

Shri Sai Leela



June 1978

60 Paise

SHRI SAI LEELA

JUNE 1978

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COVER PAGE

Shri Sai Spiritual Centre, founded by Shri Radhakrishna Swamiji, completed its twentyfive years. A full size marble statue of Shri Sai Baba was installed at the Centre on the very auspicious day of Akshayya Tritiya (10th May 1978). a photo of which, appears on the cover page.

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

JUNE 1978

No. 3

Humility and Spiritual Life

In humility God builds spiritual life. "Be as the dust," is the Guru's teaching to his disciple. The Guru seeks to build the temple of life not in pomp and show, but in simplicity and lowliness of heart. This is poverty of the spirit. They that are poor in spirit are given the power to build the temple of true life.

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Annual Subscription Rs. 6.00

Single Copy Rs. 0.60

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EDITORIAL

Shri Akkalkot Swami Maharaj



Bharat is a country of sages. The duty of the sages is to help the people to proceed on the path of righteousness and for this purpose they preach the devotion to a certain God. The Hindu philosophy preaches that all the Gods are outwardly different and each devotee chooses the God according to his temperament; but ultimately all Gods are the different manifestations of the same supreme Brahma. Thus though every sage chooses a different place and a different

deity, still his ultimate aim is the same as described above. Shri Swami Maharaj of Akkalkot chose Akkalkot as his place of residence and Shri Datta as his God. He stayed at Akkalkot for nearly twenty years, preaching devotion to God Datta and advising his disciples to lead a pious life. He took Mahasamadhi at Akkalkot on the 30th of April 1878. A century has been completed for this event on 30-4-1978. In order to celebrate this great event, functions are being held in most of the Datta temples all over this country. Hence it will be worth while to remember this great sage on the event of the Centenary of his Mahasamadhi.

Shri Swamiji came to Akkalkot in 1857 and from that time upto his Mahasamadhi on 30-4-1978, he was staying continuously at Akkalkot; but prior to that in 1838, he appeared first at Mangalvedha. From that time, for about twelve years, i. e. upto

1850, he was at Mangalvedha. Here he used to stay in the grazing ground of one Inamdar, Shri Patwardhan by name. In 1850, Shri Swamiji left Mangalvedha and went to Mohol via Pandharpur. On his way lay the Bhima river. Due to monsoon it was flooded. The common people used to cross the river at this place by means of a ferry; but Swamiji did not wait for it. He started to cross the river on foot and lo! The water in the river was only knee-deep for him and Swamiji could easily cross the flooded river.

It is a very common thing for many Indian saints that their later life from a certain date is known to all; but their former life remains shrouded in mystery. All our readers know very well that nothing authentic is known, about the parents of Shri Sai Baba. His life-history upto nearly the sixteenth year of his life is similarly not known. Similar is the case of the Swami of Akkalkot. No authentic information about his parents and about his life prior to 1838 (A.D.) is available. However the following legend about him is current amongst his devotees:-

On the bank of the Ganga, in northern India, there is a penance-grove known as "Kardaliwan". Shri Maharaj sat at the foot of a tree in this forest and started meditation. It is not known as to how many years passed by. Shri Maharaj continued his meditation and by and by, earth started depositing on his body. The deposit went on increasing and ultimately it covered his whole body. An anthill came up round his body and his body disappeared completely in the heap of earth. One woodcutter, who was passing by the way, saw this big tree and with a view to cutting it for firewood, he gave a blow with his his axe on the trunk of the tree. And lo! A stream of blood started flowing. The wood-cutter got terrified at this juncture and he did not know what to do. He could not understand how blood started oozing from the trunk of a tree! He ultimately gathered courage and removed the earth collected round the trunk of the tree and what a wonder? He could see a lustrous and a bright personality

sitting in meditation at the foot of the tree. The wood-cutter knew the usage of certain herbs in the jungle. He therefore ran immediately to the relevant tree, plucked its leaves and applied them on Swamiji's wound, after crushing them. Though all this happened, Shri Swamiji did not come out of his meditation. After some time Swamiji came out of his meditation and the wood-cutter begged his pardon for what he had done. Swamiji however pardoned him & even blessed him.

After this incident, Shri Swamiji went on a pilgrimage of holy places like Kashi, Prayag etc. and after completing his pilgrimage of many holy places, he came and settled at Akkalkot, as stated before. His age at that time was estimated to be over four hundred years. Some other evidence also corroborates this long age of Swamiji. One yogi, Shri Sewadas by name, met Shri Wamanbuva Brahmanishtha on the Girnar mountain in Shaka 1795 (1873A.D.), when the former told the latter that he had met Shri Swamiji on the Girnar Mountain and had discussed with him certain problems of Yoga. It is reported that Swamiji had also once mentioned to his devotees that he was born before four hundred and fifty years.

Such legends and miracles are told about many sages. One such miracle is also mentioned about Shri Swamiji, when he was staying at Mangalvedha, prior to his coming to Akkalkot. Once when he was on his round for begging alms, he came to the home of a brahmin and started asking for milk. The brahmin had a cow in his house; but it was not giving milk. So with great sorrow the brahmin said, "Sir, there is a cow in my house, but it is not giving milk. If I had a cow, who was giving milk, I would have certainly given milk to a guest like you." Hearing these words of the brahmin, Shri Maharaj went to the cow and addressed to her as follows, "O cow, you are called Gomata (गोमाता). You are the mother of the whole mankind, because you give milk to all young children and they are mainly fed on your milk. Why then do you not shower your favour only on this

poor brahmin? Be kind to this poor man and give him milk. I shall come in the evening for drinking milk." Speaking to the cow in this fashion, Shri Swamiji went away. In the evening, the poor brahmin started milking his cow and to his surprise the cow gave a good quantity of milk!

Similar miracle is told about one Oilman, Basappa, by name. He was a staunch devotee of Shri Maharaj and hence he wanted to serve him day and night. He practically left his business and other normal duties and started going after Swamiji, wherever he he went. He went after him from village to village. Once when they were passing through a dense forest, Shri Swamiji thought of showing favour on the Oilman. His way of showing the favour was also very queer. By his power, Shri Swamiji created a swarm of snakes and from every nook and corner they started hissing. The Oilman got frightened very much when he saw hundreds of snakes around him. He started looking at Swamiji for help, when he said, "Don't be afraid. The snakes will not harm you in any way. Pick up any one of them according to your need." Basappa was frightened to a great extent. Even though Shri Swami Maharaj assured him, he could not gather courage. Ultimately he made up his mind and keeping implicit faith in Shri Swamiji, he picked up a small snake and put it in his bag. On returning home, Shri Basappa found that the snake had turned into pure gold! Poor Basappa thereafter had no wants in the whole of his life.

During Swamiji's life-time, Akkalkot was frequented by Hindu devotees belonging to all castes and even Mohomedans, Parsees, Christians and many top-ranking British Officers also used to pay a visit to Akkalkot for Swamiji's darshan. Shri Swamiji liked truth and straightforwardness. He censured pretenders and persons not believing in God. He always advised the devotees coming to him to do their duty, to be industrious and to believe in God and chant his name. Once a devotee, Dhondiba by name, came to Akkalkot for Swamiji's darshan. He bowed down before

Swamiji and asked, "Maharaj, is Kartikswami not here?" Dhondiba raised his head and what a wonder! In place of Shri Swamiji, he saw Kartikswami. He got the darshan of Kartikswami which he wished to have. In Sai Satcharita also, we come across several such incidents, where Shri Sai Baba gave darshan to the devotees in the form, in which they wanted.

Like Saint Ramdas, we come across one incident in the life of Akkalkot Swamiji, where he brought to life a boy, who was brought to him by his grief-stricken mother. Shri Tukojirao Holkar, the ruler of Indore, was a sincere devotee of Akkalkot Swamiji. Once he came to Akkalkot along with both his sons. After Shri Maharaj took darshan of Swamiji, the latter said, "Due to the merit of your past life, you again got darshan here after you had the darshan at Mount Abu." After Shri Holkar left, the devotees started discussing among themselves, the meaning of the words of Swamiji. It is always a practice of all saints to speak a few words, which have a lot of hidden meaning. The Sai devotees know from Sai Satcharita that Shri Sai Baba also, like other saints, was in the habit of such mystic talks. The riddle of Shri Swamiji's mystic talk was however solved, when it was known that one old hermit was observing penance near the Padukas of Shri Datta on Mount Abu and that old hermit was no one else than Swamiji himself.

The ruler of Baroda, Shri Malharrao Gaikwad, wished that Shri Swamiji should pay a visit to Baroda. He therefore declared that a handsome prize will be awarded to the person, who will bring Swamiji to Baroda. One Shree Tatyasaheb came to Akkalkot with the idea of winning the prize. After coming to Akkalkot he started giving lot of money in charity with the idea that his fame will reach the ears of Swamiji and hence he would get an approach to Swamiji. After some time Tatyasaheb changed his strategy and approached one Shri Cholappa, who was a disciple of Swamiji. Tatyasaheb told Cholappa that he would be given a big landed property at Baroda, if he would arrange to bring

Swamiji to Baroda. Cholappa thereafter talked to Swamiji at a suitable opportunity and told him that he would get a big landed property if Swamiji would go to Baroda as per request of Shri Malharrao Gaikwad. On hearing this request from Cholappa, Shri Maharaj replied, "Malharrao may have a desire for my visit; but has he got real devotion? I want true devotion. I am hungry for that. I would have willingly come to Baroda if I would have noticed the strong devotion towards God."

