

CHAPTER II

Narayan Govind Chandorkar

Nana Saheb Chandorkar is the next of the most prominent amongst Baba's bhaktas, not merely because he was sent for, and the only one openly sent for, by Baba and specially trained and prepared for his mission, but also because of his magnificent work and grand personality. He was the first and foremost of Baba's apostles whose labour was the basis of the spread of Sai faith for many decades. If Mahlsapathy was the seed, Chandorkar was the stem and trunk of the spreading Banyan of Baba, i.e. Baba's St. Paul. A study of his relations with Baba, and the way in which Baba moulded him is a typical and highly useful study of Baba's methods for advancing educated disciples and of Baba's work for society.

Chandorkar was born of highly respected parents, who were good and pious Hindus, held in high esteem in their social circles and following the sastras to the best of their ability. They did their daily Vaiswadeva and fed Atithis, i.e. kept open house; and visitors to Kalyan expected to be and were actually welcomed and fed by them as guests. His father was a retired Government officer, and had built a decent storeyed building there, the Chandorkar Wada, which became, and which still continues to be, the family mansion for so many generations. Chandorkar's capacity and talents can be seen from the fact that by twenty he was already a graduate, and that entering Government service at once he rose to the position of a Gazetted officer, a Deputy Collector, in seven years, which was in those days considered (and must be considered even now) to be an exceptional or marvellous feat. His conduct, character, and spiritual fitness were

those of a good Hindu. He had taken up Philosophy for his special subject for the B. A. degree and supplemented his college study by careful attention to the Bhagvad Gita with Sankara Bhashya.

In these and other ways, he was anxious to get the best out of the Hindu sastras for his own moral and spiritual equipment and progress. His basic equipment being so good, what was wanted was only the hand of a perfect master to turn him into a brilliant apostle, one high up in the spiritual ladder. Even under ordinary circumstances he would have shone well in life but with Baba for his Guru and guide, he shone resplendently well, and he was known throughout the Bombay Presidency as a gentleman of an excellent and noble character and of great attainments, and was revered as a Guru by eminent devotees like Sri B.V. Dev and others. His case illustrates the truth of the saying that it is not the sishya that seeks the Guru but very often the reverse. It was the Guru who sought him out. He had no idea of his previous births. But his Guru Sri Sai Baba was full of jnana. That is, he had *Rnambhara Prajna* or *Pratibha*. The present, past and future floated before Sai Baba's mind's eye, if we may so term it, as one moment, and he could see every bit of it clearly. He remembered that in the past four janmas N G Chandorkar was his sishya; and so he was determined to make the pupil continue the contact and derive further benefit till he achieved life's goal. That is why he sent for him even though he (Baba) did not care ordinarily to meet persons in high official position which, in his eyes, counted for nothing at all. The details of Baba's invitation and its fate are fully set out in Part 1. But as each part may be studied independently of the others, we may summarise the facts about that invitation.

The karnam or Kulkarni of Shirdi, Appa Kulkarni, went to take leave of Baba before leaving Shirdi for Kopergaon where Nana Chandorkar, the Collector's chitnis, was camping for jamabandi. The diffident karnam finally undertook the task of inviting his big officer to his hamlet. When he actually mentioned the matter to the officer, the latter could not believe that a fakir would invite a DC or chitnis and declined to visit Shirdi. Nothing daunted by the rebuff, Baba repeated the invitation a second time, and when it failed, even for a third

time. At last, Nana agreed to see Baba at Shirdi, came up and inquired why he was sent for. Baba's answer was that for four janmas he had been connected with Baba, and Baba desired that he should renew the contact. As Nana still hesitated to renew his contact, Baba revealed to Nana his watch over his interests using his *pranbha* and other powers to foresee or control the future. The Collector was pressing Nana to inoculate himself with a new serum against Plague that was playing havoc with public health. Nana feared the inoculation and hastened to Baba to get his assurance about the safety of the operation; and Baba gave it. Again his father's objections to a Moslem's connection with any one in his family was an apparently insurmountable obstacle. But it was overcome by Baba's power to control the father's mind. Baba made the latter approve of Nana's acceptance of Baba (apparently a Moslem, for he lived in the Masjid) for his Guru.

Having sent for Nana, Baba did everything to see that the course was properly begun. The first essential of progress under a Guru is faith. We need not go into Dasabodha or other standard works to define or describe the sishyas' (the disciples') qualifications. It is enough for us to note what Baba himself has declared and stressed as the important qualifications. The first and foremost is complete faith (*Nishta*) and the second is *Saburi* i.e. patient, cheerful awaiting the future with self-possession. One must get to believe that the Guru is full of all divine power, divine mercy and love, directed especially towards the pupil. So Nana had to be impressed with Baba's divine nature and Baba's personal interest in him or attachment to him. As for nature, Baba declared time and again that He is God, that is, that he has completely realised God or merged his identity with not merely the Impersonal Brahman but also the Personal God known under various names and forms such as Lakshminarayan, Hari, etc. Baba has used the terms, 'Maim Ailah hun' and 'I am Lakshminarayan' etc. as synonymous. To Baba, God is the same under or without any name and form (most of us firmly believe in differences of personality in God according to Name and Form). What are the nature and powers, etc. of Lakshminarayan? Every one knows Lakshminarayan is a form or name of "Maha Vishnu", the supreme Iswara's

Protecting Aspect though it is inseparable from creation and salvation, which are the other aspects. So, Baba's mission and work, as Lakshminarayan, were and are to protect devotees anywhere and everywhere and under all conditions. Baba declared (see Baba's Charters & Sayings)—

'My eye (of vigilant supervision) is ever on those who love me.

Whatever you do, wherever you may be, ever bear this in mind that I am always aware of everything you do.

If one ever meditates on me, repeats my name, sings my deeds, and is thus *transformed into me, one's karma is destroyed, I stand by his side always*’.

[What is this but Divinity?—Divine Omnipresence, Omniscience, Omnipotence and Mercy.]

Thus, it was Baba's lookout to see that his nature and attitude towards his devotees should be thoroughly well impressed upon Nana's mind- Baba was watching over not merely Nana but numerous others and looking after their welfare. But we shall just now note first how he dealt with Nana so as impress him deeply with this divine (Gurudeva) function of his.

Baba's work (like most divine work) is subtle (sukshma), unseen, easily forgotten, and not properly interpreted. See Kena Upa 9, 14—26 where gods fail to see God's working through them to attain victory or to make out God's manifestation in a particular form. Note also how few realised God in Rama Avatar during his life time. So Baba had to repeat his efforts to ensure the thorough fixing of these valuable truths and impressions in Chandorkar's mind. The most common and trifling things one would suppose in the list of an ordinary man's needs are water to drink and food to eat. Yet at times these assume extraordinary importance, and provisions of drink or food under extremely difficult circumstances becomes clearly a kind act of Divine Providence. This was done for Nana Saheb Chandorkar by Baba under very peculiar circumstances.

Chandorkar was an orthodox Hindu, and, in spite of his corpulence, anxious to visit hill tops where there were temples. Harischandra Hill, forty miles away from Shirdi, was a noted hill with a Devi's shrine at the top. But the long stretch of barren rock between that temple and the bottom of the hill was one

vast treeless, wild, rocky waste, where there was neither water to drink nor any shelter to hide in. Over that hill, Nana was climbing on a hot, summer day, and, after he had gone some distance, the heat of the sun and the toil of the journey told upon him. He felt very thirsty and asked the Sheristadar friend by his side for water.

The latter replied that there was none and that it was a barren rock. Nana felt the fatigue of climbing also greatly and said he could not climb. The Sheristadar asked him to climb down. But Nana was unable to do that either and quietly sat on a huge slab and exclaimed 'if Baba were here, he would surely give me water to slake my thirst'. The Sherishtadar, who was by his side, remarked that such observations about 'ifs' were useless. He added 'Baba is not here. What is the good of thinking what would happen if he were here?' The Sherishtadar had only fleshy eyes and matter-bound brains. He could not see with the eye of faith. If he had such an eye, he could have noted the presence of Baba not only on Harischandra hill but in every other place also. Chandorkar was in a slightly better position than the Sherishtadar. It is because of his faith in Baba that the thought occurred to him that Baba could save him even on that barren rock. But he did not feel certain that Baba was there and that water would be provided. Anyhow his thought of Baba was the tiny hairspring or switch working the magic, the turn that saved the situation.

Prayer saves. But what are prayers but thoughts? Many a person fancies that he must put forward a definite demand in prayer to the 'highest' powers and get it granted by force of prayer. There is some truth in this mixed up with much error and confusion. What comes often after prayer and is supposed to be the result of prayer, is very often something fixed up by a higher power which, as part of its plan, produces the thought of prayer first. Prayer often proves to be the immediate predecessor, but not the efficient and direct cause of the result. '*Post hoc, ergo propter hoc*' (i.e. 'After that; therefore due to that') is what we frequently say and believe. Many a man says 'I prayed; I got it. So it is prayer that got it'. But this is neither logically nor theologically sound. The fact is that prayer is a means of placing one in contact with higher beneficent powers and there it

serves its primary purpose. Incidentally when a devout soul is deeply concentrating on God, what happens is that the soul gets so thoroughly saturated with the divine that divine power infiltrates into the Jiva and the combined power or the higher power (both are the same, despite difference in names) produces certain results. It is the man of prayer that draws down divinity, i.e. turns divine at the moment of intense prayer and is responsible for certain results (*Etad hyeva aksharam jnaatwa yo yad ichchati tasya tatKhat U.I (2) 16*) 16, i.e. Having realised the Imperishable, if one has desire, that is fulfilled, even when the results have not been previously fixed up, as the result of previous karma. Anyhow, Chandorkar's thought and longing constituted a good prayer on account of its earnest faith and contact with Supreme Power and Mercy.

It is always good to pray, because it brings one in contact with God. The prayer, however, that is found most common in society is occasional prayer for a definite material object, and there it stops. It is always advisable to avoid the commercial spirit when dealing with God. We should not bargain with God. Nor should we say, 'I will pray to you only for such and such an object being gained'. The thought of God purifies the soul, and the purified soul gets power to draw God more and more into it. The commercialised soul, if too much oppressed with the contemplation of the worldly benefit is handicapping itself and preventing its purification, that is, saturation with God idea (purity means having God-idea and impurity is lack of God or God-idea). The very idea of material objects may so obsess a mind as practically to obliterate the thought of God. God then becomes only a secondary consideration, a sort of side element, a weak coloration when the main object before the mind's eye is worldly gain. Such approaches are deplorable, however attractive the object to be gained by prayer may be. One ought to have prayer without concentrating too much on worldly gains. Concentration on God alone is purity. Purity means power, and when a soul is thoroughly pure, then the objects entertained in the mind of the prayerful soul some time previously, that is even before the prayer began, remain in the subconscious, i.e. at the back of the praying party's mind and may come to fruition by the power of the purified and strengthened soul. This is an incidental

benefit which ought not to turn the scales when one considers how he should pray. Prayer is primarily and essentially only an affair of the soul with God. All intervention of outside objects is an interference with the soul's concentration on God. Prayer must be purified by very keen practice—i.e, it must be shorn of all undesirable gross elements just as we keep off the floating moss repeatedly when we bathe in a tank. In cases where however one is in dire extremity and prayer comes out from him for a much needed object, in spite of oneself, as was the case with Chandorkar on the Harischandra hill, then prayer cannot be condemned at all. Prayer is a natural vent for the heart. We leap out at what we want on the wings of prayer. It is God Himself that has implanted this tendency to seek God's help to attain objects of great importance to one's material or spiritual life and each time we so seek, we should stress in our mind that God is our first and final object and that other objects form a temporary and partial diversion or screen.

Let us see, how the thought of Chandorkar on the Harischandra hill intensified by his dire thirst operated. His thought was very intense and even if it had been less intense, when it was directed to Sai, it must have had immediate effect. That could not be seen by the Sherishtadar or by Chandorkar himself on the hill. Let us see what took place at Shirdi where the body of Sai Baba was physically situated. Sai Baba spoke out immediately in the presence of some devotees, 'Hallo, Nana is very thirsty. Should we not give him a handful of water?' To Baba all places and all times were open before his vision, and he could see and hear everything. But the persons around him, who had not the benefit of such a vision, were wondering why Baba should talk of Nana's thirst. Nana the Deputy Collector was not there, and if the Deputy Collector was in thirst, why a palmful, gallons of water would be quickly brought to him by number of persons. Why did Baba talk like that? People round about Baba could not make it out. Nor did Baba care to explain. But what followed on the hill gives the explanation. A little time after Nana made his exclamation about Baba, a Bhil, that is, a hill tribesman, was seen coming down the hill towards the party, that is, Chandorkar and his friends. Chandorkar accosted him and said 'Hallo! I am thirsty; can I get some water to

drink?' People wondered that this Brahmin Deputy Collector should accost a Bhil, who is considered an untouchable or a low-caste man, and ask him for water. But necessity knows no law, and the Bhil's reply was most surprising. He said, 'What! You ask for water! Under the very slab or rock on which you are seated, there is water'. So saying, he moved away and disappeared from view. Nana's subordinates and friends who were with him immediately set about lifting up the slab after Nana moved aside, and lo and behold! There was just palmful of water on that rock, attractive and cool, just the quantity that is necessary to save a man from fiery thirst. Nana took that water, his thirst was gone; and he was able to march higher up and complete his pilgrimage.

