him and holding up my palms, to pour abundance of udhi from my palms.

(At this stage, Kushabhav at once put his two empty palms together and held them above and in front of his face, lifted his face up and closed his eyes, for (or as though he was in) prayer and in a minute he cried, 'Here is udhi!' Hold your hand under and receive the udhi' and he began to drop a stream of fresh udhi from between his palms. We (i.e.) I, B.V.N.Swami and Mr.Avaste, stretched out a piece of paper and took some ounces of udhi, folded the same into packets and took the same.)

This miraculously produced udhi could be distributed by me to those who have faith and want prasad from me, and the udhi would remove troubles. This power was at once vested in me and did not require any japa on my part. I am since then using this power to grant udhi prasad to those who want it. This udhi will remove various evils and can be used. It might even cure lack of issue. But, in cases of menstrual disorder, it would be better to see the issueless lady, before deciding on the remedial measure necessary. As for the old power of producing pedhas etc., I am mostly obeying Baba's interditory order. But occasionally, I have yielded to the importunity of people, who ask me to produce pedhas etc.

This power of counteracting evil spells and black magic I have exercised without compunction. Within the last month Mr. Rajmachikar's grandson was getting mysterious '*biba marks*' (i.e. marks of the marking nut) on his body or on his clothes or bed clothes without any visible cause. That is a well known species of black magic and there are specific

mantras (that I have practised) to counteract these and other similar evil practices. I was sent for and I came and went on with these counteracting mantras and my Datta Pooja, *arati* etc., at Rajmachikar's. That checked the black magic. On 18-7-36, Saturday, when as usual, the magical *biba* marks should appear, none appeared and the evil spell is now counteracted.

After I stayed three years with Baba, my father came up and took me. At my departure, Baba said '**Next time when you come, come two of you**'. A little later, I and my father went to Shirdi and paid our respects to Baba. Then he said that by his phrase 'come two' he means that I should marry and come with a wife. Soon after my father took me from Shirdi, I had married a wife; yet still I liked to go and stay with Baba. So, I went to him alone, and stayed with him for a long time, though married. Then my wife came up and took me away with her. Now I have children and grand children.

On one of my visits, Baba told me "Why do you take the trouble to come up all this distance to see me. I am there'. He then gave a specific description of a plot of land in my village as his residence. I went up later and after clearing the prickly part on it, I found there was a samādhi. I bought up that land and at that samādhi, I have my worship. There Baba gives me darshan. So I am not going to Shirdi after that except for the *Ramnavami*.

The power of producing udhi etc., which I have got is communicable by me. But the would-be recipient of the power would have to undergo a rigorous course of an austere discipline (e.g) six months of absolute *brahmacharya* (i.e.) continence).

30th August, 1936

The name of the saint that appears at Mirazgaon is Pakir Shah. He lived 200 years ago and held the land in which his tomb now exists, as an *dinam* grant from the *jagirdar*. I now own that land. He has no disciples or descendants. He is different from Sai Baba. He occasionally talks of Sai Baba. He talks very little. It is mostly darshan of him

we get. Now, during the *Chaturmasya*, even *dharsan* is stopped. We can now hear his voice but not see him during these four months.

(Just as he entered today at 10p.m, into Narayan Rao Bhide's room, Kusa Bhav said, 'here hold' and produced vibhuti or udhi and applied it to Mr. Bhide's forehead and gave bits to others.) The production of this udhi is not the result of any mantra, but is the result merely remembering Sai Baba. The former power of producing pedha is different. The pedhas I produced are merely property fetched from elsewhere. That power did not include the production at will of udhi. Now it is production (by thinking of Sai) of udhi. Formerly it was merely transferring pedha, etc., from one place to another. This Pakir Shah does not give one any help; by his speech etc., in one's progress in *jnan* or bhakti. It is merely to inspire faith that he appears. He is to be seen and worshipped or bowed to. His statement about Sai Baba is that Sai Baba is alive. He gives no details as to what form or what condition Baba is in whether Sai baba remains only as a spirit or has taken fresh form in some human body, etc. He says that he and Sai Baba are interrelated as persons of the same order or set.

XI

26th July, 1936.

Balakrishna Govind Upasani Sastri, S/Oh Govind Gopal Upasani Sastri, Brahmin, aged about 69, retired Professor of Sanskrit, Saniwarpeth, Poona says:

When plague was raging at Poona, my college was closed for many long months, and then I went on pilgrimage with my mother and wife. When I went from Haridwar and Rishikesh to Tapovan, there I met a *sādhu* who glared at me at least he was persistently looking at me. I bowed to him and he still looked at me, and asked me 'Are you not from Satana?' 'Yes', I answered, for Satana is my ancestral village. Then, I, in my turn inquired of him who he was. 'Come here again tomorrow at this time (afternoon) and I will tell you, he said. I then went to my quarters and informed my mother.

She thought that this might be our (family) Mutt Founder, Sri Uddhava of Mulhare (Mayurapura). Next day, she wanted to come to the saint and she accompanied me to the appointed place at the time fixed. After 15 minutes of wandering up and down, she thought it was a wild goose chase to find a wandering saint and went away. Almost immediately after she left, that saint appeared before me and said, with a grave countenance, 'Do not act in this manner again'.

I: In what manner?

He: Only those directed to come should come. There is always difference between one individual and another alike in physical and other peculiarities. No two are exactly the same. So only the bidden person should come.

I agreed to abide by that rule.

Then as I wanted to know his identity, he informed me that I had a *saligram* among the Gods that I worshipped at home and he gave me an exact description of it. I said that I had that saligram. Then, he added, that he was the person who gave it to Uddhava Maharaj from whose grandson, my grandfather had got it. It has been a heirloom with us and I am still worshipping it.

Still as his identity was not clear, he thus replied to me talking this time in *Hindustani*. Till then, he was talking in Marathi. He waved his hand so as to attract my attention and said 'Lo, there was a tree. Two persons went up that tree. One came down; the other went up'. He wound up with the remark 'You will come to know' and then he disappeared.

He looked like a man of 50 or 60 years, rather bulky and stout and he wore only a *coupina* and no other article of dress.

Many years later, say about 1910-11, (31-12-1911) I was trying to utilise my Christmas Holidays for a trip from Dhulia southward to see if any trace could be found of my younger brother Kasinath (i.e. Upasani Baba). He had contracted some strange disease in the course of his efforts at pranayama. He could not lie down lest breathing should stop. He had no sleep, nor good digestion. So he left home and we had no trace of his whereabouts. As I was in the train

from Manmad going south, it stopped at Kopergaon for a few minutes and the local mamlatdar Mr. Bhat, a friend of mine who was on the platform made me alight and spend a pleasant day with him. He told me that Sai Baba was a saint living 6 miles off (i.e) at Shirdi and worth a visit. He sent me in his tonga to that village.

I went to the mosque and found Sai Baba at the dhuni in the mosque. He was standing close to the fire and occasionally turning round himself. He saw me and invited me inside. I went and prostrated myself before him. Gazing at me, he told me to go to Khandoba's temple. I thought he recommended that visit to see the image of that God and I said that all Gods were there with him, and was quite content to see him. He repeated the words "Go to Khandoba's." I inferred that he wanted me to get away and not to stay there. So I went to an adjoining house and there they told me (after I mentioned Baba's order) that there was one Upasani Sastri at Khandoba's. I then went to Khandoba's and found my brother there. He said that he was remaining there by Sai Baba's order and that he saw very little of Sai Baba. I then gave him or rather one Dada Kelkar on his account some Rs.4 for his food expenses and went back to the Masjid. I stayed at Shirdi for one or two days at that time.

On the first day, he asked all generally for *dakshina kukshana* some gave. He extended his palms towards me and asked for *dakshina kukshan*. I said I had nothing and made *pranams*.

On the occasion, Sai Baba said to me the same words as the *sādhu* at Tapovan. 'Lo! There was a tree. Two persons went up that tree. One came down; the other went up' in Hindustani. I was at once reminded of the Tapovan saint whose person closely resembled Sai Baba's, though the dress was different. Sai Baba mentioned some autobiographical reminiscences of his own. He said he had been at the battle in which the Rani of Jhansi took part. He was then in the army.

On the second day he asked me again for *dakshina*. I excused myself on the ground that I had barely the railway fare for my journey with me. Then he pointed to a silver watch I had in my pocket and asked for it as *dakshina*. I gave

it but not without a momentary regret and hesitation. He received it and handed it over to some fakir by his side. Then looking at me and evidently to meet my momentary regret at losing the watch, Baba said to me 'You are not going to be worse off (on his account)' I said, 'Of course, it was nothing I had given. Then I started back, and via Kopergaon I came to Poona. There I went to a friend's (Mr.Natu's) house. I was talking of my Shirdi watch incident and inquired what it would cost to get a similar watch. Just then my friend's brother sent down his gold watch worth about Rs.60 and wanted me to accept it as a present and I accepted it. So I wasn't worse off for parting with my watch to Sai Baba

I visited Shirdi on one or two occasions. I composed then a Sanskrit poem on Sai Baba.

XII

27th July, 1936

Balakistna Ramachandra Khairikar, Brahmin, Vydiki life, aged 70, Khairi (3 miles off Chitale) says:

When I first heard of Sai Baba, it was that he was a mad man. That was 35 years ago or thereabout. But when everybody began to talk of him and as some of the Brahmins of Shirdi (eg.Appa Kulkarni) are connected with me, I went to see him. I was a hereditary village officer. The Government dispensed with our services in 1916, Formerly people used to visit Shirdi along Chitale, Jalgaon, Rampur, Nathpatlacha, Wadi, Pimpalwadi, Shirdi route. That road not being in use is not now to be found.

I saw Baba using water instead of oil for his *panthis* (lamps).

Deshpande Master of Danderpur was often hearing Baba talk. I know nothing of what Baba said.

Once in 1908, when I went to Baba, a coin a pice I trod upon at the mosque. I picked it up and delivered it to Baba saying 'Keep this safe. This is you coin'. He returned it to me saying 'That is all right. Take this coin home. Keep it in your pooja, along with he images you worship. You will

have prosperity. I took it and worshipped it. For three years, (i.e) till 1911, I had prosperity. Formerly, I could not get even rice for a night meal. But after I started the worship, I save so much from my earnings as Kulkarni, that my wife could get gold bangles (i.e., wristlets). Then when I travelled and came under pollution I delivered my study book (*Pothi*) with the pice in it to a friend and some days later, I found the pice was lost. Since then (1911) misfortune dogs my heels. I first lost my wife in six months of losing the coin. In 1916 I lost my service. In 1917-18, I lost my mother. I am now begging for my food. I visit Shirdi on each Ramnavami.

XIII

27th August, 1936.

Badave, c/o Anand Ramachandra Badave, of Nevase, Brahmin, aged 64, Estate Broker, Mothi Chowk, Ravivar Peth, Poona says:

About 30 years ago, my father in-law Mr. Vabale then Vakil of Ahmednagar, was a great devotee of Sai Baba. I was a Badave or Poojari of Mohiniraj at Nevasa. I had one son. But several children were born to me before and after that had died young. My wife, child and I went at the instance of my father-in-law (who was a friend of Nana Saheb Chandorkar) to Shirdi. My wife said nothing and none of us said anything about our grievances or prayer. My wife mentally prayed for Sai Baba's blessings that children to be born later should not be short-lived but be healthy and long-lived. Baba placed his palm on her head and said, 'Have no anxieties'. Thereafter, I had only one daughter and three sons born to me and they are alive except one son who died at the age of 17. At that visit, Baba asked me for Dakshina. When I paid something' he wanted more. This he repeated several times till my funds were practically exhausted. I wanted to give him one rupee more but somehow failed to give it. We returned and I told my wife about it. Some years later, I fell on bad days, my finances were very low and I was knocking from pillar to post getting little or nothing. Then my wife reminded me that I wished to pay Rs.1 to Sai Baba and had

omitted to do so. At once, I sent Sai Baba Rs.1 by M.O. Since then the tide has turned. I have had good days and no financial difficulties. This was about 20 years ago. Baba was alive then. I came to Poona in 1914 and I am doing business as estate broker etc. My sons are doing good business here.

XIV

1st September, 1936.

Shridhar Narayan Kharkar, aged 57, Kayasta Prabhu, Accountant, Secretariat, 37 Charni Road, Thana, Says:

My earliest period, that is infancy, was wellstocked and fed with religious ideas and ideals by the pious prudence of my grandfather. When I was thus developing the orthodox side of my religious study and practice, Mr.Appa Kulkarni, Deputy Collector, a very pious soul, showed me the picture of Sai Baba that he was devotedly attached to. That was my first contact with Baba. Very soon after that I got from Mr. Dabholkar a picture of Baba, a number of Sai Lila Masiks and a packet of Baba's udhi that came on a day. I was unwell; and on the second day, I got alright and started my worship of Baba which steadily grew thenceforward.

The beginning of my faith in Baba was marked by a remarkable dream or vision.

The picture I got from Mr. Dabholkar I took to my pooja room but when I was taking it near the picture of the Akkalkot Saint that I was already worshipping, some impulse made me withdraw the new picture. 'Hallo! This is the Moslem's picture. How could it be placed next to the holy Hindu saint?' So thinking I kept it apart, a little distance from (and not in the same group with) Akkalkot Maharaj's picture.

I had a dream that night. In the morning, I first forgot all about the dream but when I began to worship, I at once recalled the details of my night dream. In the dream, I saw a fakir robbed like Sai Baba coming towards the oti or veranda on which I and some one else were sitting. I got up to welcome that fakir. Perhaps I was going to make some individuou distinction. At any rate to prevent such a distinction

being made, the person who was next to me told me this (Sai Baba) is not different from Akkalkot' and I was directed to treat him on the same footing as Akkalkot Maharaj. Recalling the dream, I rearranged the pictures and placed Sai Baba's picture along with Akkalkot Maharaj's and worshipped him.

By Baba's kindness, devotion to Sai Baba has increased by leaps and bounds not only with me but also amongst all the members of my family. I read up all available books on Sai Baba and my wife and children (and God has given me my quiverful) all have taken to Baba worship and show such a great zeal that in case I fail to attend to arati or pooja of Baba, someone else is ready to take it up.

At first, there appeared to be some exceptions to my felicity in this respect. My mother was living away from me for many years. But, by the grace of God and Baba, she came to live with me. But at first, seeing the worship I paid to Baba's picture and my visits to Shirdi she was displeased on the ground that Baba was a Moslem. But, Baba's kindness towards me and her was most remarkable. He worked a gradual change in her feelings. As she was not for Baba, I took other members of my family with me to Shirdi but not my mother. After 2 or 3 such years, i.e. in 1933. She wished to go to Shirdi and pay here respects to Baba's shrine, and asked my wife and daughter to see that she was taken to Shirdi. I was very glad to see the change worked in her. Baba's kindness made a great change in her attitude. Extremely orthodox though she was, she dropped her orthodox scruples when devotion to Sai Baba suggested the contrary course. She was well impressed with all she saw at Shirdi. The visit to Shirdi was none too soon. Shortly after our return from Shirdi, she breather her last at my residence at Thana. It was a great kindness on the part of Baba to have brought a change in her and given her darsan of the Samadhi just in time before she passed away. I can easily multiply instances of Baba's kindness to me and my family. But, it is needless. It is enough to say that I feel Baba is guiding us and watching over our interests and actions in everything.

I shall give only two instances to show how other members of my family are sharing the kind and merciful care that Baba bestows on his own. My second son, Govind, was

hungering and thirsting to have the joy of visiting Baba's samadhi, and Dwarakamai at Shirdi. So in 1934 for Ramnavami celebration when our family friends Mr.G.B.Datar and family were going to Shirdi my son accompanied them. When he went to Dwarkamai (i.e.) the mosque, he was alone with Baba's eyes from the portrait seem to pierce into you, wherever you may stand in the hall. My son gazed with rapture at the portrait and closed his eyes. He heard then a distinct and audible voice aaalas (Have you come?) That is the parental affectionate greeting he had. He opened his eyes and found himself alone. There was no other to utter those words of welcome, but Baba. About 8 years back, my daughter was in the family way and we had taken her to our village at Khar (some 2 or 3 miles off Thana). When the delivery was to take place, there was no proper medical aid. My relations were blaming me for not providing a place at Thana for the delivery. My wife and told me that it the delivery was obstructed. The child had evidently died and could not easily come out. There was great pain and anxiety was felt by the patient and by all of us. It was midnight or rather 2 A.M. When the condition was reported to be so painful and anxious, I was helpless. Suddenly, it dawned upon me that I had a safe source in Baba's udhi. My wife took the udhi and applied it to my daughter. Within 30 minutes or one hour of the application the child came out. It was dead, but my daughter's life was saved and our anxieties were at an end. A doctor came in the morning and wondered how it had come out. He thought that ill trained people like the midwife would have thrust their hands in and created danger of septic and possible post-parturition troubles. He was surprised to learn that mere udhi without any physical interference resulted in the expulsion of the child, the placenta and everything.

All my girls take part in the service of Baba and daily perform their arati & c. A week or so before my daughter's delivery, my son informed me that Baba had just appeared in his dream and called our "Nana, Nana. (meaning myself) Where is he? Why is he afraid? Apply my udhi." Though my son had told me this, I did not recall it at the time of my daughter's serious troubles; but instinctively I resorted to the aid of Baba's udhi. Long afterwards I thought over the matter and found that in my son's dream, baba had given me a

forewarning of the impending danger and shown me the way out of it. And when I failed to realise this at the critical moment, I was made unconsciously to utilise the very way he had mentioned.