From the above talk of Swamiji, Cholappa understood that Swamiji is not at all interested in going to Baroda and he informed Tatyasaheb accordingly. On noticing that his errand was not likely to be successful, Tatyasaheb returned to Baroda; but he did not give up the idea altogether. He sent one Shri Yashwantrao to Akkalkot for the same purpose. Yashwantrao had brought with him good and costly clothes and some gold and silver articles. He offered them to Shri Swamiji and entreated, "Swamiji. I would request you to come to Baroda with me as Maharaja Shri Malharrao Gaikwad, the ruler of Baroda, wishes that you should purify his palace with your visit." Shri Swamiji thereupon replied, "I am not there, where there is no devotion." Saying so, Swamiji returned everything that was offered to him; but Yashwantrao was a man of very strong determination. He was not ready to leave his point. He again and again approached Swamiji with the same request. Ultimately Shri Swamiji got annoyed and told him angrily, "You will be hand-cuffed and jailed." People who were round about could not construe these words of Shri Swamiji and started looking at each others' faces for knowing the meaning of the mystic talk; but while on their way to Baroda, Tatyasaheb and Yashwantrao were arrested under the charge of murder. Thus this event was foretold by Swamiji because of his supernatural powers.

After thus preaching the devotion to God Datta for a long time Shri Swamiji thought that the mission of his life was more or less over and that he should therefore enter into

Samadhi. This news spread far and wide through Swamiji's disciple Cholappa. When this news was heard by Swamiji's devotees all over Bharat, they started rushing to Akkalkot for the last darshan of Shri Swamiji. Ultimately on the thirteenth day of the dark half of the Chaitra month of Shaka 1800 (1878-A. D.), Shri Swamiji entered into Samadhi and all his disciples were drowned in great grief. Shri Shreepad Shreevallbh and Shri Nrisinha Saraswati were formerly considered as the incarnations of God Datta and in modern days Shri Vasudewananda Saraswati (Shri Tembye Swami), Shri Swamiji of Akkalkot are also considered by their devotees as incarnations of Shri Datta.

The saints in Bharat have a holy communion. They have got a secret way of communication among themselves. They honour each other and mention the names of other saints with respect. Their mystic way of speaking is often not followed by the common people. In Shri Sai Satcharita we find the mention of Shri Akkalkot Maharaj in two places. On page 24 (8th edition 1978), we find the story of Shri Bhai Krishnaji Alibagkar, in whose dream Akkalkotkar Maharaj appeared and told him, "Now Shirdi is my resting place, go there and offer your worship" The Padukas were also installed in Shak 1834 (1922 A. D.) under the Neem tree as a reminiscence of this vision.

In the story of Shri Harischandra Pitale, we find the mention of Shri Akkalkot Swami a second time. When Shri Pitale, went to Baba to take his leave, the latter said to him, "Bapu, I had given you before Rs. two, now I give you Rs. three; keep: these in your shrine for worship and you will be benefited. Shri Pitale did not follow these mystic words of Shri Baba and hence after going home, he asked his mother about it when she informed him. "As you now went to Sai Baba with your son, so had your father done when he took you to Akkalkot, for the darshan of the Maharaj there many years ago. That Maharaj was also a siddha, perfect yogi, omniscient and liberal. Your father was pure, devout and his worship was accepted. He then gave your

father Rs. two for being kept in the shrine and worshipped. Your father worshipped them accordingly till his death, but thereafter the worship was neglected and the rupees were lost. After some years the memory of these two rupees also disappeared and now, as you are very fortunate, the Akkalkotkar Maharaj has appeared to you in the form of Sai Baba just to remind you of your duties and worship and to ward off all dangers-----." (Page 140-141, Shri Sai Satcharita, 8th edition 1978)

Shri Sai Baba was at Shirdi from 1858 to 1918. Shri Akkalkotkar Maharaj was at Akkalkot from 1857 to 1878. We therefore find that both these saints were contemporaries for nearly 20 years at these two places. From two instances, quoted above, from Shri Sai Sat Charita, we know that there was a close communion between these two saints. Shri Sai Baba also showed reverence for all his contemporary saints as will be seen from the story about the cocoanut sent to him by Shri Vasudevananda Sarsawati. It is therefore our duty also to bow down to this great saint of Akkalkot, on the centenary of his Mahasamadhi and pray to him for giving us faith and mental peace. ★



Three Stages of Divine Life

Torture of the body is a sin against Krishna. What is required is self-discipline, self-restraint, self-denial. Three stages there be in the ascent to Life Divine:—

1. The practice of self-discipline.
2. Meditation leading to contemplation of the Image of Krishna and, ultimately, transformation into the Image of the Lord.
3. Compassion for all creatures as manifestation of the Divine Spirit.

Homage to Late Prof. D. D. Parchure

Prof. D. D. Parchure Ex-Editor of this magazine succumbed to a heart attack on 1st June 1973. From the time from which he took over the editorial work of this magazine, his only anxiety was improvement in this magazine and increment in its circulation. Since the inception of this magazine in 1923, it was being published only in the Marathi language. With the spread of Sai cult among non-Marathi knowing devotees, they started feeling that they are being deprived of Shri Sai Baba's favour in as much as they are not able to read the experiences of the devotees etc in their own words. A sharp minded and well-observant editor like Prof. Parchure knew this fact very soon after he started shouldering the editorial responsibilities of this magazine. He therefore submitted a very practical proposal to the Court Receiver, Shri Pathaksaheb, in respect of this magazine and it was of bringing out a separate issue of Shri Sai Leela in English. All devotees are aware that Shri Pathaksaheb always welcomes such revolutionary proposals and he at once agreed to it. The first issue of English Sai Leela therefore was published on 1st April 1973!



In the editorial of that issue (April 1973) Prof. Parchure wrote, "Since its inception, the magazine (Shri Sai Leela) was published in Marathi only. During the last two years, an English

section was introduced in order to cover a wider range of readers. This section proved to be so popular that there has been an ever increasing demand for enlarging it, and, if possible, even to separate it. Owing to this popular demand we have now decided to publish a separate English Edition from this month." Though apparently Prof. Parchure patted the devotees on their back and showed that he was satisfying their demand, still the urge was really in the mind of Prof. Parchure and it is because of his ceaseless efforts that Shri Sai Leela has started its publication in English. Though the publication of the English issue was started on 1-4-73, with a moderate number of 400 copies per month, it started going up in leaps and bounds, with the spread of Sai cult and Sai devotion. The number of issue, printed for April 1978, was 1125. Though the boosting up of the circulation of Shri Sai Leela is mainly due to the favour of Shri Sai Baba and the spread of devotion to Him among the devotees, still the far-sightedness and the pains taken by Prof. Parchure in improving the get up of this magazine cannot be denied and have to be given their due credit. On the fifth death anniversary of Prof. Parchure falling on 1-6-78, we therefore pay our homage to him and pray to God, on behalf of all Sai devotees and readers as well as the contributors to this magazine, that the soul of Prof. Parchure may rest in peace!



THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION

By : Swami Chinmayananda

The Secret Mystic Death

In the last talk, Krishna provided the seeker with eight pointers in meditation, to set his mind in contemplation upon the Infinite Self. As a result of this intense meditation, the Imperishable Self can be realised.

Whetting the spiritual appetite in a seeker, Krishna says, VIII-II "That which the knowers of Vedas speak about as the 'Imperishable' that which the striving seekers freed from attachment enter: that Goal to gain which they live of Brahmacharya; that in brief I shall declare to you."

This is a verse from the Kathopanishad, substantially quoted. It expresses the theme the teacher is trying to explain. Vedic scholars speak of it as the Imperishable. Those who strive in lonely caves to curb their wild minds, strive constantly in search of this very same sublime experience. Wishing to realise which, men "constantly meditate upon Brahman" (ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति), that Supreme State "I shall now briefly declare to you." (त्ते पदं संग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये).

All the hard disciplines and laborious asceticisms are cheerfully lived through by the seekers only to persuade their minds away from the endless enchantments of the world outside and to turn its entire attention to bring about the end of the limited ego.

So far in this chapter, Lord Krishna gave us eight directions to hold the mind in meditation. There are some more elementary but very important adjustments to be made by which meditation

can be perfect and more efficient. These are being listed by the Lord in the following two verses.

The Geeta Acharya declares, VIII-12-13 Controlling all sense-organs, confining the mind in the 'heart', drawing the Prana into the 'head', occupied in the practice of concentration, uttering the one syllable OM, the Brahman, constantly remembering Me, --- he who thus departs leaving the body, he attains to the Supreme Goal."

Here are six necessary adjustments to be effected in order to receive intimations from the Infinite. (1) Controlling all sense organs सर्वद्वाराणि संयम्य -- the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin are the five windows through which sense-objects rush into us and when the sense-organs are controlled, an entirely undisturbed mind is available for contemplation.