After the hill ascent, the goddess' darsan at the temple and descent were over, some days later, Nana had occasion to go to Shirdi and as he stepped into Baba's Dwarakamayee the very first words that Baba uttered to him before anybody could inform him about Nana's experience on the hill, were these, 'Nana, you were thirsty; I gave you water; did you drink?' Nana's eyes opened with joyous wonder. He felt that his very thought of Baba had worked as a prayer and the appearance of the Bhil and his pointing out where the water was and the appearance of the water there on a waterless rock must all have been due to Baba. How Baba managed it, Baba only knew. And to confirm Nana in his view, devotees at Shirdi mentioned to him that on the memorable day and hour when he was on the Harischandra hill, with burning thirst, Baba spoke the above words. Nana was convinced more than ever that Baba was God omnipresent, merciful and omnipotent, for he had the power to bring water under a rock and a man to show it just at the exact psychological moment. This conclusion of his might perhaps appear to be too weak for a logician versed in inductive logic to accept. 'An individual instance does not prove a rule and guarantee the validity of a universal proposition' is what the logician would remark. But Nana was not pestered by doubts of Tarka sastra or logic. In the circumstances of Nana, there could be no room for doubting that Baba did respond to his very thought, which was an appeal for aid and did provide him with the water which was a necessity

to save his life at that perilous juncture. His faith was confirmed and grew stronger and stronger.

The unfortunate fact about most of us is that as most educated minds are fed on the Cartesian principle of doubting everything, the logician's axiom about insufficiency of individual cases to prove universal propositions and other similar doubts crop up over and over again. When 150 experiences of Baba's help had been derived by a man, on the occurrence of the 151st case of help, even a well-known devotee asked himself the question, 'Is this chance or is this Baba's help?' This wretched idea of 'chance helping' does not easily leave us. Luckily most of us by Baba's favour have some grounding in faith, and we gradually shake off the tendency to go on doubting and doubting for ever. Except for that, we would become "*Samscayatmas*", that is, persons in whose nature, doubt becomes a fixed trait, a part of their second nature. The Gita (BG IV 40) says, *Samscayatma Vinascyati*, that is. The man who goes on doubting and doubting *ad infinitum* will perish'. 'Perish' does not necessarily mean 'die', so far as the physical body is concerned. He is dead already whose faith is dead. A man that has no faith is a breathing corpse. Even in ordinary worldly matters, we find what an important part is played by our ability to believe what is reported to us. If in a new place before reaching the railway station, we have to ask for the road to the station at half a dozen places and answers are given, if at each answer we think that the answer may be false and hesitate, we should never reach the station in time to catch our train. This is the meaning of *Samscayatma Vinascyati*. Luckily in the case of Nana, far from his being a '*Samscayatma*', he was a *Shraddhatma*.

*Shraddhaavan labhate jnaanam tatparah samyata indriyah
Jnaanam labdhva paraam scaantim achirena adhigachchati.*

BG IV. 39

This means, The man of faith obtains knowledge and wisdom. Being a person who controls his senses and thereby effectively fixes his mind on that jnana, treating it as the goal of his life, he obtains Jnana; and having obtained it he soon reaches *scanti*, Supreme Peace.' This has an obvious application to Nana's case, and Nana, with very little of doubting nature, advanced in the strength of

his faith, obtained more and more of wisdom (Jnana) by the grace of Baba and was progressing rapidly towards that *scanti* or Peace, which is the goal of all spiritual life and endeavour.

Thus Nana was convinced that Baba had superhuman power, superhuman love, and made superhuman provision of needs for those who were attached to him and whom he loved. So, he found that Baba was really a Deva (God), and that Baba was preeminently fitted to take charge now of Nana's life, of his comfort, and of all his concerns, temporal and spiritual. Thus convinced, Nana was perfectly prepared to take the plunge of *Prapatti* to the Gurudeva, to surrender himself unhesitatingly to the directions of Baba, being perfectly assured that no harm would result thereby, and on the other hand much good—nay every good—would result therefrom.

Having provided for the thirst of Nana in one place, Baba marvellously provided for his hunger in another place. In Padmalaya forest, there is a Ganapati temple. It is ten miles away from the nearest Railway Station and the access to it is through ten miles of forest. Nana had made arrangements for all this, but trains have got a queer way of being late, and in this case, his train being many hours late, all arrangements were upset and there was no conveyance and no assistance forthcoming. Nana's arrival at the railway station was evening time, very near dusk. But he would not be thwarted. He determined to push along with his companions to the temple, come what may. In the absence of any conveyance, Nana had to dare and dared the risk and trouble of walking ten miles to reach the Ganapati temple. So he trudged on. But when he was about half way or more than half way, it was already 9 p.m. and the pujari of the temple would usually lock it up by 9 or 10 p.m. and retire to his cottage at some distance for his night's rest. So, Nana doubted whether he would get into the temple at all. Further, having walked wearily six or seven miles, he felt the pangs of hunger. Naturally he remembered Baba. He prayed, 'Baba, I am not asking for much. I am not overgreedy. I will be quite satisfied if, at the close of this journey, I can get one cup of tea to quench my hunger'. Then he and his companions trudged on. It was nearly 11 p.m. when they reached the temple.

Instead of the temple being closed (as it would usually be) the pujari was on the watch, and on seeing persons at a great distance (that is, Nana's party) coming, shouted. 'Is Nana coming?' It would be highly impertinent on the part of any priest to call a Deputy Collector by his pet name, as though he was his chum. But here there was no feeling of resentment, but one of gratification on the part of Nana and his friends when they heard the voice, 'Is Nana coming?' They approached and said, 'Yes. How do you know that Nana is coming?' Then the priest said, "I had an ethereal message from Sri Sai Baba in which he said, 'My Nana is coming weary, thirsty, and hungry. Keep for him one cup of tea'. Here is tea ready for you all." He then gave Nana his cup. This again proved that Baba's eye of supervision was not merely on hills but also in forests to look after the safety, comfort and health of his beloved devotee. Alike from danger of thirst and hunger, Baba had saved him.

What was it that saved Nana? The Sanskrit stanza says—

Vane rane scatru jalaagnimadhye

Mahaarnave, parvata mastakevaa

Suptam pramattam vishama sthitamvaa

Rakshanti punyani puraakritaani

This means, whether it is in the forests or in the battle field or amidst foes or in the ocean, or on hill tops, the merit acquired in former times or janmas saves a person even though he may be sleeping, disordered in mind or unbalanced. This is an abstract statement, which is very true. But abstractions do not save any one. It is the concrete person called Sai that actually saved Nana both on hill top and in the thick forests and not abstract poorva punya. After all, it is poorva punya (former merit) that had taken shape as Sai's body, which had undertaken the responsibilities of a Gurudeva and which therefore saved Nana. So it is alike poorva punya and also Gurudeva that saved Nana.

While on this subject we may point out the conclusions into which people fall when dealing with questions where the abstract and the concrete or the particular and the universal or the part and the whole blend as they invariably and necessarily do. I may say that I stir the milk with my right hand, emphasizing

'right' or I may say with equal truth that I stir the milk with a spoon in my right hand. Both are the same and not conflicting, and similarly a particular person protecting a devotee is not inconsistent with his poorva punya protecting him. Forgetting this obvious truth, recently at the Thotapalli hills (Visakhapatnam District) there was a confused distinction without difference. A lady, who was proceeding at dusk from Sri Omkar Swami's chambers to her own room, trod on a snake, and cried out "Om Sai". The snake did not strike her, but bent its head and went away quietly. Some said, 'This is Sai's protection'. Others said 'This is poorva punya protection'. The obvious truth is that the poorva punya of the lady taking the shape of her contact with Sai, saved her. Similarly in the above two cases of Chandorkar's troubles in forest and hill, it is his poorva punya that saved him, in accordance with the above stanza. The poorva punya in Chandorkar's case was continuous punya, a punya which tended to perpetuate itself because it consisted of a surrender to a most loving and beloved Guru, janma after janma, who took it on himself to protect his disciple right through in every detail, and that too life after life.

We shall see how the loving Guru's supervision and watch helped Nana Chandorkar in his latest birth (which is the one janma known to us) in matter after matter essential for his temporal and spiritual safety. Baba having implanted in Chandorkar sufficiently strong faith in and reliance on the Guru was constantly watering this plant with fresh instances of his loving watch and care. Even in apparently trivial matters such as catching trains and meeting official superiors, Baba (as was usual with him) showed his concern for the disciple and helped him as also so many devotees. It is this enduring and endless concern of the Guru that grips the disciple, and makes him understand God.

Nana Chandorkar and Haridas, a Kirtankar, were both at Shirdi, and both had to be at Ahmednagar the next day, and so had to catch a train, the scheduled time of which required their immediate leaving of Shirdi. So they went to take leave of Baba. Baba quietly told them both, 'You had better take your meal and then go for your train' Nana, having implicit reliance on his Guru did so, though it took some time for him to take his meal. Haridas did not wish to risk the

loss of money which he would get at the next day's engagement, and so, remembering the scheduled time and not Baba's words (on which he did not place much reliance), started off immediately without food and reached Kopergaon station and waited there for some hours, for the train was late by some hours. Baba knowing the lateness by his Antarjnana (or Ritambhara Prajna) gave the benefit of his knowledge to Nana who went up leisurely after meal, and found Haridas waiting at the station with a hungry stomach, for the late train. Nana was in time to catch the train, and Haridas learnt a lesson, which he no doubt would preach to others but did not practise himself, namely, that one must put implicit faith in Great Souls like the Guru Sai Deva, and not throw aside their words and rely upon one's own wisdom. This is the correct interpretation of the last line of the Niti *sloka*:-*Ushas Sasamsca Gargyastu, Sakunamtu Brihaspatih, Manojayamtu Maandavyo, Vipravakyam Janardhanah*, which means :—

(When one wishes to consult augury of success before starting on any action) Gargya praised starting at dawn; Brihaspati held omens e.g. flight of birds etc. to be the best guide; Mandavya held one's own's optimism and powerful determination were the best guides; Janardhana (Sri Krishna) viewed the words of the *Vipra* or holy ones as the best [Baba was a *Vipra* in the best and every sense of the term]. Baba also taught Nana incidentally another lesson before he left Shirdi (saying), 'Look at this Haridas. He comes with you. He leaves you behind and runs away for his own (fancied) advantage. You must always have friends who will not desert you in the middle like this'.

Another incident also may be quoted here. Nana was staying with Baba at Shirdi and wanted to start one morning to go to Kopergaon, where he had an appointment to meet the Collector. When he went to take leave of Baba in proper time, Baba simply said, 'Go tomorrow'. That meant, leave was denied. Others with less faith than Nana would have simply brushed aside Baba's advice and started off. But Nana had full faith in Baba, and consequently the advantage of staying one more day with Baba. Having been stopped for that day, he took leave of Baba the next day. Baba then said, 'You now go and meet the Collector'

When Nana went to Kopergaon and enquired of the office staff there as to what happened the previous day, they said that the Collector had sent a telegram that he was not coming that day but only on the following day. Baba did not receive a copy of the telegram, but by his own Antarjnana knew of the postponement of the appointment and gave Nana the benefit of it with the resulting further benefit of an extra day's stay with his Guru. Thus even in the most important official matters, Nana's faith made him follow Baba's words with great advantage to himself, temporally and spiritually.

Nana's benefit in temporal matters from Baba was not merely for himself but also for persons connected with him. Baba who saved Nana from the pangs of hunger and thirst in hill and forest would certainly not leave his disciple when his life was in danger. See the Bhagavata verse below that "He is no Guru who does not save one's life".

Gurur na sasyat svajano na sasyat

Pita na sasyat janani na sasyat

svapatir na sasyat Na mochayet

yas samupeta mrityum

which means, "If a person does not save one's life, when it is threatened by Death, that person is not a Guru, a kinsman, a father, a mother, a god or a husband".

Such a juncture arrived one day when Nana and Lele Sastri were starting from Poona in a tonga. They had gone a few miles when suddenly the horse reared, and the carriage capsized. That was a perilous moment. Both the occupants of the carriage were corpulent elderly people who would in such an accident ordinarily suffer serious damage to life and limb. Sai Baba, however, who was watching over Nana wherever he went, at that very moment blew what is called 'Bum-Bum', (the Conch sound—for at death people blow on the conch), keeping his hands in front of his mouth as though the hands were a conch. This is a signal of danger and distress. We shall give the account as it appears in the Gospel of Baba (See B. C. & S. 535-A).

535-A. One day at Shirdi, Baba made the dolorous Sankha sound (indicative of coming death) and said "Hallo, Nana is about to die! But, will I let him die?" At that time, N.G. Chandorkar and Lele Sastri were near Poona. They were in a tonga the horse of which reared and overturned the tonga. N.G.C. and Sastri were in peril of their life. But they picked themselves up and found that they had suffered no injury. When they reached Shirdi, they found that Baba had made the above declaration and had saved their lives.