XV

12th September, 1936.

Shamrao Raoji Shrotrie, Kayasth Prabhu, aged 55, record keeper, District Court, Thana says:

I visited Sai Baba at Shirdi only once. That was about 1909. When I went and bowed to Sai Baba, I sat in his presence and then a particular question cropped up in my mind. Baba told me to go to a Bai, saying that she was in the temple reading Puran. I went up and found an elderly (Brahmin) lady of about 50 years reading puran. I sat and listened. Therein what she read to me was the answer to what cropped up in my mind when I was in Baba's presence. This was Baba's way of giving me a solution.

XVI

12th September, 1936.

Sadashiv Trimbuk Vdhavkar, Kayastha Prabhu, aged 68, Retired Goods Clerk of G.I.P.R. now living at Mahagiri, Thana Says:

I was a goods clerk at Dadar some 28 years ago (i.e.) about 1909. I had a distant relation, a Tamane, was a devotee of Baba. He told me to go to Shirdi and see Baba. So I went up about 1909 with my friend Tamane and engaged a tonga for going to Shirdi and returning back to Kopergaon.

When we went to Baba at the Mosque, we had left behind a couple of mangoes in the tonga for our own consumption and took the rest of the fruits which along with some tobacco and a quantity of copper coins I presented to Baba. Baba said, "Where are those two mangoes? Why do you keep them there? Bring them here." Baba knew the facts evidently by his own wonderful power. These were then brought

and presented. Baba ordered all the fruits to be cut up and distributed as prasad to all the people that were present. He then smoked away. It was about 11 a.m I felt very hungry as my usual meal time was 9 a.m, and I had no meal that morning. But, out of delicacy, I said nothing of my hunger and merely continued to sit at the Mosque. Then some one came with a packet of pedhas and placed it before Baba as a present. Baba usually touches nothing, but on this occasion, as soon as the packet came, he opened it, and took up one pedha. It was a good sized pedha and he threw it on to my lap. I was some yards off from him. I thought that it was prasad and a precious gift to be taken home and not anything that I should eat then and there. But, Baba seeing that I held it in my hand without eating said, 'It was given to you not for keeping it.' Then I was obliged to eat it up. I felt that my hunger was half appeased. Then again, Baba picked up another pedha from the packet and flung it at me. This pedha at least is to be carried home, I fancied and retained it in my hand. But Baba gain repeated his remark 'it was not given to you for retention'. So I ate it up and felt my hunger wholly appeased. Baba did not throw any more pedha at me nor did he give any pedha to any of the others present. Baba evidently knew of hungry state, half appeased state and fully appeased hunger without a word from me.

Then after arati was over, the question of food for me and my friend had to be considered. It was very late, too late to start cooking. But Baba had evidently anticipatd things. We learnt that he had told the retired mamlatdar (probably Balasaheb Bhate) in the morning that he would go and dine with him. So extra meals were ready at the gentleman's house. When the arati was over, Baba told him to take us two and a third Brahmin stranger to his house and feed us. We were the persons to represent Baba and we had a satisfactory meal.

At the time when Baba was sending that official to us at his place to feed us, he said to him "This youngman (Referring to me) has needless anxiety. His business is already accomplished." That gentleman came to us and reported Baba's words and asked what for we had gone to Shirdi. The fact was that I was anxious to get upadesh and hoped that Baba would given me some upadesh.

In the afternoon, the tonga man was hurrying us up to go back to Kopergaon. Some people told us that Baba did not usually permit people to get back the same day they visited him, but we had to go for two reasons. First, the cartman had to be paid his return fare even if we did not start that day. Secondly, I had got away from my office by reporting myself sick and had to present myself before the Railway Medical Officer at Dadar on the following morning. Anyhow, we told the tongawalla to wait and sat before Baba. Even there the tongawalla came. Baba looked at his face and asked him to go away saying "Where is the hurry?" Then, anyway he knew my other difficulty and so gave us leave. He told me to take udhi. I took it and we came away. His parting words to me were 'Have no anxieties. Your business is already accomplished.' It was not clear to me what business of mine he was referring to or he could refer to as already accomplished. The only business I had with him if it could be described as business was taking upadesh and it was not accomplished for he gave me none. I returned to Dadar and in 7 or 8 days, I had a dream. In that dream, my family priest who was at Indore at that time came to me to give me upadesh. When I woke in the morning, I had no intimation by letter or otherwise of the priest's visit, but, in a few days, he suddenly turned up at my office and said he would stay with me. I told him of the dream. He said he knew that and had gone to me then specially for giving me upadesh. But, he did not tell me how he happened already to be aware of my dream. Next morning, after due and proper performance of the requisite ceremonies he gave me formal upadesh a regular initiation to Sive Mantra. I am a Saivite. Thus, my business was accomplished. And as evidently the priest intended to give it to me sometime earlier, Baba's words were real statements of fact, or powerful words that forced the intended business into the mind of my priest (who lived at Indore far away from Shirdi and who had not gone to Shirdi).

[This gentleman is a devotee of Hubli Siddharud Swami and went to Shirdi only once after the above visit and that was in 1935 in grateful memory of Baba.]

XVII

13th September, 1936

Dattatreya Vithal Vaidya, S/o Vithal N.Vaidya Kayastha Prabhu, aged 25, Clerk, Treasury, Thana Collectorate, Thana, says:

My father Vithal N.Vaidya is a retired Railway employee living at Karchi and has long been a devotee of Sai Baba. But, he has a dislike for expressing to other his own experiences relating to Baba. My father's first visit to Shirdi Baba was when I was very young—indeed so young that I have hardly any recollection of that visit. My sister Chabu, a small child then, had suddenly an attack of fever on the day fixed for starting to Shirdi and he had to take the children with him. Our relations, therefore, opposed his idea of starting. But, his strong faith in Baba made him stick to his first idea and he was prepared to go and did start with the sick child. By the time we reached Kalyan, the child was alright—fever had disappeared. Thus, his faith in Baba was justified and strengthened. He went and took darshan. He was anxious to return in proper time and asked Baba for leave. But Baba detained him for several hours beyond the proper time for starting in spite of his informing Baba that he must proceed at once to join duty on tomorrow. Some 4 hours or so after the proper time, Baba gave him leave. But my father thought it was useless to start then for Kopergaon station, as there would be no train available. But Baba having given leave, he was told that it was not right for him to continue at Shirdi and that he should start at once. He started and when he reached the station, he was surprised to discover that the train by which he wanted to go to Bombay was 5 hours late and had not arrived. It came soon after he went and he reached Bombay in due time.

My father fell ill at Thana in 1933-1934, severe type of pneumonia it was. Dr. Chipkar was despairing of his recovery. He had fever for 21 days and the temperature was yet high.

My father was, however, even during his illness, praying to Sai Baba. On the 21st day at 9p.m. my father had

actual vision of Baba -though none of us at his bedside could see Baba. My father cried "Baba has come and wants bread and onions". As we did not see Baba, we thought our father delirious and that really there was no reason to fetch bread and onions. Then my father was angry with us and asked us all to clear out. We left the sick room and stood outside, but quite near to hear what passed in the room. We could hear Baba talking with my father. Then we heard Baba addressing some 2 persons present there and asked them to go away. They however, protested and wanted to take away my father with them. Baba objected and asked them to clear away and forcibly struck the earth with his little staff. And evidently these two persons went away. We heard no more of their voices.

Baba left the sick room telling my father to drink plenty i.e. one lotaful of cold water. Then my father called for me and for drinking water. As the doctor had forbidden cold drink, we hesitated but at the insistence of my father, my mother who had faith in Baba gave him water. He drank 2 or 3 cups full of cold water. He perspired and the temperature was rapidly coming down a fact which we ran up at once to report to the doctor. Doctor came up at once and wondered at the sudden fall of temperature, and its being brought about by cold water being taken. He gave some injection and next morning he declared that my father was beyond danger. Thus, the crisis of my father's life was tided over by Baba's appearance and help. On some previous, critical occasions we heard our father say Baba is come and wants bread and onion.

Last year (i.e. 1935) my sister Chabu had to be married. My father was anxious about it and was inquiring for a suitable match. One match was almost settled but suddenly fell through; that made my father still more anxious. As usual, he was praying to Sai Baba. One night he had a dream. There he was told that a letter from Pandharpur side would come and following that would settle matters and that he need not be anxious. Within 15 days of the dream, one Dingre of Pandharpur wrote a letter to him proposing a marriage with one Mr.Dixit of Pandharpur. Very soon, that marriage was settled and celebrated.

XVIII

14th September, 1936.

Sankar Balwant Kohojkar, B.A., Kayasth Prabhu, aged 41, clerk in Bombay Collector's Office, living at Thana, says:

My late father Balwant C.Kohojkar a retired mamlatdar visited Sai Baba in 1911. Baba gave him an affectionate parental welcome and patted him on the back. Baba said to him. "Will you live in the mutt? (i.e) at Shirdi. My father lived there for about 7 days. When the time came for leave taking, Baba told him Go anywhere. Baba is after you. Subsequently, (i.e.) till my father's death, a few months back, whatever mishap may be fall, my father found that he was helped by Baba. My father went only once.

During his stay at Shirdi in 1911, Datta Jayanti occurred. About 5 p.m. or so, Baba was seated at the mosque with devotees around him. At once, he said "I am having the pangs of labour. I cannot bear it. I am about to be delivered." Evidently, he was identifying himself with Anusuya, mother of Datta who at that time had her pains of labour and was undergoing sympathetic pain.

At twilight time (i.e.) shortly after the above incident he drove out all people from the mosque and again after a little while he called all people to come unto him. Then he was in glee. This is according to the Purana the time of Datta's birth. People all went in and among them, my father directly entered the mosque: what he was on Baba's seat and in place of Baba's figure was a small child, charming three faced figure of Datta (i.e.) Datta, as an infant. That view he had just for a moment. Then instead of Datta figure, he saw at the identical spot Baba in his usual dress and form. Just imagine what his feelings must have been at that time. He vividly realise that Baba was Datta.

On the day of leaving Shirdi and after taking the parting udhi at the Masjid, my father had gone through the lanes and houses that block the view between the main road and the mosque. There, at the main road, he had a strong feeling that this view of Baba might be his last, and so he desired to see Baba once more. Just as he formed that wish

in his mind, he looked at the lendi side and there peeping through the hedge was the face of Sai Baba. What a wonder of wonders! He had left Sai Baba behind at the mosque and Baba had not accompanied or followed him. Yet, at the moment when he entertained the desire to see Baba's face for the last time Baba's face appeared at a hedge about 100 or 150 yards away from the mosque. That was the last time he saw Baba, and so Baba said "You are going. Well go". I had not accompanied my father on the above occasion, but my father has mentioned this to me and others.

I have personally little experience. As a boy, I got a small photo of Sai Baba in my pocket. Since that time I progressed well in my studies and in life. I have given that little photo to my sister. I am worshipping Baba even now'.

In 1930, I had a serious accident that threatened to cut my life short at once. I had dysentery and I mistook a bottle of phenol, while I was in half sleeping condition for water and swallowed most of it. That resulted in my passing into a deranged state and for four days, I was unconscious. The attendant Dr. Chipkar feared it might prove fatal. But, I recovered after the fourth day. Just at that time, as I was regaining consciousness, I had a vision. I saw that figure of a young athletic Moslem (bareheaded he was) beating all round (i.e.) on the wall and the floor of my sick room with his staff. At once, I concluded that it was my patron saint Sai Baba that had come and saved my life.

In 1934, I felt a strong impulse that I should at once proceed to Shirdi and have a darshan of Samadhi and Dwaraka Mai. When I went into the Dwaraka Mai, I felt thrilled by a current passing through my body (just like an electric current) at the sight of Baba's portrait. At first, I could not keep looking at that portrait. As I felt it, I was full of the feelings "God is here".

XIX

15th September, 1936.

Ramachandra Ramakrishna Samant, ESQ., B.A., Brahmin, Landlord, 45, Turner Road, Bandra says:

I visited Sai baba thrice during my life time. The first time was at Guru Poornima of 1912 and was in the company of my father-in-law, Annasaheb Dabholkar and my wife. I had not then become a believer in Sai Baba but I went at the insistence of my father-in-law. He had owed to take his daughter and sun-in-law to Sai Baba. So I had to go. On my parental side there was no connection with Sai Baba; but there was intense religious fervour. My great grandfather "Bhagat" Lakshman Arjun Samant was a very devout and regular pilgrim of Pandharpur Sree Vithoba. He is ochre coloured Chhati, i.e. sash, his clothes and vessels etc, which he regularly carried at each Ashadi Kartikai are still preserved as heirlooms and I took the ancestral sash to Pandhari, for dipping it into the Chandrabhaga. My grandfather, a bhakta of Vithal was deeply devoted to Shankar also. Every afternoon, he carried on his meditation with concentration and japa of Shankar with Namavali, and I, his grandson, was his pet. Yet, I was not allowed to disturb his prayers. At night, he recited Haripatha and at dawn he had Bhajan. At his death at the age of 59, there was a very memorable scene. He grew virakta and said 'My close of life has approached vatvel ali ubha pandurang vaikunto Sri Ranga bholavile, i.e. He (referring to Shri Pandurang sitting on a box in white dress) had come to take him to Vaikuntha and that the heavenly visitor had given him one ghatika (i.e.) 24 minutes to take leave. Then he called his sons, daughters, etc. one after another. The ladies (i.e.) his daughters, etc., he did not call by their usual names. One he called Ganga, another he called Bhagirathi. He called them by the names of holy *tirthas* and bade them good-bye. He called my weeping father and asked him to take courage.

Bhavache bhaye kaya mithos landy?

Dharemana Dhairy dhakisi sandi

To me, he gave blessings saying he would protect me as soon as I should think of him and that he was always before and behind me. The words he uttered were words quoted appositely from Tukaram, Ramdas, etc., and not his own words. This was in 1899.

After such talks in highly spiritual view, he peacefully passed away, it is believed, to Vaikuntha. My father was not quite so advanced. He visited Pandharpur and told me that to keep up the family traditions, every member of our family should go to Pandharpur at least once in his lifetime. When he died, he was conscious up to the last moment and as death was approaching, he said pointing to the south "malanyayala ale aheth meyeto" (i.e.) They have come to take me. I am leaving (1911).

I sucked in these holy and purifying ideas and ideals in my early years; but the education I went through tended in quite the opposite direction and was quite powerful enough to deaden and stifle the feelings and sentiments of earlier years. At the time of my marriage (June 1911), I was just beginning to suffer in health (from albuminuria hereditary) and I was on diet (i.e.) at night I would take no solid meal. I had the beginnings of seeds of faith of Sai Baba, having heard grand accounts of his powers. But, my spiritual numbness still continued. I was just prevented from descending to scoffing. I simply ran with the current, or rather went through all that my father-in-law and others went through, merely out of a desire to keep in conformity with my surroundings. Others went and bowed to Baba and I bowed. Baba clearly perceived my mentality and ultimate possibilities and remarked about me in reference to Mr. Madhavarao's bidding me to bow to Baba at that time tyala paya padayala net lagato (i.e.) He requires pressure to be brought to bow at the (Guru's) feet. But that gentle pressure was being very slowly applied. I was also by his kindness made the recipient of favours, the effect of which would also be to increase my faith in him. Baba was informed about my trouble (albuminuria) and my getting weaker on account of inability to take the food that others took in usual quantity and at the the usual times. Baba said that I would get alright. Perhaps, the full words were

The words of Baba came true. I was observing diet and taking medicines now and then for a short time as a precaution and had my regular or periodical urine-examination. Thereafter, the trouble stopped and I resumed my normal food eating.

On 5-6-1913, my first child, a daughter was born (i.e.) about 11 months after my first visit to Baba. It was in 1913 I was appointed to be Chairman of the temple committee to look after Tungareshwar Devasthan at Bassein. At the Guru Poornima of 1915 was my second visit to Baba, as before in company with my wife and father-in-law. There was nothing notable at the visit itself to record. But something that took place in February 1915 may be recorded to show how Sai Bhakti and Sai's protection were going on, at least subconsciously.

In that month on a particular day, I was trying to get up at bedstead; during my convalescence, at my house at Arnala, I suddenly had a fit and fell down. My wife feared that consequences might be serious, and others also were soon drawn to the place. But at that time I had something like a vision. I saw some 8 or 10 dark beings with spears and shields round me accounted in the accepted Yamadoot fashion and I said to myself "What is all this? Why are they beating me?" I did not feel any pain but still I had the feeling that I was being beaten. Simultaneously, there was light and I saw a hand moving on and sweeping aside all those dark beings who should respectfully away from it and there was a portion of a white kaphani (gown) below that hand. Then I woke to full consciousness and picked myself up just as a crowd of persons was gathering round me. I had not sustained any injuries personally by the fall. The only damage done by the fall was that my spectacles fell down and broke. I perceived a peculiar odour at the time of my vision. Of course my relations believed that I was saved by Baba and now I recognise that the hand seen by me was Sai Baba's. This strong faith I had not in 1915 but it came to me in 1927 after seeing how Narayan Maharaj's power worked.