(2) And confining the mind the "heart" (मनो हृदि निरुध्य च) in Vedanta, the "mind" is the seat-of-emotion, while the 'head' is the seat-of-reason. A harmonious blending of both mind and intellect, a psychological atmosphere of Love and Knowledge is the 'heart'. To hold the mind in the 'heart', therefore, means to turn our loving emotions towards what we have so far understood as the nature of the Supreme Self. When sense-organs are controlled the influx of disturbance from outside is stopped. Yet, left to itself the mind can spring up, excited by its own memories of past experiences. The mind can be confined to the bosom only by turning its devotion to the Self.

(3) Drawing the Prana into the head मूर्च्छ्यांधायाम्नः प्राणं We have already seen that the term Prana is used in our scriptures as "the expression of life in a living creature". So the instruction means, that a meditator should halt all other expressions of life, stop all expenditure of energy, and with all attention turn in vigilant alertness to experience the Self.

(4) "Occupied in concentration" अस्थितो योगधारणाम् now having controlled the senses, having confined the mind to the 'heart', and having turned all our energies into our seeking what are we to do? How long can we remain in such a state of inner strain? Sri Krishna advises us to remain occupied in concentration. How is this done?

(5) Uttering the one-syllabled Om, the Brahman ॐ इत्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन् the state of intense concentration is possible if we whisper OM, the word-symbol of the Infinite Self. This is an exercise for the intellect. How can we hold the seat-of-emotions, the mind, in concentration?

(6) Remembering Me constantly मामनुस्मरन् the chanting of OM is a steady exercise in contemplation to the intellect. The continuous remembrance of the Lord is an engaging exercise for the mind and its emotions of love.

These six instructions plan both for restraining the outflow of our personality, and for intense application of the entire personality to the experience of the higher State of Consciousness. In the glowing inward pause, tides of Peace rise in the heart, to wash away our sense of individuality, and we glide into the Experience Divine, into the State of Godhead.

This end of the ego is the 'mystic'-death of the meditator. The "waker" dies when he attains sleep, and becomes the "sleeper". The meditator ends in the State of the Self, and becomes the Self, the pure Infinite Consciousness, the Imperishable Brahman.

Hence Krishna says, "he who thus departs, leaving the body, attains the Supreme Self" (यः प्रयाति त्यजन्देहं स याति परमां गतिम्) Here, very often we take only the obvious meaning of "one who departs leaving the body" as "one who dies". At the time of physical death no being is normally expected to make these six adjustments. It is impossible. But a seeker in his meditation seat, having

made all these adjustments within himself, ends his ego-sense. He then "leaves the body", meaning, he becomes unconscious of his gross, subtle and causal bodies. Then he attains to the awareness of the Universal Self the Imperishable Brahman.

No other chapter, or portion of any chapter, in the Geeta is comparable with these three verses in richness and completeness of information. No meditator needs any more instructions.

These six-adjustments will sound treacherous and threatening until one starts practising them. They are easy for the spirited seeker. Try. You too can. Even if you fail to reach the Highest, you will have gained a more balanced and healthy personality by your sincere daily attempts and meditation.

(Courtesy : Geeta Office, Powai)

WHAT PLEASES SAI

Neither rituals O ! Lord Sai
 Nor the holy Tulasi leaves
 Nor constant dips in the holy Ganges
 But true and loving devotion
 Only pleases and moves thee
 O ! Almighty the Lord Sai

Amingad M. M.

Gulunche - Via - Nira, S. C. Rly. Tal. Purandar, Dist. Pune

SHRI GAJANAN MAHARAJ

By :- Shri S. N. Huddar

(Continued from May 1978 issue)

CHAPTER 16

PUNDALIK GETS SANDALS

Pundalik Bhokare of Mundgaon was a devotee of Shri Maharaj. Bhagabai Thakare of the place had no reverence for anyone. She said to Pundalik "your life is futile as you have not made any Guru, you were relieved of fever and so you respect Gajanan Maharaj of Shegaon. But this is an accident. He recites 'gan gan ganat Bote'. He behaves like a mad man. He eats things touched by anybody. A Kirtan of a disciple of Kijaji Maharaj is arranged at Anjangaon tomorrow. Let us go there and have Gurumantra from him Guru should be wise and should have good knowledge. Gajanan Maharaj has nothing of this sort."

Pundalik's mind was wavering. He agreed to go to Anjangaon for Kirtan and said "About taking mantra; it will be seen later". when asleep, in the third part of the night, he saw a dream in which a naked person appeared before him and said. "Are you going to Anjangaon to get Guru on the advice of Bhaga? Your illusion will be wiped off there. Does one become a Guru by telling something in the ear? People tell in one another's ears. Do they become Guru of one another? Do not be led away by such pretentions. Just turn your ear to me". He then uttered in his ear "gan gan" and further said, "What do you desire now? I shall fulfil it today". Pundalik looked at him and recognised him as Shri Gajanan Maharaj. Pundalik lay prostrate before him and requested to give his sandals for worship. Shri Maharaj said, "All right. I give you my sandals. You can worship them today in the midday."

Pundalik awoke and began to think over the dream. In the morning Bhagabai Thakare called upon him. Pundalik said, "I am not coming to Anjangaon. You may go if you desire. I have accepted Shri Gajanan Maharaj as my Guru. I do not need any other." Bhagabai then went away.

Zamsing Rajput had gone to Shegaon. When he was returning, Shri Maharaj told Balabhau to give him his sandals for giving to Pundalik of Mundgaon. As he entered Mundgaon, he saw Pundalik, who asked him, "Have you brought some prasad for me from Shegaon?" Zamsing was astonished by his question. He took Pundalik to his house and said, "Why did you ask me like this?" Pundalik told him that Shri Maharaj had promised to give him sandals for worship in the dream early in the same morning. Zamsing gave him the sandals. Pundalik returned home delighted and worshipped the sandals with devotion.

KAWAR OFFERS BREAD AND ONION

Rajaram Kavar lived at Akola doing saraf business. He was a devotee of Shri Gajanan Maharaj. He had two sons, Gopal and Trimbak. Trimbak alias Bhau was studying in the Medical College at Hyderabad. He believed in God and was a devotee of Shri Maharaj. He came home in the vacation. He wished to offer bread, onion and vegetable of Ambadi to Shri Gajanan Maharaj. As he had no mother, he was anxious as to how these articles could be got prepared. Seeing him dejected and gloomy, his brother's wife Nani asked him why he was unhappy. He told her his desire. She readily agreed, prepared the articles, gave them to him and said, "Hasten to the Railway Station, as it is the time for the train."

Bhau came to the Station; but he found the 12 O'clock train had just departed. He was very sorry as there was no train till 3 P. M. He waited till then and went to Shegaon by that train. He had resolved not to take food before the articles were offered to Shri Gajanan Maharaj.

He went to Shri Maharaj's Math and found that Shri Maharaj had not taken meals till then, though several dishes of delicious food articles were offered to him that day. Balabhau requested Shri Maharaj to have meals, as unless he dined, others could not have meals. Shri Maharaj told him that he would have his dinner in the afternoon. Disciples should take meals if they desired. In the meantime Bhau Kavar reached there. He lay prostrate before Shri Maharaj and stood before him with folded hands. Shri Maharaj smiled and said, "Is this the time for dinner? I am without meals till now. Bring your 'Shidori'". Bhau Kavar was glad to hear this. He said, "I missed the 12 O' clock train and so there has been delay." Bhau Kavar then placed his articles before Shri Maharaj, who took two breads and gave one to be distributed as prasad to all.

After dinner, Shri Maharaj said to Bhau, "Now you go to Akola. You will pass next year and become a doctor" Bhau said, "I only wish to have your blessing." He bowed to Shri Maharaj and returned to Akola.

BULLET COMES OUT OF TUKARAM'S EAR

Tukaram Shegaonkar was a farmer at Shegaon. He was serving Shri Maharaj devotedly. Every evening he would come to Shri Maharaj and fill his chillim. One day a hunter came with a gun. He saw a hare in the bushes behind Tukaram. He aimed at the hare, but unfortunately the bullet entered in the rear side of Tukaram's ear. In spite of medical treatment the bullet did not come out and it caused severe headache and other troubles as insomnia. Even in this condition, Tukaram came and served Shri Maharaj regularly. He cleaned the environs of the math and after 14 years' service, on one day all of a sudden, the bullet came out of his ear and all the troubles had vanished. He continued to serve the math and Shri Maharaj with more devotion.

(to be continued)

A SELF-UNFOLDMENT

(Continued from May 1978 issue)

By :- Shri Avdhutswami Maharaj

Thus the first Chapters of my married life were opened. There were constant changes in my mind and thoughts. Sometimes, I thought of pleasures and attachments of the married life and of doing my duties to my utmost capacity, sometimes I used to experience the frailty of the mundane life and get myself disgusted to it. The undercurrent of a constant devotion to God was there, but it was too weak to make any determination or to face the severe onslaught of the life. It was at this moment that I felt an ardent desire to have somebody near me, who would properly guide me and love me and console me. I had already realised that God alone was my benefactor. All the bygone saints had revealed the necessity and importance of a Sadguru in such circumstances, but it was not a happy task to find one in this Kaliyuga. I came in contact with some saintly persons; but I never felt like surrendering to anybody. There was either learnedness and no realization or mere pomp and glory and no Vairagya. There was authority but no love of heart and kindness or there was only vagueness or a mute silence and no path of advice or sadhana. Of course, it was Kaliyuga after all. But I was adamant. I ultimately surrendered myself to 'Lord Datta Prabhu' and began propitiating Him day to day with the prayer that He may reveal Himself to me in human form as a Sadguru and guide me in my spiritual path.

