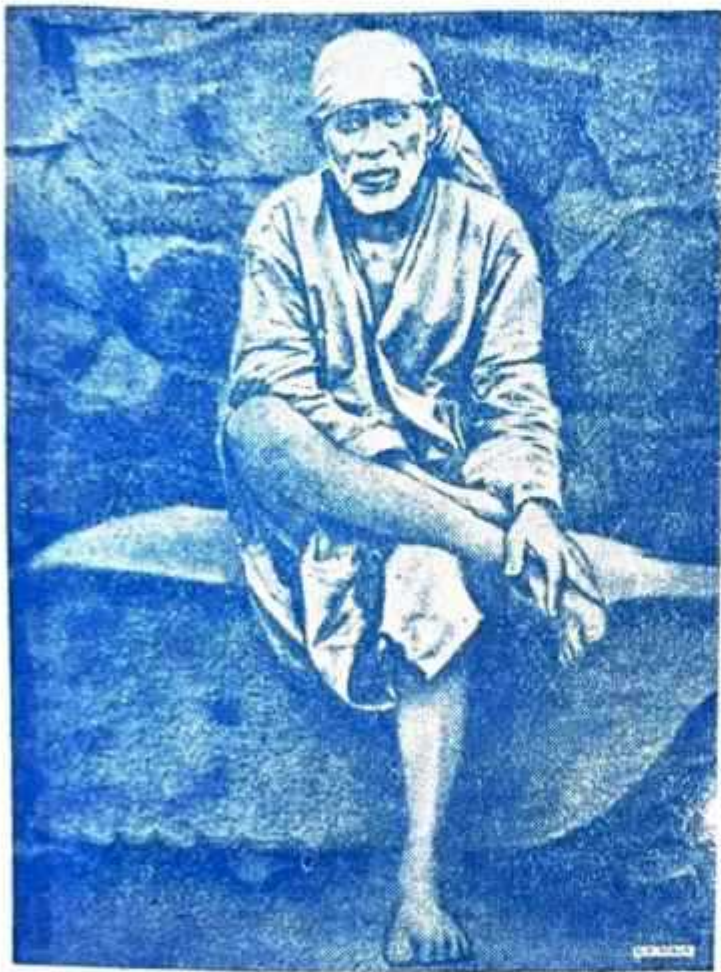




SAI LEELA



May

60 Paise

1978

SHRI SAI LEELA

MAY 1978

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SHRI SAI LEELA

(Official Organ of Shirdi Sansthan)



TO GUIDE THE WORLD ON THE RIGHT PATH
IS THE PRINCIPAL AIM OF SHRI SAI LEELA.

VOLUME 57

MAY 1978

No. 2

Rigour and Attainment of God

There have been seekers of God who have imposed on themselves the rigour of sleeping on the floor filled with noxious insects. One such seeker after God tells us how he practised extreme asceticism for years together and then, to quote his words, "after some twenty years of tormenting torture, I saw in a vision a messenger from Heaven who told me God required not this of me; whereupon I discontinued it."

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EDITORIAL

Fire - Worship

Three places in Shirdi are of very great importance to all Sai devotees, who visit Shirdi. The Samadhi Mandir is the first place of importance, because it houses the Samadhi of Shri Sai Baba. Big life-like marble statue of Shri Sai Baba is also installed in this mandir. Hence for taking darshan of the Samadhi and the statue, every Sai devotee goes to that mandir. In addition to taking darshan, if a devotee has to perform "Abhishek", he again goes to the Samadhi Mandir for that purpose. The devotee next visits "Dwarkamai". This is the place where Shri Sai Baba spent most of his time during his life time. Udi, which is used by the Sai devotees for various purposes, is obtained from the Dhuni, which is located in Dwarkamai. The third place of importance is the Chawadi. Shri Sai Baba used to sleep in the Chawadi every alternate day and thus this place was his dormitory. It will thus be seen that all these three places are closely connected with Shri Sai Baba and are therefore revered very much by the Sai devotees.

Out of the aforesaid three places, the importance of Dwarkamai is twofold. The permanent burning fire is located in the Dhuni in this building and Shri Sai Baba's Aarati was being performed here during his life time. Hence the present importance of the Samadhi Mandir was given to the Dwarkamai during the life-time of Shri Sai Baba. Though Shri Sai Baba celebrated Ramanavami, Gokul Ashtami and such festivals of other gods and deities, still he also worshipped the fire by keeping it burning all the year round.

Fire-worship is not new to the human race. If we look at the life of the aboriginal man on earth, we find that he was in

the beginning a cave-dweller. All around him, nature was showing its wonders and horrors. The aboriginal man was puzzled by the manifestation of the power of the main five elements of nature viz. the earth, water, heat, wind and the sky or vacuum. The human beings must have seen earthquakes. They must have seen storms as well as heavy floods. They must have seen big fires in the jungles, caused due to rubbing of one tree on another. Thus the original man might be having a sort of a feeling of fear in his mind about these elements. This fear therefore perhaps resulted in his considering them as Gods and worshipping them. Of course, these elements were originally worshipped as deities. There were no idols of these deities in the beginning. It was later on that these deities came to have a form and they manifested themselves into the form of idols. In the vedas we find several hymns (सूक्त) composed in praise of these elements of nature.

Though the aboriginal human being did not know how to kindle fire, that knowledge was obtained by him with the growth of civilisation. Though he did not know to cook food and though he used to eat it raw, still later on he used the fire for that purpose. In the cold season, he obtained warmth from the fire and protected himself from the cold. The use of metals added further use of fire. Some human beings misuse the fire for burning other's houses; but then that is the case with every good thing. The use of a thing depends on the user. A good thing can be used for a good cause if the user wishes to use it for that purpose. The same thing can also be used otherwise, if the user wishes accordingly. Any way considering all the above uses of fire, the human beings started considering it as a revered thing and gave it a place among the gods.

The Yagnasanstha (यज्ञसंस्था) of the Aryas is based on fire-worship. Fire (अग्नि) was a deity, which was required to be appeased and this was done by offering to him in the sacrifice various objects like ghee, rice and other grains. Fire was also a

vehicle or an agent of the Gods; because offerings, required to be made to other gods, could be accomplished by throwing handfuls of corn or other things in the fire, which was kindled in the sacrificial pit (यज्ञकुंड).

During the Vedic period, sacrifices were very common; but then they could not be performed in any manner you like. There were elaborate ceremonies and rituals prescribed for a yagna and all of them were observed to the last letter of the Vedic hymn. Even the brahmins, who could act as priests in the sacrifice, were required to have certain qualifications and accomplishments. Like modern tournaments or Olympics, sacrifices were also planned and their preparation was going on for days on end.

With the rise of Buddha and his preaching against sacrifice on grounds of himsa (हिंसा), the sacrifices got a big set back and this ritual almost came to an end. The worship of the fire now took a different form. The person, taking this vow of fire-worship, was known to be an Agnihotri (अग्निहोत्री). He had to keep the fire in his house, burning all the time. He had to worship the fire every day and on certain auspicious days of the month, he had to perform special ceremonies connected with the worship of fire. The daily worship of the fire in his house, was required to be done by an Agnihotri and hence there were natural restrictions on his movements and his stay out of station. The fire was required to be maintained in a special holy place, which would be away from any sort of pollution. It was because of these restrictions that this vow of fire-worship was not commonly undertaken by all the learned priests or brahmins living in the society. Only a selected few undertook this vow and observed all the rituals prescribed for that vow in religious books. It is stated in the Sai Satcharita about Shri Baba's stay at Shirdi as follows:- "Shirdi is midway between and equidistant from Rahata on one side (south) and Nimgaon on the other (north). Baba never went beyond these places during his life time" (Shri Sai Satcharita P. 49, Eighth edition 1978). Shri Baba was a fire-

worshiper and because of that vow, he had to remain in Shirdi near the fire and keep it burning. Hence he must have never moved out of Shirdi during the night time. Shri Sai Baba never talked about himself and hence he must not have referred to his vow of the fire-worship and the reason for which he always stayed at Shirdi by night.

Shri Baba took great care to maintain the fire in the Dwarkamai. An incident of how he broke the ordinance of the panchas of the village, not to allow a fuel cart to come in the village in order to ward off the spread of the Cholera epidemic, and how he brought the fuel cart to the Masjid and unloaded the fuel for keeping his Dhuni alive has been narrated at length in the Sai Satcharita at page 124 (8th Edition 1978). After narrating the incident the author has further commented, "Like an Agnihotri keeping his sacred fire alive throughout his life, Baba kept his Dhuni ever burning all day and night; and for this He always stocked fuel". (P. 125, Shri Sai Satcharita 8th edition 1978). The secret of Shri Sai Baba's permanent stay in Shirdi perhaps lies in his fire-worship, as pointed out above by Shri Dabholkar. Two stories, relating to Shri Baba's encounter with fire, have been narrated in Sai Satcharita. The first refers to the taking out of a child out of the blacksmith's furnace (P 42) and the other relates to bringing under control the fire in the Dhuni in the Masjid, which had all of a sudden started burning brightly and its flames had consequently started reaching the rafters above (P. 66 Shri Sai Satcharita, 8th edition 1978). In both these cases, we see that Shri Sai Baba was fearless and confident that the fire would co-operate with him. Shri Baba perhaps got this confidence in fire and control over it, because He was a fire-worshiper.

Fire-worship is still observed as a religion by a few people in Iran. It was Zorostor, who preached that creed. Among the many theories of the spread of the human race on the earth, there is one theory which says that originally the human race

was on the north pole. At that time the earth had not cooled as much as it is today. Hence there was no ice on the north pole at that time and it was habitable. By and by the north pole started freezing and the conditions there became noncongenial to the human race. The equatorial region, which was very hot before, also became temperate. Hence the human race started migrating from the north pole to the south. One group went at that time to Iran and settled there; while another migrated to India and settled there. The religious books of the Iranis are written in the Zend and Avestha languages. These languages are very near the Vedic Sanskrit, which was the language of the group, which migrated to India. Zoroaster was more or less similar to the Rishies in ancient India and therefore his preaching of the fire-worship is the remnant of the original ways of worship of the human beings, when they were staying on the north pole.