In October, 1918 just a week or ten days before Sai baba passed away, we went up and took his darshan. I had taken two little sons along with other members of the family

and while there they had diarrhoea. In other places, one would make them fast or give them light liquid nutrition; but here at Shirdi, Baba was asked about them, and he said "Feed them on sweetened semolina (boiled with ghee). They ate that and got alright in a week. I know personally that my father-in-law, when ill, was, by Baba's order, fed on food which ordinary rules of prudence would avoid in cases of illness. But obedience to Baba's orders did not result in any harm.

It was in 1918 that Baba first asked me for dakshina and that several times I gave him such sum as he asked for. He did not compel me thereby to borrow for that purpose a course which I would not like at the place. He stopped asking me before my pocket money was exhausted. Another fact I noticed about these demands was that whenever he asked me for money, I was then having in my mind feelings of distrust in spirituality. I did not then pause to reflect, if the figures mentioned in his demand (viz) 25, 15, 10 had any allegorical meaning or were allusions. On some occasions he told me, "Go and sit in the Wada". I literally carried out his bidding by going to Mr. Buty's building where we stayed and sat by my father-in-law. Long afterwards, I was told that the words meant "Go and listen to the purana that is being read in the Wada". I will narrate next when my faith in Sai Baba came up to its present pitch of belief that Sai Baba is both man and

God and that divine powers and divine nature were part and parcel of Sai Baba.

One of my sons began to be seriously ill in August 1926. It had a very protracted course and during its course diverse diagnosis were put forward and diverse treatments adopted by eminent doctors. But, after all efforts, there was no improvement. Things seemed to point in October 1927 that it was a hopeless case. I had given up hope. Then my sister-in-law said that we should take the child to Narayan Maharaj of Khedgaonpet. That was done, Maharaj said "He will get alright, take this tirtha". That was the turning point. The same doctor with altered treatment continued; but the child began to improve and in 6 months' time all danger was passed. Later, he picked up more health and strength and that boy is alright. That turn that came with the words of Maharaj convinced me that it is absurd to put satpurush like

Sai and Narayan Maharaj on the same level with other human beings, whose words had no power, and that the former were justly placed on a rough pedestal of their own that may be described as the "human and divine". "Thou art human and divine"- In Memoriam (Tennyson).

From 1930, I got more phenomena about saints. In that Tungareshwar temple, there was a saint Naga Bua. He was ganja smoker. In 1930 he passed away at Tungareshwar. That very night at 11-30 p.m., I was half dozing in my room at Bandra when suddenly I was getting choked as it were, with the smell of smoke that entered my nose, throat, etc. I got up and finding only my wife in the room asked her "Are you smoking?" Of course she never did. She asked me "What is it you are saying?" I felt the force of her remark, but I was still feeling the smoke strong in my nose and wondered how that smoke had got into my room. But she did not smell it.

Next morning as I was motoring in a village, accidentally, the then chairman of that temple committee turned up and stopped my car and told me that about 2 a.m. during that night, the Naga Bua had died and asked me what arrangements should be made for disposal of the remains. So about the time of his departure that saint had gone over to my room. When my friend told me of the death, I recognised the smoke and smell I had in my room as that of Naga Bua.

In 1918, when Sai Baba came in my dream and swept away the dark beings, I perceived a peculiar odour, which I have learned to identify with Sai Baba.

Baba had spoken a little regarding my past births etc. To Nana Saheb Nimonkar in my presence although I could not distinctly hear it; but the latter died before I could ask him as to details.

XX

16th September, 1936.

Bapu Rao N.Chandorkar, S/o Nana Saheb Chandorkar, Brahmin, aged 40, Landholder, Gograswadi, Dombivli, (near Kalyan) G.I.P. says:

I was taken as a little boy to Sai Baba by my father. Mahalsapathi worshipped Baba applying gandha (i.e.) sandal to feet, head etc. None applied sandal paste to Baba's forehead. I was the first, who, as a child of 4, innocently applied it to his forehead just as we apply it to all the Gods we worship. After that time, others were allowed to do so. This was in 1900. My father told me that Baba explained the Gita to him in 1900-1902, in the style of the ordinary learned pandits expression, and without the use of mystifying parables or symbology etc. After 1902, Baba began use of mystifying parables or symbology etc. Then my father went on transfer to Jamnere. My father said that Baba knew Sanskrit and that he had explained that stanza etc tadvidvi. very well. My father told me that Baba had adwaitamata. But, what adwaitic idea he explained or put forward was not stated to me. We were all concerned with Baba's chatmatkaras prophecies, goshties (i.e.) moral talks etc. and we did not mind about philosophy at all. My father said that after 1913, the crowds that flocked to Baba were too heavy and there was no more peace for Baba, and that Baba once said with tears. "No one cares to take from me what I am prepared to give abundantly. But they want from me what I am unable to give".

Baba once told my father about chatmatkar something very interesting. It was about 1903-1904. My elder sister Minathai, had been helped at delivery by Baba with udhi, sent through a Gosavi. That child, however, died very young. My sister also as widowed at that very early age and had no other issue. This cast a gloom over all of us. My father and all of us went to Shirdi. My father went and sat before Baba glum-in sullen silence. Usually whenever he went, Baba would question him and he would talk and all would be cheerful. Now, on this occasion there was a sad sullen begin-

ning. This continued for some minutes. Then Baba broke the ice.

Baba:

Why are you so silent?

C:

(i.e. my father)- Baba! You know everything. While we are under your care these calamities have befallen us,- be-reaved of child, and son-in-law etc.

Baba:

If you care for child (or son-in-law) and come to me for that, you are mistaken. You need not come to me for these. These are not in my power. These i.e. (birth of child and death of relatives) are dependent on poorva karma. Even Parameswar, great God who has created the world, cannot alter these.*

Do you think he can tell the Sun or the Moon, ‘Rise some two yards farther away from your usual or appointed place.’ No, He cannot and will not do that. That would produce disorder and chaos.

C:

If that is so, how is it that you tell some one “You will have a son” and he gets a son, and you tell another “You will get appointment” and he gets it? Are these not *chamatkaras* of yours?

Baba:

No, Nana. I do not do any *chamatkaras*. You have your village astrologers. They work 2 or 4 days ahead and give out their prediction. Some of them come true. I look further ahead. What I say happens. My art also is a sort of astrology. But, you people do not understand this. To you, my words look like *chamatkaras*, because you do not know the future. So, you regard events as proofs of my miracle-working power and you turn your reverence on to me. I, in my turn, turn your Bhava reverence on to God and see that you are really benefited.

Baba spoke some numerous goshties but I do not remember them now. In 1913-1914, my father was unwell and on long leave. So, he went and stayed at Shirdi, My mother also was there and when they were by baba's side and I was worshipping him, he (Baba) said:

me aata jayena bapuche peta janma gheyen
voveli nanardha man (ghat)aashi aashi halat asel !!

(and moved his hand like the shaky neck of an old man)

(i.e.) "I will go away now. I will take birth as the child of Bapu. At that time, Nana's head (or wrist) will be shaking thus and thus".

My father construed this to mean that he (my father) would not die till a son was born to me. Unfortunately he died in 1921. During the fatal illness, I remembered this prophecy and hoped my father would survive, as I had not even got married and had no son, of course. But Fate willed it otherwise and my father died in 1921. I got married in 1922. my father's head was never shaky.*

All mantras that Baba spoke or recited were Arabic or Persian etc. and not Sanskrit, so far as I know. Kondaji and Baba recited fatias. When 'sera' was placed, on the niche (caaba), when brought by people, Baba and Kondaji placed it repeating something in Arabic, Persian or some such (to me unknown) language. My father never said that Baba spoke out or spoke of mahavakyas. It was about 1908, my father was working at Pandharpur. We i.e., I and he went to Shirdi, Baba had asked him to prepare for naivedya. That was offered to Baba. My father asked Baba to go down to his quarters to eat.

Baba: Go, I will come.

My father knew that Baba was not intending to come in his physical body and so returned disappointed. Madhava Rao Deshpande was present at the talk with Baba. Baba told him after my father left the mosque in that mood, "Tell Nana,

that he has been so long with me and yet not grasped the fact that Baba is in every ant and every fly etc. Baba said he was in all creatures. That is the highest truth I have heard from him directly or indirectly. I do not remember if any pantheistic utterance came from him. I have not heard if he spoke long sermons on Vedantic lines. He generally spoke on common matters, (e.g) 'Give alms. Do good. Speak the truth' etc. He told me when I was a boy, 'Hearken to the words of your parents. Help your mother in her tasks. Speak the truth and truth alone.' Never a word did he talk to me about mantras or about God.

I have firm faith in him as my protector. All my life is supported and maintained by him. I cannot give instances but I feel that he is guiding me and guarding me and protecting my interests and looking after my welfare.

XXI

17th September, 1936.

Chandrabai, aged 66, wife of late Ramachandra Borker, Ville Parle, says:

I am a worshipper of Sai Baba for the last 44 years of so. I went to see him at Shirdi 20 years before he expired. You see here (in this bungalow) he is the God that I worship. I still retain a good quantity of the udhi which he gave me each day with his own hand in small quantities and this I have carefully preserve as it has great virtue and potency. I have also this sacred tayath enclosing Baba's tooth, which he gave me as a memento.

I have had deep devotion to and powerful response to my devotion from Sai baba. When I went to him about 1898 (?), the present masjid had not been built, nor the wada of Sathe which came after rebuilding of the masjid. Baba was then sitting under the neem tree which is now in Sathe's Wada. I saw Baba filling his panthis, (i.e.) lamps with water, instead of oil, after drinking away the little remnant of oil mixed with some water. I saw also his lying on a plank in the Masjid hung up from the ceiling with strings made of slender shreds of cloth. There were lamps on the plank, whereon he

lay. No 'bigwigs' were coming then. Whenever I went there, I put up in the house of some villagers.

Baba's kindness to me was very great. (Even as she referred to instances, she was overcome repeatedly with emotion, shed tears and had frequent breaks in her narration, being unable to continue it by reason of her feelings). My husband Mr. Borkar never went and saw Baba: but even to him, Baba showed great kindness. In or about 1909 my husband, who was an engineer, was engaged for the construction or repair of a bridge at Pandharpur. His residence was, therefore, at Pandharpur. When he was there, I had gone to Baba at Shirdi and was serving him. One day Baba told me, you had better go to Pandharpur and I will go with you and added that there was no difficulty for him to travel and that I should start expeditiously. So I started. I did not know what had happened there. When I reached that place, I found that my husband was not there, that he had resigned his work there and gone away to Bombay. That information I got there for the first time and I was in great straits and sorrow. I had just a few rupees with me and had taken two companions with me. I had just money enough to take us back up to Kurdwadi. We went there. I had got thoroughly moody and was brooding over the situation. Suddenly a Fakir appeared before me, and asked me what I was brooding over. I evaded replying to him. He told me that my husband was at Dhond and that I should go at once with my two companions to Dhond. But, where was the railway fare to come from, I enquired. Then, he immediately delivered 3 tickets for Dhond and went away. I took the tickets and with my companions boarded the train for Dhond. Meanwhile, my husband was at Dhond drinking tea and sinking into half dozed condition or a reverie. A Fakir appeared before him and said, "How is it you are neglecting my mother? She is coming down by the train in carriage. No, such and such" and gave him the number of my carriage.

He was startled and got up saying 'Who is this that is taking me to ask?' and looked up. But the Fakir disappeared. When the train arrived, I stepped down and my husband was there to receive me and take me to his quarters. My husband told me of the Fakir's appearance before him and wanted to see a photo of Sai Baba whom I was worshipping. I showed

him the photo and he recognised therein the Fakir who came to him.

On a Guru Poornima day before Upasani Maharaj, who is my Gurubandhu, left Shirdi for Kharagpur, Sai Baba asked me to take Pooja Dravya and Naivedya and worship Maharaj. I went and worshipped him, telling him that it was Baba's order and Maharaj did not prevent me from doing that worship. But, after that day, I never again worshipped Maharaj. My attitude towards him is what I should have towards a Gurubandhu. I do not hate him as so many Shirdi people do. Sai Baba has often said that we should not harbour feelings of hatred against any, nor entertain feelings of envy, rivalry or opposition or a combative disposition towards others and that if others hated us, we should simply take to Namjapa and avoid them. But, my attitude towards, Upasani Maharaj has been misunderstood by him and others. Two years ago, I went to Sakori to help in establishing a proper arrangement about recent changes in the Panchakanya establishment of his. But, apprehending my attitude to be hostile, he never gave me the chance of a free private talk with him and I returned.

Sai Baba's kindness towards me and mine was manifested even in 1918 before his expiry and even afterwards.

Some three months before Dussehra of 1918, he was thoughtful of my welfare after he should leave the body. He told me 'Bai, (that is how he addressed me) you need not hereafter trouble to come and see me here. I am with you wherever you are'. (This lady melts into tears as she narrates this). So kind he was and his words are ever true. I went away then. Just at the Dusserah following, when I was at Panchgani, I get Mr.H.S.Dixit's message that Baba was often thinking of me and that Baba was not likely to survive even for a short time. I went to Shirdi in time to see him pass away. I gave him some water at the last moments, and Bayyaji did the same. Baba leaned back on Bayyaji and expired.

After this, I visited Shirdi once in 1919, and once in 1933. But Baba, as he promised, has ever been with me and helping me wherever I remain. I have composed some verses and communicated them and my experience to the Sai Lila Masik.

In 1921, my husband fell down from a carriage and his leg broke, I took him up and applied udhi and paste of Biba nut Jongla (ata?) And Thaqdipala. In three month's time he got alright. In 1921, I also got a child. That was also Baba's grace. In 1918, when I was aged 48 and had not conceived at all, I naturally yearned to have a child, though lay-people and doctors alike would declare conception there after out of the question.

But Baba knew my desire and in 1918-

Baba: Bai, What is your heart's wish?

I: Baba, you know everything. What is there for me to tell You?

Three years thereafter, my menses stopped and after some months, Dr.Purandhare diagnosed my condition as one of internal tumour and proposed to remove it by operation. I protested and said that I would bide my ten month's time and then decide. He opined that in my fifty-first year, after long continued absence of conception, there was no chance of my having any child. But Sai's grace made the impossible possible and a son was born to me on Dhanathrayodashi day (i.e.) 3 years and 2 days after Baba attained Maha Samadhi. And for that delivery, which took place at Chembur, I had neither doctor, nor nurse, nor any medicine. I attended to my regular duties during the day preceding delivery and at night had an easy and safe delivery. All that time and for 9 months previous, I had numerous complications. My legs etc. were swollen. I had carried on a fast for months taking hardly any food, but more often water and Udhi.

Baba's grace was shown again at the time of my husband's demise. Two months before that event, Baba was preparing my mind to face that calamity. He appeared in a dream and said to me, 'Have no fears. I will take away Sri Ram'. (My husband's name was Ramachandra). I said, 'Baba, take me away first'. Then Baba replied that there was much work for me to do and I should nerve myself to survive my husband and do the duty allotted to me. I communicated this dream to my husband. He made light of it, saying it was only a dream. That was about two months before the close of Chaturmasya. Sometime later, he developed serious kidney

trouble and hiccough supervened. The end was perceptibly drawing near. Then he said to me, that he felt his end was near but that he wished earnestly that he should die after Chaturmasya was over. But at or immediately after he was saying this, symptoms of the close of life were being manifested. His limbs got rigid and he passed into unconsciousness. I prayed to Baba to spare him at least for the remaining days of the Chaturmasya. The next day, he regained consciousness and limbs lost their rigidity. My husband was more cheerful. Then the 7 days or so of Chaturmasya lapsed, Kartik Poornima (1934) came and also pratipada. That day at midnight, he took tea and then told me to go on with arati (of Baba) and to utter Vishnu Sahasranam loudly. I did as directed. This was going on till morning when the doctor came. They were talking hopefully. But I knew that he would pass away by noon or in the afternoon. I gave him Ganges water to drink. He drank and a little later he was saying 'Sri Ram, Sri Ram'. A chokra came and called him 'Baba'. He got up saying, 'Oh' and as he said 'Sri Ram, Sri Ram' he passed away. I was by his side praying to Baba and Sri Krishna that he may be taken to the divine feet. He thus passed away with full smaran of God and Baba. I saw the grace of Baba in securing for him such a good end.

After he passed away, I had a look after my son and this building etc. Some relations were giving me endless trouble and threatened suit etc. So, I had to get Rs.14,000 to pay it to them to secure this house, etc. from further troubles. Then some evil-minded persons thrust into this house lime fruit charmed, i.e. filled with black magic, so as to do harm to us and to prevent anyone becoming out tenant in this house. Sai Baba appeared to me in a dream and told me of this. I then sent some one to go to Goa to our family deity Devi and there they secured her intervention to break the black magic and spell of our enemies.

XXII

19th September, 1936.

Balwant Hari Karnik, aged 54, employee in Bombay Customs Department, Ghodbunder Road, Bandra, says:

I am a worshipper of Sai Baba, I attend to domestic worship of Baba and I regularly visit Shirdi every year.

My faith began with listening to Das Ganu's Kirtans about Sai Baba. I went to Sai Baba first in 1911. His eyes so powerfully impressed me with faith in him-though I had no talk with him, that I resolved to visit him every year. My parents visited him soon after I did. After that, we had regular family worship of Sai Baba.