The kind Lord immediately heard my prayers. As a prelude to glorious events of my life that were to come I happened to come in contact with some saintly persons who just showered their blessings on me, held me to their hearts and foretold that my existence in life was for the benefit of the mankind and very

soon the spiritual force in me would elevate to a level from where it would spread its luster all over the World. But all this was to happen only under the guidance of a Great Master the Sadguru. Late in 1942 the first Golden rays of the rising sun appeared on the horizon. I came in contact with Yogiraj Shree Vishwanath Maharaj Keskar of Nasik who, at my first visit to him, took a liking for me, and of course myself to him, and very soon adopted me as his spiritual son. Soon after I got an opportunity of getting blessing from the grand old Shree Appa Maharaj of Ganagapur, spiritual brother of Shree Keskar Maharaj. Thus under the loving paternal guidance of Shree Keskar Maharaj my spiritual career began in right earnest and its first climax came in 1945, when I met Shree Gajanan Maharaj Borkar of Dadar, and immediately after, the Great Spiritual Trinity (i) Shree Appa Maharaj, (ii) Shree Keskar Maharaj and (iii) Shree Gajanan Maharaj united at Nasik for the opening ceremony of Lord Datta Temple at Anand Peeth of Shree Keskar Maharaj. I was with them and passed the most thrilling and happy days of my life in their spiritual loving company.

Very soon the sun of my spiritual career appeared with his glorious luster. I found my Sadguru in Shree Gajanan Maharaj and completely surrendered myself to him. It was in 1946. He visited my residence and installed an idol of Lord Dattatraya for my daily worship and penance on "Akshaya Tertiya Day". Then under his guidance my spiritual sermons began at my residence 3 days in a week with a small gathering of devotees. Same year, he took me to Shree Kshetra Chinchkhari for Shree Datta Jayanti where celebrations are held by him every year. Thus my career began in right earnest under my ablest Master who cared for me more than any thing else. He loved me because I loved him, and I loved him because he loved me. There was nothing else in between. It was pure and simple love. I used to visit him daily and he watched me day to day. He encouraged me for anything that was done correctly at the same time he whipped

me mercilessly whenever I went astray. He began leading me to my spiritual goal step by step. Very often my struggle to keep pace with him was very hard and difficult. There were my own evil sentiments and temptations to material happiness, there were oppositions from family members, relatives and neighbours and there were usual difficulties of mundane life like financial stringency etc. I continued sticking up to the feet of my Master and gradually surmounted every difficulty that came. Then Shree Keskar Maharaj was with us for some years since 1947 and there were frequent spiritual gatherings, with the company of many other devotees. A heavenly atmosphere of love and spiritual bliss was created and the fortunate children were happy under the protection of their parents, Shree Keskar Maharaj and Shree Gajanan Maharaj.

There was one more landmark in my spiritual path when Shree Gajanan Maharaj ceremoniously initiated me as his spiritual disciple on the glorious day of 10th May, 1951, which was Thursday. On this day he blessed me with the "Nam Mantra" and with the spiritual name "Avadhutswami" - the very name of Lord Dattaprabhu. It was a beginning of my meritorious journey to the self abode of Lord Dattatraya, which was to be attained by my honest and sincere service to Sadguru. My spiritual battle with the six evil forces (Desire, Anger, Greed, Temptation, Insolence and Jealousy), began and for the preparation of this great battle Lord Datta Prabhu inspired me to write a treatise named "Mano Vijay" on the 'Manache Shlok' of Shree Samarth Ramdas. "Mano Vijay" was written under the keen watch and guidance of Shree Gajanan Maharaj and finally this great work came to be completed and published on Akshaya Tritiya day in 1957. It was really a miraculous coincidence of my relations with Shree Samarth Ramdas in the previous births that such a treatise on his spiritual creation should have got written by me. The work was not only highly commended and applauded by a large number of well-known Marathi journals and periodicals,

but there has been a great demand locally as well as from the various places like, Delhi, Calcutta, Nagpur, Hyderabad, Poona, Kolhapur etc. It was also a wonder that this book found its place in foreign countries like England and America. Thus the rays of the ever rising sun of my spiritual life, were being spread at the farthest nook and corner of the World by the Grace of my Great Master Sadguru Gajanan Maharaj.

This was not the end. There is no end to the spiritual light of God, The Brahman. There are no limits to his existence. He is every where and at all times. The World will end but not He. The body will perish but not Atma. The "Mano Vijay" i. e., the conquest of mind, naturally resulted in the Eternal Spiritual bliss "Anandacha Kand" (The essence of Spiritual Joy) rightly and masterfully supplemented by 'Hari Ha' by Shree Gajanan Maharaj. The Lord inspired me to write a treatise on "Hari Path Abhangas" of the great saints Dnyaneshwar etc. and the same was being continued under the close watch and guidance of Shree Gajanan Maharaj and was then subsequently published in the month of May, 1966. This work is an emblem of pure spiritual joy and is intended to spread an atmosphere of the spiritual joy throughout the World. A spiritual soul after proper initiation and guidance by a Sadguru realizes his self Atma, as the sun spreading his powerful light throughout the World. All his speech and actions are inspired by Lord and initiated by his Sadguru. He is void of any ego. The Lord selects him as His medium of His Avatar Karya to protect Dharma and the meritorious humanity. As the powerful luster of the sun is not affected by any other planet, so the Godly life of this great devotee is carried on unhampered inspite of oppositions and obstructions. He lives for the entire humanity and not for a particular caste, race or nation. He feels like a traveller in a railway journey, who cannot claim the train as his own. He realizes the shortness of the span of his life and tries relentlessly to make every moment of his life worthy of his great cause.

His bodily existence in a particular family, caste, race or nation is but a coincidence for which he does not have any ego and feels himself as only belonging to the Universal existence of God.

At that time spiritual sermons were given by me at my residence on every Thursday evening, wherein the spiritual advice given to me by my Sadguru off and on and my own experiences were revealed. These sermons were given through an inspiration from Lord.

Then subsequently in December, 1960 and February, 1961 a bolt from the blue fell upon me as my Sadguru Shree Gajanan Maharaj Borkar and my spiritual father Shree Keskar Maharaj, left this world and became one with Brahman leaving me alone to carry on their great and sacred spiritual work. For very short time, I became nervous and felt dejected but immediately the Lord gave me His blessings and I took courage to carry on the work of my masters. I retired from service and experienced that devotees from different quarters visited me for the guidance in both their mundane and spiritual life. Some came to read spiritual books of the old masters and the work of giving sermons was carried on with more zeal and spiritual courage. The number of devotees increased by and by which created a new life in me.

Subsequently a third book viz. 'Anandashram' (a spiritual novel) was written and published by me in August, 1968. My own life in Marathi verse was composed by one of my disciples, which was a large volume consisting of 66 chapters and was published in December, 1972. Meanwhile I had already started to initiate new spiritual disciples, both male and female, especially husband and wife and guided them in their spiritual path and also helped them to face the sorrows and difficulties in their mundane life. A new phase of spiritual literature in the form of dramas revealed itself to me and Marathi dramas, like 'Ahalya,' 'Radha' and 'Shabari' were written by me and brought on stage.

A musical drama viz. 'RadhaKrishna' has already been completed and will be brought on the stage in the coming August, 1978 on Gokulashtami day. Simultaneously, about nine spiritual centres have been established in the Bombay City and suburbs and five out of Bombay, where my experienced disciples are doing the spiritual work in the form of Bhajans, Keertans and sermons etc. to guide the public. More than two hundred families have thus come under my spiritual fold and I am very happy to say that they are all enjoying the spiritual Bliss, so much needed by the humanity in the present difficult times of Kaliyuga.

I am also very glad to mention here that my both sons 1) Shri Avinash Limaye, M. Sc. (Shree Paramanandswami) and 2) Shri Vijay Limaye, B. Chem. Engg (Shree Krishnanandswami) have taken up the spiritual path and they also give sermons once a week. In addition my wife four brothers and their wives my daughter and son-in-law, my 2 daughters-in-law have all taken up this spiritual path.

Such is the path of true devotion and the Guru Marga. The great spiritual masters - the sages and the saints - in the past perfectly lived to its ideal and continued to burn the noblest neverending spiritual lights against the adverse times. So far as I am concerned, it exists in the form of my Sadguru Shree Gajanan Maharaj Borkar and it is my bounden duty as well as of all meritorious humanity who believe in such a path to carry on the noblest job with every sacrifice that may be needed.

May Lord Dattatraya in the form of Sadguru shower his Blessings on us and make us worthy of His Cause! May all humanity have faith in God and the great Masters and Saints who are carrying out His great cause! May all attain the great spiritual Bliss and may there be all spiritual light and joy throughout the world. May Lord Dattatraya bless us all with His Grace.

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Shri Shirdi Saibaba Society at Hyderabad

REPORT OF THE CELEBRATION OF "SHRIRAMNAVAMI AND BABA'S JAYANTI"

Under the auspices of Shri Shirdi Saibaba Society, Hyderabad, "SRIRAMNAVAMI AND BABA'S JAYANTI" was celebrated on Sunday, the 16th April 1978 at Reddy Hostel, off Abid Road, Hyderabad.