After the aggression of the Mohomedans on Iran, the fire-worshippers became more or less extinct. A few, that still believe in that religion, cannot openly observe it and they have to do fire-worship in hiding. Those, who still believe in old traditions, are no doubt still carrying on the fire-worship secretly. It is said that many of the Hindus, who were converted to Christianity by the Portugese by force, still secretly keep idols of Hindu Gods with them and worship them. The position of the Zoroastrians in Iran is more or less like these converted Christians on the west coast of India. It was because of this persecution that a few Zoroastrians migrated to India and adopted this country as their motherland. They are at present known as the Parsee community in India and have still maintained their tradition of fire-worship intact. Their temple is known as Agiary (fire temple). Many Parsee devotees have been attracted towards Shri Sai Baba; because He also happened to be a fire-worshiper.

Flame or torch is the symbol of fire and is still honoured in all the countries of the world. The Hindus always light a lamp at the time of any auspicious occasion. The Christians

light candles at the shrine and this flame indicates the sanctity of fire. Even the Olympic games are started by carrying the flame according to old traditions of the Roman people.

It will thus be seen that fire-worship, in some form or the other, is being done all over the world even today, though the form of worship might be slightly different from place to place. To all Sai devotees fire is very sacred, because it is the base of the Dhuni of Shri Sai Baba. The tradition of fire-worship by Shri Sai Baba, will therefore be virtually continued by the Sai devotees by honouring Shri Baba's Dhuni and considering the Udi obtained therefrom as very sacred. ★

श्री साई नाम

साई राम बोले, जय साई राम बोले
जीवन की मैया को साई संग खेलो ॥ साई राम ॥

ॐ से उत्पन्न होकर, जन्म ले अनेकों
पूर्व पुण्य उदय हुए, मानव तन पाया ॥ साई राम ॥

मानव तन पाय कछु चिन्तन कर लीजे
जीवन यह सुफल हाय, साई शरण लीजे ॥ साई राम ॥

इन्द्रिय सुख भोग लिये, माया की ओट में
साई तन्मयता का, आनन्द अब ले लो ॥ साई राम ॥

वह तो है परमानन्द, सच्चिदानन्द वही
साई श्री चरणों में, मोक्ष मति पा लो ॥ साई राम ॥

श्री बी. पी. श्रीवास्तव
रेल्वे क्वार्टर नं. २७७/२, रेल्वे स्टेशनके सामने
जबलपुर (म. प्र.) ४८२००१

THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION

By · Swami Chinmayananda

Meditational Pointers

In the last talk, Krishna emphasised the secret effects of dedicated work upon the inner personality. Then He declared that when a mind trained to be steadfast is turned to contemplate upon the Infinite Self, the meditator realises the Self.

In Arjuna, a man-of-action, mere theories generate an intolerable impatience. He demands for direct means and ways of meditating. How can a finite mind, however trained it may be, however steadfast it may be, contemplate upon the Infinite All pervading Consciousness? The Imperishable is beyond the mind-intellect and so is not available for the mind to reflect upon, nor for the intellect to contemplate upon.

Thus, to the ruthless logic of a thinking-mind meditation is a paradox. Lord Krishna in the following two verses provides eight pointers to hold the mind's attention. When the mind is held in these directions, it is in meditation, ready for the descent of the experience divine fully alert to receive intimations from the Supreme Consciousness divine.

Lord Krishna enumerates them, (VIII-9-10) "The Omniscient, the Ancient, the Over-ruler, smaller than the smallest, the Sustainer of all, of inconceivable Form. Self-luminous like the sun, and beyond darkness - - he who meditates upon Him thus, at the time of death, full of devotion, with the mind unmoving, and also by the power of Yoga, fixing his whole Prana between the eyebrows, he goes to that Supreme Resplendent Purusha". Here are the eight directions indicated, each of them a different pointer, but all pointing to the same Seat of Consciousness in everyone. To hold the mind's attention through one or many of these pointers is to keep the mind in meditation.

Consciousness illumines all knowledge, and so is termed here as the All-knowing --- (1) the "Omniscient". It is from Consciousness that the universe emerged and as the very father of time and space, It is indicated here as the "most (2) Ancient". Every action of all living creatures, plants, animals and men, is an expression of the Self, and so It is hinted at as the (3) "Over-ruler". It is (4) subtler than the subtlest and being All-pervading, It is even in the smallest of small things in the universe. It is the very life in all beings and so the (5) "Sustainer" of all. The mind-intellect cannot make It an object of their feelings of thoughts, as It is the very subject, the very Consciousness behind all feelings and thoughts. Hence, (6) of "Form-inconceivable". Consciousness illumines all and is Itself the pure Light of Knowledge. Just as a lamp in a room illumines everything in the room and needs no other light to illumine it, so too, Consciousness is (7) "Self-luminous". The resplendent Self being Consciousness is (8) "Beyond all darkness" --- beyond all **Maya**. There is in It neither any non-apprehension nor misapprehensions of Reality. It is the pure apprehension of the Self by the Self in the One Infinite Self. It is Peace Infinite, Bliss Supreme.

He who can meditate upon Me thus, (अनुस्मरेत यः), "at the time of death" (प्रयाणकाले), "with a steady mind full of devotion" (मनवाऽचलित भक्त्या युक्तः), "he goes to that Supreme Resplendent Self" (स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम्). Here "death" is to be understood not as the biological death of the body, but the "mystic" death of the ego-sense in deep meditation. In the intense heat of deep meditation the sense of the ego ends and the awakening to the Supreme Consciousness takes place.

"By the power of Yoga, fixing the **Prana** between the brows" (योगबलेन भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक्) --- is not to be taken literally. We have already seen how every science has to use its own vocabulary. Here is a sentence which is clustered with special terms. "By the power of Yoga" (योगबलेन) means by the results

of intense meditation, "Prana" is not breath. In Sanskrit, breath is swasa (श्वासः); so Prana-yama is not "breath-control". If it were so, the right Sanskrit term would have been swasa-yama. "Prana" in our entire scriptural literature is used as the "expression of life at the body, mind, intellect level". Thus perceptions, feelings, thinking, etc. constitute Prana. As indicated by the eight directions given, when all our conscious attention is gathered from its extrovert dissipation and held steadily in meditation, then the Self is experienced.

Not only has the Lord given all the guidelines to lift the mind from its drab commonplace sensuous distractions, but has provided a seeking student with all necessary instructions. When meditation becomes intense one glides into God-consciousness as one glides in tired repose into the engulfing depths of sleep!

All failures at meditation are only because of the dissipation of the meditator's attention into the world of sense-objects. These vasanas that drive the mind into sense fields get wasted in the heat of our daily attempts at meditation. Slowly, the mind stops its roamings. Naturally, more and more of it is employed in contemplation upon the Self.

When we thus develop this faculty of heaving ourselves on to the higher planes of Consciousness, we become ready for the sudden intuitive experience of the Divine. This is the death of the ego and the birth of God-hood. This transcendental State of God-hood can be reached and man can end his confusions which are born out of his sense of inadequacy and his sense of limitation.

(Courtesy : Geeta Office, Powai)



SHRI GAJANAN MAHARAJ

By :- Shri S. N. Huddar

(Continued from April 1978 issue)

CHAPTER 15

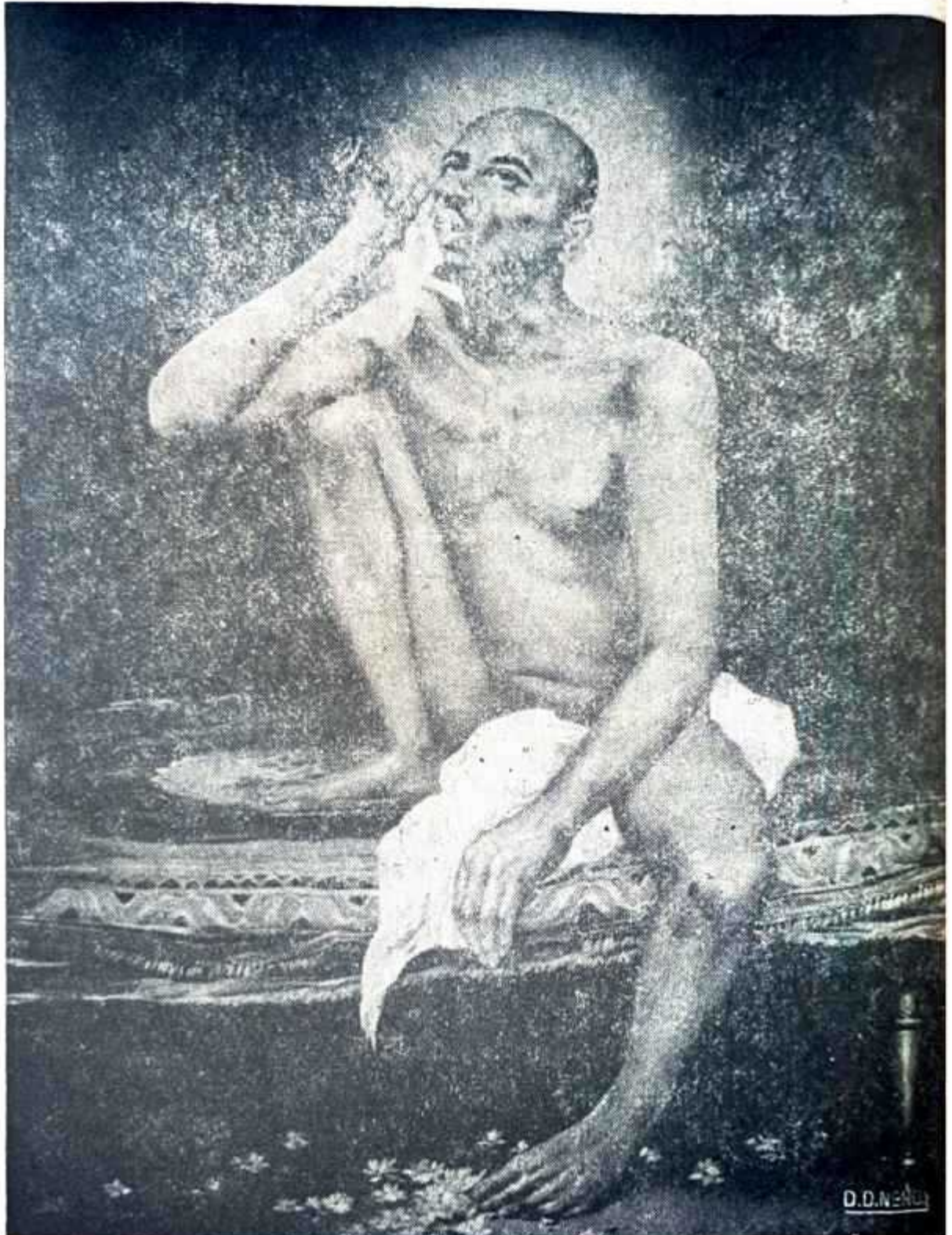
LOKMANYA TILAK AT AKOLA

In 1907, Shiva Jayanti Utsava was organised at Akola (Berar) under the chairmanship of Lakmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, a great national leader of Poona. Shivaji's mother Jijabai, was from the Jadhao family of Sindkhed Raja of Berar. Shivaji's father Shahaji belonged to Maharashtra. Arrangements of the festivities were being made since a month. Shri Damle, Kolhatkar, Khaparde were the leaders of Berar who had come to Akola for the festival.