Thus Baba saved Nana's life, just as Baba's Guru saved Baba's life. There is a saying that the string of a flower garland borrows its scent. Similarly Lele Sastri, who was not himself a staunch bhakta of Baba, derived his safety from his company with Nana Chandorkar. Baba on this occasion proved the truth of his statement (see B. C. S. 35 & 301) "If a devotee is about to fall, I stretch out my hands, and thus with four outstretched hands at a time, support him. I will not let him fall*. This is *Karavalambha*.

- (1) *Na me bhaktah pranascyati*, i.e. My devotee shall not perish (BG IX-31).
- (2) *Tan Vddharishyeham achirat Apatbhyo nowriva arnavat* i.e. I quickly save them as a boat saves in the ocean. SB XI (17)

It is not merely the friend of a devotee that Baba saves. Baba's interest is in every one in whom a devotee is interested. Nana was deeply interested in the fate, health, and life of his daughter Minatai. About 1904 or so, Nana Chandorkar was Deputy Collector at Jamner (then unconnected by train with Jalgaon). He was at Jamner along with his pregnant daughter, whose pregnancy was in a very advanced state. Unexpectedly the delivery, being the first delivery, proved troublesome and risky. The pains were prolonged for many long hours, and the poor young lady suffered torture. What could poor Nana do? He knew that Baba was aware of everything, and that there was no necessity to send a telegram or letter to him. So, he must do what he could in his own place. Being a very orthodox and pious Brahmin, he started a *Kashtanivaarana Homa* with the help of his Sastri. Still no relief was obtained. All the while, Baba was fully aware of what was going on at Jamner. At evening time, he called Ramgir Bua, a Gosavi, whom he used to call 'Babugir'. That Babugir was about to start away from there

but Baba commissioned him to go to Jamner first, in order to deliver to Nana Chandorkar a packet of udhi and a set of papers containing Bhishma's Aratis for the puja of Baba, modelled on the Pandharpur Aratis. Some one present handed over Rs. 2/- to the Gosavi to enable him to perform this journey. That Gosavi complained that the rail portion of his journey, namely, Kopergaon to Jalgaon, itself would take up Rs. 1-14-0 leaving only a balance of 2 annas to cover the ordinary road journey of 30 miles. Baba simply told him, 'Babugir, go, everything will be provided'. (See B.C.&S.31&535 C). Accordingly the Gosavi started. He got down at Jalgaon and was in a quandary. Railway officials were troubling visitors coming by train from infected areas, with a view to enforce quarantine rules, and there was no method by which he could escape them and go to Jamner. Suddenly he found a liveried peon bawling out, "Who is Babugir from Shirdi?" Then this Bua said, "I am Ramgir Bua whom Baba used to call 'Babugir'. And I am from Shirdi". Then that peon said that he had been sent by his "master" with a tonga and a horse to fetch him to Jamner. He gave him a meal also. Babugir fancied that Baba had sent word or wired to Chandorkar, and thus provided conveyance and meal for him. The distance of 30 miles was soon covered up by the tonga, and when very near Nana's quarters the carriage stopped, the peon told Bua, "There is the master's house; you had better go". Babugir got down for a natural purpose and when he turned back and looked, there was no peon, no horse, no carriage, nothing at all. How they could disappear on a clearly visible road, he could not understand. But anyhow right in front of him was the Deputy Collector's house. So he went there and found the Deputy Collector and his wife waiting. They had heard the rumble of a horse and carriage and were anxiously waiting. Babugir handed over to Nana the udhi saying, 'This is Baba's udhi sent to you for your daughter's sake'. At once the udhi was applied to Minatai, and thereafter it was no longer Minatai that was crying but her new-born child, for she had easy delivery. The arati paper also was handed over to Nana for his approval, so that it might be used at Baba's puja at Shirdi. When Bua thanked the Deputy Collector for his timely sending of the candle and food, Nana was taken aback. He said he was not aware of anybody coming from Shirdi and

so he did not send anything. Then it was that both Baba and the Deputy Collector understood what Baba meant when he said 'Go, Babugir, everything will be provided'. It was Baba's extraordinary powers that provided the carriage, the horse, the live peon and the meal, without Chandorkar knowing anything about them. This shows how deeply Baba was interested in the welfare of Nana's family, and how he took upon himself and used his mysterious powers to help him in such extremities at a difficult position in a far off place like Jamner at a time when no proper medical aid was available. Thus Baba saved not merely Chandorkar's life but also the life of those connected with or dependent on him, by the use of all his superhuman powers.

Baba helped Chandorkar in other matters also. As even many present day devotees know, Baba took charge of all affairs (including the apparently trivial affairs) of those who surrendered to him and depend on him. That watch, care and provision by Baba form not merely the cause of surrender but also a very essential factor in keeping up surrender and leading on to Laya. But we shall not enter into these minor details.

We shall take up the larger question of how Baba helped Nana in his spiritual course. Merely saving the physical life of Nana and those dependent on him would not suffice. Baba's work was to save his soul and train it to enable it to reach its goal. We shall see how Baba used every little occasion to help him. Even in temporal matters Baba's interference and help had a very good spiritual effect. Nana who noted how Baba's powers were vast, how he was watching him and his people from enormous distances and provided the necessary help in mysterious and apparently superhuman ways, soon began to get deeper and deeper realisation of Baba's divine nature. Baba's powers were far above the human level or limit just as Baba's love and supervision of many were far above the human level. None of us can take interest in even a dozen at a time and look after their affairs. Baba, however, was looking after the interests of hundreds or thousands of devotees, disciples and bhaktas and keeping watch over them all at all times and in distant and different quarters that they occupied. (See B.C.S. 479, saving 4000 persons & 35). This sort of power to know and power to protect

can only be called divine. No other term would fit (for this omnipotence, omniscience and ubiquity). Thus, while Nana was getting temporal help, he was also at the same time getting spiritual help, as he derived a very strong impression that Baba was nothing but God, that God in the abstract (Brahman) dealt with in the Upanishads (*Kend*) is not really accessible or available to people, even if they worshipped Him in the form of images, and that unless and until God took the *rupam* or form of a Gurudeva like Sai Baba, God was a remote unrecognizable or practically unfelt object. Nana noted how his poorva punya had crystallised itself into the very powerful (B C S 90-99) and highly loving Sai Baba. So we shall proceed to consider further how and in what other ways this all loving and all watching Baba promoted the spiritual and temporal welfare of Nana.*

"The feeling that one is always under the watching eye and protection of a Divine power that looks after the trivial and the important concerns of one alike and makes him successful and happy in everything has come to many Sai Bhaktas and they are constantly reporting it to Sai Sudha and the author. Has this protection and guidance and grant of success anything to explain it? Is there any parallel to it in our

The most essential part of man's nature is the ego. But in his endeavour to derive the best out of his physical life, a man's ego ordinarily runs riot and manifests itself in anti-social and anti-moral ways. Lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride, and jealousy, are all the various manifestations of this ego, and each of these has to be put down, and the danger of allowing free scope to these must be rubbed into the soul of the disciple so that he may become a fit person to attain life's goal.

Regarding this, much instruction has been imparted openly and in hidden or mysterious ways by Sai Baba to devotees like Nana Chandorkar, and we shall do well to study the way in which the lessons were taught while benefiting by the lessons themselves. But before proceeding to deal with each of them, we must remember that we are dealing with human nature, and that the so-called

Shadripus, (i.e. Six Enemies)⁴ namely, *Kama* or Lust, *Krodha* or Anger, *Lobha* or Greed, *Moha* or Delusion, *Mada* or Pride, and *Matsarya* or Jealousy are evils mostly from the standpoint of the sadhaka aiming at crossing samsara and reaching a perpetual state of perfect bliss. But to ordinary men who have very little hope or chance of attaining the high goal, namely, perfect *Scanti* and *Mukti*, complete freedom from all these six enemies is an impracticable ideal. And perhaps for the continuance of society and the species, absolute freedom from the first two or even the first three is not desirable. Kama and Lobha are desires for external objects which are generally needed by an individual in the circumstances in which he is placed and, therefore, it is wrong to totally suppress attachment to external objects so long as a person wants to retain a body and live in the world. Attachment is called *Kama* when it is directed to the satisfaction of the sex urge, but the satisfaction of that urge is ordained by God as part of the work of created beings to continue the species, Hence Lord Krishna says in the Gita that the attachment to the opposite sex for purposes of sex gratification, if limited to those lines which Dharma draws, is divine; and God himself is that love, sex-love.

Dharma aviruddho bhuteshu kaamosmi bharatarshabha.

This means, 'O Bull amongst the Bharata clan, I am the sex urge when it does not conflict with Dharma'. The royal Raghu line is praised thus "*Prajayai Griha medhinam*" i.e, having sex relations to continue the lineage. Readers will note

⁴ Vedas and puranas? There is one word *Kamavasayita*, i. e. achieving all objects, in Yoga sutras and Bhagavata and one hint or instance of it in Bhagavata Purana (re Vamana Avatar). When the Asura Ball went on defeating the Devas and conquering all the three worlds, Indra complained and sought the aid of his guru Brihaspati who then said, *Jaanami Maghavan Scatror unnaler asya kaaranam Scishyaya Upabrutam tejo Bhrugubhih Brahma vaadibhih* i.e. I know the cause of this increased prosperity of this enemy (Bali). His Guru Sukra Acharya, master of Mantra sastras has given him the benefit of his mastery of mantras.

that a total exclusion of sex contact or sex urge for all is not proper and will do no good. On the other hand, an attempt to achieve what is in the circumstances impossible or impracticable will result in numerous evils.

Similarly about *Krodha*. *Krodha* is the manifestation of the excessive vigour of the ego when it tries to assert itself against obstacles to the gaining of desired objects, services, etc. As objects are desired and have to be acquired in worldly life, *Krodha* or a resolve to overcome obstacles must be there for the temporal welfare of beings. See Gospel i.e. B.C.S. 313.

313. Baba said:—'*Yama Niyama* : Restrain lust— wholly in respect of others' wives, and partly in respect of your own. Enjoyment of marital pleasure is permissible. But be not enslaved by it. Mukti is impossible to persons addicted to lust. Lust ruins mental balance and strength or firmness. It affects the learned also. Unruly buffaloes are controlled by tying a log to their neck as a clog to their movements. *Viveka* (i.e. prudence or discrimination) must be tied to one's mind when sex attracts. Desires must be controlled. You must master them and not be their slave (*Vijitatma, Jitendriyah*).

'Yet you can (and must) use them, the inner enemies, within limits :—e.g. Besides *Kama* for the wife, have *Krodha* (anger) against unrighteousness, *Lobha* (greed) for Harinama, uttering God's name, *Moha* (fondness) for Mukti (salvation), and *Matsarya* (hatred) for evil action. Have no *Mada* (pride)'.

So long however as the sex urge and the anger urge are pulling at a person, there is no Scanti or perfect poise, no buddhi or perfect satvic understanding of things as they are, including the Self, and they are therefore obstacles to his spiritual advance.

No self-realisation is possible when sex urge. Self-urge, and other urges are ruining the equilibrium of the Self. As for *Lobha* etc., they are obviously violations of social rules and common wisdom. It is good to desire well-being but bad to be greedy. Hence *Lobha* (greed) is bad. To desire under wrong ideas is *Moha* (Delusion). This is bad. *Mada* is pride, conceit, vanity, or other kindred states and obviously implies very wrong and improper valuation of oneself and consequent

wrong behaviour towards others. *Matsarya* (jealousy) is the worst of these six mental upsets, and the reasons are those which are set out in BCS 225.

