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18th September, 1936

Ramchandra Sitaram Dev alias, Balabhau or Balabhat aged 55 (60) Brahmin, Lanlord, Varsova Road, Andheri says:

I saw Baba first in S. 1830 (i.e., 1908). I had already heard of him from Das Ganu Mahraj at his Kirtan at kalyan. I knew Amir Sakkar Khatik i.e. butcher of Bandra. He also spoke highly of Baba and asked me to go and see him. So I went to Shirdi along with Sri Krishna Patil. Sathé's wada was the only resort in existence then. But we had our lodging at Ganapati Temple. On that day, there was no crowd of Bombay visitors but there were crowds of the locality and neigh-

bour hood. I was intending to go to Akkalkote and Amir Sakkar said “Shirdi is on the way. Call there and then go to Akkalkote.” So I wanted just to see Baba and start off for Akkalkote.” When we saw Baba he said “I must go to Akkalkot and thereby expressing the predominating idea in my mind. I was struck at once by his power to read what I had in my mind, and I decided to spend the day with him at Shirdi. But I had no end to achieve by my visit or stay beyond the pleasure of being near a great soul. Next day I went away, with his leave, to Akkalkote. I was being drawn to him. So I repeated my visit e.g. I went there next Deepavali. At that time there were crowds from Bombay with Baba. There were 5 or 6 accompanying me. I sat up between 8 P.M. and midnight with Baba (at the Mosque) and I then asked him to give me Upadesh and be my Guru.

Baba: “It is not essential that one should have a Guru. Everything is within us. What you sow, you reap. What you give you get. There is no need for a Guru. aapala javalachu aahe

It is all within you. Try to listen within and follow the direction you get, “we must look at our self. That is the monitor, the Guru”. aapana pahaya apala apan pahava

At the time I approached Baba for Upadesh and even now, I had and have my own Sampradai Guru at Ratnagiri. As my faith in SaiBaba grew, I gradually dropped my visits to Pandharpur and Akkalkote. I was doing two services, one was Asst. Master in a local fund School and the other stamp vendor’s work. Even the Shirdi visits dislocated my school work. Baba detained me beyond my leave days. The school authorities inquired where I was spending away my time and heckled me about it. I had to choose between Shirdi and school work. I gave up school teaching, but I retained the stamp vendor’s work till five years ago and then got it transferred to my son. That gave me a net income of 20 to 25 Rs. per diem. When I gave up service, I was only 32. But I kept up my faith and my financial position was satisfactory. I attended each Shri Ramnavami of Baba. When Baba was in the flesh, he gave me personal directions. After he passed away. I get my guidance from him by casting chits before his picture and getting one picked out after prayer for guidance.

Later on, (while he was in the flesh) I got afraid when I saw that in my place Andheri, there was a terrible robbery. I saw the inmates of the house that was robbed at the hospital with severe injuries inflicted by the robbers. I prayed to Baba in my own house to help me and save me and my family from such misfortune. That night Baba appeared to me in a dream and said he had come with ten Pathans and that I need not fear. Just at that time, the washermen using B.B.& C.I. Ry. Property for their washing, were refused further access to their usual washing places. Ten of them came to me and wished to build huts for themselves on my land. I readily agreed. They still pay me monthly 200 rupees as rent besides giving me their company by which we are safe from robbers' attacks. The existing well had no sufficient supply of water for their purposes. I consulted Baba and acting on his advice, I dug a new well in the place approved of by Baba and there I had abundant supply of water. In respect of this big building, I had to dig a well first and I went to Shirdi and asked Baba. Acting on his advice, I dug it and it has turned out into a very good well. Then I began the building after getting Baba's personal sanction at Shirdi. When I went there, I had funds only for putting up 5 suites of rooms and wished to build only these. But Baba drew on the floor before him 25 lines and said "one rupee for each line, i.e., each sets of rooms. Give 25 rupees." Though I was intending to build only 5, I paid 25 rupees. The work began, suits were slowly being added on till in 1920, the total number of sets of rooms became 25. It still continues to be only 25 rooms.

I think and feel that Baba is still alive. Still he guides me. My sons also have the same faith, I have sent my account of experiences to the late Mr. Dabholkar.