This year it was decided to make a slight departure from last year in as much as the Society decided to make it a week-long celebration. The celebrations commenced on Sunday, the 9th April '78 with reading of "Shri Sai Charitra" in group. It was resolved that the participants should start reading the "Sai Charitra" on the 9th April 1978 and complete the same within seven days. The Society is happy to state that this novel idea of mass-reading of "Shri Sai Charitra" together at one place, was liked by the devotees of Sai Baba. About 30 devotees of Shri Sai Baba took part and completed the reading of Shri Sai Charitra, in Telugu, Marathi, Hindi and English by the 15th April 1978.

On Sunday, the 16th April 1978 the celebrations commenced as usual, with Kakad Arti at 5.30 a. m. At 12 noon there was a special Pooja to synchronise with Sri Ram's Birthday, which was followed by poor-feeding. About 500 people were fed. In the evening from 6 p. m. to 10 p. m. there was satsang, Bhajans by various Bhajan Mandalies of the twin cities.

This year Shri B. Ram Dev, the Honourable Minister for Animal Husbandry and Dairy, Government of Andhra Pradesh participated in the celebrations.

Shri N. R. Gamji, one of the Life-Members of the Society spoke on the significance of Bhagwan Ramachandraji and Baba.

A six year old girl, Kumari Bala Yogit, called as "Santosh Ma" came and attended the function, gave blessings, sang Bhajans and spoke about Baba's greatness.

The function came to an end at 10 p. m. with Samapthi Arti and Prasadam was distributed. ★

M. Hanumanth Rao, Treasurer
4-1-354/1, Opp. Reddy Hostel, HYDERABAD 500 001



TO THE EDITOR

To The Editor, Shri Sai Leela, Shirdi

Dear Sir,

It is a well known fact from "SAI SATCHARITA" that Baba used to write letters through Shama or Jog and others. I would humbly suggest to publish such letters, after collecting them, in "Sai Leela" monthly magazine, regularly. This will not only improve but attract also many "Sai Devotees".

All letters when collected may please be compiled, and published in a book form, after translation in various languages, by Sai Baba Sansthan Shirdi.

Yours truly,

Mrs. Sudha R. Jani

Sankadisheri, 787, Lalavasa Pole, Ahmedabad-1

[The suggestion made by Mrs. Sudha R. Jani, in her above letter, is very nice and worth considering; but it cannot be said how far it can be implemented. On 11-10-78, sixty years will be completed since the Mahasamadhi of Shri Sai Baba. Hence the letters that He wrote must relate to a period much earlier than 1918. As it is, most of our people are lacking in historical point of view. It is therefore not likely that any of the devotees might have preserved those letters all these years. However in view of the above letter, we appeal to all such persons, who may have such letters with them, to forward them to us for taking necessary action as suggested in the above letter. The relative documents will be returned to the devotees intact. A similar appeal is also being published in the Marathi issue - - - Editor]

SAI DARSHAN

Everyday is a Sai Day. However, somehow, Thursday has become more important to me since past few years. On this day, I am more consciencious of Sai and whomsoever I meet on that day, I presume the form of Sai in him and bow to him reverentially in my mind.

Sai is always with us. Whoever wants Him, gets Him. Whoever takes one step towards Him, He takes complete care of him and also visits him frequently. Of course, we recognise Him only when He vanishes like a flash.

I remember very vividly, about a year and a half back, on a Thursday, when I was at Shirdi in the early morning itself, myself and two of my Sai brothers, Shri Jagat Advani and Ramesh Raisinghani, were going towards Chawdi side, one crippled brother asked for milk and there was a boy, who wanted to sell the milk. Immediately, I purchased the milk and gave it to that crippled person.

At about 8 O'Clock, on the same day, Shirdi Sai came in His usual human form. He came in His usual form - yes - except the difference that He appeared to be younger in age. He came and from out of three of us, myself, Shri Jagat Advani presently Editor, Sansthan Sarthi (Sindhi), and Advocate Ramesh Raisinghani, who were near the canteen, he addressed me alone as "Krishna, Chai Pilao". My name is Kishin, the abbreviated word for Krishna, commonly spoken in our community. I was wonderstruck as to how he knows my name and out of the three of us, he addressed me alone as Krishna by name. I saw in Him the form of Sai and bowed to Him in my mind and gave him a coupon for a cup of tea. Lord comes in His form, makes Himself known well; still we miss Him as we are deeply engrossed in worldly life. We feel low to bow to Him reverentially in public. Same day at about 11.30, myself and Shri Ramesh

Raisinghani, were standing outside the Bhakt Niwas and Shri Jagat Advani had gone to the office to pay some donation to Shirdi Sansthan. I may mention here that Shri Jagat Advani, is a pious and noble soul. He is a man of little means, but for a good cause he has a big heart. Wherever he goes, he donates to his mite. He gives money to down-trodden people. He does it so selflessly and shyly that nobody comes to know much of it. His wife, also who was a teacher by Profession and who is now retired never lags behind him and contributes to her mite in addition to her husband, wherever she goes. Sai came again in the same form of Shirdi Sai Baba at about 11.30 and addressed to me alone as "Krishna, Khana Khilao". I was about to give him a coupon for Khana, when I noticed that he had a Beedi in his finger tips. I disliked this and said in my mind that it was no good to encourage such people, who spend money on smoking and instead, I thought of purchasing about a kilo of guava (Peru) worth Re. 1/- only and giving to four/five persons. I also thought to wait for Shri Jagat Advani and then to purchase the guava, because he may also like to purchase. I, therefore, went upstairs in the office of Shirdi Sansthan, where Shri Jagat Advani was paying donation and within half-a-minute I came back to see that Shri Sai had left - yes - He had vanished. Later, whole day and until I was at Shirdi, I searched for Him throughout, but could not find Him anywhere in the same human form. I have gone to Shirdi thereafter also a number of times, but I have never come across that same human form of Shirdi Sai.

From my little experience, I feel that we should always be alert and vigilant. He comes in any form - at any time - at any place. We must, therefore, pray to Him constantly, to give us Subuddhi, so that we perceive His form. We should also cultivate the habit of seeing Him in everyone and rever everybody as Sai in that form. ★

K. H. Bhurane

C-6/36, Behind Prabhat Theatre, Ulhasnagar-5

Shri Sai Baba's Divine Grace

My first experience of the miracle of Shri Sai was in the year 1942. I was posted as Medical Officer of Civmil Centre at Ananthapur in June, during second World War. After taking charge of the post, leaving my wife and child in travellers bungalow, I went in search of a house Sri Hanumanthrao, a leading Criminal Advocate of the place, whom I met, was very kind to promise to get me a suitable house within a few days. Because I happened to be a doctor, he was anxious to take me to his brother-in-law's house, Shri Ramaswamy, an Advocate and an ardent devotee of Shri Saibaba. The time was 7 p. m.

Shri Ramaswamy was sitting in the puja room and praying to Baba with implicit devotion. His wife and other members of the family were in the front varandah crying loudly. After enquiry, I learnt that their daughter Pramila a girl of 6 years had sustained severe burns all over the body upto neck because her pavadai had caught fire when she was doing Pradakshinam to Tulasi brindavan where a number of mud oil lamps were lit on account of Uttana Dwadashi (festival of Shri Krishna at Brindavan). This had happened about ten days back. Her body was full of foul smelling pus, having lots of maggots (young worms of flies). She was being treated at the local Government hospital. She was unconscious for nearly six days with high temperature and had not taken even a drop of water during the period. As her condition deteriorated, the relatives were asked to take the girl home in a serious condition in anticipation of an early end. That was the scene at my entry. As soon as I entered the house, Shri Hanumantharao introduced me as a doctor from Madras. Shri Ramaswamy, who was praying in the puja room, immediately came out and exclaimed, "Shri Saibaba has sent the medical aid at the critical time." He asked me immediately to examine the girl and treat the case suitably. I was dumbfounded because I

had not heard of any Saibaba before and more so it appeared that the condition of the patient was beyond any human help. However, being a doctor, I had to face the emergency. I went back to the traveller's bungalow to get my medical bag and inform my wife not to worry about me if I return late in the night on account of this emergency.

The patient had 104° temperature, pulse was rapid but feeble. She was not responding to any kind of stimuli. The place was smelling very badly as it was full of maggots. After protecting my nose with cloth I cleaned the whole body, removed manually with forceps a number of maggots (nearly 180) and applied gauze soaked in codliver oil over the wound. The girl did not show any sign of life during the whole process which took nearly 3 hours. As only sulfa drugs were available then, I got some M and B 693 tablets, powdered them and asked the mother to give it with honey in case the girl awoke in the night. Shri Ramaswamy applied Shri Sai's udhi on the forehead.

Next morning I was sure that the girl would not be alive. With great trepidation in my heart, I went to their house to know the position. There I saw the miracle of Shri Sai for the first time in my life. The girl was awake, had asked for water and milk in the night, which were given. Her general condition was very much improved. The temperature had touched normal and pulse full. She answered my questions clearly and fluently.

Everyday I used to visit their house to clean and dress the wounds. At the end of six months, the entire burnt area of her body had fully healed up, covered with healthy skin, without any trace of a scar. Baba's grace was primarily responsible for snatching that young girl from the jaws of death and I was only a tool in His hands. Soon after that, I was transferred to another centre in Madras.

Shri Ramaswamy told everyone that I was sent to Ananthapur by Baba to treat and save his daughter's life.