LUST

With these prefatory remarks, we shall begin with lust, and see how Baba inculcated truths about lust, and made Nana Chandorkar absorb them. Nana was a very respectable, married gentleman, having children and having family traditions and a position to maintain. Further, his training had given him excellent qualities of self-restraint and propriety of behaviour. So, he was not ordinarily what one would call a lustful, lewd, or lecherous person. He was on the other hand a very properly behaved, and excellent head of a family. Yet, the saying goes 'Even an elephant may slip'. Baba, who was watching Nana wherever he was, and at every moment, noticed that he needed to be taught and trained in the matter of lust also. On one occasion when Nana was sitting next to Baba at the Dwarakamayee, two Muslim ladies were standing for a time at a distance, evidently waiting to see when this Hindu (Nana) would go away. They had to remove their veils at the time of taking darsan, which meant, putting their bare foreheads on Baba's feet; and being gosha ladies, they did not wish a Hindu to see their faces. When Nana tried to get up on this account and go away, Baba pulled him down and said, 'Let these people come if they care'. So, the ladies had to approach Baba and take darsan with Nana by his side. Nothing happened when the elderly lady removed her veil and took her darsan. But when the younger did the same, her face struck Nana as remarkably beautiful. The sheen of the eyes, the brilliance of the countenance, the perfect proportion of the features, and the indescribable charm of the whole person, were such that Nana was at once smitten with her beauty. When his mind was thus occupied, the lady finished her darsan and resumed her veil. Then the thought struck Nana, 'Shall I have another opportunity of seeing this angelic face?'¹ Baba at once slapped him on the thigh. Then the ladies departed. Baba asked him, 'Do you know why I slapped you?' Nana admitted that his thoughts were low and unfit for one in Baba's company. He asked, 'How is it that even when I am next to you, such low thoughts sway my mind?' (B.C.&S: 205). Baba replied, 'You are a man after all,

and the body being full of desires, these spring up as sense objects approach.' Then Baba asked, 'Are there not lovely temples with well coloured exterior? When we go there, do we admire the exterior beauty or the God within? When you are seeing God within, do you ever care for the outside beauty of the building? Similarly, remember God is not only in temples. He is found in *every creature*.⁵

"Therefore when you see a beautiful face, remember that it is a temple and the image of the God within is the Jiva, a preeminent part of the Universal Soul. So, think at once of God—or the Universal Soul in every object, whether beautiful or ugly. These forms reveal the God within. There is nothing wrong in admiring beauty, but the thought must follow at once, "If this object is so beautiful, how much more beautiful and powerful must be the God who made this object and inhabits it? Thinking thus, you will not get smitten by a Muslim beautiful face hereafter". This was the upadesa given to Nana. Baba had not to go further and stop him from any sinful acts due to lust, as he had to do in another's case. (See B. C. & S. 206)

H. V. Sathe, when once staying at Shirdi, was in danger of being dragged by lust into the mire of sin. Baba, when he saw him, asked him whether he had been to the "Sala." Sala means school, but it was the local name of the house in which a young lady with considerable beauty (and bad reputation) lived.-Later in the day, H. V. Sathe went to that lady's lodgings (Sala). He carried on conversation with her behind closed doors, and there was imminent danger of a terrible and ruinous fall. Just at the nick of the moment, the door was flung open. Baba stood on the threshold and made signs to Sathe signifying, 'What! You have come all

⁵ *Dehol Devalayah proktah Scivo Jivah Sanatanah, Tyajet Ajnana Nirmalyam Soham Bhavena Pujayet.*

So says the Upanishad. which means 'The body is said to be a temple. The god (in it) is the eternal individual soul Jiva. (So) Remove the Nescience-Ajnana which is Nirmalya (used up flowers). "Soham" "I am He". Remaining with the realisation must be the worship".

2. See also S B XI (II) 45,46.

this distance to your Guru, and are you now descending to hell? Oh! What an excellent course!' Sathe was shocked and quietly went away and never again visited her house. In the case of Nana, there was no chance of his going to such extremes. On the other hand, he was naturally self-controlled, and with Baba's guidance, he developed so much of reverence for the female form that even when alone in a sequestered chamber, within closed doors with a young, beautiful person, he still would retain reverence for the lady and not have thoughts of sex. This was demonstrated in the case of Bannu Mai.

Bannu Mai (a young Muslim girl of 20) lived in a village, Bodegaon, 50 miles away from Ahmednagar, and she had the local reputation of being a mad girl. She was possessed of great beauty. She behaved most erratically and wandered anywhere and everywhere without dress amidst bushes and thorns and did not show the least sign of observing the rules of propriety demanded of women. Her mother thought she was hopelessly mad. So also thought most of the villagers. But a few had noted that her conduct showed that she was highly inspired and that she was a saint. Nana wanted to take darsan of her and asked Baba for permission. Baba, though he first objected, finally granted the permission saying, 'Go, you will have darsan'. That darsan was no easy joke. Nana went with plenty of preparations, taking a tent, bathing materials, ornaments, food, Sari (dress) etc., and setting these up, was waiting for her. He could not find out where she was, and nobody could tell him anything about her. Some people even got angry at Nana, a young officer questioning about the whereabouts of a lady who mostly went naked. Then finally, worried in his mind, Nana thought of Baba and prayed to him. When he opened his eyes, Bannu Mai was right in front of him on the road. He made his prostration (namaskar) with a feeling of reverence and without the least touch of the sexual urge. He began to take out the thorns that were found on her feet, but in a second, the saint, who did not care for such good offices, got up and went away. Again Nana was in great difficulties. He wanted that she should come, have a bath, wear the cloth and the ornaments he had brought for her, and should taste the naivedya which he had placed inside the tent. He waited and waited, and at last prayed to Baba. Suddenly Bannu Mayi

appeared, entered the tent, had her bath, put on new clothes, the ornaments and the *tali* or token of *Saumangalya* (as Goddess Parvati must wear a tali) specially prepared for her, and ate some of the naivedya. Nana fell at her feet, treating her as Mother Goddess, and at once she disappeared. Nana spent the night in a temple within closed doors, and early morning, before starting to go away, he just thought that it would be a special blessing if Bannu Mai should give him one more darsan before he departed. In a second, Bannu Mai was somehow there within closed doors right in front of him. Nana fell at her feet. Obviously Bannu Mai was a highly advanced Siddha and perfectly pure, and Nana with perfect purity, thought only of falling at her feet, and had not the least touch of sex urge at the presence of a young and beautiful lady in solitude within closed doors. Thus, Bannu Mai's case is a fairly good proof that Nana had conquered his sex urge at least to the extent possible.

KRODHA

Krodha means anger. It would include hatred, disgust, and kindred feelings. In the usual sense, anger is that which tends to vent one's full force against the adverse creature or person. Therefore, it is extremely unsocial. All the same it is a necessity. Creatures are together in this world, and there is the struggle for the survival of the fittest, and creatures have to obtain objects coveted for by more than one and, therefore, the obtaining of an object requires the venting of one's full force against adversaries or adverse forces. Hence, anger is sometimes treated as a virtue, and, in any case, a necessity of the situation in the world as it goes (especially in war). Therefore, for a virtuous person like Rama, the epithet applied is '*Jitakrodhah*', Anger-controller, that is, not that he had no anger, but that he had conquered it. For Shirdi Rama (that is Sri Sai Baba) also, we can use the same epithet) namely, '*Jitakrodhah*'. 'When the anger was on, Rama is described by Valmiki as '*Kalagni Sadruscah Krodhah*'. That is, 'When in anger, he (Rama) resembled the terrific fire that devours the world at its end'- Rama put on this anger for purposes of battle when he went to meet Ravana. He checked it when he found that Ravana had been beaten to the ground. He told him then, 'You had better go home. Come tomorrow again for battle' showing that Rama

was a *Jitakrodha*, that is he could rouse anger up at one time and stop it at the proper time and place. Baba also had need for anger, a physico-psychical need that could be understood only by persons who thoroughly studied Baba's physico-psychical organism. Anyhow, it has been noticed that Baba himself was in towering rage at times, and this appeared to be an ungovernable rage to people. They would regard Baba at those times as mad with rage. G. G. Narke once saw Baba in such a condition, and thought for the moment that Baba was a mad man. Mahlsapathy also had similar impressions. Baba corrected G. G. Narke when he came to bow to him, and said, 'Narke, I am not a mad man', knowing his momentary thought. That is, even when he was in a towering rage, he could read Narke's mind. Now reading another's mind is the result of the clairvoyant power which requires a considerable degree of placidity, *satva guna*, clear buddhi, and *scaanti*. So, Baba had all these even when he was in a towering rage. Similarly on several other occasions, of which examples are given in B.C.&S. paras 212, 213 to 218, Baba, when apparently under a wave of anger, was really placid enough to note with calmness who had come, what for, and how they required to be accommodated immediately e.g. Uddhavesa Bua, Police Sub-Inspector Samant, and Pleader Joshi of Thana each separately; and each on a separate occasion noted that Baba suddenly stopped his rage, carried out their wishes, gave them calm and cool replies and udhi. This is "*Jitakrodhah*." Rouse up your anger, use it for a time, and when you do not want it, put it back into its scabbard; this is the proper use of anger. But people do not always understand it, and may plead Baba's anger as an excuse for their own. If they really wish to have anger like Baba, they must be able to shut it up at will; but that ability they have not.

Baba however put down anger as the staunch enemy of all equanimity so absolutely essential for one's upward march in realising the final state of life called *saanti* (*Om santih, santih, santih*). So he told a Ramdasi, who was overpowered by anger when he learnt that his Vishnu Sahasranama had been taken away without his permission or knowledge and given away to Shama.

When Jog got angry with Baba who asked him for dakshina, Baba told him not to give way to anger. Some devotees are generally short tempered, and to such devotees Baba gave the special advice that they should not yield to that weakness. R. B. Purandhare and Mrs. Pradhan were two such persons. Baba said to Purandhare (B.C. & S. para 210), 'If any body comes and abuses you or punishes you, do not quarrel with him. If you cannot endure it, speak a simple word or two or else leave the place. But do not battle with him and give tit for tat. I feel sick and disgusted when you quarrel with others'. He told Mrs. Pradhan, 'If any one talks ten words at us, let us answer with one word, if we reply at all. Do not battle with any one'. On another occasion, Baba said (B.C. & S. 208), 'If any one is angry with another, he wounds me to the quick. If any one abuses another, I feel pain. If any one bravely endures the abuse, I feel highly pleased.'

Baba's self-control and carrying out this same advice has been noticed at times. A half-crazy sadhu called Nana Wali, on one occasion came to Baba and, standing before him, said, 'Baba, get up, I want to sit in your seat'. Any other person would have kicked Nanawali out, but Baba quietly vacated his seat and the impertinent Nana Wali occupied it. After sitting on it a few moments, the crazy man thought he had done too much. So, he got up, requested Baba to resume his seat, and fell at his feet, and Baba was calm throughout. This shows to what extent Baba could control his anger. In paragraph 215, Baba has said, 'I get angry with none. Will a mother harm her little ones? I love devotion. I am the bonds slave of my devotees'. He also told Nana on one occasion, 'I am not angry with you'. Baba told Mrs. Pradhan, 'You see I did not get angry with any one today.' On one occasion, when he was uttering words in a towering rage, he uttered in the middle, 'Let blessings be to all', [BCS 218] c.f. "*sarve janah sukhino bhavantu*". This blessing cannot coexist with anger. It is characteristic of a peaceful and loving frame of mind. Baba, therefore, might be considered during his towering rage to be driving away spells of thought or other ethereal waves which might be coming to harm his devotees or the public and the anger might be necessary to quench and beat back those waves. Two such instances of useful anger may be pointed out here.

When B.V.Dev wanted Baba to overcome some wretched force of destiny which prevented him from completing his study or pothi or parayan of Jnaneswari whenever he started it, Baba first repeatedly took large dakshinas from him. finally fell foul of him, got suddenly angry, and used these words, 'Why are you stealing my rag? Is it your way to steal and that despite your grey hairs? I will kill you with a hatchet'. This might be a special shock treatment needed for Dev's mental state. Dev wondered what this thunder of anger meant. Then Baba cooled down and said. 'Does not matter. Give me Rs. 12 dakshina', Dev gave the dakshina. Then Baba said, 'Go on reading pothi'. Dev then started reading pothi, namely. Jnaneswari. Till that time, his pothi reading was ending in failure. After Baba's anger directed evidently against adverse forces, there was no more obstacle, A very similar incident took place when Gadgi Bua (who was building a big dharmasala at Nasik for which funds first came in lakhs and later no money was forthcoming), approached Baba in order to overcome the unseen unlucky (*duradrishta*) forces. As soon as he came near, Baba used angry and bad words and curses and abused him. The Bua laughed out, Baba also laughed out. Gadgi Bua went away. Baba had driven away the adverse forces, and Gadgi Bua again got plenty of funds, and the dharmasala was completed. Thus Baba's anger is not to be understood literally. It is evidently directed against unseen forces. Similarly when Baba came as a young fakir and stayed in some lonely place, he used to shout with anger, laugh, or do other things. He was evidently always dealing from the beginning with unseen forces and directing his anger, laughter, etc. at them. G.S. Khaparde notes several times in his diary that Baba used "hard words" meaning foul and angry abuse, the cause of which the persons present could not understand.

Before leaving the subject of anger, we may also refer to other instances of Baba's outbursts of anger which had special purpose, and which were not mystic processes like the above. Sometimes they were cases of "*double entendre*." One instance may be immediately given. Shama, that is Madhav Rao Deshpande, was bitten by a snake, and his life was in danger. People are accustomed to take such patients immediately to a particular temple. In Shama's

case, however, Baba was all the God he knew, and he wanted to go to the Masjid straight away and he accordingly went there. Baba, instead of treating him civilly, flew into a furious rage, and said, 'Do not climb up Bamnia. If you do, take care. Get down. Get down, *Hat Mage Hat Mage, Bamnia. Var Mar Jav, Hat Mage, Hal Mage*'. Shama thought that his refuge was gone, that Baba was not protecting, but driving him away. Just one minute later, Baba coolly and quietly said, 'Shama, come up' and gave him directions to be observed by cobra-bitten patients, and asked him to go home, and there observe the usual directions of keeping awake and moving about and not going to sleep for 24 hours. Shama was thus saved, and he survived the cobra venom. Then what did the words mean? '*Hat Mage, Hal Mage*' did not mean that Shama was to go down but only the poison should go down from his system. "*Bamnia Var Mat Jav*" should not be construed as addressed to the Bamnia Brahmin, namely Shama, and as asking him not to come up. But they were addressed to the poison. The poison was not to go up, but it should go down the Brahmin Shama.