I have no experience to report about Sai Baba. I almost always went to him without special reasons or requests to make. In 1918, Guru Poornima, it occurred to me that I might ask him about my spiritual welfare. But, he was in a very unfavourable mood and so I was going away dissatisfied. But, as I was getting into my tonga, Nana Wali came to me, embraced me and said: "alama tera accha karega"

In 1928, my wife who had seen Sai Baba and developed Sai Bhakti, passed away. Before the fatal hour, she was unconscious for 6 to 7 days and was suffering from postparturition troubles for 9 months. I took Baba's photo and placed it before her. Just before dying, she got conscious, folded her hands and made namaskar to Baba's picture and to me and told her elder sons to attend to the younger ones and passed away. This was very great grace of Baba to ensure her peace and a sadgati. (anayasen maran)

I use the terms sadhu, sant and sat purusha as having the same meaning.

Baba took from me a dakshina of Rs.10 at my first visit. That left me without money for the return journey. But, just at the critical moment, my friend Mr.Toser (now Swami Narayanashram of Wai) turned up and lent me the necessary sum.

Once, I and my wife wanted to go to Pandharpur and other holy places and so took Rs.100 with us. But first, we

went to Baba at Shirdi. There, on two days, he took away as dakshina, the entire amount and we had to give up all idea of pilgrimage to other places. Evidently, Baba wanted us to feel that Shirdi was pandharpur and all other holy places put together. 'At the feet of the Sat Purusha are all holy tirthas'. Then after all our money had been taken, Baba gave us leave to go. Then I told my friends of Shirdi that I could not go as I had no fund. They said that after Baba gave leave, it was wrong to stay on. Then suddenly, Mr. Toser came and got for me a loan from some one, the amount required. My feeling in paying dakshina to Baba was that as he was feeding and helping so many fakirs, poor people etc., money given to him was good charity.

One effect of my contact with Baba is that I got premonition of coming evils and courage to face them when they come.

XXIII

25th September, 1936.

Vinayak Appaji Vaidya, Kayastha, aged 45, clerk, Bombay Port Trust Chief Accountant's Office, Parasuram Buildings, Versova Road, Andheri says:

I listened to Das Ganu's Kirtan and so went to Shirdi for Baba's darshan in 1912 during Easter. Later visits were after Baba passed away since 1923, I go there every year especially for Ramnavami.

In 1933, I stayed at Shirdi for 20 days. I have given an account of my experience in Sai Lila Masik, about visions I had and the use of udhi.

In 1927, my wife suffered from consumption. She suffered 8 months and there appeared to be no hope of her recovery. I took her to Shirdi. In 4 days, her fever stopped. I returned to Andheri at once. Ten days later, fever started again. That is, there was a relapse. I thought that her case was hopeless and that I should only take her to a village. But, Baba came to her in a dream and said that she would be alright. In fifteen days' time, the fever stopped. Thereafter

her weight began to increase. She recovered completely and has begotten 4 children thereafter. She is in good health even now.

In 1923, Baba appeared in a dream to my wife and told her that a case would be brought against me and that she should tell me not to fear. A case soon after was brought against me. But it ended in my favour.

Once on a Thursday in June, Baba appeared before my wife and wanted a patka (a towel to tie round the head) She had none. So she gave him some rice and dhal. He received that and disappeared. My wife has not seen Baba. But from her description of the visitor, I infer that it must be Baba. I am sure Baba is behind me, in everything. Every time difficulties come, I get over them with his help. In 1933, he appeared to me in a dream. I gave him Rs.1 then. He returned it to me and said, "Take as much as you want". In one month of that, I got promotion unexpectedly.

Ten years ago, my brother's daughter, aged 3, had fever for several days. Doctor's treatment availed nothing. It was at 105. The end was thought to be nearing. I gave her Baba's udhi. In 3 or 4 days' time she got alright. She is healthy and vigorous even now.

XXIV

27th September, 1936.

Mr. B.V.Dev, Retired Mamlatdar, Station Road, Thana, says:

You wish to know if Sai Baba spoke anything about or advanced any person to Adwaita Avesta. I doubt if anyone, who went to him was an Adhikari for such a course. There were Nana Saheb, H.S.Dixit. Dabholkar and Mahaslapathy with him. Perhaps, these were in the front rank of his devotees. Each had his merit of characteristic. Mahaslapathy were very meek, obedient, pious and firmly adhering to 'Holy Poverty' and Baba kept him to it. Dixit was blindly obeying Baba and had firm faith in him and was made to study Eknath to promote his spiritual condition. In these matters, he was but a beginner. Mahaslapathy had neither learning

nor culture. Nana Saheb Chandorkar knew Sanskrit and he was a student of the Gita. I retired in 1911 and went to Baba. I tried to do Pada Pooja at the bidding of Dixit. Baba stopped me. 'You need not worship. You have given me Dakshina. That is enough'.

My questioning Balakram, Baba's anger and Baba's giving me order to read Jnaneshwari, are all set out in Dabholkar's Satcharitra.

Baba took from me one after another four sovereigns. Then he said 'I have received one'. I said 'Baba, I have given you 4'.

B: I did not deny it. But when you have given 4, Baba received one only.

I: I do not understand it.

B: You will come to understand it.

Later, when I was touring along, a young Fakir came to my compartment and asked me for something. I gave him once pice. He said he wanted 4. I gave him a four-anna piece. He then said he had got one. Again I met an old hermit, he wanted something. I gave him one coin. He wanted 4.

So I understand Baba, as appearing in all these forms to teach me that though I gave him four (i.e., Manas, Buddhi, Chitta and Ahankar etc.) He receives but one, the soul or jiva.

I tried to learn Asanas from a Hatayogi. Baba appeared in my dream and tried to dissuade me. I agreed to give it up. Then he showed me how to sit in Sukhasana and get on.

27th September, 1936.

Chandorkar was a good student of Vedanta. He had read Gita with commentaries and prided himself on his knowledge of all that. He fancied that Baba knew nothing of all this or Sanskrit. So, Baba, one day, pricked the bubble. These were days before crowds flocked to Baba, when Baba had solitar talks at the mosque with such devotees. Nana was sitting near Baba.

Baba: Nana, what are you mumbling to yourself?

Nana: I am reciting a sloka in Sanskrit.

B: What sloka?

N: From Bhagvat Gita.

B: Utter it audibly.

(Nana then recited B.G.IV, 34, tadvidvi etc)

B: Nana, do you understand it?

N: Yes.

B: If you do, then tell me.

N: It means this: 'Making Sashtanga Namaskar (i.e.) prostration, questioning the guru, serving him, learn what this jnana is. Then those jnanis that have attained to real knowledge of the Sat Vastu (Brahman) will give you 'upadesh of jnana'.

B: Nana, I do not want this sort of collected purport of the whole stanza. Give me each word, its grammatical force and meaning.

Then Nana explained it word by word.

B: Nana, is it enough to make prostrations merely?

N: I do not know any other meaning for the word pranipata than "making prostration".

B: What is pari prasna?

N: Asking questions.

B: What does prasna mean?

N: The same.

B: If pari prasna means the same as prasna (question), why did Vyasa add the prefix pari? Was Vyasa off his head?

N: I do not know of any other meaning for the word pari prasna.

B: Seva. What sort of seva is meant?

N: Just what we are doing always.

B: Is it enough to render such service?

N: I do not know what more is signified by that word seva.

B: In the next phrase, upadesyant te Jnan can you so read the phrase as to read any other word in lieu of janan?

N: yes,

B: What word?

N: Agnanam

B: Taking that word (instead of 'Gnana') is any meaning made out of the verse.

N: No, Shamkara Bhashya gives no such construction.

B: Never mind. If he does not, is there any objection to using the word 'Agnanam' if it gives a better sense.

N: No. But I do not understand how to construe the stanza by placing 'agnanam' in it.

B: Why does Krishna refer Arjuna to jnanis or tatwadarsis to do his prostration, interrogation and service? Was not Krishna a tatwadarsis- infact, jnana itself?

N: Yes. He was. But, I cannot make out why he referred Arjun to jnanis.

B: Have you not understood this?

Nana was humiliated. His pride was knocked on the head. Then Baba began to explain.

(1) It is not enough merely to prostrate before Jnanis. We must make Sarvaswa Saranagati to the Sadguru.

(2) Mere questioning is not enough. The question must not be with any improper motive or attitude or to trap the Guru and catch at mistakes in the answer or out of idle curiosity. It must be serious, and with a view to achieve moksha or spiritual progress.

(3) Seva is not rendering service retaining still the feeling that one is free to offer or refuse service. One must feel that he is not the master of the body, that the body is the guru's and exists merely to render service to him.

If this is done, the sadguru will show you what the jnana referred to in the previous stanzas.

Nana did not understand what is meant by saying that a guru teaches ajnana.

Baba: How is Jnana Upadesha (i.e.) imparting of realization to be effected? Destroying ignorance is jnana. 87th

verse on 66 ch.XVIII in Jnaneshwari says 'Removal of ignorance is like this, O Arjun. If dream and sleep disappear, you are yourself. It is like that'. See also V.83 of Jnaneshwari on B.G. V. 16, where he says: 'Is there anything different or independent in jnan besides the destruction of ignorance? Expelling darkness means light. Destroying duality (dwaita) means non-duality (adwaita). Whenever we speak of destroying dwaita, we speak of destroying darkness, we talk of light. If we have to realize the adwaita state, the feeling of dwaita in ourselves has to be removed. That is the realization of the adwaitic state. Who can speak of adwaita while remaining in dwaita? If one did, unless one gets into that state how can one know it and realize it?

(Again) the sishya, like the Sadguru is really the embodiment of Jnan. The difference between the two lies in the attitude, high realization, marvellous superhuman Sattha (beingness) and unrivalled capacity and Iswarya Yoga (i.e.) divine powers. The Sadguru is Nirguna Satchit Ananda. He has indeed taken human form to elevate mankind and raise the world. But his real Nirguna nature is not destroyed thereby, even a bit. His beingness (or reality), divine power, and wisdom remain undiminished. The disciple also is in fact of the same swarupa. But, it is overlaid by the effects of the Samskaras of innumerable births in the shape of ignorance which hides from his view that he is Suddha Chaitanya, see B.G.Ch.15 Asanenavritta Jnan tenamujati jatav.

As stated therein, he gets the impression. 'I am jiva, a creature, humble and poor'. The guru has to root out these offshoots of ignorance and has to give upadesh or instruction. To the disciple held spell-bound for endless generations by the ideas of his being a creature, humble and poor the guru imparts in hundreds of births the teaching 'You are God, you are mighty and opulent'. Then, he realizes a bit that he is God really. The perpetual delusion under which the disciple has been labouring, that he is the body, that he is a

creature (jiva) or ego, that God (paramatma) and the world are different from him, is an error inherited from innumerable past births. From action based on it, he has derived his joy, sorrows and mixtures of both. To remove this delusion, this error, this root ignorance, he must start the inquiry. How did the ignorance arise? Where is it? And to show him this is called the guru's upadesh. The following are instances of ajnana:

1. I am a jiva- creature.
2. Body is the soul (I am the body).
3. God, world and jiva are different.
4. I am not God.
5. Not knowing that body is not the soul.
6. Not knowing that God, world and jiva are one.

Unless these errors are exposed to his view, the disciple cannot learn what is God jiva, world, body, how they are interrelated and whether they are different from each other or are one and the same. To teach him these and destroy his ignorance, is this instruction in jnana or ajnana. Why should jnan be imparted to the jiva (who is) a Jnanamurthi? Upadesh is merely to show him his error and destroy his ignorance.

Baba added: (1) Pranipata implies surrender. (2) Surrender must be of body, mind and wealth: (3) Why should Krishna refer Arjun to other jnanis?

Sadbhakta takes everything to be Vasudev B.G.VII, 19, (i.e. any guru will be Krishna to the devotee) and guru takes disciple to be Vasudev and Krishna treats both as his prana and atma (B.G.XII, 7). As Sri Krishna knows that there are such Bhaktas and Gurus, he refers Arjun to them so that their greatness may increase and be known.

13th December, 1936.

On the question as to how far I can give instances of

Baba's acting like Jesus Christ in curing leprosy (congenital or acquired) blindness, deafness, palsy, devil possession, effects of sorcery and black magic and purifying vile halots and other sinners, I know of clear particulars. But, as to his reproofing vice, there are numerous instances. In my own case, he reproofed lobha or love of wealth. I shall give the incident in full.

After the close of my full period of service, I got an extension of 3 months and after that was over, I naturally desired to have an extension of one year, and the Collector mooted the question and I mentioned my wish to continue for one year. The matter was thus practically settled and I had one year's extension. At that time, I had a dream. Therein I saw Sai Baba seated with some body. Before him I prostrated.

Baba: Do you know what these books are?

I: No.

B: They are your accounts. I am looking into your accounts.

I: My account, Baba?

B: yes, Here are these. Look here. Dies 17 come after 16 or 16 after 17?

I: How can that be, Baba?

B: See, is it not so? Here is your account.

He threw the account book open before me. I read it and found it was my own account. 'Yes Baba, here 16 comes after my 17. How is that?' Then I thought over the meaning of my dream. I concluded.

XXV

18th September, 1936.

Shama Rao Jayker, aged 70, painter, Ville Parle, says:

I was at Shirdi in 1916-17 and even earlier, I went and stayed with others. But, when they left Shirdi, I continued to stay. When I was with others I was getting money and

so Baba asked me for dakshina and I paid. After others left I had no money. Baba did not then ask me for dakshina. Baba knew of my condition without being told.

When I was a boy of 16, a Brahmachari gave me Siva Mantra, (i.e) initiated me into it. Later, a sanyasi gave me a Sakti Mantra to add to it and form its compliment. When I went to Baba, I had thus my initiation and my *mantra*. His advice to every one is to keep to what he has already his guru, his mantra and his course jo karita aale techa karabut Baba gave us a lot of fine ethical teaching (e.g.): Be pure and truthful. Treat all people properly’.

I knew some of the people at Shirdi. I never went to Radhakrishna Ayi, as there was no need for me to do. I knew Nana Wali. He was dangerous man. Sai Baba warned me not to move with him. First, I had move with Nana Wali. Dr.Pillai also had done so. But once he heat Dr.Pillai, and we left Nana. He was not worshipping Baba, but treated him with some consideration, Baba would beat him and warn him not to do mischief.

During the eight months of my stay at Shirdi, I heard a lot of *goshitis* (i.e.) talks of Baba. But, I do not remember any now. Baba, so far as I know, did not give any *advaitic* teaching to any. People went to him for the most part for plain matter-of-fact requests (e.g.) health, wealth etc., and he dealt with them.

Baba is looking after me and I am content. I lost two sons. But, he keeps us alright. It is not for money that we should go to him-though he gives us money also, when he thinks fit. He used to say that the walls of his Masjid were really gold. He wanted people to come and take away car-loads of that wealth; and his regret was that none came to take it away.

17th October, 1936.

I went to Baba for the first time, as Rao Bahadur M.V.Pradhan wanted me to give him a lifelike oil painting of Baba. So I had to go and actually see Baba. I went and had a good look at him. He also was looking at me. Then Baba’s

leave had to be obtained before an oil painting could be made of him. So Shama (i.e.) Madhav Rao Deshpande went and asked him for permission. Then Baba replied, "Why should I, a poor fakir, have an oil painting of me? You, Shama, you may get a portrait of yourself". Ultimately, Madhav Rao came and told me that Baba's leave for the painting had been obtained from Baba. Instead of painting one picture, as ordered. I painted three. Then, Rao Bahadur M.V.Pradhan took two and the third was taken to Baba, touched by him and handed over to H.S.Dixit. There, in his bungalow, it is still kept and worshipped.

One more big-sized picture I painted of Baba. That was left unused for some years and is now kept in the Mosque, and serving to assist or augment the devotion of numerous people who go and look at it.

Baba has been very kind to me. But, I have been guilty of neglecting Baba and all things. I have been so peculiarly indifferent in my temperament, I cannot carry things through. Baba knows this well enough. Once, I was wishing to worship silver *padukas* of Baba, after receiving them from his own hands. So I got a small silver pair of *padukas* prepared and took them to Baba. He looked at them and me. He received them. But, instead of giving them to me, he sloped his palms (on which the *padukas* were placed) downwards and they fell down. I picked them up and hoped to worship them. But, that very evening. I gave out my clothing for wash with the silver *padukas* inside a shirt-pocket. They were lost to me and I never got them back. Baba knew how I would lose things and so did not give the *padukas* into my hands, to worship-but allowed them to slip off his hands, showing evidently how they were going soon to slip off mine.

On one occasion, I had lent Rs. 4,000 to a very rich Moslem *purda* lady without issue. It was essential for me to recover the sum as I have a large family of 8 sons to support. But, the lady never sent me the money. I went to Baba, hoping to have his sympathy and aid for recovering the money. But, Baba said to me then 'apalyala te haramache nako (i.e.) Let us have nothing to do with such evil or ill-fated wealth'. I did not get back my money. Two or three years later, I was told she had lost all her wealth.

Ever since I went to Baba, his photo or picture is always with me: where ever I may go to live, Baba has been protecting us (i.e.) me and my family in remarkable ways of which I shall mention only a few instances.