Some expressed their opinion that Shri Gajanan Maharaj of Shegaon should also be invited for this utsava. Others said, that he would roam here and there naked and might strike even Shri Tilak. Others replied, "You are not right. His madness is for the mad man. He will behave well with the learned gentlemen". At last it was decided to bring Shri Gajanan Maharaj for the occasion. Some persons including Dadasaheb Khaparde came to Shegaon. Shri Maharaj said to Shri Khaparde, "I shall gladly come to the festival at Akola. I shall not do anything awkward. I shall sit silent at one place. Bal Gangadhar Tilak is a real national Leader. His friend Shri Annasaheb Patwardhan, is a disciple of Shri Narsinha Saraswati of Alandi and he is also coming. I shall come to see both these leaders".

Dadasaheb Khaparde said to Kolhatkar, "The discussion at Akola is already known to Shri Maharaj by intuition. See what great powers these saints possess. It is evident by his words how

Shri Gajanan Maharaj of Shegaon



D.D. NENGA

he loves the national leaders. We are not required to pursue him to come to Akola." Khaparde, Kolhatkar and others were pleased and they returned to Akola.

This ceremony on Akshatritiya (Vaishakh Shudha) was in the summer. A great pandal was erected. People from long distances had come to see and listen to Lokmanya Tilak and see Shri Gajanan Maharaj. The pandal was full of people. Lokmanya Tilak and Shri Annasaheb Patwardhan sat on the dias. Shri Gajanan Maharaj sat by the side of Lokmanya Tilak.

Lokmanya Tilak said in his speech, "Today is the birthday of that brave personality Shivaji, who spent his life for the freedom of our country. That great warrior was blessed by Samarth Ramdas Swami. We are fortunate that today Shri Gajanan Maharaj has come here to bless us. The country without independence is like a dead body. So it is necessary to impart such education, which will inculcate love for our nation in our children. Will the present foreign Government give us such education?"

Shri Gajanan Maharaj raised his voice "No No". Tilak's speech was most impressive. Shri Gajanan Maharaj smiled and said, "Due to such speeches fetters come on hands," and he started his usual bhajan, "Gan Gan Ganat Bote".

LOKMANYA TILAK'S CONVICTION

The function was a great success. Shri Maharaj's prediction came true the same year. Under section 124, a case was filed against Lokmanya Tilak. He was arrested. Great Barristers and Advocates pleaded for him. When Shri Khaparde started for Bombay for this purpose, he asked Shri Kolhatkar pleader to go to Shri Gajanan Maharaj at Shegaon and pray to him for the release of Lok. Tilak. He expressed his regret for his inability to go personally, as he had to proceed to Bombay urgently.

When Kohlatkar came to Shegaon, he found that Shri Maharaj was asleep continuously for 3 days. Kolhatkar waited

till he awoke. Shri Maharaj said to Kolhatkar, "In spite of your great efforts, there would be no success. Chhatrapati Shivaji, though blessed by Samarth Ramdas Swami, had to be in the custody of Aurangzeb at Delhi. Political salvation comes after the suffering of great persons. The tale of Kauns tells us the same thing. However I give you this bread as prasad. Give it to Shri Tilak. He will achieve a great deed. He will go far away but there is no other means to avoid this." Kolhatkar bowed to Shri Maharaj and went to Bombay.

At Bombay, he met Shri Tilak and Khaparde and narrated the words of Shri Gajanan Maharaj and also gave the bread as prasad. Lokmanya Tilak pounded the bread on his palm and ate it. Lokmanya Tilak smiled and said, "Shri Maharaj has uttered the truth. His knowledge is unfathomable. Government will keep their prestige. But the words that I would achieve some great deed, appear to me mystic."

Lok Tilak was sentenced to six years' rigorous imprisonment and he was removed to Mandalay in Burma. There he wrote "Geeta-Rahasya" a most learned and honoured treatise on Shri Bhagwad-Geeta". This has been undoubtedly his great deed. There have been many treatises written on Geeta by various learned authors for the benefit of the universe and expressed views to suit their times and circumstances. Due to this volume Lok Tilak's name will be remembered forever in the whole world.

ADVICE TO SHRIDHAR KALE

Shridhar Govind Kale of Kolhapur, a Koknastha Brahmin, was very poor. After Matriculation, he joined college but he failed in the Intermediate Arts examination. He read the life of Oyama Togo in Kesari and this inspired him to go to England to study mechanical Engineering. But he had no money to proceed to England. He was thinking over the question of collecting money,

He went to Bhandara to one of his friend, who was a teacher in the Munro High school. He also approved of his idea

of taking foreign education. Both started for Kolhapur. Hearing the name of Shri Gajanan Maharaj, they halted at Shegaon and came to Shri Maharaj. They bowed to Shri Maharaj and sat before him. Knowing the intention of Shridhar Kale, Shri Maharaj said to him, "Are you mad? Do not think of going to the foreign country. Every thing is there in our country. There is nothing special in physical science. Study philosophy and you will gain much". Hearing this, Shridhar recollected similar advice, given by a saint, living at Kumbhargalli at Kolhapur. Shri Maharaj further said, "After many virtues one gets birth in this Bharat. Do not go elsewhere out of Bharat. Yoga is more important than Physical Sciences. Philosophy is more valuable than Yoga-shastra. If possible study that. Your wife is waiting for you at Kolhapur. You return soon to your home". Shridhar was delighted with these words. He passed B. A. and later on M. A. examination and became Principal of Scindia College of Shivapur (Gwalior State). He prospered there very well. Due to this meeting with the saint, Shridhar could choose the proper line of his life.

(to be continued)

Shri Sai Temple at Bhilai Nagar

With the spread of devotion to Shri Sai Baba, the Sai cult is spreading far and wide, in this country and abroad. In the Sai temple, located in the town-ship of Bhilai Nagar, the Aarti is sung on every Thursday and it is attended by the residents of the town-ship in great numbers. The first Aarti was sung on Thursday the 8th May 1975 and since then, Aarti is sung there on every Thursday on a large scale. Other important occasions like Dasara, Ramanavami, Guru Pournima are also being celebrated there with great devotion, co-operation and enthusiasm.

Extracts From Shri H. S. Dixit's Diary

BABA IS IN HIS PORTRAIT

Balabuwa Sutar is called 'The Modern Tukaram'. When he had been to Sai's darshan to Shirdi, Shri Maharaj (Baba) said, "I know this person for the last four years". Balabuwa could not be convinced of this as he had not come to Sai at any time before. However, he suddenly remembered that it was exactly four years since the day when he saw a portrait of Maharaj and bowed to Baba in the portrait. And as such, he was convinced of the truth of Baba's words. (This incident is reported at page 185 of Sai Satcharita, Eighth edition 1978).

BABA IS AKKALKOT MAHARAJ

A gentleman from Bombay (Pitale) had once been to Shirdi to take darshan of Sai and at that time Maharaj gave him Rs. 2 and said, "When you were a young child, I had given to you Re. 1. Keep these two rupees along with the same". That gentleman could not clearly understand what Baba was saying, since he had never been to Sai before. After coming to Bombay, he told this to his old mother and she said, "When you were a child we had been to Akkalkot Maharaj, who had given you a rupee and I have kept the same carefully. The gentleman was overjoyed to know that both these saints were one and the same. (This incident appears at pages 140-141 of Sai Satcharita 8th edition 1978. There is however difference in the amounts paid to Shri Pitale).

INSTALLATION OF PADUKAS AT THE FOOT OF THE NEEM TREE

There is a Maratha gentleman by name Bhai. Once he thought of spending some days at the sacred feet of Akkalkot Maharaj, i. e. at Akkalkot. On the night on which he was to start, he had

a dream wherein Akkalkot Maharaj appeared and told him to go to Shirdi (and not to Akkalkot) as he (Akkalkot Maharaj) was at Shirdi at the time. Accordingly Bhai went to Shirdi, remained there for about five to six months, and arranged the sthapana i. e. installation of the padukas of Akkalkot Maharaj under the "gode neem" tree in Sathewada. (This incident is reported at page 24 of Sai Satcharita, 8th edition 1978. The name of the person stated there is Bhai Krishnaji Alibagkar).

BABA GIVES ALMOND FOR DIARRHOEA

Once cholera was raging when Bapusaheb Buti was at Shirdi, He suffered from diarrhoea, vomiting and great thirst. His friend Dr. Pillai went to Baba, told Him everything and asked Sai Baba whether Bapusaheb was to be given water or coffee. Upon which Baba replied, "Give him conjee of coarse wheat flour, milk, almond, pistas and walnuts (ackroots). The same was prepared and given to Bapusaheb which not only reduced his thirst but also cured the cholera. (This incident appears at page 75 of Sai Satcharita, 8th edition 1978. It is however stated there that Shri Bapusaheb Buti suffered from cholera).