Another instance of a similar sort was where Baba's outburst of anger was merely a device to enable a diarrhoea patient to get groundnuts. Kaka Mahajani had diarrhoea, and he carried a (*chombu*) vessel of water with him, and was in front of the Dwarakamayee. Baba was inside, and there were plenty of persons outside. Suddenly Baba burst out into violent rage and people fled in all directions. See B. C. & S. 392. People took to their heels and cleared the premises, Kaka Mahajani also was slowly moving towards his "chombu" and wanted to go out. Baba suddenly came and stopped him and sat next to him. There was a packet of groundnuts left by some one who was eating them, and who in his hurry to escape safe, left the groundnuts behind. Baba took up the groundnuts and shared it with Kaka Mahajani saying, 'Let us eat groundnuts'. They both ate the groundnuts, and Baba asked Kaka Mahajani to drink water on top of it. This is not exactly the treatment for diarrhoea which any doctor would dare to give, for that would aggravate it. But Baba said 'Your anal sphincter is now tightly closed'. This cured Kaka Mahajani of his diarrhoea.

LOBHA

Now we shall take up the remaining "shadripos" and see how Baba coached his dear devotee Nana in respect of these matters also. 'So far as Lobha is concerned, it is excessive greed and is looked down upon even in an ordinary person, and much more in a person who aims at spiritual uplift. But so far as Nana was concerned, Lobha does not appear to have been a defect in his character. In any case, Lobha is only an exaggeration of one's attachment to moneys and goods. Baba took very good care to see that Nana's attachment did not reach excessive heights. Baba adopted his usual methods for this purpose. It is 'Dana' that is the exact opposite of, and, therefore, the antitode for, the venom called attachment or greed. This truth comes from even the date of the Brihadaranyaka (V.2). Prajapati was approached by his three sets of children, the Devas, the Naras, and the Asuras. Each of these came and said, 'Please give us instruction as to what we should do'. Prajapati answered. '*Da, Da, Da,*' to each of these. In the case of the gods, the '*Da*' required for them was *Dama*, that is, self-control, moderation. In the case of the Asuras, the '*Da*' required was *Daya*, i.e., Mercy. Their excessive cruel nature had to be met by the spirit of compassion, which was the antidote for their cruelty. In the case of men, the '*Da*' was '*Daana*' i.e., charity. Man's natural instinct is to grasp, to be greedy, and to get more and more, and the best way of checking this greed is by making man give up all that he has got. *Daana* forces a man to part with his money, etc. and by constant parting, he will get accustomed to feel quite nonchalant, quite unaffected while parting with moneys or when moneys are lost. Thus '*Da*' (*Daana*) is the recipe given to men as the rule of their life by Prajapati.

The importance of eradicating greed from one's nature may be seen from the simplest and one of the best of all the 108 Upanishads—viz., *Isavasya Upantshad*, so much praised by Mahatma Gandhi. In the very first verse of this Upanishad, the order is given, '*Ma Gridhah Kasyasvid Danam*'. That is, 'Covet not wealth whosoever it may be.' Or it may be translated thus, 'Covet not; Whose is wealth?' This means, What is your wealth today is mine tomorrow and somebody else's on the third day. So there is nothing fixed about wealth, and one

need not concern oneself so much about this fleeting possession. Therefore, *Daana* has been specially insisted upon not only in the Vedas and Upanishads (*dakshina* is prescribed for all the rituals) but also by Baba in his daily practice. Baba the Soul of Vairagya never cared to ask for moneys in the beginning. But when visitors began to rush upon him in crowds, in hundreds, he began to ask for *dakshina*, which had various meanings and explanations. One way of keeping out undesirable people, the over-greedy people who think of nothing except money is to ask for *dakshina*. A lawyer, who went to see Baba when alive, noted that he, a lawyer, accustomed to get money from others, was being asked to pay money to Baba. So he felt repelled and never again visited Baba during his life time. That is evidently one of the ideas underlying Baba's demand in some cases. In many other cases also, the demand of *dakshina* serves the purpose of reducing attachment. In the case of Nana, Baba used to demand off and on various sums, and so Nana was accustomed to take with him large sums like Rs. 300 or Rs. 400 whenever he visited Shirdi. Whenever Baba asked for money, Nana would give him money. This constant giving of money to Baba would naturally reduce his attachment to wealth. Baba, however, used this demand on one occasion for another purpose, which deals with the next subject.

"MOHA" i. e. DELUSION

Nana was under the delusion that he was the great supplier of Baba, and that Baba had to depend upon him for moneys. Nana had to be disabused of that idea. So, Baba made use of Sri M. B. Rege on one occasion, and exhausted all the funds he had by taking them out as *dakshina*, and when M. B. Rege said that he had no more money, Baba said, 'Borrow'. 'From whom' asked Mr. Rege. Baba sent him first to Shama who had no money at all, and who was a very poor man. Shama's explanation of Baba's demand was that Baba wanted *him* and not his cash, and, therefore, he (Baba) wanted him to feel the want of cash was nothing. So saying, he sent his namaskars through Rege to Baba. Then Baba sent Mr. Rege to H. S. Dixit who also had not the money with him at that time. He explained Baba's demand to Mr. Rege thus: 'You must not feel begging at all to be a shame, much less begging for the sake of your master'. Then Baba sent him

to Nana Chandorkar. Nana Chandorkar then explained to M.B. Rege his policy. He used to leave one half of his money at Kopergaon and come with the balance to Shirdi, and when this was exhausted, he would send for the reserve at Kopergaon. When Mr. Rege reported this, Baba sent for Nana Chandorkar and took from him (by repeatedly asking for dakshina) all the money he had in his possession. Then he again asked him for dakshina, before the reserve from Kopergaon arrived. Nana felt humiliated. His *moha* received a blow. The subjects of *moha* and dakshina are closely connected with daana.

Daana - Alms Giving

Charity or alms-giving is stressed in every religion as also in the Hindu scriptures as stated already. Yet as very few understand and practise it correctly, Baba had to give Nana instructions on Daana to reduce *lobha*, *moha* and *mada* especially through increasing contact with God. Baba's instructions to Nana are found in the Gospel 306-309. The first advice was that alms giving, should be straightforward. No one when asked for alms should utter falsehood and say 'I have not got it' (the money or other things prayed for), when he has got it, but only decline to give it in polite terms and say that circumstances do not allow the giving. No crooked ways should be adopted. Yet after this advice was given, some time later, Nana, who had promised to pay Rs. 300 for charity to be done at the Kopergaon Datta temple, did not bring the money and therefore avoided a visit to the temple, which was on his way to Shirdi. He, with the approval of his friend, took a detour through a very thorny path, as a result of which he and his friend ran thorns in their bodies. When they reached Shirdi, Baba would not talk to them.

C:— Why don't you talk to me?

B:—Nana, when a man says he will remember the lessons I taught him but really does not, how can I talk to him?

C:—Baba I remember all your lessons.

B:—You gentleman, you evade seeing 'Sircar' (God Datta) and take a detour. Why? Because the sadhu will ask you for Rs. 300. Is this the way to remember my lesson? If you have not the money, if it was not easy to arrange to get it. you

have only to tell him the fact. Will that saint eat you? But what device is this to avoid the temple of God for fear of the saint demanding money? Well then, have not thorns pierced your feet and body and the posterior part of your sapient friend? How can I talk to such a person?

Again Baba advised Nana to give his alms without any arrogance or anger and that if any beggar was not pleased and wanted more, then the beggar should be answered suavely. Wrath and official authority should not be flung at him. Nana thought this quite easy. But on one occasion when his wife was being pestered at Kalyan by a Brahmin beggar woman, who was not content with one-eighth of a measure, one-fourth of a measure, one-half of a measure, or one measure, or even 2 measures, of *Bhajani* (*Poriarisi porikollit*) i.e. fried and seasoned rice, and who threatened not to leave the house (at all) till the whole stock of four measures in the possession of the lady was handed over to her, Nana's wife lost patience and sent for her husband. Nana came and gave it hot to the beggar woman. 'Either you take what is given or the peon will neck you out', he stiffly remarked. Then the beggar woman left. When later Nana went to Baba, Baba again refused to talk to him. "*Mitra Dandam Abhashanam*" is the wellknown saying. That means, The way to punish a friend is by refusing to talk to him.' When Nana asked for an explanation, Baba said, 'You forgot the lesson I gave. When that beggar woman was importuning you for more and more *bhajani*, why did you show your anger and official authority, and threaten to neck her out? What mattered it if you suavely refused to give more? The woman would have remained for some time longer and left of her own accord'. Nana recognised that this mysteriously overwatching guardian angel of his was watching him every moment and anticipating the temptations and evils that would befall him, and that he should be more careful in carrying out his (Baba's) instructions, Thus, *Lobha* by leading to arrogance, insolence etc. in Nana was put down by Baba, and Nana recognised more and more what true *daana* was. True *daana* is thus described in Bhagavad Gita.

Daatavyam ity vat daanam. diyale anupakarine.

Dese kalecha patrecha tad daanam saatvikam smritam,

The beggar is not to be treated as a nuisance or as a contemptible individual. According to Hindu religion, the beggar is God himself. You have to treat him as Narayana, coming to you to give you an opportunity to serve him. So. the gift to the beggar must be with due respect and not with contempt or insolence. The above stanza means: 'The gift must be at the proper place, at the proper time, and to the proper person. It must be given with the idea. It is my duty to give this. I claim no particular merit in giving it', The gift must not be for a consideration or with a view to reward or recompense. This is satvic *daana*".

One more instance of Baba's reducing "*moha*" of 'mineness' is this: We might mention also what Baba taught Nana as to Karma to weaken *moha* on the same occasion. The *moha* that sways practically everyone of us is the attachment we feel to our children and to other members of our family and the feeling that we cannot be happy unless they are always with us. Birth and death are serious things which condition our happiness. (See B. C. and S. 371). We have already referred to Baba's help in the case of Minatai's difficult labour. Unfortunately within a few months after its birth, her child died. A short time before delivery, the husband of Minatai also had died. Minatai was very young. The whole family was in gloom. They went to Shirdi and sat in sullen silence before Baba. Baba asked, 'Why are you so sullen?'. Then Nana said, 'Baba, you know everything. While we are under your care, these calamities have befallen us. We are bereft of child and son-in-law'. Baba answered, "If you care for child and son-in-law and come to me for that, you are mistaken. You should not come to me for these. These are not in my power. The birth of a child and the death of relatives are dependent on poorva karma. Even Parameswar, the Great God, who has created this world, cannot alter this. Do you think he can tell the Sun or the Moon, 'Rise some two yards farther away from your usual or appointed place?' No, He cannot and will not do that. That would produce disorder and chaos". Nana asked 'if that is so, Baba, how is it that you tell someone, "You will have a son" and he gets a son, and you tell another "You will get employment" and he gets it? Are these not chamatkars of yours?' Baba answered, 'No, Nana. I do not do any chamatkars. You have your village astrologers. They work at three or four days ahead and

give out their predictions, some of which come true. I look just further ahead. What I say happens. My art also is a sort of astrology.

But you do not understand this. To you, my words look like *chamatkars*, because you do not know the future. So, you regard events as proofs of my miracle working power, and you turn your reverence on to me. I in my turn turn your reverence on to God and see that you are really benefited'. Baba thus weakened his *moha* or unconditional and excessive attachment to relations. Baba's further advice in this matter is given elsewhere.

MADA

Thus far we have dealt with *Lobha* and *Moha*. We shall next proceed to see how Baba dealt with the other two items, namely, *Mada* and *Maatsarya*. *Mada* is pride, conceit, vanity, or display of one's ill-conceived high opinion of oneself in a way displeasing and disgusting to others. That pride may be based upon either caste or wealth or learning or physical strength, etc. In the case of Nana, pride of learning and caste was in him, and it had to be duly toned down. That which is the hardest to conquer is pride of learning. This over-attachment to learning is called '*Vidya Vasana*'. When we have to shake off *vasana* (tendency) after *vasana* to get into pure Satva of Brahman, one serious obstacle is this *Vidya vasana*, the idea 'I am a learned man', 'I know all the Vedas', 'I must consider everything in my own style and cannot accept somebody else's dictum.' These are all *vidya vasana* traces, and all of them are fatal to one's chance of attaining Mukti. So, Baba had to put down this pride of learning in Nana. Nana was not very offensively parading his learning, but still had an idea that his knowledge of Sanskrit and the Gita with Sankara Bhashya placed him high above the ordinary run of men in knowledge. Baba wanted at one stroke to pull him by the heels and show him how dangerous his conceit was and at the same time teach him the duties of a (*sisya*) pupil and lay the foundation for Brahma-realisation (which cannot coexist with Ego and Egotism). One day when Nana was massaging Baba's feet, he was mumbling something to himself. Baba asked him what it was. Nana said that it was a Sanskrit verse.

Baba : What verse?

Nana : A Gita verse.

Baba : Recite it audibly.