In 1916, we were living at Gajanan Rao's house at Mugabat, a part of Bombay. Baba's picture was kept in a room there. One night at about 2 a.m. thieves were trying to break into that house, beginning with the very room in which Baba's picture was kept. They had succeeded in pulling out by mere strength, 1 or 2 iron bars from the window of that room. Entry into the house thereafter would naturally have followed and the whole house would have been pillaged and robbed. But a barber was sleeping in the verandah in a totally different part of the house. It was usual for him to get up at 4 a.m. and to go round the house for answering calls of nature. On this occasion most strangely and without nay traceable reason, the man got up at 2 a.m and went round the house for his necessary purpose. The thieves seeing him began to run. He saw them and shouted out 'Thieves, Thieves' and every one got up. We found we had got up just in time to prevent the robbers entering inside the house. Every one concluded that Baba took care of the house and took care to nip out the intended robbery when it began in his own room.

In 1917, we were living at Poona in a dilapidated house, the ceiling and walls of which were crumbling. To prevent the falling of dust from the ceiling, cloth had been struck up under the ceiling. One night, in such a room, there was a picture of Baba with a kerosene lamp burning in front of it, and my one-year old child also sleeping close by. At dead of night, there was a sudden thud, The ceiling cloth had fallen, Loose bricks from some of the walls had fallen on the cloth and the debris came with the cloth on to the floor. As the ceiling cloth covered the whole ceiling, it might be expected to fall with the bricks on it, on the child and the lamp if not on Baba's picture. But Baba's providence willed it otherwise. The debris and the cloth fell within a foot of the child and the lamp and did not touch either the child or the lamp. If they had fallen on the child, it would have been crushed; if on the lamp, there would have been a choking fire on the child and other parts of the house might have been endangered. In 1917, we went and stayed for 10 months at Shirdi.

We put up at Baba Bhav's (i.e.) Sharadabai's house. A snake was living in a hole in the small portion in which we lived and we were in danger. One night, my son and others saw the reptile emerge from its hole and made short work of it.

In 1923, my son Surendra, then aged ten, had typhoid. In the course of his illness, he cried out one day, that gas was rising upward from his belly and pressing hard evidently against the diaphragm and heart etc. And he shouted 'Save me, Save me'. He had become extremely weak from the typhoid and I feared even to touch him—much more to press typhoid and I feared even to touch him—much more to press or massage him. I merely cried in a very loud voice 'Baba'. The upward pressure at once abated.

Baba's help to me spiritually consisted of direct oral advice or symbology in matters of dakshina etc. Once he told me "Jaise karale tai sa Bhogel" 'As you sow so you will reap'. On another occasion, he said looking at me, 'guru seva karove' (i.e.), 'We must serve the guru'. He did not, however, give me any mantropadesa. I had already in my twentieth year received that from a guru, and had uttered it for the prescribed period of 12 years and more. Baba's teachings were mostly on moral questions and conduct. He once said amidst a group of listeners Aapala aapan hovun paha jnala tyala vicharnayat kaya artha ahe" 'we must see (things) for ourselves. What good is there is going about inquiring of his man and that man for his views and experiences? At the time this was Sai, there was a man amongst us who was going about asking people. 'Is Baba a siddha? Is he an avatar purusha etc.'. Baba evidently deprecated such inquiries when the inquirer had the opportunity of directly facing Baba, getting into contact with him and then deciding on every question for himself with more certainty than could be obtained from reports of others' experiences and views.

Once even about H.S. Dixit who was noted for his obedience to Baba. Baba made a remark. Baba called Dixit, asked him for dakshina of Rs. 30 when he had no money and sent him to Baba Saheb Jog to get the money. Even before H.S. Dixit left the compound of the Masjid, Baba referring to him said "He is unsteady". At that time Dixit had still his former habit of making inquiries and investigations about Baba instead of directly contacting Baba on every matter and

taking his decision upon the results of such contact. This was, of course, sometime prior to Baba's Samadhi. Things changed later on undoubtedly.

Baba strengthened my faith in him by showing me his *antarjnana* (i.e.) knowledge of every fact without being told of it or having direct sensual experience of it. Once I sat before him with only Rs.3 in my pocket. That was all the sum I had for my household experience. Baba was seated along with Kaka Dixit, Nana Saheb Nimonkar at the time and he had asked me. mala char dhave. I doubt if he said *Rupaya*. But, I took it that he wanted Rs.4 dakshina and took out my Rs.3 and placed it before him. Kaka looked at me suggestively as much to say "why give only 3 when 4 was asked for?" Baba at once answered "Where are 4? There were only 3" Baba knew the exact state of my pocket. As he knew also my straitened circumstances, the demand for 4 seemed to indicate his desire that I should develop resignation to fate, to face utter absence of pecuniary resources-with confidence on him, of course to remedy matters, when he thought fit, and to part with the last pie cheerfully when ordered by him to do it.

Here is another instance of his order depriving me of the last pie in my possession and leaving me absolutely helpless to meet domestic responsibilities coupled with his exhibition of his *antarjnana*. It was a day in Ashad 1917. I sat in the Sabha *Mantap* some 20 feet away from the main mosque where Baba sat. One Varde was talking with him. Varde told him that he wished to perform there and wanted permission. Baba accorded permission. Then Varde said he had no funds to perform it. Then Baba pointing to his finger to me said to Varde "Go and ask him". Varde came to me and reported that Baba had asked him to ask me for money for the expenses of Satyanarayana Pooja to be done there. Varde I knew barely as a devotee of Baba and was hardly anything more than an acquaintance. But, when he said Baba told him to get money from me. I at once agreed and asked him how much he required. Fancy what his reply was, He just asked for Rs.2.50. That was the exact sum that I had in my pocket and constituted my entire resources. This thought of asking for the entire amount with me must have been Baba's lila. I gave him the 2.50 at once. Then, Varde set about getting the necessary materials and made all the requi-

site arrangements. He brought small plantain plants and set them on both sides of Baba, to make a *chappar* or *pandal* and tried to use Baba himself for the God Lakshmi Narayana or Satya Narayana that has to be worshipped at this pooja. Baba objected and asked him to have his usual images or pictures and place his plants round them. But, Varde and other devotees went on insisting that Baba should himself as the Satya Narayana and Baba ultimately yielded.

Then, Satya Narayana *Pothi* was being read in the mantap below, while I sat with 1 or 2 by Baba's side in the mosque itself. My mind was very soon at war with itself and I was much perplexed. I love to hear Satya Narayan Pothi. But, Baba's own personality and neighbourhood that was a great fact and I could not decide which I should prefer. Again, I was hearing Pothi sitting up above the level where the reader of the Pothi sat. To sit on a higher level is improper for the hearer. So what should I do? I was greatly perplexed in my mind. Baba evidently read the conflict in my mind and told me suddenly "Go down and sit there" (i.e.) in the lower level, close to the Pothi reader. Baba made the election for me when I was unable to make it for myself.

Baba once showed us how concerned he was to save poor dumb creatures from unnecessary molestation; how powerful he was to cure serious ailments of such creatures and what a refuge or sanctuary he was to all creatures. I was on the veranda of Dixit Wada at Shirdi, one day. I saw a strange sight. Big dogs were running away from and being chased by a small white dog. It was clear that the small dog was rabid and that the bigger dogs were afraid of its bite. The villagers then took sticks in their hands and pursued the small dog with a view to smash it to death. When this chase was going on, I had moved on to the Mosque. The chasing party came up there. Suddenly, the small white dog ran up the steps of the Mosque and stood behind Baba. It seemed to feel that Baba was its sanctuary and that its assailants dared not attack it there. This indeed proved to be the fact. The men stood at a distance and waited for the dog to come out. Meanwhile, Baba abused them vigorously for their heartless cruelty to a poor dumb creature. They explained that the dog was mad that it should be killed. He abused them the more and asked them to get away. Myself and Dr.Pillai were

at the Mosque, fairly near Baba and the dog, and we were assured that the dog was mad and felt the we were in dangerous proximity to it. But ultimately the men went away and the dog was saved. I said then to Pillai that Baba had evidently out of consideration, cured the dog and saved its life. Baba, of course, knew the exact situation in respect of the dog, its rabid state, its possibilities of cure, and the way to save it.

XXVI

18th October, 1936.

Balakrishna Waman Vaidya, C/o C.K.Prabhu, aged 58, retired Railway servant. (G.I.P) Bandra, says:

In 1910-1911, was my first visit to Shirdi, I had then taken my entire family and we stayed 4 or 5 days. Baba was kind to us all and gave us his blessings. Even prior to starting, his grace was evident. I applied for leave to G.I.P. Rly authorities and for passes. But, urgent work appeared to require my continued stay and to be an obstacle to leave being granted. But, my head clerk was a "Sai Bhaktha" and he passed on my application and leave was granted. Baba's grace helped us on the journey also. It was night (or nearly nightfall) when we reached Kopergaon. The road to Shirdi was unsafe; robbers might attack us. So the *tonga* man whom we sought to engage told us to wait till tomorrow. I told him that Baba would protect us and asked him to start. Then other passengers who were there said they would also start with our *tonga*. Thus, we had some company or protection even at the outset. But, as our *tonga* went on, we found several carts coming towards Kopergaon and others going in the same direction as ourselves. Baba's aid was thus clear. No highway man could or did trouble us.

When we reached Shirdi, it was 1 a.m and we got into Sathé's Wada. I insisted on my family joining me at once in taking *faral* (i.e.) a light meal, as the day following was a *Sankashti Chaturti* a fasting day, and we then retired to rest after the *faral*. Early morning, Baba got up and took the resident devotees or some of them to task for not providing us

with a meal as soon as we arrived, said He: (i.e.) **“My children arrived. None (of you) looked after them. You gave them nothing to eat, and made them fast”**. (In one sense, this was true as persons who eat only *faral* and not a regular meal are considered as fasting or *upavas*). Baba, with these angry words, drove from his proximity those devotees who were there. This showed us the intense paternal love he had for us and his watching over our interests. The expelled devotees came to us and reported Baba’s words and action; and they begged us to tell Baba that we had taken our light meal on arrival, and had been well treated. So we reported to Baba as soon as we went to him, (i.e.) at *darshan*. Baba blessed me as soon as he saw me and said (i.e.) **‘Good will befall you’** and he blessed us all similarly. Later, when we had prepared food at our wada, Baba came round and begged for food and my wife promptly gave him these articles, (i.e.) bread and vegetables.

One day, we prepared special *naivedya* for Baba and we were late in getting ready. Others had taken their *naivedya* to Baba. Baba waited for ours and kept them waiting, saying (i.e.) “wait”. Then when I took mine, he bade me place mine nearest to him, and he gave us *prasad* and blessings.

Look at his kindness and care for us. When we were starting I begged leave to go with my family to Nasik. Baba forbade it saying:

‘Go, Go, Go to Nasik. What for should you go to Nasik? There is plague there. Do not go there, go back home just as you have come (i.e.) the way you came, taking your little ones with you.’

During one of these 3 or 4 days of our stay at Shirdi, I was talking with Madhavrao Deshpande and expressed my desire to take a photo of Baba, touched by him and given to me, for the purpose of worshipping it at home. Baba, who was near, insisted on my going and fetching a photo at once. I brought it; he touched it and gave it to me. I am worshipping

it daily even now. I never take food without first worshipping him in that photo.

Baba guided and guarded us on our way back. When we took leave, he said **'You had better go now'**. We took a *tonga* and arrived in time at Kopergaon just to miss our intended train as it left the platform as we reached the station. This looked bad augury and we spent the night there for some hours and took the early down train for Manmad. Fancy our grateful surprise when we learnt that the previous train to Bombay which we intended to board, had an accident with the result that one carriage in it was smashed. Baba's all-watchful eye and kind care for 'his children' had saved us from possible harm in that accident.

One incident at Shirdi during this visit is curious. One of Baba's devotees came to me and said, 'Give me some money and I will give you *bandar* (i.e. a sacred power applied to the forehead as a blessing). I was resenting this demand and said 'No'. The man was going away. Suddenly, my mind changed, and I recalled him. 'I will give you some coins, give me *bandar*', I said. But, he declined saying that he had no such orders from Baba. Then, I went to Baba and reported what happened. Baba said 'Alright'.

My next visit was in 1912. This time no member of my family accompanied me. Two office friends were my fellow pilgrims then. My idea was to tell Baba, on this occasion, about my misfortunes, troubles and miseries. But, Baba anticipated me and said: **'Be quiet. Don't fear.'** I replied that I had no fear as he was protecting me. We had all taken only a day's leave and so I begged leave of Baba to go away. But Baba did not give me leave. I knew Baba would somehow save me from trouble and so I stayed on. But, my friends expressed their fears to me of being cashiered for staying away without leave. But seeing that I stayed, they also decided to cast in their lots with me and remained with me. Baba prevented us from going back for 2 or 3 days more. Then he permitted us to go. When we returned we applied for extension of leave and got it without any trouble. This was Baba's lila or power.

The second visit was my last visit to Shirdi. In 1916, I made Bandra my residence. Then, say in 1917 or 1918, a

saint came before our lodgings and asked for a pice. My son gave him one pice and said: 'I know who you are'. As he felt sure it was Sai Baba though in an unrecognizable form. Then Baba said. Sri Sai Baba aahe gageyakaru navane As he said this at the verandah, I bowed at his feet and asked him to walk into the house, and he came inside, whereupon I again bowed at his feet. He asked me thuja samadhan barale (i.e.) 'Are you satisfied?' I replied 'yes'. Then he demanded sidha (i.e.) materials (e.g) wheat flour to prepare food. I gave him. He blessed me and went away telling me: 'I am here with you always. You need not come to Shirdi.' This was about in 1917-18. I never went thereafter to Shirdi.

We have had many misfortunes and troubles all these years. But, Sai Baba is at my back and I have faced them all courageously and cheerfully.

XXVII

1st December, 1936.

Ramgiri Bua (styled by Sai Baba Babugir), disciple of Gangagir of Sada (4 miles off Shirdi), age 76, Shirdi, says:

As a young boy, I studied in the school at Shirdi. (This house in which I have been and am residing is the house of my mother's grand-mother). I was a student when Sai Baba came first to Shirdi. He was then accompanied by one Patel of Dhupkheda, who came to settle the marriage of a girl with Hamid, the son of Aminbhai of Shirdi. Baba appeared to be 25 or 30 years old, at that time. He stayed then as a guest of Aminbai. In a very short time (i.e.) after a few days, Baba and Patel went back. Two months latter, he returned to Shirdi. He returned alone and since that date made Shirdi his permanent residence.

That Dhupkheda Patel was giving an account of his missing horse and how Baba helped him in tracing it. I heard the account myself. This is the account- Patel went about in search of his missing animal, and then he came across Sai baba. Baba asked him what he was searching for? 'My horse' was Patel's reply. Then Baba, pointing in one direction, said 'See there, near the streamlet, is your horse'. Patel went as

directed and found his horse. Patel told us that he found Baba with a dhuni or fire in front of him. Ramagir Bua does not recollect if there was any other miracle except the tracing of the lost horse.

When Baba came, he had long hair flowing down to his buttocks. He wore a green kupni, a skull cap next his hair and over it a Bagawi (i.e. ochre-coloured) topi with a chilm and match-box. He did not wrestle. He got his bread by begging. Yamunabai's mother-in-law (i.e. the Teli Narayan's wife), next door to the Mosque give him half a roti. He was giving medicines to people.

Moidinbhai's son-in-law was mantrika (i.e. a magician) living at Belapur. That man came to Shirdi. Baba and he had a quarrel. Then Baba left the village and lived in the jungles 1 or 2 miles away from Shirdi. He frequently starved there. If people went to him he would beat them.

Gangagir Bua of Vanjargaon came to Shirdi. He spoke to Nana Saheb Denge of Nimgaon and to other in high praise of Sai Baba, and said "This (Baba) is a Chintamani". Therefore, Nana Saheb Denge went to Sai Baba and bowed at his feet, while he was seated at the foot of a Babul tree. Later on, Baba came to Shirdi and was living at the foot of a Margosa tree. Once, Baba himself spoke of that tree, that under it (i.e. its shade) was a tomb. Baba was living under that tree for 4 or 5 years. From the neem tree foot, he moved to the Mosque and made that his residence ever afterwards. Baba lived about 50 years here (i.e.) after his arrival.

Baba did not do any wrestling. But Gangagir was first a wrestler, and he wrestled with Dondalgaon Patel, a Mahratta. In that engagement, he came off second best. He then gave up wrestling and became a Bua (i.e.) an ascetic. This was approximately about the time of Baba's first arrival at Shirdi. Baba and Ganggir recognized each other.

I was throughout my life a wanderer. But every now and then I would return to Shirdi. So I know much of what I said above by hearing from others and verifying myself. I know a few remarkable facts about Baba. When Baba got inflammation of his eyes, and they were looking red, he pounded pepper into paste and applied that pepper poultice over his eyelids and he was cured.

Once a Moslem boy, who was up on neem tree behind the Mosque, fell down and died. At that very instant, Baba from within the Mosque was sounding a note of distress and cried out: mulla jore marila and blowing Shankha vadyam (i.e.) on the back of his palm. The Margosa tree is not visible from inside the Mosque. As he spoke these words, the boy fell down and died. I was seated at no great distance and I heard his words and went up to see the fallen boy and the people crowding there.

I knew the fire in the village stacks. Baba asked Bagchand Marvadi to run up there as a stack had caught fire. It was his stack that was on fire. Baba came up and made some signs. The fire cooled down.