ANTARJNAN

Once Kaka Mahajani went to Shirdi with the intention of spending some 8 days there. When he approached Maharaj, the latter asked him as to when he was returning back. Kaka was wonderstruck and replied that he would do so as soon as he was ordered. Baba told him to proceed the next morning itself. Upon his return, Kaka found that his boss as well as his (Kaka's) clerk were ill and Kaka's presence was essential in the Office. They had already addressed a letter to Kaka at Shirdi to return. But before Kaka got it, he had already started back. (This incident appears at page 69 of Sai Satcharita, 8th edition 1978).

BLESSING CURES CHRONIC COLIC

There was a gentleman by name Dattopant, living in Datta's temple at Harda. He was troubled with Colic for about 12 to

14 years. He went to see Sai, hearing of Sai's glory. Shri Sai Baba blessed him and kept him for some days and gave his blessing (Ashirvada). The stomach pain stopped completely and never repeated again. (This story appears at pages 76-77 of Sai Satcharita, 8th edition 1978)

THAKARSAY AND MAHARAJ

There came a solicitor from Bombay to have darshan of Sai Maharaj. Sai handed him some grapes. He ate one grape with great difficulty, as he did not like to eat grapes without washing them. Then his greater difficulty was where to spit out the grape seed. On Maharaja's insistence, he ate one more of the grapes and he did not find any seed in it. The same was the case with the rest. He just thought of giving some grapes to his friend and immediately Baba gave some to his friend. At this he was wonderstruck. (This incident is reported at page 195 of Sai Satcharita, 8th edition 1978).

HYSTERIA CURED

Every year, there assembled at Dabolimath in Vengurla, Ratnagiri District, a conference of a religious section to which Annasaheb Dabholkar belonged. It is named Maha Mandal. On behalf of this Mandal, Annasaheb was asked seven years ago (i. e. in 1917) to preside; but he refused to do so as there was no permission from Sai Maharaj. He was requested even next year; but before that he had a vision at Bandra wherein Maharaj permitted him to preside over the function. Accordingly he accepted the invitation from the math. One of his daughters was suffering from hysteria, and she never used to keep good health; but after Annasaheb accepted the invitation, she improved in her health and was cured of her malady. ★



A SELF UNFOLDMENT

By :- Shri Avdhutswami Maharaj

(Shree Avdhutswami Maharaj Limaye, who stays at Navalkar Building, N. C. Kelkar Road, Dadar, Bombay-28 is a disciple of Shri Gajanan Maharaj Borkar, who was also staying at Dadar. Shri Samarth Kamdas Swami, whose books and teachings are honoured and revered very much by Shri Avdhutswami, has never advised his disciples to leave the family life and go to the jungle in order to attain God. Though many common people have heard this advice of staying with your family and attaining God and achieving progress on the spiritual path, still it is rather difficult for them to follow it and bring it into practice. Shri Avdhutswami is a family man. He was in service and still he could achieve good progress on the spiritual path with the help of his Guru. Swamiji was born on 3rd May 1906. He will therefore be completing 72 years of his age on the 3rd May 1978 and entering the 73rd year of his life. In honour of his birthday coming in this month, the following article, written by him, is being published here. In this small autobiographical article (1st part, second part will be published in June 1978 issue), our readers will find how a family man can struggle and achieve spiritual progress if he has a will to do it. These two articles will therefore serve as beckon light to all 'Sadhakas', who want to remain in their family, live a family life and also achieve spiritual progress - - - Editor).

To be born as a human being on this earth, especially in the meritorious land of sages and saints, is the most miraculous and wonderful thing that can happen in this Universe, because the man possesses intellect and can get knowledge of the Universe, its Creator God, and finally of himself. He can know the real purport and secret of human life and by practising the same in his own life, can attain the greatest bliss. From time immemorial, the Great Sages and saints realised this most secret and sacred path of bliss and showed it to the suffering humanity around

and made them happy. No man can live for himself alone. He has to live for himself and also for the World. If he does not, what is he but a mere animal; and who would not be ashamed to be an animal being born a human being! Man is the golden and the ripest fruit of this wonderful Universal tree. This tree has no splendour without its beautiful ornamentation of golden fruits and the fruits cannot have existence without the tree. The ripe fruit alone bears the seed of the tree. The human being bears the seed of the Universe-the omnipotent existence of God i. e., the soul in the body. The Universe cannot have existence without the Omnipotent Brahman; the body cannot have existence without the Atman. The man has just to realise this and he will one day awaken himself with the most thrilling and joyful experience that he is the complete part and parcel of the Almighty. For this awakening it is essential that he must ardently take himself to the meritorious path of Devotion, love and service with the guidance of the ablest Master - The Sadguru.



Shri Avdhutswami Maharaj

I am really proud and very happy that I was born and that by Grace of God I am still alive quite safe and sound. I came into this World on 3rd May, 1906 and now I quite realise that I have to go one day - any day any moment. Every moment of my life is therefore precious and must be properly utilized. Very often I have to think what happened in my life till now and what should happen at every moment that may come. I was born in a pious Brahmin family and experienced all the Good and Evil, and all the usual happiness and

tormentations of a Childhood. Since early childhood I also experienced faith and love for God and got a liking to utter the name of "Lord Ram", to visit temples and attend Bhajans and Keertans and to read lives of Rama-Krishna and Saints etc. I could not know how and why these things were there; but it was a fact that I could not just do without them. There was natural inner yearning and very often some friendly person would goad me further. As time passed I could just experience that faith in God helps to minimise our sorrows in life and to attain some of our desires for a happy life, but very often there were long periods of forgetfulness of God. I matriculated in a Bombay School in 1923 and Graduated in 1927 at Sangli. I went for Law at Poona; but left the course having no liking for the profession. In 1929 I served as a Head Master in an English School at a village in Kolaba District and got a wonderful experience of human life. I joined the Postal Service in 1930, and was married in 1931.

Throughout the latter part of the above period and even later on, I got a very bitter experience of life. Not only I suffered from continuous sickness and physical ailments but got no peace of mind from any source whatever. I really got a disgust of the world around. I experienced the weakness of the humanity in general in every respect. There was dishonesty and immorality. There was greed for money and power to such an extent that even my own kith and kin were not an exception. There was no selfless love and kindness to be seen. There was neither sincerity of purpose nor any devotion to duty. Faith in God and religion was lacking. With a sincere and loving heart and honest purpose, I tried my best to cope up with the situation but came to a point of breaking, so much so that on the very day of my marriage, I thought of leaving my family and going in search of God. But good reason prevailed. I thought I was a coward if I could not face the world, which God has created and desired to run away. But where could I go? Could I be really away from the world by a mere change of place? And

who could guarantee that the world far away was happier? God had kept me at the right place and in proper circumstances befitting my "Prarabdha" of my previous births, and I must face them only by surrendering myself to God. I thought that sages and saints have already described in detail the phases of Kaliyuga and it should be so. It was a folly to blame the world or anybody for the sorrows that overcame me.

(to be continued)



OMNIPRESENT BABA

Shree Baba is omnipresent and in His own inimitable way. He has encouraged me to fight in times of difficulties and blessed me and my family on happy occasions.

It was on 19-1-1976, I had got married and it was His devout follower Dr. K. B. Gavankar, who had blessed us both on that happy occasion by his presence at the wedding.

Shri Baba did it again on 19-1-1978, when I had taken off from duty and paid an early visit to Sansthan Office at Dadar to get the 1978 Diary. I was deeply pleased to see Shri V. V. Bagwe, Manager of Samadhi Mandir and Librarian of the Sansthan Library at Shirdi. When he asked me, I told him the reason for which I had come to the Office. Without my asking, he gave Shri Baba's photo, Udi, Prasad and a sugar packet and while giving those articles he said that, my feeling for Shri Baba being true, it was He who arranged the meeting. So true! Shree Baba has created in me a stream of self-less love for Him and I dedicate all fruits thereof to Him. ★

Shri A. K. Rasal

21/382, B. P. T. Staff Quarters,

Reynolds Road, Wadala (East), Bombay 400 037

Fourth Annual Gathering at Shirdi

(Continued from April 1978 issue)

SECOND SESSION



From left to right :- Mrs. Pathak, Shri K. S. Pathak, Court Receiver, Dr. K. B. Gavankar, Shri Radhakrishna Swamiji, Chief Guest, Shri G. J. Chitambar, President, Dr. S. D. Parchure, Executive Editor, Shri Sadanand Chendwankar, Executive Editor and Shri A. J. Chitambar, President of the gathering held in 1977.

Photo : by Shri J. N. Kulkarni, Pune.

The post-lunch session started at the same place at about 3-30 p. m. This is supposed to be the most important session of the whole gathering, because it is in this session that the administration and the editors come to know the reactions of the contributors, who form a section of the readers. Though during

the last three gatherings, suggestions were always made by a number of delegates, still if they are scanned very carefully, it would be noticed that some of them are being repeated from time to time. Some suggestions are not practicable, some suggestions are concerning change in the administrative policy and some suggestions are made on the spur of the moment, which are not at all concerned with the issue of Shri Sai Leela Magazine. The Chairman of the meeting has always to be alert on such points. He has also not to allow people to digress and take the time of the session either by speaking beside the point or repeating the arguments already put forth by somebody. In doing this job, the Chairman becomes, a target of criticism both because he does not check the speakers in time even when they are speaking beside the point and also because he does not check the people who are lacking in brevity; but it goes to the credit of this year's Chairman, Shri Chitambar that he acted so very well in his chair, that no one from the audience could complain against him on any of the aforesaid grounds. He was all the time quite alert and he made such pertinent remarks that they gave rise to fountains of laughter in the gathering.

Out of the delegates present, the following persons made certain suggestions :-

- 1) Shri Gajanan Kulkarni
- 2) Shri Ramesh D. Chawan
- 3) Shri Madhav Gore
- 4) Shri Hasmukh Onkar Patil
- 5) Dr. (Mrs) Sumati Khanvilkar
- 6) Shri Gajanan Nirkhe
- 7) Shri Vijay Hajare
- 8) Prof. Gunderao Patwari
- 9) Shri R. B. Sandbhor
- 10) Sow Meena Khadilkar
- 11) Shri Bipin Swadia
- 12) Shri Nagesh Mogalaikar
- 13) Shri Rajaram Humne
- 14) Prof. M. V. Ramchandran
- 15) Shri Suresh Chavan
- 16) Shri Jagdish Devpurkar
- 17) Shri Radhakrishna Gupta
- 18) Shri Suryakant Garje
- 19) Shri R. S. Pujari
- 20) Shri Dattatraya More
- 21) Shri Prakash Doshi
- 22) Shri Anil Rasal
- 23) Miss Shashikala Salgaonkar
- 24) Mrs. Sarala Garje
- 25) Shri K. H. Bhuraney
- 26) Dr. K. B. Gawankar
- 27) Mrs. Sushila Hajare.