Then Nana gave out Bhagavad Gita, Chapter IV, verse 34, dealing with Sishya and Guru relation. Baba knew exactly what he was mumbling and caught him exactly at the point wanted. It dealt with the Guru's teaching the sishyas, and that is what Baba wanted—to disabuse him of his conceit and pride based on an ego which barred God-realisation or *jiva brahma-aikya*. The stanza runs as follows :

Tadviddhi pranipaatenaa paripraschnena sevaya,

Upadekshyanti lejanaatn jnaamnah tatvadarscinah,

Baba asked Nana whether he knew the meaning and, if so, to give it. When Nana gave the general purport, Baba ordered him to give a word for word translation with strict reference to number, gender, case, tense, mood, and other parts of grammar. Nana wondered how the intricacies of Sanskrit grammar could be understood by Baba who showed no trace of linguistic, literary or any other education. Anyhow he went on giving the word for word meaning. Then Baba began a cross-examination of the severest sort.

Baba : Well, what does '*Ta*?' refer to?

Nana: Jnana.

Baba: Which Jnana?

Nana : Jnana referred to in the previous verse.

Baba : What does *pranipata* mean?

Nana : It means prostration or bowing down.

Baba : What does '*Pata*' mean?

Nana: The same.

Then Baba asked :—If '*Pranipata*' and '*Pata*' meant the same thing, would the author (Vyasa) have used two extra needless syllables? Similarly about '*Pariprasna*', Nana said, '*Pariprasna*' means questioning, and '*Prasna*' also meant the same. When asked whether the author was again needlessly adding two syllables, Nana could not explain the difference. Similarly about *Seva*. Nana said that it was merely service like massaging, which he was doing.

Baba : Nothing else?

Nana : Nothing else so far as I can see.

In that way Baba puzzled him word after word and phrase after phrase and puzzled him also with the general question, why Krishna, a Jnani, should refer Arjuna to other Jnanis instead of himself giving him Jnana. Again he asked, 'Is not Arjuna a soul of the nature of Chaitanya, i.e., knowledge?' Then, when this was answered in the affirmative, he asked 'How can (or why should) knowledge be given to that which is already knowledge?'. Chandorkar was simply dumbstruck. After putting several other questions like this, Baba finally asked, 'By a difference in syllabification, can you read one extra syllable (without damaging the metre or verse)?' 'Yes' answered Nana 'We can say *Upadekshyanti Te {a} jnanam*. Then Nana added, 'What! this reading of the Guru giving *Ajnanam* is not in Sankara Bhashya.' Baba said. "That does not matter, if that makes a better meaning'. Nana could not understand how the Guru's giving *Ajnanam* could make a better meaning. Then Nana Chandorkar was thoroughly humbled. He felt that he was before a giant who knew Sanskrit, who knew the Upanishads, and who knew everything. He then asked Baba himself to explain, and Baba's answers to his own questions revealed a wealth of knowledge of Upanishadic material and a cleverness in twisting the words into a new meaning. So far as the word 'Jnanam' is concerned, Baba quoted Upanishads and said 'Is not Jnana that which is beyond Mind and Speech (quoting *Yatovacho Nivartante*) ? Is not Jnana, *Avang Manasa Gocharam*, i.e. beyond Vak and Manas?' Nana had to say 'yes'. Then Baba said, 'Therefore, what the Guru says through his mouth is not *Jnana*, and what is not *Jnana* is *Ajnanam*. So thoroughly humiliated, Nana wondered what it all led to. Baba, however, explained, 'Just as one thorn removes another, the Guru's teaching which is verbal begins as *Ajnanam* and removes the *Ajnanam* of the sishya which is but a cover over the sishya's knowledge, and the result is *Jnana*. Therefore what the Guru teaches is primarily *Ajnanam* which tends to result in *Jnana*. *Jnana* is not created, but is always there, and is not uttered. The uttered word, like an optician's instrument, simply removes the cataract from the eye of the pupil who, thereafter, sees and recognizes himself in a state of pure knowledge'. Thus Baba went on explaining

the whole stanza and insisted upon the sishya's duties. Baba said, 'Seva is not any ordinary massage. You must surrender *Tan Man Dhan*, body, mind and possessions. You must not feel that you are rendering service to the master. Your body already surrendered is the master's property, and you must feel "No merit is in me. I am merely making the body, which is yours, serve you". That is "Seva." *Pariprasna* and *pranipata* were similarly explained to show how thorough must be the spirit of surrender and the spirit of earnestness. '*Pranipata*' must be '*Sashtanga dandavat* like a stick falling down. You must feel that you are nothing. You are only a zero. The Guru is everything, and, therefore, thorough humility is involved in *pranipata*. *Pariprasna* means an earnest questioning and repeated questioning, i.e. questioning carried on up to the point of getting full and complete enlightenment impressed upon you. This is *pariprasna*. It is not merely putting questions with a view to trapping up the master, and catching him at some mistake or simply asking for the fun of it, (like Pilate who asked Jesus "What is Truth", and did not wait for an answer but went away.)

We shall narrate another instance where Nana's pride of learning received a good shock. Nana was observing the vedic injunction that at every meal he should prepare the Vaisvadeva food and, after offering it to God, wait for an *Atithi*, i.e. guest, before he should eat it. Nana was in so many camps and waiting, and yet he never found an *Atithi* or guest. So, one day he thought, "How could Vedas give such a nugatory or infructuous injunction?" With that thought uppermost in his mind, he went to Baba. Though he did not utter it, Baba himself started the subject. Baba said, 'Yes, The Devil, they will come. You think that *Atithis* will come wherever you go. But you do not look at the *Atithis* when they do come.' 'Yes, Baba. I want to know how that is', said Nana. Then Baba answered. 'The mistake is not in the Vedas. The mistake is in your interpretation of the Vedas. An '*Atithi*' is not necessarily a person who is a Brahmin by birth, and who would come to your quarters to sit at meal with you. After your puja is over, take some food out in your hand and leave it in some corner, and thousands of *Atithis* will be coming one after another, each in its own due course, and partake of it. They are the asses, the dogs, the flies, the ants, etc. To you they do not look like

*Atithis*⁶. But they are *Atithis*, for *God is in them all*'. If you do this, the Vedic injunction is satisfied and you will obtain the required *punya*". Nana felt duly humbled by seeing that Baba gave an interpretation which made the Vedas sensible, whereas his own interpretation made the Vedas absurd and infructuous. Baba also asked Nana to leave the food outside without crying out or calling for anyone or anything. This is set out in the Gospel (BCS 309). See also B Gita XV 14. Lord Krishna says '*Aham Vaisvaanaro Bhutva Praaninam deham ascritah Praana apaana-samayukto Pachamyannam chaturvidham*', i.e., 'as the *Vaisvanara* (fire) I enter the bodies of creatures, and in union with *Prana* and *Apana* digest and use up food of all the four sorts (solid, very solid, semisolid, and liquid).' Thus, Nana not only got a valuable addition to his knowledge of sastraic duty but also got more humble in finding that Baba could give an interpretation which made the Vedas sensible and not nugatory nor infructuous.

Nana was very far advanced amongst the disciples of Baba. But human nature is hard to subdue. Familiarity, if it does not breed contempt, at least breeds liberty-taking, and Nana was the only one or one of the very few who hobnobbed with Baba. All the hundreds of males and females that went to Baba at puja or Arti time would invariably stand up, and no one would sit. Upasani Maharaj had to stand and so had others to stand. The pujari Bapu Saheb Jog had to stand. Every person, male or female whatever his or her position may be, had to stand before Baba. Nana, however, used to sit next to Baba, even at Arti. Having studied Baba's nature, Nana began to get rather weak in his humility and reverence. For instance, the vessel of water held near Baba's lips at the close of the puja, would be distributed to all as *tirtha*, and they would all drink it. But Nana and Das Ganu would not take it. Therefore, familiarity had its adverse effect in

⁶ ***See Khaia** Upa v. 7 *Vuisvaiarah praviscati Atithir Bmtimano gruhan Tassyaitam scanttin Kurvanti. Hara Vaivasvata udakam*, i.e. The Brahmin guest enters into a house as the Vaisvanara Fire People (ie. the hosts) appease him. 0 **Death** bring water to offer him (as *Padya Arghya* and *Acliamaniya* sc.).

the case of Nana also. *Tirtha taking* is after all a minor matter. The more important matter is that Baba's presence, which was magnetic, lost a great deal of its magnetic spell in Nana's case by his repeated contact. The highest lessons one has to learn from a Moksha Guru are first to realise that in a particular person or object there is God, and next that He is in all. That means that one must first have realisation of one's own nature and of God's nature; and God should not be merely that which you worship with flowers. God should not be that which you feel to be only in one place and at one time. Gita says, 'A person who understands Iswara properly must feel awe and bliss from the presence of Iswara in everything,' Baba, being the Guru Deva, had to teach his beloved pupil this truth and make him realise God in all things and feel awe, love, etc. Baba is treated as God on account of his wonderful power and knowledge and is held in awe by others. But Nana seeing Baba constantly at the Mosque or in particular places naturally developed *sakhya* more than *daasya* and insisted on particularising and humanising or fraternising with Baba and not universalising him, as he ought to have done. Baba had to overcome this difficulty.

So, Baba wanted to make him feel (firstly) divinity more and more in Baba and (secondly) the fact that Baba's divinity is not confined to the Baba body but extends to all creatures as Baba is their Antaryami or soul or self. These two are closely connected. Baba said, 'I am not at Shirdi alone. I am in all creatures, in the ant, etc'. Intellectually this was understood, but at heart, Nana did not realise it. Baba wanted him to realise it more vividly, as that was very important for higher spiritual progress. So on one occasion, when Nana came up, Baba told him to prepare 8 pooran polis (cakes) for naivedya and then take his food. When Nana placed before Baba eight pooran polis, Baba did not touch them, but flies sat on them. Then Baba asked Nana to take away the prasada (i.e. remnant of food which Guru had first tasted). Nana insisted that Baba should eat some. Baba said that he had eaten. 'When?' asked Nana. Nana said, 'All the eight polis are there'. Baba said he had eaten it at some time. Then Nana got vexed and went away to the chavadi. When Baba sent for him, the same conversation was repeated. Finally Baba told Nana, 'I say you have been living with me for 18

years now. Is this all your appraisal of me? Does Baba mean to you only the 3½ cubits height of this body? Am I not in the fly and the ant that settled upon the polis?' Nana said that he knew that, but could not realise it. If Baba could make him realise it, Nana said, he would take and eat the polis as prasad. Then Baba lifted his hand and made a gesture. He thereby revealed a secret which Nana was hiding very deep in his heart; and Nana discovered that Baba knew the secret. How? The only explanation was that Baba was the *antaryami* or the inmost soul in his heart. If Baba was his *antaryami*, he must be the *antaryami* of the fly and the ant also. So he agreed to take the pooran poli as prasad, and was satisfied. Then Baba told him, 'As you see the gesture I make, you must remember that I am in all creatures'. Thus Baba gave him a very valuable lesson and took him up one very important rung of the ladder, that is, realising God in one form after another and not confining Him to the object worshipped at home or in a temple.⁷

Baba had to teach several other valuable lessons, most of which are embodied in the Gita. When Nana was cross-examined about the Gita sloka, he finally prayed that Baba should teach him the gist of the Gita. Baba told him to come up everyday, after going through part of the Gita, and to sit at his feet. Then when Nana did so, all that he had read in the Gita flashed as realisation in his heart. This is what is mentioned by the *Svetasvataropanishad*, last stanza, namely,—

yasya deve para bhaktih, yata deve talha gurow

tasyaite kathifa hyarthaah prakaascante mahaatmanah

This means, 'To him who has intense faith in God and equally intense faith in his Guru, (to that Great Soul), these truths of the Upanishads (about realisation of Brahman) will shine forth'. Nana had full faith in Baba, and, as he sat before

⁷ The very great importance of this realisation is seen from the frequent insistence on it, not merely in [the Upanishads and Bhagavad Gita, but also in the Bhagavata XI Sk.

Baba, the full gist of the Gita, chapter by chapter, flashed before his heart and helped him to realisation.

This method of direct illumination in the heart of the pupil without utterance of any speech by the Guru is called *Mouna Vyakhya* and the Dakshinamurthi method, which must be more fully described in a later chapter, as this one is already too long. For the same reason, other truths taught to Nana Saheb Chandorkar have to be described in chapters dealing with other devotees, who were taught the same truths.

Eknath Bhagavata XI was prescribed by Sai Baba for study (Parayana) by so many of his bhaktas including H.S. Dixit, Uddhavesa Bua, etc., It was also recommended (and made frequent use of) by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and other saints and gurus.