One day, Baba called me to him and gave me a packet of udhi and a copy of Baba's arati. I had to go to Khandesh at the time. Baba directed me to go to Jamnare (which is 36 miles off by cart route from the station Bhusaval) and told me to deliver the udhi and arati to Nana Saheb Chandorkar, Deputy collector at Jamner. I said to baba that all I had was Rs.2 and asked how that could take me by train from Kopergaon to Jalgaon and next by cart from Jalgaon to Jamner. Baba said 'God will give'. That was a Friday and I started at once. I reached Manmad at 7.30 p.m. and Jalgaon at 2.45 a.m. At that station, plague regulations were enforced and I had much trouble. I was to discover what I should do to get to Jamner. At about 3 a.m. a peon in boots, turban well equipped with other details of good dress, came to me and took me to a tonga and drove me on. I was in terror. On the way at Baghoor, I took refreshments. We reached Jamner early morning and by the time, I attended my call of nature, the tonga and its driver disappeared.

XXVIII

1st December, 1936.

S.A.Patnakar, Kayastha, 42, Artist (cinema), Dadar, Bombay, says:

I was first told of Sai Baba by my friend Mr. Samant. I learnt about his greatness and goodness and began the wor-

ship of his photo which I hung up on a wall in my house. Once my child had fever for many days. One night at 2 or 3 a.m. a fakir was touching the child. I came near and made namaskar with my folded palms. He waved his hands at me bidding me not to approach him and said: "The child will be alright". On a later occasion, two children were unwell. Then noticing that the temperature of one child was continuing high for days. I looked at Baba's picture and prayed that he should save the child. I took the thermometer in my hand and placed it on the photo and said 'If you are looking after us, how is it that these children are suffering? I shall place the thermometer on the child and take the temperature. "If it has come down, I shall have faith in you and I shall bring the child to you for Ramanavami. If not, how can I have faith?" So saying I removed the thermometer from the picture and applied it to the child. Judge my surprise when I found that the Child's temperature was normal!

XXIX

6th December, 1936.

Raghuji Ganpat Schinde Patel, age 65, Land Owner and retired Revenue Patel, Shirdi, says:

As soon as Baba came to Shirdi, one Amanbhai, a moslem, gave him food. That amanbhai was visiting occasionally my Mavsi's house. Her son Ganpat Hari Kanade, aged 35, had leprosy and fever. Amanbhai told her that a holy man had come to his house and could treat her son. Then Baba came in and saw the patient and administered medicine. That medicine was made out of cobra poison. Baba asked Ganpat courageously to catch a cobra, as the cobra would not sting a leper. Ganpat caught a cobra and it did not sting him. Out of its poison, medicine was prepared and give to Ganpat. He began to improve in a few days. But he did not observe the medical injection to avoid sex pleasures. So Baba stopped giving the further treatment. The disease developed and Ganpat died.

Baba came to this very house to treat my younger brother Baguji, who was suffering from fever - at a very

critical period when death was imminent. Baba gave him some medicine and further had him branded with red-hot irons (one on each temple and one on the back), Baguji recovered his health (i.e) escaped death and fever. Baguji had leprosy. That was arrested by Baba's grace but not cured. Baguji served Baba personally. I also served Baba personally.

There has been faction at Shirdi I belonged to one of the factions. The hatred between the factions did not affect Baba. He was not hated by either faction. One Birjichand's wife was carried naked and brought here, and there was a case against me and others, before the Kopergaon Magistrate Appa Saheb. When the case was under trial, one day Baba was requested by H.S.Dixit that Baba should see that I was not acquitted. 'No, that cannot be done' said Baba. 'Who am I to do it?'

At the trial, all of us accused except one were convicted and given terms of four months imprisonment. From Kopergaon lockup, we were taken to the Ahmednagar jail and kept there. I then prayed to Baba for release. The third night Baba came, in my dream, into the jail and said 'Do not be afraid. I will get you all acquitted.' I wept at that time in my sleep. The jailor or sepoy rather came and woke me. Next morning, Mr.Dhumal came and that day we were all acquitted. For expenses of the trial, I contributed Rs.70 by sale of a buffalo. Once, I was splitting a log for fuel. Baba stopped me saying that I would split dry wood and not green. I gave up further splitting.

XXX

7th December, 1936.

Sagun Meru Naik, Mahrath, age 47, Teashop Shirdi, says:

I belong to the village Borri (Boori) Marmagoa, Poona Taluk. I was grazing cattle there. I went thence on my travels for years visiting and residing at Belgaum. I stayed at Narsowadi with Tembe Maharaj for 2 years: next with Ajunkar Maharaj. Next Gangapur I visited. I was ill and I

stayed with Siddharood Maharaj of Bubli. Next after going to Rameshwar, Pandharpur etc., I came here (1911-12). Baba remarked you have come from a “Mota Darbar” in allusion to my stay with Siddharood Maharaj. Baba gave me advice for 5 months after my arrival. When I asked him for leave to go away, he said

“stay here doing something. God will give you (Barakath) blessing.” I obeyed and have made Shirdi my home and last abode. From that time, I am running this teashop and refreshment stall and sale of sundries (i.e.) Baba’s pictures, arati books and devotional goods. I am prospering ever since I began that life here. I begged Baba that he should protect me and he said he would. I was doing petty services (i.e.) replenishing the Masjid lamps with oil.

I have had ample evidence of Baba’s powers when I came to Shirdi in 1911-12. I came from Hyderabad accompanying a Vysia Sowcar of that state, who as a Sai bhakta, was paying his devout visit to Baba. That man brought with him his paralysed daughter. She could not stand on her legs or walk. She had to skip on the ground using her hands in place of the powerless legs. She had to be carried into Baba’s presence at first. But, on the third day of her arrival, she began to use her legs a little. On the eighth day, she was able to walk. The cure was most marvellous and due entirely to Baba’s grace. Another case of paralysis cured by Baba’s grace was that of Mr. Ghaisas. Mr. Ghaisas was formerly in G.I.P Railway service. His wife came here and was cured of her paralysis in a few days.

In 1914, I had a dream wherein Baba appeared and said ‘Bring me soft boiled rice’. Then for two years, I took boiled rice to Baba without any ghee in it. Then he told me to put some ghee into the food before taking it to him. Since then, and up-to-date, I have been carrying boiled rice with a little of ghee and first offering it to the God of Fire at Baba’s dhuni (at the Mosque). I place part of it in a pot (Kolumba) for the use of Baba and throw the remainder to the dogs. For 5 or 6 years when huge crowds were daily flocking to Baba, I ran a busy hotel here, and engaged some Brahmin cooks to cook and serve food. In October 1919 when the crowd had fallen doff, I closed down the hotel.

I know Upasani Maharaj. He had arrived here at Shirdi shortly before me. After I came he was living at Mr.H.S.Dixit's wada and being fed for 5 or 6 months at Mr.Dixit's expense. This was when Mr.G.S.Kharpade was here. Madhav Rao Deshpande (H.S.Dixit's agent) and U.Maharaj then had a quarrel and the latter removed to Khandoba temple to live there.

In the middle of 1912, the marble stone paduka of Sri Sai Baba was installed at the foot of Baba's favourite margosa tree in he Sathe Wada. Bhai Alibagkar, a Mahratti vendor of Udhbattis started the idea. Practically the whole of the expenses were borne by Ram Rao Khotare of Bombay. Baba Ali was too poor to pay for this Baba himself gave Rs.25 as his contribution. Four Brahmins, representing the four Vedas, were brought from Kopergaon for performing the ceremony. Amongst the local people Balasaheb Bhate, Babu Sahib Jog, Dada Kelkar and Upasani Maharaj took a leading part, and helped in the installation.

Some time later, one Martand, a mad Brahmin was living here, depending upon the bounteous supplies of food that Baba was throwing to all comers. There were hundreds of men living at Shirdi depending on Baba's doles of food for their sustenance. This man, one day, went to the Neem tree and with a huge stone broke the paduka into two. He went into the temple of Mahadeo and Parvati (where the images had been installed at Tatyapa Patel's instance) and broke those two images also. Baba was asked if a new paduka was to be ordered and to be installed in place of the broken one. Baba did not approve of that idea but said taht mere anna santi would suffice. We fed 200 or 300 people soon after that. Two hundred or more were everyday waiting to be fed at Shirdi in those days.

XXXI

9th December, 1936

Laxman Kacheswar Jakadi (alias) Nanumama or NanuBhatt Poojari, Brahmin, Yajurvedi, a aged 40, Shirdi says:

I have been doing Baba's pooja and arati of Sai Baba all these years. I began it even in Baba's life time as assistant to Bapu Saheb Jog. It was in 1914 I came here. My sister's husband Bapaji was here. I had occasionally visited him first. One night while I was at Sangamnere, Sai Baba appeared to me in my dream and said 'Boy, are you sleeping? Do not stop here. Come to Shirdi. There is plenty of fun at Shirdi'. In the morning, Bapajis' father had come to our village and he invited me to go over to Shirdi to assist him. I went over to Shirdi and for a short time, I stayed with him. I worked for my bread by touring into villages round about Shirdi with my Bikshuki service, and helping Bapuji in Sai Baba worship at the Mandir. After some years (say 1 or 2) of free (i.e.) unpaid voluntary pooja of Baba I was appointed by the S.Committee as the permanent poojari.

XXXII

6th December, 1936.

Laxman Bhatt Joshi, Shirdi says:

As I was quite a boy when I was with Sai Baba, my thoughts were not serious and I cannot repeat the talks he gave. I would run about doing miscellaneous work at the Mosque and do odd jobs for Radhakrishna Aji. Madhav Fasli did the same. We would sleep with Baba at the chavadi. We were allowed to be with him when none else were allowed. 'Bhai, carry that log of fuel here,' 'Bhai, bring that tub of water' etc., Baba would tell us. I would be feasted on the perpetual flow of edibles that would be presented to and distributed by Baba. He would have basketful for fruits often times and we would occasionally purloin some. Baba would occasionally catch us and say humorously 'do not take too much'. Often he would abuse me. Once or twice he beat me

with his hands. He would occasionally send for me. At night at the chavadi, he occasionally asked me to sing. 'Sing Ganu's songs or Tukaram's. What does Ganu say?' He would say. I would joke with him by singing songs in his praise light-heartedly Raham najara karo abomore Sai etc. He liked both tune and subject matter of the songs. I have heardly any command of music. Baba would occasionally himself get into an elation of spirits and then (when none else was present) at dead of nighty would sing songs himself. Kabir's songs, etc. I do not remember anything now of what he sang.

Baba's cures I have mostly forgotten. Leprosy was moderated or lessened by him in the case of one Dagdubai. The progress of disease was arrested. That was all. It was not cured. But after he attained Samadhi, say about 1922, there was the wife of Dr. Rane, a Marathi lady, from Bombay. She and her husband would come here and stay four or five months or even one year. She would bathe in Baba's abishek tirtha and apply udhi all over her sores. She would even get a bucketful of tirtha carried to Bombay for the purpose. In two years or so she got thoroughly cured. Formerly she had spots all over the body of the size of a pulse- discoloration of the skin etc. Later, the skin became quite ordinary and she was free from disease. Dr. Rane has not been seen here for some years.

As of consumptions, a Gujarathi girl of ten years came here and had to be carried to Baba at first. In some short time, she began to walk and greatly improved during Baba's lifetime.

As for cursing the blind, I remember no cases, the crowd of visitors was very great in Baba's days, one room in the village would fetch Rs.4 per mensam. Now none will pay that for the house itself. In such large crowds, I never cared to inquire into details of name, caste etc., and the extent of benefit of each. As for Baba's averting premature death, Akala marana* I remember no case.

Some people easily imagine experiences and communicate them to magnify their importance-even here, we have to discount such utterances.

XXXIII

13th December, 1936.

Ganesh Ragunath Teli, Honorary Magistrate, Bombay Road, Thana says:

I went to Sai Baba in 1914 or 1915. Baba asked me for dakshina and said: 'Give me 1 rupee 2 annas and six pice'. That was the exact sum that I had in my pocket and, of course, his asking for that sum was based on his mysterious knowledge of that fact. I gave him the sum. Then there was a nurse, Chandrabai with me. Baba asked her for Rs 6-7-0. That again was the exact sum that was with her. She gave him that sum. We begged leave the same day to go. Baba told her "Why not stay some time?" She pleaded previous engagements elsewhere and we left Shirdi, that very night. That very night or rather early in the morning before she reached home, thieves had broken into her house, carried away Rs.500 worth of property and caused other damage. I have no other experience. I went merely to have darshan of Sai Baba. Baba has given me faith in Him. That is enough. Within a year of my return, my son Nanu was born.

XXXIV

14th December, 1936.

Ramachandra Vasudev Ghaisas, Brahmin, Konkanastha, aged 58, pensioned Postal Servant, R.M.S. Record clerk, Selection Grade, May Mansions, Gokhale Road, North Dadar, says:

I did not see Sai Baba. I knew Kaka Saheb Dixit. I was working in the R.M.S. Department at Manmad. Then Kaka Saheb Dixit was coming to my neighbourhood. He told me of Sai Baba. He said Baba called him to Shirdi and hence he was going to Shirdi. I asked "Baba is not alive. How does

he call you?” Then he said “You will come to know”, and he gave me a photo of Baba. Some months elapsed. My wife fell ill. This was about 13 years back. Her condition appeared hopeless. It was post-parturition trouble. I prayed to Baba on her account and wanted to know if she would live. One or two days afterwards, I had a dream. In that I and a Moslem named Shaik Kabula were in a boat in the ‘Kadi’ or creek of the sea at Kalyan. Some one got into paddle our boat to ferry us across. The creek was in high tide. We were propelled up the current first. But, whereas we had to reach our landing place in the opposite shore, we were stranded in some muddy place lower down. That was because our propelling man had disappeared; we were two in the boat and neither of us knew how to propel the boat. So, we get to a much lower muddy place. However, we reached our shore. This was my dream. I inferred from it that my wife would survive, though after much trouble and lapse of time. From that date, she began to recover. Our doctor declared that the crisis had been passed and that she was safe, though recovery would be slow. I mentioned the dream to Kaka Sahib. Then he said that I would thereby understand Baba’s statement “My Samadhi will speak” (i.e.) “Baba though apparently dead is really alive.”

I was very uneasy in my mind at not getting a decently high position or higher grade (called selection grade) in my department. At that time, I got a dream. In the dream, I was talking with some one else on financial matters. Suddenly, some one appeared and told my companion “Why do you not grant him what he (i.e., myself) wants? Let him prepare Vanki (i.e.) upper armlets of ladies”. He disappeared after my companion said to the 3rd person, “yes, that will be done.” That was the dream. This like other dreams and experiences of mine, I communicated to Kaka Saheb. The 3rd person was obviously Baba. The reason why 3 armlets were to be prepared, while only pairs are worn, I did not first understand. But, Kaka Saheb explained it, saying that the 3rd person was Baba- a Datta Avatar having 3 bodies in one. So 3 vankies were wanted. I accordingly got 3 silver vankies prepared and I placed them in my box of pooja, after making prana pratishta. The fourth day thereafter, I was given the selection grade.

I had doubts what spiritual reading I should go in for. Baba then appeared in my dream and said “Give me biksha of 53”. I thought that as I am poor, I should set apart 53 coins (of quarter anna) from my pay as soon as I get it. I did so for four months and was spending from those funds. Then I consulted Dabholkar about the dream. He showed me that the dream referred to the old standard Guru Charitra with 53 chapters. I then began to read that as my pothi.

Once I started the idea of having a Saptha (i.e.) a 7 days reading Baba’s Guru Charitra and ordered for Dabholkar’s book. After getting it, I had a dream of thieves entering my house. That showed me that Baba wanted me to keep on the old traditional pothi (i.e.) the standard Guru Charitra and not introduce an innovation. So, I gave up the idea of reading Dabholkar’s Satcharitra for the Saptha but kept up the old orthodox Pothi.

Some two years and half back, my wife had a serious attack of paralysis. Her life appeared to be in danger. But, she is a staunch devotee of Baba. She got a vision and in it saw Baba was sitting at the doorway or entrance of her room and telling her “I am here to guard you. I will not allow even Yamadhutas to enter”. She saw also (in that vision) some men bringing bamboos, a mud pot etc., and preparing a bier to carry her corpse. But, Baba asked them to clear off and go to the opposite place; and when they did not mind his words he kicked them away and broke their bamboos and mudpot. This was the vision and my wife was saved. This same night, a person in the opposite chawl (Rangari’s chawl opposite to our chawl (i.e.) Ghamat terrace or Ghamat Chawl) died. My wife’s life was saved and she recovered.

Mr.Dixit called me Bhau Saheb. There is published in the S.L.Masik an incident in which a devotee was given help by Baba, through me. I used to help devotees of Baba. I used to help devotees of Baba, in getting their bus or train to and from Shirdi. When I went to Shirdi, this devotee also recognized me and called me “Bhau Saheb”.