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When I left Ananthapur Sri Ramaswamy invited me and my wife to his house and gave us a photo of Shri Saibaba and a packet of udhi, after a sumptuous meal. He asked me to worship Baba from that day. But my mind was still not receptive at that time to get His blessings. Being young and full of ego, I entirely forgot about the whole incident for nearly a decade when I was again reminded by Shri Sai. I shall narrate my next experience of Baba with His blessings in the succeeding article in Shri Sai Leela.

With sastangapranams to all knowing, Shri Sai's incarnation of Sathya, Dharma, Prema and Shanthi.

P. S.

Pramila I learnt now is married and leading a very happy life with her husband and children in Hyderabad. We were extremely happy to meet her when she came to our house to invite us personally for her marriage some years back. ★

Dr. A. R. Govind Rao, M. B. B. S., M. S. (Yale)
23, 2nd Main Road, K' Nagar, Adyar, Madras 600020



शांतिदूत

अकेलेही गंभीरसे,
बैठे थे भगत इक 'कार' पर।
देखा उन्होंने मुडकर,
तो पड़ी नजर एक 'मेम' पर ॥
होगया भूत सवार,
'दिले-आशिक' इक अदापर।
पूछा उसने, कार ठहरा,
"मैडम टुम जाटा है किडर" ॥
मैडमने नजरेन्दाज से देखा,
कि है वही भगत दिकोंडवार।
कह दिया बस मुस्कराकर
"डार्लिंग, टुम जाता है जिडर" ॥

* * * *

देकर 'लिफ्ट' सोचत भगतराम
कभी न बीते थे सुखद क्षण।
होगा 'सक्सेसफुल' जरूर,
पूर्व-पश्चिम सुखद मीलन ॥

पवित्रता के वे थे पुजारी,
मानवता के महान उपासक।
लेकिन मोह-माया ने किसे है छोडा!
सो विवशतासे हि क्यों न हो—
वन बैठे 'एकता के प्रचारक' ॥

डॉ. अनिल जायस्वाल
श्री साई क्लिनिक,
चितारओली नागपूर २

साई ध्यान

चरणोंमे तेरे रहे ध्यान।
साई दो ऐसा वरदान ॥
काम क्रोध माया से छुडाओ।
दुःख व्याधी से मुक्ति दिलाओ ॥
सुख शांती संतोष का दे दान।
साई दो ऐसा वरदान ॥
भक्तों का रखवाला साई।
संकट मे दौडकर आये साई।

मृश पर भी थोडी कृपा-निधान।
साई दो ऐसा वरदान ॥
शिरडी नगरी प्रभु ने अपनाई।
श्री की मूर्ती बहुत मन भाई।
साई साई रटते रटते।
निकले मेरे प्राण।
साई दो ऐसा वरदान ॥

जी. के. नागडा

२० पल्लवी, माडोकलाल महेता इस्टेट, आग्रा रोड, घाटकोपर पश्चिम, बम्बई ४०००८६

श्री स्वामी समर्थ गीतायन

गीत - ६

जगन्नाथपुरी से अंतर्धान होकर श्री स्वामी समर्थ हरिद्वार में प्रकट हुए। वहीं पर उन्होंने अनेक चमत्कार, किये। बारह वर्ष तक कुष्ठरोग से जर्जर हुये व्यक्तियों का उद्धार कर उन्हें मानव रूप प्रदान किये। इतना ही नहीं, उनका हृदय परिवर्तन भी किया। यदी मन चंगा रहा तो सुख-दुख की विकृत कल्पनाओं को मन में जगह नहीं मिलती है। रोग होने से उसका प्रतिबंध करना महत्त्वपूर्ण है। रोग, किस कारण हुआ यह अव्यक्त कारण समझना याने रोग का निदान होने पर उस पर उपचार करना इत्यादी बातें दूसरों के लिये भी हितकर है। इस हेतु में श्री स्वामी समर्थने रोगास्त व्यक्तियों के पूर्व कर्मों को प्रकाश में लाकर लोकोपकार किया।

कुटिल वृत्ति से ओतप्रोत भग ब्राह्मण भी स्वामीजी से मिलने आया। कुविचार और कुसंगति में रहने के कारण उसको मत्पुरुषों के दर्शन से उनका महत्त्व कैसे और क्योंकर समझमें आयेगा। समर्थ कितने पानीमें है, कितना सामर्थ्य आदि वह ब्राह्मण देखना चाहता था। परंतु उसे कोई कल्पना नहीं थी कि मानव के प्रोभ तिमिर में किय गये कुकृत्य क्षण में प्रकाश में आ जायेंगे। समर्थने उस कुटिल ब्राह्मण का हृदय परिवर्तन कर जो चमत्कार दिखाया, वह मानसशास्त्र की दृष्टिसे बड़ा महत्त्व रखता है।

जैसा कर्म करेगा वैसा फल देगा भगवान

हरिद्वार में समर्थ लीला अद्भुत और महान्
जसा कर्म करेगा वैसा फल देगा भगवान्
यह है गीता का ज्ञान, यह है गीता का ज्ञान ॥ टेक ॥

ब्रह्मकुल में जन्म ले कर कहलाते महापंडित
छूटे अभिमान से होती बुद्धि सदा कुंठित
सदाचार का ढोंग रचाने, ये कपट दुराचारी
चोले कैसे दूर हटेगा दुनियासे अज्ञान ? ॥ १ ॥

कुटिलवृत्ति का ब्राह्मण आया श्री समर्थ के पास
 वह क्या जाने कैसे होता साधुसंत सहवास
 शान चक्षु पर पड़ा था परदा निज अज्ञानता का
 समर्थ की वह करता निंदा, बनकर यों अनजान ॥ २ ॥

पूजनीय है हमको अपनी प्यारी गौमाता
 पालन करती है वह सबका हम न भूले नाता
 ब्राह्मण होकर 'गौहत्या'की, कितना नीच पापी
 कुष्ठरोग से पीडित अब वह मानव रे नादान ॥ ३ ॥

गुरुकृपा से कुष्ठरोगी का सहज हुआ उध्दार
 भक्तिभाव से शरण गया वह पाया अनुभव सार
 प्रायश्चित्त की आग में जलती उसकी सारी देह
 अंतर्बाह्य सब शुद्ध हुआ यों 'कायाकल्प' महान् ॥ ४ ॥

सत्व परीक्षा में वह ब्राह्मण तनिक न चबराया
 गुरुकृपा से उसने मन का सामर्थ्य पाया था
 सिंचन करके गुह्यदामृत, जीवित की मृत गैया
 अद्भुत लीला देख देख कर सभी हुए हैरान ॥ ५ ॥

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



SAINT GADGEMAHARAJ

(Continued from May 1978 issue)

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

There are many places of pilgrimage in Maharashtra. Some places like Nasik, Pandharpur etc. came into importance and became places of pilgrimage because of the particular God located in that town, while places like Alandi, Dehu, Shegaon, Shirdi, Sajjangad etc. became important because of the residence of a particular saint at that place. Though there is such a large number of the places of pilgrimage in Maharashtra and though devotees are flocking at these places without limit, still nobody had thought about providing some accommodation for these pilgrims on a large scale. Shri Gadgemaharaj was the only person, who realised the hardships of the pilgrims and who tried his best to provide accommodation to at least a few pilgrims at a very nominal cost. Thus because Shri Maharaj constructed dharmashalas at a few holy places in Maharashtra, the other holy places, which needed such facility, started backoning him. Thus after constructing the dharmashalas at Nasik and Pandharpur, Shri Maharaj turned his attention towards Alandi.

Alandi is situated at about twenty five miles from Pune. It is considered very holy because that is the place where Shri Dnyaneshwar Maharaj took Samadhi centuries ago. Pilgrims flock there on every Ekadashi day and the largest number of pilgrims is present there for the Punyatithi of Shri Dnyaneshwar Maharaj. Like Pandharpur, here also the pilgrims have to remain in insanitary conditions. Because of such insanitation epidemics like cholera often break out here and cause loss of life. Shri Maharaj thought that at least some relief could be given by constructing a dharmashala there. He therefore as usual started looking up for a suitable plot for that purpose. Such important places of

pilgrimage are usually crowded. It is not therefore normally possible to find out a suitable place for constructing a new structure in the town proper. Hence it will be seen that in most of the places Shri Maharaj selected a place outside the old town. At Alandi also the position was more or less the same. In the town proper no big plot was available. Hence he selected a plot at the site just as the road from Pune enters the town, near the bridge on the Indrayani river. This plot was lying vacant for a long time and hence he thought that it would be available at a very cheap rate.

The aforesaid site at Alandi was in view of Shri Maharaj for a long time. He now wanted a donor to carry out the work of the building. It was the experience of Shri Maharaj that there was no dearth of donors, who would come forward to help such works. Shri Bhagoji Balaji Keer, who had little education, had a dashing spirit. He started taking different contracts and earned lakhs of rupees. Due to the inspiration given to him by Barrister V. D. Sawarkar, he constructed at his own cost the Bhageshwar temple and the "Patit Pawan" temple at Ratnagiri. Shri Gadgemaharaj attended the opening ceremony of the Patit Pawan Mandir, when he was introduced to Shri Keer. After looking at the works carried out by Shri Maharaj at Pandharpur, Nasik etc. Shri Keer was impressed much and he said to Maharaj, "I have a lot of money which I intend to spend in charity. What would you advise me to do? For a long time, Shri Maharaj had the sufferings of the pilgrims at Alandi in view. Hence his eyes immediately gleamed at the above request and he said, "There is one good work awaiting you at Alandi. You should utilize your money for that public work."