In closing this chapter, one naturally feels the importance of taking up the two great highlights of the Sai movement, its pioneers and, by a careful, humble, and observant comparison and contrast of the two, noting what can be derived as conclusions about their individual natures, the way in which they approached Baba and Baba approached and benefited them. Comparisons are said to be odious, but comparison and contrast is the very life breath of a proper study of human beings and the way in which they progress. If one avoids captious criticism, irresponsible remarks, superficial admiration, and prejudiced views, one may arrive at various valuable truths by comparing and contrasting bhaktas. Thereby one begins to understand much better the way in which Sai Baba was approached and He operated upon those contacting him. The study might prove interesting in any case for a student of religion and should prove particularly valuable to those bhaktas who are anxious to approach Sai Baba now to determine for themselves in what way they ought to approach him, what preparations, if any, they ought to make, and how Baba is likely to benefit them. These first views may not be exhaustive or perfectly accurate, but they may form the basis for one's earnest effort to get the best out of Sai's contact. They certainly will help any one to understand Sai better. When we note the innumerable ways in which Baba was approached by persons of various levels

and grades and how Baba responded in each case, we are struck with wonder and delight. It is like noting the rays of the Sun which shoot out in all directions and operate in innumerable different ways on different objects or matters at various levels. At the very outset, this author bows down with utter humility before these two great saintly personages, namely, Mahlsapathy and Chandorkar, whose height he can never hope to reach, and about whom he cannot have the least irreverence, jealousy, envy, cavilling tendency or any other improper attitude. Following Baba's directions to Annasaheb Dabolkar (Hemadpant), the study has been undertaken here also of great worthies who contacted Baba, partly with a view to understand and appreciate Baba's workings and partly to present Baba's lilas with as much fairness, fullness and clearness as possible. When there is this sincerity, humility, and desire for truth, Baba declared that jnana and vairagya would be the results of the study of bhaktas' experiences, that is, bhaktas' experiences contained in the biography. Therefore, this author has ventured to study among others these huge giants, who acted as pioneers in the Sai movement, to present as attractive and useful a picture as possible.

Both Mahlsapathy and Chandorkar were pioneers, but they strike one as being in the opposite poles in social, intellectual, and other matters. Mahlsapathy was a humble, poor goldsmith in an obscure village. Chandorkar, on the other hand, was a scion of a well known reputed Brahmin family, the heads of which held high positions in the State, owned considerable property, and led lives highly praised by their community and were well known to fame. Both Mahlsapathy and Chandorkar had from the beginning pious surroundings and early orthodox training. Both adhered to *sadachara* and worshipped God in accordance with family customs and adopted family traditions. But these traditions were different in the case of these two families. The humble goldsmith could only worship his tutelary deity Khandoba not known at all even to Hindus outside Maharashtra and get ideas of God to be found in Mahlsapathy purana, and progressed only on lines indicated therein and followed the footsteps of his father. In Chandorkar's case, he had the entire Sanskrit religious literature before

him and the worship of the far-famed Vedic deities of the Trinity - Siva and Vishnu alike - and he followed Sankara Acharya in matters of doctrine. To Mahlsapathy, education was practically a sealed book. To Chandorkar's eyes, literature spread a vast panorama, and he was prepared to advance as far as his powers would permit, alike in secular and religious education. Mahlsapathy could not get beyond his pial school. But Chandorkar as already noted rapidly advanced from his elementary to secondary and from secondary to high school and then to collegiate education, and, by the age of 20, obtained a degree from the University, and entered service, wherein also he rose by his ability in seven years to the position of a Deputy Collector.

Equally rapid and notable was his march in his studies. He read up not merely Western philosophy, but also Sankara's philosophy as contained in the Gita Bhashya and other sacred works. He read up books not merely in Sanskrit but also in English, and could widen his views in both spiritual and temporal matters to an extent which would be impossible for Mahlsapathy. Naturally the consequence of such progress and position would be to develop self-assurance and even egotism in Chandorkar, and he would be apt to assume, as so many educated orthodox persons assume, that Moksha is merely a matter of conquest over the self as described in Vivekachudamani and other works by bringing their teachings into practice as early as possible in one's life. In Mahlsapathy's case, there was no question of extra studies. The four corners of Mahlsapathy Purana formed the horizon of his view. He had to pick up his religious and other knowledge only from what is contained in a few elementary books and from family traditions and the contacts he had with sadhus and saints. Several people would fancy that, from this contrast, the position of Chandorkar was far superior to that of Mahlsapathy. But such people are ignoring the very important fact that both these went to Sai Baba, the All Knowing Samartha Sadguru, whose methods of imparting culture, wisdom, and excellence to his devotees were so unique, so different, nay wholly different, from those adopted in ordinary religious education from religious gurus.

In the case of Baba, it is not the study that one has of Vivekachudamani or Bhagavata that counts. On the other hand, one totally devoid of any book study, but possessed of perfect self-surrender, humility, trust, and love towards the Guru Baba, was and is the person who could derive the fullest benefits from Baba. Chandorkar's vast learning should all be unlearned before Baba could impart anything to him. The idea that one has understood all about Jiva and Paramatma and the methods by which Paramatma could be reached by a Jiva forms the greatest obstacle to one's progress. It is not the intellect, the keenness of intellect, that is wanted from a person approaching Baba. (*Naayam atma pravachanena labhyah namedhaya na bahuna scrutena*). It is humility, receptivity, and a readiness to receive all that Baba gives, that counts. Mahlsapathy, therefore, was really not at a disadvantage in the above respect. Perhaps he had more receptivity and humility than Chandorkar. For instance, Chandorkar thought that Baba could not understand Gita and could not possibly throw light on Chapter IV, verse 34, of the Bhagavad Gita being presumably ignorant of the Gita or its source, namely, the Upanishads. So long as these false ideas remained in his mind, his progress was doomed to failure. That is why Baba knocked off that conceit by a severe cross-examination on the Gita and by quotation of Upanishadic authorities which stunned Chandorkar and made him perceive that knowledge was not to be had by study of books alone but by openness of mind and approach to the source of all light. Chandorkar was by no means the exception amongst the educated people in this respect. Sri Upasani Maharaj had a similar obsession of his own learning and understanding of God and the methods by which alone he fancied he had to reach God, namely, mantras, japa, etc., which he had picked up at the feet of his grandfather. Baba had to disabuse Upasani Maharaj and others of their wrong notions before he could benefit them. As Baba pointed out to the Valambi Station Master, persons (evidently with much conceit of learning etc.) came to him like vessels the mouth of which was kept inverted and were therefore incapable of receiving any benefits from him. Before one learns what is valuable, one must unlearn what is harmful and even though we should not call Chandorkar and others conceited,

yet from the standpoint of Baba, there was enough conceit in them to prevent their deriving benefit until and unless sufficient humility and receptivity were implanted in them. Vasanas including Vidya Vasana form Ahamkar and shut out the Supreme Light, Therefore the contrast between Mahlsapathy and Chandorkar in respect of education is apt to be misleading. Even in Mahlsapathy's case a certain amount of conceit and sufficiency of Khandoba puja for one's spiritual and temporal welfare is sure to have been lodged in him by family traditions and otherwise. Even this had to be knocked off. Baba's miraculous power, wonderful knowledge, and mysterious supervision for the benefit of devotees would naturally knock off any improper assumptions or conceit on the part of devotees like Mahlsapathy and keep them at the proper level of receptivity. This remark applies also to Chandorkar.

The comparison and contrast between Mahlsapathy and Chandorkar in respect of social matters -was glaring and most marked. One was a wretchedly poor goldsmith begging his bread and starving for days after days. The other was a rich Deputy Collector with immovable properties, with a bank balance perhaps, feeding guests at his house, and looked up to as a Lord or a big man by innumerable people and not without reason. Yet the difference in this respect counts for nothing so far as fitness for receiving benefits from Sai Baba is concerned. The manner of contacting Baba by both may also be contrasted. Mahlsapathy, who first kept Baba out of his temple on account of his being a Muslim, was still able to perceive his spiritual greatness by his frequent contact and conversation with local saints like Devidas who could and did appreciate the worth of Baba. And being struck with Baba's greatness, Mahlsapathy fell at Baba's feet and determined to become his sishya. In the case of Chandorkar, he was too high a person to think of falling at the feet of a fakir, especially when his father was opposed to Muslims having anything to do with members of his family. Baba had to send for him before Chandorkar could think of going to Shirdi. Even after his first visit to Shirdi, Chandorkar could not make up his mind to be with Baba. Baba had to reveal his wonderful knowledge of what passed at Ahmednagar between him and the Collector and reveal his foreknowledge of a

new serum to be tried on Chandorkar's system, assuring him that no harm would befall him by undergoing the inoculation. This gradual perception of Baba's wondrous psychic powers, and his interest in Chandorkar inducing him to use all these powers for his benefit, conquered Chandorkar. His intellect surrendered and his love responded to Baba's call. Still as he came at a pretty late stage of his development, it was no joke for him to adapt himself to Baba's ways; and however much he might try, he could never get the fullest benefit of Baba's contact. In the case of Mahlsapathy, it was just the other way. There was a complete surrender by Mahlsapathy, who was very humble, and very poor, and had to depend entirely upon Baba for guidance, guardianship and all that he wanted. Mahlsapathy, therefore, quickly regarded Baba as being on the same level as Khandoba. Mahlsapathy could never think of philosophical or scientific explanations for Baba's lilas and would never trouble himself about them. But on the other hand some people who derived the fullest benefit by contact with Baba like Chandorkar (and the other educated set with him) were constantly trying to find out how Baba worked, what the meaning of Baba's lilas and words was, and whether Baba's siddhis fitted in with the previous religious ideas that they already had. Baba dissuaded the educated set at Shirdi from going into these disquisitions and told them that there would be no use in doing so. But nature is hard to conquer and evidently up to the last, they had their wobbling and never attained that complete surrender which Mahlsapathy got so easily.

Baba's dealings with Nana Chandorkar bring out one clear fact into prominence. Baba was not thought to be a teacher by many who contacted him and by others also who thought about him after his Mahasamadhi. It is now increasingly realised that Baba was a teacher. But even that is a misstatement. He was not a mere teacher. He was a trainer and still more, one who undertook to mould the personality of the approaching devotee. He was still more than that. He was Providence providing everything needed, temporal or spiritual, for the advancement of the persons surrendering to him; and still more than that, we find that Baba was not merely a teacher or trainer, but a school or a college in himself, nay a University in himself with postgraduate courses and research

courses leading *ad infinitum* to unknown horizons. Baba's methods are so very strange and infinite in variety. He suited and suits himself to each pupil and provides special courses peculiar to each pupil, and that is why he has been compared to a University with research courses. This is very well illustrated in Nana Chandorkar's case. Baba had achieved the highest pinnacle of spiritual greatness, and he developed incidentally powers of every sort that we read of in *Vibhuti Pada* i.e., Part III 16-55 of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras (dealing with all siddhis ending with Moksha Siddhi) or Chapter XV of Srimad Bhagavata, Skanda XI, relating to yoga siddhis. He never seems to have practised yoga for itself, but his intense concentration on his Guru with white heat of love banishing everything else but the Guru from his mind was the highest yoga that could be thought of as described in the above mentioned Skanda XI. As stated in chapter 15, verse 32, what is there impossible for one who concentrates upon Iswara with great intensity? All the siddhis were at his control and he utilised these siddhis as and when occasion required for every purpose that came to his view. He had to draw thousands to himself by reason of rinanubandha or for other reasons. By drawing them and subsequently making them hold on to him and draw more and more benefit from him, Baba had to confer various benefits by the use of his extraordinary powers. The display of his weird knowledge and weird powers was the best means for drawing people and holding them on to him and lifting them step by step, up the ladder of spirituality. Amongst the thousands that he drew, it will be difficult to find how many classes there were. If in a University there are a hundred classes, in Baba's University there must have been more, and, as for students, if a University here can boast of a strength of a few thousands, Baba's University boasts of many thousands. The peculiar power of apparently one (Baba) playing the part of the teacher, the trainer, tutor, proctor, and feeder of so many thousands even in distant places, is something unseen and unheard of.

Baba had to draw Chandorkar first by reason of his previous rinanubandha and make him the most prominent and notable amongst his (earlier) apostles. He has done that, and this learned and high-placed apostle, working together with his orderly Constable (Das Ganu) has been responsible for building up a vast

mass of bhaktas that constituted the nucleus of the world of Sai bhaktas that we see today and the bigger world of Sai bhaktas that is yet to be. But this apostle was not necessarily the recipient of everything that Baba could give. He did not attain to anything like Baba's position. He was given a very good modicum of Baba's gifts and he made enormous strides in his temporal and spiritual position. But he did not go through all courses of Baba's University.

Bahunam janmanamante jnanavan maam prapadyate

Kalena atnani vindati

He did not reach perfect or all-round development and perhaps it is not reached usually in one life. B.C. VII. 19, IV. 38. In this same volume, we find devotees with merits and excellences perceived even by Chandorkar himself as those that he had not attained to. As we have seen from the first chapter Mahlsapathy the uneducated Bhikshuka, reached very great heights of self-sacrifice and constant service to Baba which far exceeded what Chandorkar could reach or render. The absolute Saint Francis-like self-abnegation and perpetual service of Mahlsapathy, was impossible in Nana Chandorkar's condition with his family, position, office and reputation to keep up.