In addition to the usual suggestions of having a separate issue of Shri Sai Leela in Hindi and in English and to increase the number of pages, there were a few more suggestions like having a separate section for children, having a better get up, changing the size of the magazine, keeping the magazine for sale on Railway station stalls, giving new writers a place along with old ones, giving extracts from old issues, giving advertisements, introducing philosophical subjects in the story form, increasing the subscription, having articles of limited size, giving more prominence to poems, giving more publicity so as to make Shri Sai Leela known to all Sai devotees, giving some place to pictures based on the incidents referred to in the articles; advertising about the articles to be published in the next issue, giving prize to the best poem of the month, using more costly paper, requesting the editors to give their idea about the articles required by them for publication, holding a gathering of the readers also, requesting all delegates to have at least one more subscriber. In addition to the above suggestions one speaker was audacious enough to suggest publishing "what the stars foretell!" every month. Both the Executive Editors were noting down the suggestions, that were being made by the delegates. As most of the persons that spoke were readers of the Marathi edition, their suggestions were mainly in respect of the Marathi issue. Shri Sadanand Chendwankar therefore gave a reply to the suggestions made, pointing out how many of them could be implemented and at the same time informing the delegates why it was not possible to implement some of their suggestions.

The second Executive Editor Dr. Parchure, thereafter said in his speech, "Most of the suggestions, that were made here, related to the Marathi issue and a reply is already given in this behalf by my co-Executive Editor Shri Chendwankar. As regards the English issue, I may state that some of the people here, have praised the get up and the contents of the issue outside this hall, then why have they been backward in speaking it here? Excepting perhaps Shri Garje, nobody spoke about the improvements

done and the good articles that are being published in the issue. As far as the English issue is concerned, several suggestions, made in the past, have been implemented. New heads like "Questions and Answers", "Likes and dislikes" have been started. It is open to the readers to express their opinions without any reservation. As the readers speak about something that they do not like, similarly they should speak about things which they like. Such opinions encourage the editors to strive further for improvement of the magazine. As suggested before, the list of donors has now been reduced and the pages so released are being utilized for articles. We are doing our best to improve the magazine and its sale. If the contributors co-operate with us and make some further suggestions, which could be implemented, they will be welcomed and implemented".

As this session had prolonged for a pretty long time, it was necessary to close it; but before closing the session, the Chairman had to make an announcement. Among the delegates, there were a number of poets and other artists, who wanted to entertain the audience with their art. It was therefore decided to have a full cultural programme from 8 to 10 p. m. in the Samadhi Mandir on the same day (12-3-78) and also a programme for singing songs and poems, in the morning on 13-3-78 from 9 a. m. to 11 a. m. Shri Chitambar the chairman announced both these programmes and declared that the session has concluded.

In the cultural programme in the night, held in the Samadhi Mandir on 12-3-78, Shri Appa Samant, the veteran Dholak player, gave his solo programme and also accompanied other singers. His accompaniment, as well as his solo programme, was much appreciated by the audience. Among other programmes a special mention is required to be made of the singing of "Bharud" by Shri R. B. Sandbhor from Poona. By itself the Bharud, though philosophical, has a humorous touch and when it is presented with appropriate acting, it appeals to the audience very much. Shri Sandbhor is a good artist and he is presenting that programme

at other places publicly. Hence his programme becomes quite lively. A number of poets sang their poems in both the programmes and their poems also were appreciated much by the audience. Among the poets, who sang their songs, a special mention is required to be made of Prof. Gunderao Patwari from Bidar. He is a professor of Hindi in a college at Bidar and is well-versed with the Urdu literature. He has therefore a special liking for "Shers". None of his speeches will be complete without a sher. He must give it in the beginning or end with it. In his programme he gave a lot of shers. The following poets sang their poems in the programme :-

- 1) Shri Ramesh Chavan
- 2) Shri Nagesh Mogalaikar
- 3) Dr. (Smt.) Sumati Khanvilkar
- 4) Mrs. Sushila Hajare
- 5) Shri Dattatraya More
- 6) Prof. Gunderao Patwari
- 7) Shri Jagdish Devpurkar
- 8) Mrs. Sandbhor
- 9) Mrs. Meena P. Khadilkar
- 10) Miss Shashikala Salgaonkar and others.

A poet no doubt composes his poem for giving vent to his own overwhelming feelings; but by mere composition of a poem he does not get full satisfaction. He wishes that his poem should be read by others or at least it should be heard by others when he sings it. As nearly three hours' time was given to the poets for their programme during the gathering, they appeared to be satisfied for having got an opportunity to show their art. From the enthusiasm shown by the poets this year, it appears that this programme will have to be included every year in the annual gathering at Shirdi.

CONCLUDING SESSION

The concluding session began in the hall on the ground floor of Shanti Niwas in the afternoon at about 3-30 p. m. on 13-3-78. Because of the constant increase in the number of delegates from year to year, it is always found to be necessary to hold the sessions of the gathering in the hall of Shanti Niwas. However due to influx of the devotees, the aforesaid hall was not available on Sunday and hence the previous sessions had to be held on the

first floor of the Samadhi Mandir. As this last session was held in the big hall in Shanti Niwas, the delegates were happy as they could now sit at ease.

Though the Court Receiver, Shri Pathaksaheb is always fully alert to provide all facilities to the delegates attending the gathering, still it is of course upto the staff of the Shirdi Sansthan to carry out his orders and arrange for the comforts of the delegates. As this staff always remains behind the curtain, none of the delegates come to know, who worry for their comforts. With a view to introducing the heads of the sections of the different departments in the Sansthan Office at Shirdi, this year it was decided to call them and to introduce them to the delegates. Shri Shinde, who is incharge of the accommodation, Shri Patil, who is the Civil Engineer incharge of the properties of the Sansthan, Shri Bagwe, who is incharge of the Library and the Samadhi Mandir, Shri Nagpure, who is incharge of the Cash Deptt, and other Officers-incharge of Security staff and the mechanical and electrical department and Dr. Kelkar, the R. M. O. of the Sansthan Hospital at Shirdi, were introduced to the delegates. Shri Bagwe and Shri Patil delivered short speeches regarding the working of the Shirdi Sansthan and complimented Shri Pathaksaheb for his initiative and drive, due to which the Sansthan has made miraculous progress during the last seven or eight years.

On behalf of the Shirdi Sansthan, Shri Pathaksaheb felicitated the following persons by garlanding them and offering to them Shawl, Coconut and Prasad.

1) Shri G. J. Chitambar, Chairman 2) Shri Radhakrishna Swamiji, Chief Guest 3) Shri A. J. Chitambar, the Chairman of the gathering held last year 4) Dr. K. B. Gawankar 5) Mrs. Chitambar 6) Shri Sadanand Chendwankar, Executive Editor 7) Dr. S. D. Parchure, Executive Editor 8) Shri Nivritti Patil Gondkar, old resident of Shirdi village and class student of Shri Chitambar 9) Shri R. S. Pujari 10) Mrs. Sunita T. Chawak for winning a prize in the essay competition, On behalf of the dele-

gates the Chairman offered a garland to Shri Pathaksaheb and his wife.

In his short speech, Dr. Gawankar, then told the audience that to be a good contributor to the Sai Leela magazine, they must all have good knowledge of Sai Satcharita and it is therefore necessary for them to read and assimilate it fully. He further said that as an ex-editor of Shri Sai Leela, he knows the difficulties of an editor and added that the present editors are doing a good job under the conditions in which they are working.

Shri Radhakrishna Swamiji thereafter delivered a short benedictory speech. His fully white attire, resembling his white beard and hair, made the audience feel that he was purity incarnate. In his speech, which he delivered in English, he thanked the organizers for giving him the opportunity to attend the gathering as the Chief Guest. He narrated his experiences about the favour showered on him by Shri Sai Baba in difficult situations and told the audience about his contact with other saints. Shri Swamiji said that such gatherings would help the spread of the Sai cult and also the spread of the Sai Leela magazine. He also invited all the delegates to Bangalore on 10-5-78 for the inauguration of a Sai temple there. Shri Swamiji's speech, though delivered in English, had a salutary effect on even the persons, who did not know English. His speech created a peaceful and serene atmosphere. As a part of the audience did not understand English, Dr. Parchure explained in brief in Marathi, the salient features of Shri Swamiji's speech.

Shri Nivrutti Patil Gondkar also sang a few abhangas and narrated his experiences about Sai Baba. As his family members were residents of Shirdi for generations, his words were received with special reverence by all. Though he cannot be really called as an educated person as per our usual definition, his sincerity and urge added force to his speech and it made an impression on the audience.

Shri Chitambar then delivered his presidential address. In his speech, which lasted for nearly half an hour, he thanked the organizers for electing him as a Chairman of this year's gathering, though he feels that by merely coming into contact with Shri Sai Baba for a few years in his childhood, he does not become a privileged person. If the people appreciate his personal achievements and if they feel that he is suitable for this post because of that, then he would be happy in accepting the Chairmanship of the gathering. He then narrated his experiences in various fields of life and wished that the Sai cult and Sai devotion should spread far and wide in order to have mental peace and satisfaction. He said in the end that the executive editors are doing their best for the magazine and therefore Shri Sai Leela has got a distinct future. He again thanked the gathering for offering him the Chairmanship and helping him to hold the session in harmony and peace without annoying anyone.

On behalf of the delegates, Mrs. Sushilabai Hazare, from Malegaon, thanked the staff of the Shirdi Sansthan, Shri Subhash Chendwankar and Shri Pathaksaheb for looking to all their comforts during their stay at Shirdi. As a secretary of the gathering Dr. Parchure, thanked the Chairman, Ex-Chairman, Shri Radhakrishna Swamiji, the delegates for having come from far and wide, the staff of the Shirdi Sansthan and particularly Shri Pathaksaheb for helping him in holding the gathering and making it a complete success.