Quick execution was a trade mark of Shri Gadgemaharaj. He would execute a thing, no sooner it would flash upon his mind. Hence he immediately came to Alandi along with Shri Keer in the latter's car. The plot at Alandi on the left hand side of the road near the bridge was immediately inspected and approved.

As they were walking on the land, Shri Maharaj went on explaining the proposals in his mind. Though he did not take any training in a school, he had the whole layout of the place before his mind's eye and he went on explaining to Shri Keer the different buildings that he wanted to be constructed at different nooks and corners of the plot. His instructions were quite thorough. He gave detailed instructions about the buildings, open spaces and even the plantation of gardens and the trees to be planted therein! The location of the store room, kitchen and the place for serving lunch to the blind and maimed were all decided by Shri Maharaj and the execution thereof was only left to Shri Keer. As a building contractor, Shri Keer had wide experience of planning and estimating; but looking at the broad vision of Shri Maharaj, he was also wonderstruck. He found that Shri Maharaj had obtained lot of technical knowledge simply by observation. As Shri Maharaj and Shri Keer were walking on the plot, the former appeared to be drawing sketches very quickly and the latter appeared to be adding thereto suitable colours in suitable places. Thus the whole picture of the entire dharmashala got ready within a short time.

Shri Bhagoji Keer was the only person, who was to bear the entire expenditure of the building and hence there was no question of waiting for collection of funds. Thus when the entire plan was fully explained by Shri Gadgemaharaj to Shri Keer, the latter immediately took up the building work in hand. As Keer himself was a contractor, he did not require to wait for anybody or consult anybody regarding the construction work. The building work therefore started progressing briskly and very soon the entire work was completed by Shri Keer at a total cost of round about a lakh of rupees. Shri Gadgemaharaj inspected the work, on completion and expressed his entire satisfaction about it.

Shri Bhagoji Keer did not stop here. He provided some money for the upkeep and maintenance of the dharmashala constructed by him. He deposited so much money that it would

acruce an interest of rupees one hundred per month and round about rupees eight hundred in the month in which the fair was held every year. Sweeping and cleaning the entire campus and lighting the lamps in the buildings could be managed with rupees one hundred per month.

In the Maharashtra State there is a system of carrying the palkhi (palanquin) of many saints to Pandharpur, every year for the pilgrimage at the time of the Ekadashi in the month of Ashadh. The Palkhi is carried by a suitable route, with stoppages at every eight to ten miles for rest, so as to reach Pandharpur on the Ekadashi day. The days of starting of each Palkhi are therefore fixed according to the time required for the journey. The Palkhi of Shri Dnyaneshwar Maharaj starts from Alandi every year in the month of Jyestha on a suitable day. For this purpose, thousands of pilgrims come to Alandi every year. The question of providing food for all these people is always a problem. In order to solve this problem partly, Shri Maharaj had made some arrangements. As the palkhi leaves Alandi, its route passes on the road facing the Gadgemaharaj dharmashala. As the palkhi would pass on the road, Shri Maharaj had arranged to serve to every Warkari (Pilgrim) one thick bread and vegetable for the road. Shri Gadgemaharaj thus converted a barren and secluded place into a very useful place for the public.

Just as Alandi became a place of worship because of the Samadhi of Shri Dnyaneshwar, Similarly Dehu, near Pune, had also become a place of pilgrimage since saint Tukaram lived there. In comparison with other places of pilgrimage in the Maharashtra State, Dehu is very small and except for the pilgrimage of Tukaram Beej, (The day of the Samadhi of Saint Tukaram) the pilgrims visiting Dehu are very few. The places of interest in this village are also limited. Taking a bath in the Indrayani river, visiting the house of Saint Tukaram, his temple, Gopalpur and the place in the river, where his Abhangas, though submerged in water came out without any defacement, completes the pilgrimage

of Dehu. At Dehu there are no priests of the temple. The descendents of Saint Tukaram only work as priests. They therefore arrange for the accommodation of the visitors in their own houses; but if someone wants to stay for a day or two in seclusion and spend some time in meditation or deliberation, then there is no such place at Dehu. Shri Gadgemaharaj had noted down this inconvenience at Dehu, when he happened to visit that place and had decided as usual to do something to mend matters, whenever possible, in future.

As usual Shri Gadgemaharaj had located a vacant plot at Dehu, which would be easily available. The plot was just on the bank of the river; but it was full of rock. On one side of the plot there was the ghat of the Vitthal temple, on another side there was the dharmashala of Jangli Maharaj. On the third side there was the Pundalik temple, while on the fourth side of the plot, flowed the Indrayani river. The plot admeasured approximately 150 ft. x 150 ft. and it belonged to the Inamdar of Dehu village. Shri Gadgemaharaj had a peculiar knack of getting donation for a public cause. He approached the Inamdar with a suitable request and arranged to get the plot for building up a dharmashala there.

As soon as the plot came into the possession of Shri Maharaj, his team rushed there and started breaking the rock and making the site suitable for putting up a building thereon. The people in the team of Shri Maharaj were very clever and having attended the work of other dharmashalas, they had wide experience. Hence they were able to tackle this rocky plot. Shri Maharaj often attended the site and all the workers therefore used to work with great enthusiasm. Though the workers had previous experience, still while carrying out the actual job, many of them used to get injured; but this never hampered their work. They would dress the wound and start the work with renewed vigour. Sometimes when such injuries were sustained during the work, Shri Maharaj happened to be present on site. On seeing the mishap, Shri

Maharaj would immediately rush to the injured person and would pat him on the back in order to appreciate his dutyfulness and sincerity of purpose. A pat on the back by Shri Maharaj was considered as a very big prize by the workers and in order to get that pat, they were even ready for an accident! It was because of a team of such selfless workers that Shri Gadgemaharaj could accomplish such big works all over Maharashtra.

Because of this diligent work by the team of Shri Maharaj, the plot was very soon made suitable for construction. Due to the rocky nature of the plot, all buildings in the compound could not be constructed at the same level. Hence like the buildings at Alandi, here too the structures had to be located at different levels. At the topmost level, the main buildings of the dharmashala, extending from North to South, was first put up. As usual cupboards were provided in each room for keeping the belongings of the pilgrims. The plain ground at the lower level was covered with sand. All the area was kept very clean. The cleanliness was so pleasing that nobody would object to sit anywhere and take his food. This plot was formerly used as a cemetery. Even today a number of tombs could be seen in between this dharmashala and the Indrayani river. This secluded and uncared for plot was thus put to good use by Shri Gadgemaharaj and now a dharmashala is providing shelter to the pilgrims visiting Dehu for the pilgrimage.

On the North-west side of Dehu, stands the Bhandara mountain. This mountain is considered very holy, because Saint Tukaram used to resort to this mountain for meditation. On the western side of this mountain there are some very old caves. Just in front of these caves, one patra shed was ordered to be constructed by Shri Maharaj and Shri Rajarambuva Vaishyawani constructed it for the use of the devotees. It was really a job to take all the building materials to that height on the steep mountain; but the trained workers of Shri Maharaj managed it with ease. As usual a flower garden was put up in front of this shed

and because of that the entire environment had an altogether different outlook. This is therefore the jugglery of the divine touch of a saint like Shri Gadgemaharaj.

(to be continued)

Celebration of Ramnavami at Sai Niketan, Bombay

As Ramnavami is a very favourite festival of Shri Sai Baba, it is being celebrated in all Sai temples according to their mite. As it is not possible for all Sai devotees to visit Shirdi for this festival, many of them, who are in Bombay, attend Sai Niketan on this day. This year, Mrs Laxmibai Patwardhan performed Bhajan in the hall at Sai Niketan in the morning from 9-30 a. m. to 12-00 noon, on behalf of the Saraswati Bhajan Mandal. After singing the Arti at 12 noon prasad was distributed and the morning function concluded.

In the evening Shri Vipul Kurlekar, from Goregaon, gave a programme of vocal music from 4-30 p. m. to 6.00 p. m. He sang devotional songs, which attracted the audience with his sweet and melodious voice and an atmosphere of devotion prevailed in the Hall upto the end of the day.

More than a thousand devotees visited Sai Niketan during the whole day and took darshan of Shri Sai Baba. ★



Installation of a Marble Statue of Shri Sai Baba at Sai Niketan, Bombay

One Sai devotee, Shri Vasantbhai Sanghavi, donated to the Shirdi Sansthan, a beautiful statue of Shri Sai Baba, in white marble, about three feet in height. It was therefore proposed to replace the Bronze statue at Sai Niketan by this marble statue. Another Sai devotee, Shri Paradkar from Bombay, said that the marble statue should have a suitable background, decorated with marble. He therefore offered to decorate the wall, in the rear side of the marble statue, with suitable marble slabs. This offer was accepted and Shri Paradkar started the work immediately and completed it very soon.



After these preliminaries were over, the priests were consulted in order to find out the auspicious day for the installation ceremony.