XXXV

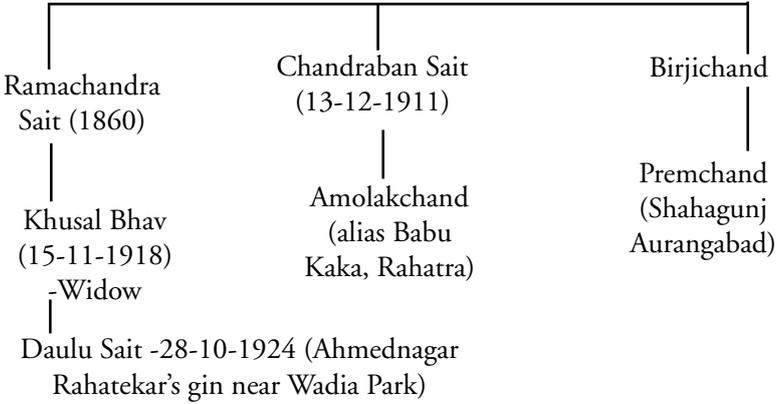
8th March, 1938.

Amolchand Chandrabhan Sait, Sowcar, Age 35, Rahata, says:

I have seen Baba coming to my house and my cousin Khusal Bhav's (which is next to my house). He visited us even 3 days before his Mahasamadhi. He looked healthy then. He used to take light refreshment in our houses and stay there 15 to 30 minutes and then go away. My elder cousin Kushal Bhav, who died on 5-11-'18 has told, me that Sai Baba lived in a chavadi (now in ruins) at Rahata for some months or so, that previously Sai Baba lived with a Moslem saint some Ali (Akbar Ali perhaps) whose portrait is still kept in our gin (i.e.) "Rahatekar's gin" near Wadia Park at Ahmednagar and that Dalu sait had seen Baba with the Saint at Ahmednagar and that Baba came from Ahmednagar to live at Rahata and then went to live at Shirdi.

My father Chandrabhan Sait died on 13-12-1911. His elder brother was Ramchandra Sait, who died in 1860. Ramachandra's son is Khusal Bhav. He has only a widow left now (and so on) and she lives at Ahmednagar. My father's younger brother was Brijichand, whose son Premchand (Premchand Brijichand Rahatekar) is a sowcar, aged 60, living at Shahgunj at Aurangabad. He knows about Baba. I have photos of my father and of Khusal Bhav. Khusal Bhav was 47 years older than myself and died at the age of 62. Daula Sait saw Sai Baba at Ahmednagar with Ali (Akbar Ali).

RAHATEKAR



Akbar ali (?) was living at Bara Imam Kotla near King Gate at Ahmednagar.

XXXVI

Sri Nageshwar Atmaram Samant, Police Sub-inspector, Bombay, says:

About 1926, I came with my wife and eldest son Manohar, then 2 years old to Shirdi. After Punyatithi, I went to Poona to see Baba Jan. I kept Rs.2 in my inside pocket when nearing Poona and had no other change. I thought Rs.2 sufficient to go from Poona station to Lashkar to see Baba Jan. I engaged a Victoria (to and fro) for Rs. 1-8-0. When I went to Baba, I bought a flower garland for 4 or 6 annas and I paid for fakirs, tea and bread 1-40. After I returned to the station, I paid the victoria man 1-8-0 and got into the train. I put my hand into my pocket casually and I found Rs.2 though I spent more than Rs. 3. I had some notes in other pockets which I did not change. I wondered how the 2 Rs. multiplied so far. I did not think about the phenomenon when paying for the fakir's tea, flowers and Victoria hire. This is the first time I took out a specified sum and set it apart for expenditure.

In 1931 or 1932, I had received summons to attend a criminal case at Chalisgaon before the Mamlatdar. I attended. But, as the case was adjourned, I requested the court to allow me to attend on the adjourned date about 1-30 p.m. After a month I received summons in the case. On the way, I visited Shirdi, having started on the day previous to the case hearing. Next morning, I left Shirdi to go to Chalisgaon by the morning train (by which I had travelled for Bombay). But, the bus being late, I reached Kopergaon town about 10-15 a.m., whereas the train leaves Kopergaon station about 10-30. There was no tonga there. I was in plain clothes and not known there. The buses refused to take me to the station. I prayed to Baba in my mind to help me. Suddenly, some one cried out "Foujdar Sahib". I looked to see who called. Then a policeman enquired if I was a foujdar. I said I was. Then, he ordered a bus to take me to the station and that bus took me in time to catch the train and be a Chalisgaon for the trail. If I had missed attendance at court, that would have been the course of much trouble.

In March, 1929, I went on two months' sick leave for a change and went home. For a fortnight, I was alright. After that, my father went to catch fish against my repeated requests. I felt very sorry for what he did. I felt that we were acting against Baba's wishes. My father brought home first some of them alive. I told my mother that killing fish was improper. By that time, I had suddenly got fever. I told her that she was anxious about the health of her only son, (viz.) myself, but was cruel to the children of fishes and that if she wanted her child not to die, they should stop killing fish. My father then came near me, applied Baba's udhi to me and prayed to Baba; "If my son is alright by tomorrow morning. I will give up eating fish." In five minutes, my temperature came down and was alright.

About 1931, I occupied an upper storey room of Nawalkarwada. The walls had cracked on several places, scorpions abounded and there was great danger of the walls coming down suddenly. Just then, R.A.Tarkhad had found it dangerous and left. He warned me. But I had no other place to stay and in the 2 days of my stay there at Ramnavami, nothing happened. I left it then and went to Bombay and I got a letter that the walls had collapsed shortly after I left.

Some years back, a scorpion was in my cap at Shirdi. I did not notice it but put it on at Shirdi and when I got it off my head at Bombay (some 12 hours after my start), I saw the scorpion inside just as I was going to place it on the peg. It had not hurt me all the time I wore the cap. A few years back, I slept in a room adjoining Baba's samadhi, I found about the middle of the night music coming from the samadhi, I could not explain.

XXXVII

Mr. G.K.Rege, Retired Thasildar, Indore, says:

I was suffering from sciatic in 1912, I was so uneasy with fever also that I could not get sleep or rest. So I went to my father-in-law Narayan Rao Parulkar at Giggaon, village near Harda. He was a great Sai Bhakta. He had udhi of Sai Baba and he applied it to my forehead. That very day, about 2 p.m I was resting on a cot and then a sanyasi with kashaya, etc. appeared before me and tapped me on my shoulders. He said: "Child, do not be afraid. You will be cured in three days". I shouted out to my father-in-law that a sanyasi was standing before me and telling me the above. He wanted to see the sanyasi but the latter disappeared before my father-in-law turned up. He was sure that the visitor was Sai Baba. Exactly on the third day, to my astonishment, my pain disappeared and I felt I was all right. Within a week I fully recovered. My father-in-law asked me to go to Shirdi for Baba's darshan.

But I could not go for 2 years. In 1914, I took leave for performing my third daughter's marriage at Mandla. We sent a marriage invitation to Baba and had his reply: "I will come in person and attend the marriage". As the marriage ceremony was in progress, the postman brought a letter from Baba with udhi in it and chit of instructions that the udhi should be applied to the married couple. On that very day, a fakir came and asked my father-in-law for once pice. But, my father-in-law neglected the opportunity, repented later, and told me that fakir might be Baba. Then I declared that if it was Baba, he should appear again. Next day, another fakir

came to me and asked for one pice only and I gave it. The fakir accepted that only and declined the dinner offered to him by my father-in-law.

After the marriage was over, I went to Shirdi and stayed there for four days. Baba, as soon as he saw me, remarked: "Why so much delay?" I replied that I was a poor clerk and could not easily come. He asked me dakshina, I gave him five rupees. But, he insisted and wanted five more. I did not know his reason but I gave him the five rupees extra. Then he said. "Nothing more is due to me from you". I discovered the reason for that demand only after my return home to Kathegaon when my wife told me that she had sent Rupees Five by money order to Baba a year ago (unknown to me) and that the money-order had come back with the endorsement that it would be received in person. That is why, I see, Baba asked me, in person, five rupees more.

My youngest daughter Prema Bai, aged 4, was suffering from fever and it had taken a serious turn. She had become a mere skelton. Medicines and treatment brought no relief. My wife, who was a devotee of Sai Baba, prayed to Baba to help the girl. Baba's voice, she heard at the prayer in the waking state, saying "I will take away all the trouble on the third day". To our surprise, the girl died on the third day on her mother's lap. She sent word to that effect and asked me to come home from my office at Manasa. I came up at once. I saw the girl was dead. My wife was wailing. I took up the child and then gave it a bit of Ganges water (which we always keep in our pooja) with Baba's udhi. I poured it into the child's mouth. The water did not flow out. So I gave some more. Then the child opened her eyes and I was sure that she was alive. After that, we gave her udhi and teertha; and in a month she fully recovered her health. She is hale and health and a matron in the Indore L.R.T (Boarding) School.

I lost my wife in 1926. My health then gave way. I had Baba's photo before me. A voice seemed to come from it: "Do not serve any more". On three successive days, I heard the voice. I could not discover any person who spoke it. My friend Doctor Parnekar said to me that the voice must be Baba. So I retired in 1926 on pension.

Before this, (i.e.) in 1924, I was anxious to get my 4th daughter Minabai married. But, no groom could be found. I had already taken leave. I took my wife to her brother at Anjangow (C.P). The second day after I reached, I heard a voice: "Go to Jirapur". I returned to Indore and found my son had received an order to go to Jirapur. But, his wife being in ninth month of her pregnancy, he could not go. So his superior officers cancelled the order. After my leave expired, I learnt that I was posted to Kathegaon in Nemawar Dt. When, however, the draft went to the Revenue Minister for signature without any request from me, he cancelled that order and wrote 'Posted to Jirapur'. So I went to Jirapur. Within a fortnight of my taking charge, I went on tour and halted at a place near Sayath where my brother was serving the Gwalior State. I visited him. There I saw with him one Balwant, who was really strong, stout and handsome. I enquired about him and found him a good match for my girl. That settled and the marriage was accomplished.

XXXVIII

Mr.X says of his experience in Sai Sudha:

Before I write anything in this about Sai Baba, I should say something about me. I have been, no doubt, devoted to God. I have visited almost all the temples in South India. I have been by nature charitable towards the poor. I was always discussing with a lawyer friend, the lives of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and others. The lawyer friend is very much interested in my prosperity. But my friend never revealed to me about Sai Baba during all these years, though he was a devotee of Sai Baba. On 1-7-39 during our conversation, he mentioned to me the sacred name of Sai Baba and his great powers, wisdom and his loving kindness towards humanity. I came home thinking of Sai Baba. I conveyed this to my wife. Sai Baba appeared to me in my dream on the very same night.

My wife had been suffering from some boils on the legs for a long time. We had tried many medicines and even injections but to no purpose. I asked my wife to apply udhi.

She was daily using udhi. There was not much udhi with us. Then she thought of Sai Baba, and said that there was no udhi in the house. Without any letter from us to the secretary, we received a packet of udhi from Rahata. We thought it was a miracle of Sai baba. She is now completely cured of her boils. We became more devoted to Sai Baba from that day onwards. We have been enjoying peace of mind since we began to worship Sai Baba.

All these wonderful powers of Sai Baba confirmed me that Sai baba is God but not a saint. On 27-11-39, I casually thought that Sai Baba should give me thirtham in his physical form. On the same night, he appeared to me in his physical form, and gave me thirtham with some jaggery. I took thirtham and drank it. Sai Baba has been helping us always. We have been taking the picture of Sai Baba where ever we go for worship. These are the experiecnes of a period of 6 months from 1-7-39 to 31-12-39.

I boldly declare that Sai baba is God and not a saint as held by others. I record all these statements in he name of Sai Baba with the solemn declaration that I have not added a word of untruth.

XXXIX

Appaji Sutar, Shirdi says:

I had in S.1851, (i.e.) in 1929, boils on my leg, weeping eczema, it seemed. I spent Rs.200 on Kopergaon Government doctors for cure, in vain. Shama (i.e.) Madhava Rao Deshpande also gave me medicines but to no purpose. Nasik Hospital, to which I then resorted, gave equally no benefit to me. When I was an in-patient there for 8 days, one night Baba came to me in my sleep. He said: 'Go back to Shirdi to read puran'. But I replied that on account of my suffering from eczema, I had come to Nasik. Baba replied: 'Go on reading my puran and apply udhi you will be cured'. I then returned to Shirdi. When I came here to Shirdi, Vittal Rao Mahratte was reading pothi, and he had to go to Siruval. As I got down from the bus on my return to Shirdi, he came to get into the bus and told me that there was none to go on with

pothi in Baba's presence, during the time he stayed away at Siruval and he asked me to read Pothi. I undertook to do it (i.e.) to read Jnaneswari Ekanath Bhagwata, Adhyatma Ramayana and Sai Satcharitra by A.D.(G.R.D). Thenceforward, I read these before Sai Baba daily and applied his udhi. In seven days' time, I was completely cured of my eczema.

Another experience of mine is this. I owed Rs.350 to a Multan Fatechand Marwadi of Shirdi. He was threatening to sue me and arrest me for the debt in 1932. I was frightened. Then Baba came in my dream. He asked me and four others to repeat stanzas from Gita one after the another. They did so and I repeated stanzas in my turn. Then Baba asked me "What do you want?" I requested that he may be pleased to relieve me of my debt. He replied that the debt would be removed. Next morning, my creditor came to my house and wanted me to build a house for him; and he gave me a written agreement that on my building the house for him, my bond would be returned. I executed the work in a month or so; and he returned my bond. I tore it up and cast away the pieces.

XL

Imambai Chota Khan, aged about 65 years, Vajapur, Aurangabad Dt, says:

I heard of Baba for the first time from Durves Shah (30 years ago). He was a Mohamedan Saint. I went to him to consult him about the disputes (i.e.) litigation between me and my paternal aunt, who was also my mother-in-law. He then told me to go to Sai Baba at Shirdi and gave me some directions. Therefore, I came to Shirdi. I met Baba, near Gonkar's house. Then Dixitwada was being built (1910) and the Madras Sadhu Vijaianandaswami was here before Baba. Baba was standing and a lady was taking darshan in this lane. I was advised by Durvesh Shah, to repeat 1st chapter of the koran behind Baba's back and not to accept any money gifts from him. So, I began the repetition of the 1stchapter with the word 'Bismilla'. Baba at once turned round and faced me. He angrily spoke thus: 'Who are you? Why have

you come to ask me about something - as if you were my father?' and he showered abuse. I got terrified. Baba went to the mosque, uttering unintelligible words as usual. I followed him and sat at the pavilion of the masjid. I could not get up the masjid without Baba's permission and that, I got only two days later through Kaka Dixit's intercession. Dixit said: "These are your children, Baba. Why are you angry with them?" This referred to me, Baba replied 'You call him a child. He has beaten the master (to death)'. This was a reference to an escapade of mine two months earlier. I was a Nizam's sepoy in the Mamlatdar's office and had beaten with a stick a Christian 'Master', who failed to give prompt information in an investigation which the police were making (I went to assist the police). The master bled in the mouth and fell senseless. This is the fact Baba referred to, though none could have told him of it. I had told the mamlatdar about this beating and he advised me to run away. So I resigned service and went up to Shirdi. The additional and the immediate reason for my visit to Baba was my fear of prosecution for what I did. That day of Dixit intercession, I still was afraid of Baba did not go up into the mosque. Two or three days later, I was taken by Kasim Bai, son of Bade Baba, Jog, and Dixit up the steps of the mosque. Then I took darshan of Baba and he touched my head saying: "Do not fear. Allah Malik". I stayed on at Shirdi for 1 3/4 months. During that period, Baba told me: "You go back. Your land disputes will be settled and your relations will be amicable". I then went back to my village, and then filed my case against my mother-in-law in the court for possession of lands. It ended 7 years later with my obtaining possession.

Second visit to Shirdi: I came for Baba's darshan and wanted to go back. But, Baba was in the presence of Mahlsapathi and Mavusi. Baba said to Mavusi: 'People do not listen to me. Rascals go away and suffer and by a thorn injury lose the parent'. In fact, though Baba did not permit me to go, I was in a hurry to get back home and so I went away without permission. Two days after my return home, my mother struck a thorn in her foot while collecting fuel and she died 8 or 10 days later, as her legs had swollen. Then, I understood what Baba said to Mavusi about thorn and losing of the parent.

Third visit: On the 4th day of her death, I came to Shirdi as I had no funds and no employment and was hoping that Baba would relieve my financial distress. I stayed on 34 days or so and Baba said to Mavusi in my presence 'Udhi must be received and then departure must be taken. I, at once, inferred that Baba meant those words for me. Baba's usual method is to address words to some one person when they are meant for another, or to address them to a whole group, when only one of them is concerned. Next morning, Baba extended his hands with udhi when I approached and thus confirmed my inference. At the time of giving udhi Baba said 'At the doorway of the house (i.e. my house), there will be an old woman standing. She will give something- using which, celebrations may be performed. Guests have become. The feast should be had in their company'. I could not make out Baba's meaning then. On going home, the widow of the Kazi, a very old lady was standing at my door and out of love or friendship for me, put fifty rupees into my hand, and said 'perform your ceremonies'. That was the fortieth day of my mother's death when the ceremonies corresponding to the Hindu Masik had to be performed: and for that, my four sisters and their husbands had come in my absence. These evidently were the guests mentioned by Baba. I celebrated the fortieth day with the money given to me by the old lady.

Fourth visit: on my next visit to Shirdi a month or so later, Baba said to me: 'Gulab (rose) has come to your house'. I went back and found that my wife had recently been delivered of a male child. Believing that to be the 'Gulab' (rose) mentioned by Baba, the boy was named Gulab.