The fourth annual gathering of the contributors to Shri Sai Leela magazine, thus concluded on the evening of 13-3-78 at about 7 p. m. with a wide applause from the audience. As an annual affair, it is eagerly awaited by most contributors and hence they all returned home with the hope of coming back next year. Some delegates started returning on the night of 13-3-78, some left during the morning and evening of 14-3-78 and the rest left Shirdi on 15-3-78. ★

S. D. Parchure Executive Editor, Shri Sai Leela (Eng.)

SAINT GADGEMAHARAJ

(Continued from April 1978 issue)

By Dr. S. D. Parchure M. A., Ph. D.

The letter from the collector to waive the payment of the yearly land revenue, gave an impetus to the work of the Dharmashala at Nasik. The foundation was laid, the plinth came up and the walls started growing inch by inch. The roof followed. The doors and windows were fitted and the building of the Dharmashala was ready. It appeared that in place of the jungle of the cactus bushes at Hanumangadhi, a palace has come up at the site. The ground at Hanumangadhi was not plain. It was a sort of a hillock. Hence the structures, comprising of the whole unit, were constructed at different levels according to the availability of plane ground. On the west side was the Datta Mandir of Bhimabai Sawant. The different structures, located in the campus, were painted with attractive colours. The entire arrangement used to astonish the pilgrims. They used to be puzzled further to find that only some nominal rent was charged for staying there. A library was also provided in the premises, so that if someone wanted to do some reading, he could do it there

In the early months of 1935, the buildings became ready for occupation. Shri Maharaj however decided to open this Dharmashala with a special function. Nasik is a place of Pilgrimage where pilgrims flock in great numbers. In order to take advantage of the philanthropy of these pilgrims, an equally big number of beggars collect there. Some of them are able bodied and they move about and collect enough food for themselves; but those that are lame or blind, are not able to move about and beg for alms. Shri Maharaj had noticed the pitiable condition of such beggars all over the country, during the time in which he

was wandering from place to place, before being famous as a saint. He therefore decided to give free food to such infirm beggars at this Dharmashala and started moving in that direction.

By this time, Shri Maharaj was a known personality. His word had now gained weight. So when he declared his plan for providing free food to the lame and blind, money and food-stuffs started flooding the Dharmashala at Nasik. When therefore he inaugurated this Dharmashala at Hanumangadhi, he called nearly six hundred beggars, who were lame, blind, diseased or infirm and made them sit in a row properly. Out of the donations that were given by Shrimant Pratapshet from Amalner, Shri Tulsidas Khimji from Bombay, Shri Kisansinha Rathod from Amravati, Shri Sarosh Irani from Nagpur and others, Shri Maharaj arranged to give food, clothes etc. to all the aforesaid beggars. This was really a new thing in Nasik and hundreds of pilgrims and citizens had collected round about to see this novel function. It was really a sight to see. The feeling of satisfaction and joy that could be seen on the faces of those beggars, on finding that there was someone who cared for them, was really unique. Shri Maharaj also was pleased to see the sight. In one of his Abhangas Shri Tukaram Maharaj has said "जे कां रंजले गांजळ।
त्यांनी म्हणे जो आपुले। तोची साधु ओळखावा" The meaning of this Abhanga is "He should be known as a real sadhu (Saint), who considers the maimed, the oppressed and disabled as his own kins and does something for them." Shri Maharaj fitted in that definition very well and was really a Sadhu in the true sense of the word.

The interest of Shri Maharaj in all such buildings of public interest, always used to come to an end, as soon as the building was completed. It was his policy to put up such buildings, meant for public use, with the money collected from the public; but after that he would get out of it, but at the same time he would see that the building always continued to give service to

the public. He therefore always appointed a board of trustees for every such building. In the case of the above Dharmashala he appointed the following persons as the first trustees 1) Shri Pratapshet from Amalner 2) Shri Ganpatrao Gangan 3) Shri Bhikusa Yamasa Kshatriya 4) Shri Dhanawate from Nagpur and 5) Shri Achutrao Deshmukh. Later on Shri Yashwantbuwa Bhandari was directed by Shri Maharaj to pay attention to this Dharmashala.

When a person is young, he always wishes that he should have long life; but when he becomes old, he finds that his strength starts reducing. The diseases that were under control when he had strength, start showing their power and they have their upper hand and thus they disturb the peace of mind of the person. In addition to these weaknesses of the body, if a person has no means to sustain himself, then there is no person in this world, who is as wretched as he. Under such condition nobody cares for the old man and sometimes he is even driven out of the house. Due to breaking up of the joint family system, the problem of the old is becoming more and more acute. Shri Gadge Maharaj had very keen observation of the society and on observing this pitiable condition of these old people, he had always thought of doing something for them; but the question of having a separate asylum or rest-house for the old, could not be solved by putting up a separate building due to want of a suitable plot. Shri Gadge Maharaj had however noticed that there was some open place available behind the Dharmashala at Pandharpur. He therefore arranged to put up some huts on the site and started accommodating such old people there. Establishing separate Ashrams or Asylums or rest-houses for old people is considered to be a modern concept by many people; but it was conceived long ago by Shri Gadgemaharaj and here lies his greatness. Service to humanity was the goal of his life and after observing the social conditions, he gave service to the society in all possible ways.

When the old people were housed in the aforesaid huts, it was necessary first of all to arrange for their food. Most of them had either physical disability or financial difficulty and they were therefore not able to provide for their food. The staff appointed for upkeep and maintenance of this Dharmashala, was staying on the premises and food was being cooked for them. Shri Maharaj made arrangements for the food of these old people along with that food. When such arrangements were made, it was expected that the old people will stay at ease for the whole day and utilize their time in chanting the name of God; but these old people had come from various places. They had brought with them their inherent habits. Hence they often times used to quarrel with their neighbours on flimsy grounds. All this was required to be tolerated without showing any annoyance.

Shri Gadgemaharaj had a very kind heart. He could nowhere tolerate, the suffering of humanity. He always tried to heal it up. Some old and helpless people used to come to the Ashram of their own accord when they used to come to know about it; but whenever Shri Maharaj used to come across such a person, he used to pick him up at once and bring him into the rest-house.

Once Shri Maharaj started from Wakhari and was going to Pandharpur. He saw on the way one such old and feeble man lying by the roadside. He was asking for bread from all the passers by. The pilgrims that were passing by, were on their way to Pandharpur. They were very eager to have darshan of the Pandurang in the temple at Pandharpur; but they utterly disregarded the Pandurang, who was lying by the roadside and was asking for food. The dust that was rising due to their movement on the road, was being deposited on the body of the old man; but none was paying heed to him. The sight of Shri Gadgemaharaj was always alive to all such persons. He immediately went to him and said, "Baba, I am a Dhobi by cast. Will you have any objection to take food from me?" With tears in

his eyes, the old man said, "I am so hungry that I will take food, touched by any body".

This old man was a brahmin by caste and in those days, brahmins were normally not taking food touched or cooked by people from other caste; but severe hunger and shortage of food for a long time had subdued the old man so much that he became ready to eat food prepared by any one. Hearing the above words of the old man, Shri Maharaj realised the pitiable condition of the old man and he at once lifted him up in his arms. The followers of Maharaj picked up his belongings and all of them came to Pandharpur. He was then placed in one of the huts and started staying there.

The condition of these old men was very bad. Because of oldage, their digestive power had become weak. They were therefore often times not able to digest the food eaten by them. Some of them then vomited or some of them got loose motions. In both these cases the whole of the hut would become full of filth. Many of the attendants, therefore, avoided to go to that hut. Service to humanity, however, was the creed of Shri Maharaj, hence whenever he used to be in Pandharpur, he always attended to that old man personally. He would give him a wash. He would change his clothes and he would give him all possible service without showing any sort of nausea or disregard!

Those persons, who had a normal life and have no disability are sometimes thrown into very bad predicament in old age because of several factors. Shri Maharaj hence established a rest-house for such old people in the huts behind the Dharmashala; but Pandharpur being a place of pilgrimage, it attracted all sorts of beggars amongst whom many were blind, lame, maimed and few of them were also suffering from leprosy. The main source of food for all these beggars was nothing else but begging. Other beggars, who were able-bodied used to move from place to place and collect sufficient food for themselves. It was not possible

for these beggars with some deficiency. They were required to sit at a place and try their luck. It was not always possible for them to secure sufficient food for the day, with the result that some of them had to fill only a part of their belly and remain half-starved for days together. Shri Gadgemaharaj had observed this fact and he wanted to serve food to these beggars every day. Shri Maharaj conceived this idea; but at the same time he knew the trouble required to be taken in order to give concrete shape to his plan. In so many village fairs, Shri Maharaj had planned the "Bhandara" and carried it out successfully, but to arrange for one dinner, may be for about two thousand people, and to arrange for lunch for round about four hundred to five hundred people every day, was quite different. For that a continuous flow of funds would be necessary, at the same time there should be suitable machinery to carry out the daily programme.

Shri Gadgemaharaj had his queer ways of collecting funds. His daily need was only one bread and he used to beg for it; but his principle was that he should not feel shy to ask for others. What would happen at the most? The donor, whom we may approach, may at the most give a negative reply, for which he would always keep himself ready; but if the donor happened to be in good mood, then the problem of financing a good project would be solved. So whenever he went to any village or town, he would enquire about the philanthropic minded person in that town. During day he would go to that person's house. That person would already be aware about the work of Shri Maharaj and hence he would be ready to welcome him. On getting into the house, the person would request Shri Maharaj to sit in his well-furnished hall. Shri Maharaj would naturally reject the proposal and sit on the ground. Then he would request Maharaj to eat something and he would accordingly offer him something. Shri Maharaj would humbly refuse that also. The person would then like to introduce his family members to Shri Maharaj.

At first the wife of the person would come. Shri Maharaj would ask her, "Where have you kept the butter, ghee, milk etc?"

“Maharaj, it is in the kitchen” would be the reply. Then Maharaj would say, “You should not do like this. You should always be near it and keep a watch over it. Otherwise your daughters and daughters-in-law will all finish it.”