The 12th of May 1978, was declared by them as the nearest auspicious day for holding the function. The Court Receiver, Shri Pathak Saheb therefore came to Bombay from Shirdi along with Shri Digambar Jakhadi, the Chief Pujari at Shirdi and Shri Joshishastri, who is the Sansthan singer.

On 12-5-78, the hall of Sai Niketan started resounding with the sweet and melodious tunes of shahanai, early in the morning. The religious ceremony of 'Pranpratishtha' of the new marble statue was started at about 8 a. m. when Shri Pathaksaheb and Mrs. Pathak did the worship and other religious rites. Shri Jakhadi and Joshishastri guided the whole function and did the work of the priest. At the time of this function of installation of the marble statue Shri N. K. Parekhsaheb, the Judge of the City Civil Court, Shri Vasantbhai Sanghavi, the donor who donated the marble statue and Shri Paradkar, who did the decoration, were present alongwith a number of Sai devotees. After the noon-Aarati was sung the devotees dispersed for their lunch.

Shri Sai devotees visited Sai Niketan on that day in hundreds. The flow of devotees continued upto the end of the day and also during the early hours of the night. A number of artists gave their programmes in Sai Niketan in the afternoon, out of which Shri Vipul Kurlekar from Goregaon and Smt. Maniktai Bhide gave programmes, which were liked more by the audience present on the occasion. Because of the Aarties sung at the timings, at which they are sung in Shirdi every day, it was thought, as if Shirdi had dawned in Sai Niketan at Bombay. Friday being a working day, a number of devotees could not take darshan of the statue on that day. Hence the flow of the devotees continued on Saturday in the same manner as it was on Friday (12.5.78)

Dr. - Kirtikar, Shri Shinde and Shri Vasantrao Khopkar feliciated Mr. and Mrs. Pathak on the occasion, on behalf of all the Sai devotees of Bombay. Shri Pathaksaheb thanked the staff of the Bombay office for the trouble taken by them for making preparations for the function and making it a complete success.★

Because of the Ramanavami festival, coming in the middle of this month, the staff of the Shirdi Sansthan had a busy time throughout the month. As the crowd, attending Shirdi for the festival, is increasing tremendously day by day, it becomes absolutely necessary to plan all things in advance and to allot the work to different persons in order to avoid chaos and confusion. Hence from his past experience the Court Receiver of Shirdi Sansthan held a preliminary meeting by the middle of March 1978, in order to decide the following things :-

The total expenditure required to be incurred. The size of the pandol required to be temporarily erected in order to provide a temporary shelter for the devotees. Arrangements for providing drinking water to all the visiting devotees. Security, conservancy services and scavenging, lighting arrangements, loud speaker arrangement, provision of the shahanai party, poor feeding and the programmes of the artists.

Because all the above things were planned well and diligent and responsible employees were given the charge of their respective work, the whole show was managed well and there were no shortcomings in any direction.

15-4-1978 (1st DAY OF THE FESTIVAL)

The programmes in the Samadhi Mandir went on as usual. In the morning, the photo of Shri Sai Baba and the 'Poethi' of Shri Sai Satcharita were taken in procession from the Samadhi Mandir and went to Dwarkamai via Gurusthan. On reaching Dwarkamai, the photo was placed on the silver "Sinhasan" in Dwarkamai and the reading of Sai Satcharita was commenced. Shri Anantrao Athavale from Nanded, who is a disciple of late Dasganu Maharaj, performed Keertan from 4.30 p. m. to 6.30 p. m. Mrs. Madhubala Chawla gave a programme of vocal music from 7-30 p. m. to 9 p. m. and from 9-30 p. m. to 11 p. m.

The palkhi of Shri Sai Baba was taken in procession in Shirdi village from 9-15 p. m. to 11-30 p. m. The local people and devotees sang Bhajan and Bharud during the procession. Shri Raghunath Sandbhor gave a mimicry programme at that time. With the accompaniment of music and instruments, the Palkhi returned to the Samadhi Mandir and the programmes for the day ended after performance of the Shejarati.

16-4-1978 (THE RAMANAVAMI DAY)

As the Ramanavami day came on a Sunday and as this was the main day of the function, people started waiting in long queues at the Samadhi Mandir, for Shri Sai's darshan from early morning. The devotees continued to flock continuously for the whole day and even upto late in the night. The photo of Shri Sai Baba and the Pothi were brought back in procession from Dwarakamai to Samadhi Mandir via Gurusthan. In the meanwhile Shri C. Ramachandra, the famous music director, along with Miss Shobha Joshi and Miss Rani Varma gave a programme of devotional songs from 9 a. m to 10-15 a. m.

Every year it is a practice to give bath to the Samadhi on the Ramanavami day with the holy water brought from the Godavari river. For this purpose, the people go to Kopargaon on the previous night and start early morning from there. After walking nearly a distance of nine miles, the devotees come to Shirdi and pour on Sai Baba's Samadhi, the water of Godavari brought by them for giving bath to the Samadhi. Previous to this, the Court Receiver and the ladies worship the pots containing the holy water. The process of giving bath to the Samadhi, goes on for hours together as there are every year about a thousand devotees, who take part in this ceremony.

Shri Anantrao Athavle performed Keertan from 10-30 a. m. to 12-15 p. m. on the story in Ramayana regarding the birth of Shreeram. From 9 p. m. in the night to 6-00 a. m. in the morning on the next day, the Artists gave their various programmes. The

Samadhi Mandir was kept open for whole night, on this day for the darshan of Shri Sai Baba. At night fire works and crackers were fired outside the village limits.

17-4-78 (THE LAST DAY OF THE FESTIVAL)

In addition to the singing of the Arties, in the Samadhi Mandir at the usual hours and other routine programmes, Shri Anantrao Athavle performed Gopal Kala keertan from 10-30 a. m. to 12 noon. The teerth and prasad were distributed to all devotees present after Dahihandi and the noon-Arati was performed. Shri Rajkumar and party (Shri Ketkar) gave a good programme of Kathak dance from 7.40 p. m. to 10 p. m. and this three-days long festival concluded with the Shejarati.

PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO SHIRDI



Shri Neelam Sanjeev Reddi, the President of India, who is a Sai devotee, visited Shirdi on 17-4-78. The President landed at Astagaon near Shirdi on a special airstrip, constructed for this purpose, from a helicopter of the Indian Air Force. On the five Kilometer roadway, several arches were erected for welcoming

the President. The public flocked in great number on both the sides of the road, and greeted the President. The devotees, numbering in thousands, who had gathered at Shirdi for the Ramanavami Festival, cheered the President and gave him a very warm welcome. Shri K. S. Pathaksaheb, the Court Receiver Shirdi Sansthan and Shri Kazisaheb welcomed the President by offering him garlands. As the chief minister of Andhra State, Shri Sanjeev Reddi had visited Shirdi before some fifteen years. The President worshipped the Samadhi with all the normal religious ceremonies. One silver idol of Shri Sai Baba, a shawl and a cocoanut were offered to the President on behalf of the Shirdi Sansthan.

The President prayed for the prosperity and uplift of Bharat, in the Samadhi Mandir. He also prayed that he may be given good health and strength to discharge his duties as President and serve the people well. Shri Sadikali, the Governor of Maharashtra State, Mrs Shanti Sadikali and Shri Vasantdada Patil, the Chief Minister of the Maharashtra State, accompanied the President at the time of his visit to Shirdi. All the visitors were pleased with the up-to-date arrangements made by the Sansthan at the time of the visit. The President landed at Astagao at 11.00 a. m. and was in Samadhi Mandir from 11.30 a. m. to 12.00 noon.

VISITS TO SHIRDI

The following important personages visited Shirdi during the month.

- 1) Shri B. K. Chougule, The Muncipal Commissioner (designate) Bombay.
- 2) Shri Shankarraoji Chavan, Ex. Chief Minister, Maharashtra St.
- 3) Shri Bhausahab Vartak, Ex Minister, Maharashtra State.
- 4) Mrs. Shalini Patil, wife of Chief Minister, Maharashtra State
- 5) Shri Talyarkhan, Ex. Minister, Maharashtra State
- 6) Shri Madhukarrao Choudhari, Revenue Minister, Maharashtra State and his wife.

- 7) Shri Mathur, Director of Publicity, Maharashtra State.
8) Shri R. S. Gawai

WEATHER :- The weather of Shirdi used to be quite sultry for some time in the noon during the month. The nights were however cool and there was no epidemic or other illness in the village.

(to be continued)

Develop Good Habits

A pure vegetarian wished to keep an Alsacian dog as a pet but he was wondering how he could have the heart to feed it with meat every day. He started feeding it only with vegetarian food. Jimmy slowly began liking the food and still he maintained perfect health and strength. In a few months, Jimmy made it a habit to wait for the prasad after the puja and eat it with a relish. This caused a surprise to all the pet-keepers. By practice and training, man or animal can develop good habits. If a dog can do that, why not man?

Shri Radhakrishna Swamiji

Sai Temple at Garkhal

Shri Sai Sudha Sabha are glad to announce that the formal opening ceremony of the Sai Temple at Garkhal, Himachal Pradesh, is proposed to be held at Garkhal (Kasauli) at 10 a. m. on Sunday the 4th of June 1978.

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Naigaum X Road, Dadar, Bombay 400-014.

Published by Shri K. S. Pathak, Sai Niketan 804-B,
Dr. Ambedkar Rd., Dadar, Bombay. 400 014