Later visit: On a later visit to Baba, he did not permit me to return. But, I was impatient and started away, Baba when refusing permission, said "People should not go. If they go, there will be storms and balls of fire and immense trouble". I did not quite see to whom this referred and I went reached Vari (10 or 12 miles off) in 2 hours (i.e.) at 5.30 p.m. Then I went by the bank of Surala. It was sunset then. There the patil told me 'Do not go. The weather is cloudy. Do not go, or you will suffer.' But I replied 'It is only 4 miles more, a short distance to my village and I will go'. I went on. Three miles I went and then a big storm came on and lightning fell

on a huge pipal tree close to me and in front of me. The tree crashed and broke into two and fire started in the tree. I was dazed by the lightning and I turned my face back from it. Then I saw Baba standing behind me with two tawny dogs. I bowed to him and he disappeared. Then I went on. There was a river near my village. I went to cross it, not knowing its depth. I felt the water only knee-deep. But when I reached the other shore and looked back, I saw the river was in full flood and was amazed as water was running over its banks. The depth of water might have been 20 feet. I wondered how I had crossed it. I reached home safe. Baba's statements as to storm and ball of fire was shown to be correct.

Four years ago, I was badly in need of money to get Gulab married. I came here and slept in the mosque. In my dream Baba blessed me and said the if I go to Poona, I would be benefited. I went to a stranger at Poona, and there, Mr.Ladkar came. He was suffering from severe piles. I told him that I knew of a Saint's (Baba) prescription that would cure the piles. At his bidding, I prepared it. He was greatly relieved by it. Then, he betted on a horse at the Poona races and got Rs 1,000. Out of that, he gave me Rs.700 which I performed my son's marriage.

Hardidwar Bua, who was here for 8 days, had a wonderful experience. A sparrow used to sit on his head when he started from Shirdi for bath and would be on his head as he went on until he dipped for his bath at the stream in the village border. Then, it would go up and sit on a tree and resume its seat on his head after the bath was over. We saw this, in our presence, Haridwar Bua asked Baba what this phenomenon signified. Baba said: "La ila illiilah. Kya bada durbar hai. Munshiji tho andai hai. Sardarji chuti hai. Allah malik hai. Allah accha karega!" This was said pointing to the Buty wada which was then under construction.

Four months before Baba passed away. Baba asked Appa Bhil at about 8 pm. "Bring four fowls. Guests are to come". I wondered who were the guests to come. That night I stayed on behind the curtain hanging in the mosque, and was awake. After 2 a.m., a huge ball of fire- over one foot in diameter - streamed into the mosque, and went up to the

nimbar, (i.e.) the niche in the western wall. It sat a while, then went up to the ceiling, there split into innumerable fragments, spread throughout the mosque and lit up everything there was with a blaze so powerful that I could not continue to see it. I covered up my eyes and bent my neck down. Appa Bhil also who was with me, did the same. Then Baba went near the dhuni and placing one end of his short stick in his bent neck was going on saying something on Arabic for about 10 or 15 minutes. The bright light disappeared as soon as Baba went to the dhuni. Baba asked Appa Bhil in the morning to bring the four fowls. They were brought and cooked. Baba prepared poli at the fire in the mantap.

Kasim, son of Bade Baba, came later on. Baba gave him some of the food cooked by him and told him "Go to Aurangabad. See Shamshuddin Mea. Give him this Rs.250. Do there moulu and kowali" and do nyas.

"Next, go to Banne Mea Fakir, Garland him with this garland, and then tell him: "Navdin, nav tarik. Allah meane apna dhunia legaya marji Allaki".

So saying, Baba gave Kasim Rs.2.50 and garland of Sevanti flowers. Kasim said he was a stranger to those parts. Then, Baba asked me to go with him. So we two, (i.e.) I and Kasim started, taking with us Kasim's servant Amir and reached Aurangabad station at 3 p.m. When we were at the station, the fakir Shamsuddin (whom I knew already) came there and said: "Who are the guests who have come from the Fakir Sai?" I went then and took his darshan- as also Kasim. Shamsuddin himself repeated Baba's direction to us word for word and took us to his house in the fort and fed us. We paid the Rs.250 to him. He then fed large number (Nyas). Shamsuddin performed the kowali and also moulu. These were completed by that night.

I knew Banne Mea's house and we went there next morning. He was standing with one arm praised and one arm held down. The Arabs with him told us not to approach Banne Mea, as he would be at us. After waiting nearly one

hour, I plucked up courage, took Baba's garland in my hand, and put it round his neck. Then Banne Mea lowered his upraised arm. Then I told him the words uttered by Baba to be told to Banne. Then Banne Mea gazed into the sky and tears rolled down from his eyes. We took leave from him and came away. Four months after that, Baba passed away. The date of Baba's passing away was the ninth (day of Dussera) of the ninth month. We had gone to Aurangabad in the Ramzan month. We fasted during the day and ate at night.

Baba knew Arabic, read and taught Koran to Abdul.

Nuriddin was Risaldar i.e. (horse-soldier) chevalier in service of the state. One day, he came to Baba, took darshan, and wanted leave to go back. Baba told him to go the next day. Bur nuriddin said that the rest of his regiment were marching on and that it was not possible for him to stay on. Baba then gave him udhi and told him something in Urdu, which literally, means, "Dig a pit and eat the udhi". The man took the udhi and rode away. At Kopergaon, he saw a corpse being carried. And: Then later on he reached his destination. From that day he had a vision of the corpse before his eyes. On those days that he had such a vision he got food and dined to his satisfaction. On days on which he did not get the vision of the corpse, try as he might, he failed to have this food for some reason or the other. This mortified him so much that he gave up service in disgust and thinking that Baba's words and udhi or his failure to stay with Baba brought about that state of affairs, he returned to Baba and stayed there at Shirdi for 6 months. His curse left him. Then, taking leave of Baba, he went away. He is now a grocery shopkeeper at Devali.

Abdul Kadir is now in the Poona cantonment. He came to Baba. About 1915, when he was here at the Takia, Baba came that side. Kadir then begged of Baba to give him fakir as he wanted to become a saint. Baba then flung his folded palm at him as though he held something in it and was flinging it at him. But there was nothing visible held in Baba's hand. Thereafter, Kadir's manner and talk were changed. He gave moral advice and behaved like Baba, sometimes abusing in unintelligible language and sometimes picking up a stone threatening to throw it. He was getting un-

manageable. Baba after 1 1/2 months of this forced asceticism faced him at the mantap of the mosque, and said: 'lavbale idar' and drew his folded palm from Kadir's side to himself. Then Kadir got back his original state of mind and stayed on for 15 days more. Then, with Baba's permission, he went to Kirki and started his beedi shop opposite to Baba Jan's margosa tree (where her tomb is). Abdul Kadir was the guru of Madar Ali, who was then here and who is now at Yeola. Madar Ali is a Khoza. Abdul Kadir and others would do namaz and azar. People would do also moulu every day, during day time before Baba at the mosque, and kowali in the morning with tabla and sarangi.

Baba used to order tabla to be constructed at the mantap and paid for it. Baba prepared Kichada (i.e.) Kichadi and mutton. This he did for many years. This tabla stopped after mantap was prepared. Baba used to pronounce fatia or get it pronounced. Moslems go for Idga to this mosque even now and they did so in Baba's time also.

I have seen and heard Baba pronouncing namaz at the mosque near the fire, without however bending the whole body on knees as others did. Baba pronounced namaz when fire was prepared in a pit at the mantap and thrown on moslem's bodies by themselves. Baba gave spiritual uplift to two Moslems, that I knew. Shaik Abdulla of my village came here. Baba spoke to him in words all of vyragia. "If we die to day, the third day follows. What is the use of house, lands etc. to us?" Shaik Abdulla returned to our village. He had only a wife and children. He left his house and property to them, and wandered in the streets and spent his night at tombs, muttering something. He lived upon what people gave him and did not care if he got nothing and starved. He had that sort of life for 10 or 12 years and died. He had developed wonderful powers during these 12 years. Once he asked me not to go on my journey as at a particular place named by him on the path, as there would-be a serpent. As it was day light, I did not heed him. But I found the serpent exactly in the place named by him. One Abbas Sait, a beedi seller of my place, once told Abdulla "What for are you behaving like a mad man and giving up wife and relations?" Abdulla said "You will come to know". Abbas Sait replied that he knew this was but madness. Abdulla then flung his closed fist in the air

as though he threw something at Abbas Sait and said “you also become like that”. From that time, Abbas Sait gave up his business, home and relations and is still wandering about.

In Bhopal of Varhad (Behar) Anwar Khan lived and once he came to Baba. He told Baba “I do not want samsara”. He lived in the Chavadi here for 12 months. Baba gave him a mantram “Bismilla, Kuliya hiyo valkafireno nabudo mabudana etc.”. I know that also. That is also in Chapter 1 of the Quran. Baba told him to repeat this 101 times at midnight. Then he was to recite ‘Devut’. Baba then gave him prasad of peda and sent him to ‘Bagdad’ in Arabia. He then went to Bombay where Haji Kasim of Bombay helped him with free passage to Arabia. He has not returned from Arabia.

Hida Beg of Kanad near Aurangabad came to Baba and stayed here. Moulvi Yakub of Delhi was here then reading Quoran daily sitting in the mantap during day or night. One night, about 8 p.m., Baba told Hida Beg: “Do not remain here! Go to the cantonment near Kanad (i.e. Aurangabad) and change your name to Punjab Shah. Go and sit there, eat what you get” - He is still living there as a saint and people revere him. Kanad is 70 miles off from my place and is a hilly place. I went and saw him there. He was sitting quiet.

Mohammad Khan, a Rohilla of Newasa, was here with Baba. Once, he lifted the curtain to see Baba, who was talking with Mahalsapathy. Strange to say, he could not see Baba. He was getting queer and crazy. His younger brother who was at Newasa, came to Shirdi to take him. Baba gave udhi to him and sent back and he then became alright.

Some 4 years ago, I had Madhav Fasle were at the mosque one night, I heard Baba’s voice crying to Madhav; “Madho, get up, I want to go to pass urine”. Madhav did not stir. Early in the morning, we found in the hollow at the place where Baba used to sit, cented water. The hollow was filled with that water. There was no explanation for its presence except Baba’s cry and his statement that he wished to pass water. I have never heard from Baba who his guru was. I have noticed some peculiar events.

1. Anwar Khan Khaji of Ahmednagar wanted to rebuild a masjid at Telikakot (Kajichi Masjid). He came to Baba for funds Baba told him (after he had waited long) that

the masjid would not accept any money from him or from others, but would herself provide the funds. "Dig 3 feet under nimbar, and you will find a treasure. Rebuild the masjid with that" said Baba. Then the Kaji went to Ahmednagar, found treasure, rebuilt and came to Shirdi and when seated in the Takia here, told me and others of the above facts. As for Baba's telling him the above I was present then. Baba was seated on the big stone in front of the mosque. Anwar Khan was even then aged about 65 or 70; and he died long ago.

2. There was one Maddhushah, a fakir at Meran. Jalgaon in Khandesh. He came here 27 years back and was entreating Baba to give him Rs.700 for some urgent need of his what the need was, I do not know. He cried and cried. Baba directed Bapu Sahib Jog to give him Rs.700. Bapusahib Jog brought Rs. 700 (i.e.) all silver coins and placed them before Baba. Baba told two boys-Gulab, son of Kondaji, and Laxman Bala Barkar Shimpi and asked them to give the money to the fakir, who was seated in the mantap before Baba. The boys in handing over the money pocketed Rs.200 delivered only Rs.500. The fakir wept and cried and said to Baba that he has received only Rs.500. He was grumbling for 2 or 3 days. Baba did nothing to give him more at Shirdi. So the man took udhi and went on walking. While he was walking near Nungaon, a tonga came up and stopped. One Irrus Shah-Parsi, Tahsildar in the Nizam's State, alighted from the tonga, accosted the fakir and gave him first food and then Rs.200 saying "Are you now content?" Then, Irrus Shah came to Shirdi, went to Tatyapa Patil's new house (at the east end of Shirdi) and there told him and all present the following facts. He had a dream in which Baba told him to go by tonga to Shirdi, and said that he would see a fakir near Nungaon carrying a tiger skin, that he should give him food (for the fakir would be hungry) and hand over to him Rs.200, which is the balance of money for which he is panting. So he came in a tonga with food and money and gave the same to the fakir. That Irrus Shah is dead now.

3. A Moslem from Lasoor in Nizam's State (Taluk Vyzapur) came to baba some 27 years ago, and cried wanting Rs.4,000 or 5,000 to meet some urgent need. Baba told him to go and sit under the Vat tree for stool, that a vessel full of coins will be found by him. Next morning, he passed stool and went to wash himself and stumbled upon a very heavy vessel evidently full of treasure. He could not lift it and so he came to Baba at the chavadi. When he returned, it disappeared and he cried. Baba said Ganu Kadu of Ruihad carried it away and so nothing could be done. That Ganu Kadu is a rich man and this Lasoor went back in grief.

XLI

Sri M.V.Saharabuddhe, S/o Vishnu, age 41, Brahmin, Civil Engineer, Paltan Sugar Works, Paltan, Santara Dt. says:

I learnt of Sai Baba at Rahata in 1931 when I went there taking up the contract (viz.) Nimgaon-Shirdi irrigation and drainage scheme. I came to Shirdi and attended arati. I was greatly impressed. I began to get help from Baba sometimes miraculously. Here are some instances: in 1932, I was digging up the earth and laying drainage pipes, with large number of workmen. One noon I slept on the bund of the channel under a tree. I felt that I was shaken and roused from sleep. Baba then in my sleep said "Get up. A man is being buried, owing to the slipping of the earth. Go and remove him at once". I woke up, called coolies and cycled up to the place of the accident which was two miles off. I found that the two sides of the trench had come down and buried 20 men. We dug up the earth. All of the buried men escaped with very little hurt. One man was seriously hurt. He was bleeding in the nose and mouth and his eyes bulged out. He wanted to be taken to his home in a cart. That was done. He died there. But for Baba's rousing me, he would have died in the works and more would have hurt and I would have had great trouble to meet the inquiry. In this case of accident, and inquiry was held by the Collector two months after the event,

and I was not taken to task. This is very remarkable help from Baba.

The next help from Baba was in 1933. I was in Poona. Baba appeared in my dream and said that the Shirdi Samsthan Committee wanted me at Shirdi. Out of curiosity, I came to Shirdi, Mr.S.D.Navalkar of that committee (who knew I was the Nimgaon contractor) was inquiring where I was. I met him and he asked me to take up the contract for building the Sabha Mantap. I then put up the iron work now standing here.

In 1936, in my mother's illness, Baba gave help. She had to undergo a liver operation. Poona is the best place but as there was plague there in 1936, we decided to have the operation at Wai (Satara Dt.), where we were living. Baba came to me in my dream and told me not to have the operation done at Wai but to have it done at Poona. We, therefore, had it done by Dr.Gharpure at the Sassoon Hospital at Poona. The operation was a success and my mother is safe and healthy even now. I am an orthodox Brahmin and therefore averse to things being touched by Moslems and untouchables. Baba told me in a dream not to care for this untouchability so much.

I have recently been elected member of the Sai Samsthan Committee. Baba has shown me in a recent vision that he is in all and is all gods. When I was at Paltan, I had a vision one night of a Satya Narayana image and pandal being put up and worshipped in the Shirdi Samadhi Mantap or front hall. The offerings made to the image, I found, were passing straight on into the tomb to the body of Sai Baba, whom I saw to be seated within the tomb. The tomb had become transparent. To verify the truth of this at least partially, I wrote at once to Shirdi to see if Satya Narayana Pooja was conducted at the time and place mentioned above. I got an answer in the affirmative. Baba has thus shown me that he is Satya Narayana and that pooja to Satyanarayana is pooja to Sai Baba.

XLII

Bhaskar Sadasiv Satam, Hindu Mahratta, Sub-Inspector of Police, Lamington Road, Bombay, says:

I joined the force as an ordinary Co., in 1911 and rose to the position of S.I. About 1930, I met Nagesh Atmaram Samant, who spoke to me about Sai Baba. I told him I would go to Shirdi. But for years I did not. In 1940, both of us were at Nargam Training School. I had then some misfortunes resulting in the loss of my job. I was suspended on 16-2-1940. I prayed to Baba while under suspension. Udhi and Prasad from Shirdi were wanted and sent to me. Prasad was received but not Udhi though Sagun Rao Meru Naik sent both. It is after that I received the dismissal order on 28-2-40. Samant wanted me to go to Shirdi unconditionally. I and my son came on last Ramnavami here, and prayed to Baba. We spent only 2 days here. On my return, at Dadar, I met a constable and he said that I was reinstated and posted to Lamington Road. But no such order could have been passed then. On 28-4-49, I appealed. On 14-5-49 the order passed was "Reinstated and posted to Lamington Road". Baba's decision and come from the constable's mouth two months earlier.

I had debts to clear. I prayed to Baba and he sent me some money. I am now free from debt and I am well-provided. I prayed to Baba only for this state of happy freedom.

THE END

"OM SAI SRI SAI JAYA JAYA SAI"

"My eye (of vigilant supervision) is ever on those who love me. Whatever you do, wherever you may be, ever bear this in mind, that I am always aware of everything you do."

SAI BABA

शुक्रकाभाई