On hearing this, a wave of laughter would sweep the audience and the old lady would say, “No Maharaj, I have no worry of that type. My daughter-in-law is a good lady. She manages everything very economically. Here she comes,” with this introduction, the daughter-in-law would step in. Shri Maharaj would put her a question, “I hope, you are keeping all the keys of the safe in your custody?”

To this the daughter-in-law would reply, “No, no! I don't worry about it. All the keys are with the mother-in-law. So long as she is taking good care of them, why should I worry?” Maharaj would then say, “They will squander all the money in going to pilgrimages of Mathura, Vrindawan, Kashi and Rameshwar and will not keep anything for you.”

With this remark of Shri Maharaj the audience would be swept away with a higher wave of laughter.

The son of the owner of the house would be introduced next. On enquiries by Shri Maharaj as to what he was doing, Shri Maharaj would be informed that he was studying in a college. On that the reaction of Maharaj would be, “When you are studying in a college, you are honouring elderly people and bowing down to them? This is really wonderful!”

The turn of the owner would come last. Shri Maharaj would now lower down his tone and would enquire whether the owner was going to Pandharpur any time or not. If the reply came in the affirmative, the next question would be, “Have you seen the place where the blind and maimed are being fed every day?” The owner would say with regret that he did not visit that place, when Shri Maharaj would remark, “You have only

paid a visit to the God in the temple. You have not seen the God, who stays outside the temple and begs alms the whole day."

The owner would then he requested to pay a visit to Pandharpur and see for himself the service of free food to the disabled. The person then would visit Pandharpur at his leisure. It would really be a treat for the man to see the arrangement of the lunch. There would be straight rows of the mendicants. The line would be geometrically straight. Shri Maharaj liked to see that every thing was not only pleasing the tongue, but he wanted that it should also please his sight. If any one was little out of the line or if anyone was not sitting properly, Shri Maharaj would at once shout at the person in charge of the particular line, "That person is after all blind. He is not able to see. So he does not know whether he is in the line or out of it." "But you are a person with sight. Don't you see the disorder? Why don't you help him to sit straight? Everything should be in order".

On listening to the above reproach, the person in charge of the line would run to the person concerned and would help him to sit straight.

Some of the beggars sitting in the gathering, who were maimed, would not be able to take their food due to loss of hands. They were required to be fed. There used to be even some lepers among them. To feed them was really a trying job. No ordinary person would have done it. It was really nauseating, but it had to be done on humanitarian grounds as a part of one's duty. If Shri Maharaj would notice that some person in charge of a particular row was not feeding the people properly and was neglecting his duty because of nausea, he would immediately run to the sight and start doing the job himself. If any body was found to be delaying any job, Shri Maharaj would immediately give a blow of his stick on the back of the person. Under such circumstances it was no wonder if the whole job went on smoothly and without any trouble. Anybody, who would see such a job being done without any motive, would naturally be impressed much by the selfless work undertaken by Shri Maharaj.

The prospective donor would then be taken to the store. The discipline of Shri Maharaj was very strict. He liked everything to be kept spick and span. He never tolerated accumulation of filth or refuse anywhere. Hence in the store, the bags of grain would be found to be well-arranged. The cereals would be found to be stored properly. The flour and other things like salt, sugar, oil etc. would be found to be properly stored in large quantity.

Next Shri Maharaj would take the person to the kitchen. Here he would see the big segrees burning properly. The vegetables would be seen to be boiling. Ladies would be seen baking breads with a brisk speed. All the kitchen would appear to be moving like a big machine, which had no obstruction or hitches anywhere. In order to acquaint the donor with the selfless work further, Shri Maharaj would introduce the persons working in the kitchen to the guest. After seeing the efficient work of all the persons working in the kitchen, the guest would start enquiring about the salary required to be paid to them. Shri Maharaj then asked the persons to introduce themselves. After one Smt. Banoobai Mohite from Satara district introduced herself, she was asked to tell about her financial position, when she said that her family had sixty Bighas (बिघा) of land. Then Maharaj, himself would say, "Tell our guest what salary you are getting". Then they would say, "Rs. five per month, in addition to lodging and boarding". After hearing this, the guest would get stunned. At the same time he would be impressed further by the selfless work, that was being done by the inmates of the Dharmashala. All other inmates of the Dharmashala would also give a story similar to that of Smt. Banoobai Mohite. So seeing that so many other persons in good financial position were doing selfless work for the blind and the maimed, the guest would be much impressed and would donate to his mite. The work of Shri Maharaj, in this manner, was of much importance from the point of humanity. It was therefore no wonder that funds flowed towards him in continuous stream without any break. (to be continued)

श्री स्वामी समर्थ गांतायन

गीत - ५

संचार करते करते श्री स्वामी समर्थ जगन्नाथपुरी आए । अळवणी नाम के एक साधु पुरुष भी जगन्नाथजी के दर्शन के लिये आए थे । आते ही वे और उनके साथी बीमार पड़ गये । संसार दुखमय है । विपदाएं आती रहती है । जगन्नाथजी के द्वारे यदि देह त्याग होवे तो उनके जैसा भाग्यवान कोड़े विरला ही होगा । कष्ट सहन करते हुए उन्हें एक तप हो गया । फल प्राप्ति का योग भी अकस्मात मिल गया । बुवा अळवणी ने स्वामी समर्थ को पहिचान लिया और हाथ जोड़कर वे स्तुति करने लगे । जगन्नाथपुरी में स्वामी समर्थ “दत्तस्वरूप” वृध्द नृसिंह सरस्वती के नाम से प्रसिध्द थे । एक गर्भाघ को दृष्टि देकर पूर्व जन्म का स्मरण दिलाया ।

प्रगट हुए श्री स्वामी समर्थ करने को उध्दार
जगन्नाथपुरी क्षेत्र में “दत्तस्वरूप” साकार ॥ टेक ॥

दूर दूर से यात्री आते
जगन्नाथ के दर्शन लेते
धन्य धन्य हो जीवन में वे पाते अनुभव सार ॥ १ ॥

साधु पुरुष वे बुवा अळवणी
आशा लेकर प्रभु दर्शन की
आते ही वे तीव्र ज्वर से पडे यहाँ बीमार ॥ २ ॥

अन्न पानी सब छूट गया यों
जीना मुदिकल जग में हुआ त्यों
देहत्याग ही उपाय उत्तम जगन्नाथ के व्दार ॥ ३ ॥

निस्तेज हुई अब नयन ज्योति
सर्वांग में शिथिलता बढ़ती
करुण स्वरो में अळवणी ने की यों आर्त पुकार ॥ ४ ॥

नाथ अनाथों के जगन्नाथ !
हे जगदीश्वर ! बढाओ हाथ
पार लगाओ जीवन नैया भवसागर के पार ॥ ५ ॥

मंद प्रकाश में जगी चेतना
'बृद्ध नृसिंह' के प्रति भावना
समय रूप में आए सदगुरु भक्तों के उद्धार ॥ ६ ॥

कवि : राधाकृष्ण गुप्ता 'चेतन'
पाटकर वाडा, भगतसिंग पथ, डोंबिवली (पूर्व) जिल्हा थाने

ढोंगी

एक वक्त की बात है,
सुनो खोलकर कान ।
'साई' के ही भगत एक निकले,
करने गोदावरी स्नान ॥
करके मंगल स्नान उन्होंने,
वहीं लगाया ध्यान ।
दोनों हथेली जोडकर,
मनन किया कुछ ग्यान ॥

किया आँख बंद और बोले;
"लाजके रक्षक हे भगवान ।
लाज शरमका गया जमाना,
मांगू क्या मैं अब वरदान ?
कलियुग की इस दुनियामें,
जब पाप ही धरम समान ।
रहे न 'श्रध्दा', न रहे 'सबूरी'
फिरभी दिला दो मुझे 'ब्रह्मग्यान' ॥

डॉ. अनिल जायस्वाल

श्री साई क्लिनिक, चितारओली नागपूर - २

१९७८ का सम्मेलन

सम्मेलन में भाग लिया, जिवन को जिवन दिया,
साई का ज्योत जलाकर जिवन को पावन किया ॥

भारत के अनेक भागों से, लेखक कवि गण आये थे,
राधाकृष्ण प्रमुख्य अतिथी, चिताम्बर अध्यक्ष बने थे ॥

संपादकों के निर्मंत्रणपर, पाठकजी के आतिथ्य बने थे,
जीवन को प्रेम मिला था वहाँ, लेखक, कवि, धन्य बने थे ॥

स्नेह मिला, भोजन मिला था, मिला हमें श्री साई का संदेश.
साई याद आती रही सदा, मिटा दिया अपने को, खोकर ब्देश, ॥

पावन मिलन था हृदयों का, गंगा यमुना की धारा थी
साई के साथ रहे वहाँ, गोदा हम सब की प्यास बुझायी थी ॥

कितना निर्मल जीवन था, माता का प्रेम हम सब ने पाया था ॥
शब्दों में इतनी शक्ति कहीं, स्वर्ग सम हमने शिगडी जाना था ॥

कुछ बहनों के आँखों में, बिछडने का दुःख गंगा का पानी था ॥
भाई रोते थे, माता भी रोती थी, दुःखी हृदय से, प्रेम बिछडना था ॥

कभी नहीं भूलेंगे हम सम्मेलन, साई की याद लिए जाते हैं हम,
पाठक का धन्यवाद, दिल से, तुम्हारी याद लिए जाते हैं हम ॥

प्रा. गुंडेराव पटवारी "साहित्यरत्न"

यन्. यफ्. जे. कॉलेज P. O. बिदर (कर्नाटक) 585401



॥ श्री साईराम ॥

मुझे है काम सदगुसे
ये दुनिया छठी तो छठने दे ॥ टेक ॥

बहीन भाई और दारा
ये धन दौलत, ये संसारा
साई का नाम लेनेमे
छूटे तो ओबी छूटने दे, ॥ मुझे है ॥

बैठकर सत संतनकी
कह कल्याण मे आपना
ये दुनिया विषय भोगो से
लूटे तो उनको लूटने दे ॥ मुझे है ॥

ये जिंदगी चार दीनकी
ये धन दौलत, नही की सकी
साई की सेवा करनेमे
टूटे तो ओबी टूटने दे ॥ मुझे है ॥

सदा रहू साई संगमें
साई का नाम लेने मे
आगर कोई कहे मुझे पागल
तो उनको बी तो कहीने दे ॥ "मुझे है ॥

दत्तात्रय महादेव मोरे

४७०, शिवाजी नगर, पुणे ५ साई सेवक



ऊदी ही बस एक सहारा

ऊदी ही बस एक सहारा, संकट मोचन नाम तिहारा
जब जब हम पर विपदा आई, ऊदी दे गई साथ हमारा

सांई सांई रट जो लगाया,
चरण पकड़कर शीश झुकाया,
संकट के तूफान में फंस कर
ऊदी को पतवार बनाया
बस हम को मिल गया किनारा
ऊदी ही बस एक सहारा ॥

कर्म की गति ने चाल चलाई, औषधि कोई काम न आई
वैद्य डाक्टर और हकीमों ने मिल कर तब दिया दुहाई
लिपट लिपट कर घर भर रोया लेकिन किस का बस चल पाया
बाबा को भा गई दया तो ऊदी से धीरज बंधवाया

दूर हो गया रोग हमारा
ऊदी ही बस एक सहारा ॥

बाबा बाबा रट जो लगाई लाभ हुआ जब ऊदी खाई
चली गई विपदा जो आई, दूर हुई पीडा जो पाई
जब जब भक्त पडा संकट में, शिर्डी से ऊदी ही आई
ध्यान करो उस बाबा का जिसने यह ऊदी पहुंचाई

अमर है सांई नाम तुम्हारा
ऊदी ही बस एक सहारा ॥

कालिन्दीप्रसाद श्रीवास्तव
पुष्पविहार २, कुलाबा मुंबई-४००००५



TO THE EDITOR
SHRI SAI RAMJAYAM

Prof. M. V. Ramchandran B. A. (Hons), M. A. Dip. in P. E.
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Date 24th March, 1978

Dear Brother Dr. Parchure,

Let me, at the outset offer you my sincere and grateful thanks for the excellent hospitality offered to me and of course to the fellow delegates to the recent conference and more than all for the opportunity offered to me to have darshan of Shri Sai Bhagawan for three days, all the time.

Through Sai's grace the conference also was a great success, a number of delegates taking part in its deliberation. Of course your co-editor Shri Chendwankar had made fine arrangement and had contributed much to its success. Shri Chitambar, President, distinguished himself by conducting the meeting expertly and also contributed much to the usefulness of the discussion by his timely suggestion and useful remarks. No doubt the presence of the veteran Sai Bhakta and direct disciple Dr. Gawankar and Pujya Shri Radhakrishna Swamiji and their inspiring speeches had added lustre to the gathering. And Shri K. S. Pathakji had made the Sansthan Officers and workers to work silently and effeciently at every stage of the arrangement. It is all Baba's grace,

I understand that May, 10th has been fixed definitely for the installation of the marble Murti of Baba at the Sai Spiritual Centre, Bangalore and this may be kindly announced in the Journal Shri Sai Leela both English and Marathi as some Bombay devotees who had attended the conference wanted information of

(Continued on page 48)

The flow of devotees to Shirdi during this month was perennial. Because of the public holidays from 24-3-78 to 26-3-78, the crowd of visitors was almost beyond control. To manage the crowd was a very tiresome job for the employees of the Sansthan.

The following programmes were performed in the Samadhi Mandir during the month :-

Keertan :- 1) Shri G. V. Joshishastri, the singer of the Sansthan, performed keertans as usual on the days of Ekadashi and other important religious days coming in the month. 2) Shri-mati Rukminibai M. Bhosale from Sholapur also performed Keertan during this month.

Pravachan :- Shri Laxmanbuva Waghchoure from Shirdi delivered a lecture on religious topic in the Samadhi Mandir.

Vocal Music, Instrumental Music, Bhajan etc.

During the month the following artists gave their programmes of vocal music, instrumental music, Bhajan etc. according to their liking. Due to the presence of a big crowd of visitors at Shirdi during the month, all the programmes attracted a good audience.

- 1) Shri H. Gopalrao, Raipur
- 2) Shri Nandu J. Borse, Malegaon
- 3) Shri Vipul A. Kurlekar, Goregaon, Bombay
- 4) Shri Chandrakant Ingale, Bombay
- 5) Shri Anant S. Kurlekar, Bombay
- 6) Mrs. Asha D. Ingale, Bombay
- 7) Mrs. Shakuntala A. Kurlekar, Bombay
- 8) Miss Alaka Kurlekar, Bombay
- 9) Mrs. Alaka B. Wisvadkar, Andheri, Bombay
- 10) Shri Sudhir Kurlekar, Bombay
- 11) Miss Jayashree Pujari, Pune
- 12) Shri Nageshrao Moglaikar, Dhule
- 13) Mrs. Kamal Sandbhor, Pune
- 14) Shri Sunil Sandbhor, Pune
- 15) Dr. (Mrs.) Sumati Khanvilkar, Lonawala
- 16) Shri Vijay Hazare, Borivli, Bombay
- 17) Shri Hasmukh Patil, Navapur
- 18) Mrs. Sushilabai Hazare, Malegaon
- 19) Shri Ramesh Chavan, Navapur
- 20) Shri Dattatraya More, Pune
- 21) Miss Mandabai

Adgaonkar, Malegaon 22) Miss Smita Gadre, Pune 23) Shri Jagadeesh C. Deopurkar, Dhule 24) Mrs. Sarlabai Gadre, Pune 25) Mrs. Meenakshi Khadilkar, Sangali 26) Miss Shashikala Salgaonkar, Sholapur 27) Shri Raghunath B. Sandbhor, Pune 28) Shri Jagannath Kulkarni, Pune 29) Shri Shreeram Athavle, Pune 30) Shri Gunderao Patwari, Bidar 31) Shri Appa Samant, Bombay 32) Shri Sham N. Lombar, Pune 33) Shri S. M. Kuhed, Dhantoli, Nagpur 34) Shri Ajay M. Hedao, Nagpur 35) Shri Govind S. Gagawekar, Bombay 36) Shri Mahadev V. Khanavekar, Bombay 37) Shri Vithoba T. Labhade, Madnimgaon 38) Shri Satya Sai Sewa Samitee, Bombay 39) Mrs. Namita Senagupta, Lukhnow 40) Shrimati Pushpalata A. Shintre, Girgaum, Bombay 41) Shri Moropant Surandare, Bombay 42) Shri Madhukar Varhadkar, Bombay 43) Shri C. S. Sangam, Bombay 44) Mrs. Vatsala A. Nadkarni, Bombay 45) Miss Rukmini M. Bhosale, Solapur 46) Miss Vimal B. Shirke, Jalgaon 47) Shri Balasaheb Malwadkar, Pune. :-

Rangapanchami :- This festival was celebrated in Shirdi as usual. Shri Baba's Photo was taken in procession through the whole Shirdi village from 5 to 6-45 p. m

Gathering at Shirdi :- In order to have personal contact of the writers and poets, who contribute their articles to Shri Sai Leela magazine, a gathering of all such persons is being annually held at Shirdi for the last three years. This year the gathering was first proposed to be held in the last week of February 1978; but it had to be postponed due to elections to the Maharashtra State Assembly. It was then held on the 12th and 13th of this month. Contributors to Shri Sai Leela, attended the gathering in large numbers. They came to Shirdi from far and wide. Shri Ganesh Jayadeo Chitambar from Ahmadnagar, presided over the gathering and Shri Radhakrishna Swamiji from Bangalore, was present as the Chief Guest. The discussions in the various sessions were quite lively and the delegates took part therein in large numbers. (A detailed account of this gathering was published

in part in the issue for April 1978 at pages 41 to 45 and the remaining account is published at pages 23 to 30 of this issue).

Visits to Shirdi :- The following persons visited Shirdi during the month. :-

- 1) Shri Bhalerao, Election Commissioner, Maharashtra State.
- 2) Shri Umraosingh, Educational Minister, Bhopal.
- 3) Shri Bhoopendrasing, Brigadier, N.C.C. Maharashtra State.
- 4) Shri S. V. Sundaram I.A.S. Managing Director Mapco; Bombay.
- 5) Shri Jitkar, Dist. Collector, Ahmednagar.
- 6) Shri Basak, Dist. Collector, Naik.
- 7) Shri Shiwajirao Patil RDC Ahmednagar.

Weather :- Because of the rain in the early days of this month, the weather was comparatively cool and balmy. It was also free from any sort of disease. ★

(Continued from page 45)

the date to enable them to make the timely Railway reservation. Swamiji has now gone to Madras for function at the all India Sai Samaj and I will request him to write to you a note for the guidance of the devotees, who are keen to attend the installation for publication in the journals. He is expected by Tuesday 26th instant.

With fraternal regard to you, brother Shri Chendwankar and Shri Pathakji.

Yours in Baba's service,
M. V. Ramchandran

(Prof M. V. Ramchandran, a delegate from Bangalore, who attended the recent gathering held at Shirdi on the 12th and 13th of March 1978, has conveyed his reactions about the gathering in his above letter. Similar letters have also been received from some other delegates. We are happy that the delegates were not inconvenienced in any way at Shirdi, at the time of the recent gathering - Editor.) ★

Publications of Shri Sai Baba Sansthan Shirdi

The prices of the publications are as follows:-

1.	Shri Sai Satcharita (Marathi)	Rs. 15.00
2.	Shri Sai Satcharita (English)	Rs. 6.25
3.	Shri Sai Satcharita (Gujrati)	Rs. 6.50
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7.	do do (Sindhi)	Rs. 10.00
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9.	Shri Sainath Stawanmanjiri & Sumananjali	Rs. 0.30
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11.	Four Adhyayas by Dasganu (Marathi)	Rs. 0.80
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24.	Sai The Superman by Sai Sharananand	Rs. 3.25
25.	Shri Sai Rudradhyaya (Marathi)	Rs. 0.05
26.	'Shri Sai Leela' Monthly (Marathi or English)	
	Annual Subscription	Rs. 6.00
	Per copy-	Rs. 0.60

Available at :- 1. Receiver, Shri Sai Baba Sansthan,
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