Chandorkar had been deeply ingrained in traditions of orthodox Hindu piety. Therefore, as already stated, he was a great believer in one's own efforts and the absolute importance and sufficiency of Vedic learning, mastery of works like Sankara Bhashya of Gita and Viveka Chudamani, for one's spiritual success. Many a reader of this book would share his views and find it hard at first to understand the difficulty which we are mentioning now as standing in Nana's way. Ninety per cent of educated people believe that a mere following of the sastras and the traditional methods of puja, dhyana, and study with meditation would suffice for one's achievement of moksha and for a thorough grasp of both Atman and Brahman. Therefore most are for self development relying upon oneself to grow step by step. (This is termed the *Markata Sisuvarga*] believing that every step upwards is achieved by one's own activity. But in Baba's method, (which may be termed *Marjara Sisuvarga*) the exact opposite is the truth, (See Gospel 176). Baba achieved the highest Jiva-Brahma Aikya which he expressed

by the aphorism *Maim Allah hum (Aham Brahma Asmi)*. Numerous powers and benefits followed it. What was his sadhana that led to this? Was he working up text book after text book and resolving doubt after doubt by approaching masters, book in hand? Exactly the opposite. He told Radhabai Deshmukhin, 'I know one thing, the truth taught me by my Guru. It is not the various sadhanas and books that are necessary. A study of the sastras is not necessary. What is necessary is absolute surrender to, and love of, the guru', (cf also BCS. 191) This, Baba declared, he had adopted, and the result was that by the Guru's grace, he was raised to the highest pinnacle. He attained to laya in his Guru. That was bhakti. It was also jnana, what is called jnana in our text books i.e. a realisation that follows as a part of the experience of one who has merged himself by surrender and love in the Guru. So, to progress on the lines on which Baba progressed, one must completely surrender oneself.

As will be seen in a later chapter dealing with Upasani Baba, the efforts of the orthodox and the learned to master one truth after another or one mantra after another with the feeling 'I have mastered this', is the greatest obstacle to progress in Baba's line.

The 'Vidya Vasana ego' is an almost insuperable barrier standing in the way of the educated, the cultured, and the intellectual set that approached and still approach Baba. Nana was the first and foremost of these intellectuals. His Vidya vasana was very powerful. He believed that he could understand and by his understanding reach Moksha. This, being a very powerful obstacle, had to be overcome, and the first step or mark of overcoming is humility and preparedness to surrender the ego or egotism.

For instance in understanding Gita, which Nana thought was a great feat achieved by himself, he could not see that his egotism barred him from really understanding Brahman or "*Tat*" for, where Ego is, '*Tat*' or Brahman is not, Baba, in order to enable him to come nearer to "*Tat*", had to knock off his self-sufficiency, egotism, and conceit, and stretch him on the floor in the mood of 'I am nothing; let the ego go; let the Guru's grace come with its enlightenment to revive the self with as little ego as possible,' and the teaching on BG IV 34-35

was the first stroke, which though powerful was not sufficient. By reason of this handicap, Nana got a certain advance in his spirituality through his understanding assisted by a certain amount of humility. But old habits will not die. As Kirtankars says, *Prakriti* (nature) dies hard and the mouse, with its rodent nature, that was offered the chance of marrying the Sun, the Clouds, the Winds and the Mountain declined all of them and ended only by marrying a rat. This is no depreciation of the great achievements of Nana Chandorkar or of Baba's undoubted ability to train him. But Baba himself recognised that there were certain barriers and limits which could be overcome only to a certain extent at a time in the circumstances of each case. That shows the need for and advantage of studying Baba's dealing with as many Bhaktas as possible. Ultimately the full course may be achieved for each as for Nana, by Baba, but that was not to be in this birth. That is what one notes, viz, that Baba trained Nana more or less in accordance with his (Nana's) own ideas. Baba is no destructive revolutionist but usually builds on old foundations. So, as Nana's opinion was that he should proceed onwards from *vairagya* and *viveka* through *Samadhi shatka* and *mumukshutva* he was given a certain advance in each of these and had to stop there for this birth (with incomplete success as he must have done in the four previous lives in which he contacted Baba). The tendencies of the animal and the tendencies of the human self built up by one laboriously birth after birth give one a particular bent or bents and have all to be taken into consideration; and the advance that Nana made in view of all these has been described in this chapter.

Here, however, (for purpose of studying Baba's methods and enabling devotees or readers to study him with reference to their own condition) we may amplify the summary given above and note some portions which Nana did not go through in this life or practically failed to achieve and which other bhaktas of Baba not so highly placed nor so brilliantly equipped did achieve. Taking the case of Kaka Dixit (Hari Sitaram Dixit), his apparent disadvantages, compared with Nana Chandorkar, proved real advantages. As stated already, for the best results according to Baba's system for one who approached Baba in accordance with Baba's traditions, the first requisite was humility and receptivity and not

much learning. In Baba's system, it is the Guru that pours into the shishya virtue after virtue by training him step after step to secure the virtues and the knowledge that he (the Guru) wishes to equip the pupil with, just as the cat carries its kittens to safe and good places. In the case of Nana, his very high learning and great ability in official and other matters were naturally accompanied by a high degree to self-assertion and egotism, which make for success in literary study, official matters, and to a certain extent even in spiritual matters. But for the highest results, it is just the opposite, namely, want of egotism, utter reduction of egotism, the power to relax the Ego and keep it relaxed for long periods, that is essential. That is why the drinking of the water washing the feet of the Guru and taking his *Uchchishta tirtha* are insisted upon in the Guru Gita for a pupil's advance, for they create and develop thorough annihilation of Ahamkara or Ego through towering reverence to the Guru ending in Love. In the case of Kaka Dixit, these disabilities of Nana Chandorkar were not present. Though high up in public life even as M.L.C. and highly successful at the Bombay Bar, he had developed humility and an equal vision by his varied experiences in India and England. A travel by sea and a visit to Britain have the remarkable effect of subduing pride and prejudice. We find in Britain the biggest men hobnobbing with common men in trains and other places and that sense of equality is very high and there people seem to feel the truth of what Burns sang—

"Man's a man for a'that".

"The rank is but the guinea stamp.

The man's the good for a'that".

On board the steamer, the Muhammadan boys who give you tea and bread, Brahmin leader though you are, feel that they are your equals, and all caste pride and peculiarities of orthodox life including the revulsion from Moslem touch disappear even in the early days of your steamer life. Kaka Dixit therefore could view Hindus, Muslims, and Christians with equal vision (which Nana could not command) and could feel himself thoroughly humble and ready to receive any Upadesa coming from Baba as something high over his head, whereas Nana, with all his mastery of Gita and other scripture, could not so completely

forget that he was a Brahmin Hindu already having a high stand. Moreover the accident to Dixit's leg, leading to a loss of its free use and inducing an inferiority complex or sense of irreparable loss and disgust with life was just the upward push that was needed.

In this samatva with humility, *prapatti* towards Baba is easier; and in all this, Chandorkar must be considered inferior to H. S. Dixit. Dixit could forget the difference between Hindu and Muslim and feel no repulsion to Moslem contact. When Baba's *teertham* was offered, Dixit and others would gladly take it, but not Chandorkar nor Das Ganu. When Bade Baba, a Muslim fakir, wanted a residence at Shirdi, to be near Baba or his tomb, no villager there would tolerate a Muslim within his small house. Dixit alone had the courage to offer a portion of his wada to Bade Baba. But many fell foul of Dixit for that provision, and even Nana Chandorkar was in the opposition and represented to Dixit the impropriety of housing a Muhammadan in "Dixit wada" (used as a travellers' bungalow for devotees at Shirdi) as that would repel so many Hindu devotees who would otherwise go there and use it. These are given only as a sample to show that Nana had not the fullest benefit of Baba contact. One's previous course of life hampers one considerably in making advance even under the powerful influence of Baba. Baba no doubt achieved very great success in inducing Chandorkar, the son of a violently anti-Muslim gentleman, to accept him for a Guru and then enabling him dimly to perceive the greatness of Baba as far as circumstances would permit. For further progress, there were serious handicaps. Kaka Dixit could make very rapid advance under Baba, especially during his Vanaprastha probation, that is, a period of 10 or 12 months which he spent at Shirdi away from wife and children under Baba's care. Nana also took leave and spent some time with Baba at Shirdi, may be a year or so. But still there was the difference in their outlook. Naturally therefore a comparatively greater rate of progress and greater amount of profit were derived by Kaka Dixit by reason of his greater receptivity and humility. We see, however, all this and more of Kaka Dixit, from his diary that he kept and also from his experiences published by his friends in the Sai Lila Masik. By reason of Nana's not having kept a diary of his experiences, we do not

know so much of him and there is the danger of our underrating Nana's progress. But still, as practically everything noteworthy in his advance was communicated by him to Sri B.V. Dev, Kaka Dixit, Dabolkar, etc., and as all these have been published in the Sai Lila Masik, we have to take it that the published matter roughly represents Nana's progress. It is on that assumption the observations in this chapter are based. There is a chance of error, no doubt, but the chance is but small, and risks of error have to be incurred in any biography.

Taking other prominent devotees who approached Baba, such as Sri Upasani Maharaj, Kusa Bhav, and Balakram Manker, we notice how they were able to give up everything, family, property, dignity, etc., and simply dedicate themselves to Baba's service, and managed to stay on for years with Sri Sai Baba. The consequent advance such a person derives must naturally be greater than any that one can derive when one pays only occasional though frequent visits to Baba as Nana did. Sri Upasani Maharaj stayed away from all contact with family, and Baba intended definitely to cut him off from family connections, and he stayed at the Khandoba temple at Shirdi for 3 years waiting for Baba to work upon him. In the Chapter on Upasani Maharaj, we may notice the consequent notable advance in various directions. Such advance is not to be found in the case of Nana Chandorkar who was a grihasta to the end of his life with innumerable worldly thoughts dominating him. Even though Upasani Maharaj withdrew himself from Baba before the period prescribed for tutelage was over, still the progress he made at Shirdi was continued at Kharagpur, Nagpur, and Sakori. Powers, which may be called siddhis, were off and on shooting out of him, and even Nana Chandorkar, when calling upon Upasani Maharaj at the Khandoba temple, felt the higher position which the *Pravrajita* Upasani occupied as a pupil under Baba (and as his probable or possible successor in the view of several), and showed him great respect or reverence. Kusa Bhav, though not spiritually so high, was living without any family connection for years and years under Baba, and Baba blessed him with the power to produce Sai Udhi at will and give it to all as a cure for all ills which raised him in the eyes of his numerous sishyas or followers. Balakram Manker was similarly able to dissociate himself

from family, to give up highly lucrative position in business, and even lead a life in solitude on Machendragad Hill by Baba's order, and was deriving great benefit from Baba's contact and guidance. In fact, many hoped that he would be Baba's successor on Baba's gadi. But his premature death in 1913 destroyed that hope. These three are mentioned to show that a certain dissociation from family, official position, and even property, which was possible for Kusa Bhav, Upasani, B. Manker, etc., was not possible for Chandorkar and that consequently the benefits he derived were different from those that totally (or almost totally) dissociated people derived. [This, however, is not a slur upon Nana Chandorkar.] The lines of advance for these three, namely, Upasani, Kusa Bhav, and Balakram Manker, seem so different from the lines of advance of Nana Chandorkar.

Again there seems to be some constitutional difference between some bhaktas and others. Some seem to have a special facility for having visions, trances and similar states. A Brahmin doctor, who went to South Africa and returned, had this special peculiarity, and, by gazing at Baba, he could see in Baba the form of Sri Rama and by intense prayer he derived for over a fortnight, what he calls *Pararna Ananda* i.e. the highest bliss he knew. It is not the same as *Brahmananda* evidently, which Ananda is not given but must exist inherently and be perceived by one after getting over all obstacles to one's vision of the self as Brahman. Even G. S. Khaparde, owing perhaps to the peculiarity of his smoking and other habits, if not his constitution, derived spells of what may be termed *Parama Ananda*. Frequently in G.S. Khaparde's diary, we find mention made that Baba cast some yogic glances, as a result of which for hours G. S. Khaparde was drowned in bliss. Even Mrs. Manager (i.e. Mrs. Tarabai S. Tarkhad of Poona) could derive this sort of Ananda. But we do not find anything like these spells of being drowned in bliss described as part of Nana Chandorkar's experiences. Perhaps constitutionally some do not and cannot get this experience. Emotional susceptibility seems to be an important factor in perceiving this Ananda, and intellectual vigour like Nana's seems to keep it out. The absence of these spells of bliss may not be a serious loss to one proceeding

on Nana's lines of advance. Absence of Yoga siddhis is no loss but a gain to such.

Again some devotees have a childlike faith, so very childlike that others do not reach it, being afraid at heart that that extent of credulity is either unbecoming or dangerous. 'You cannot enter the Kingdom of God unless you become as little children', said Jesus. This seems to have a strange application to the closing scene of this earthly life of devotees. Mahlsapathy had childlike faith and his end was most charming. At the close of life, he knew, though in ordinary health, that the moment of death was coming and he welcomed it, and his friends sat by his side and carried on bhajan till his last moment. And assuring all that he was going to Heaven on that day, and finishing his meal and betelnut chewing, he calmly and cheerfully passed away with Rama nama on his lips. Dixit's faith in Baba as his *Sathi Akaraka* (the last moment's companion) was firm—as Baba (who was the soul of truth, that never gave out false promises) had declared "I will carry my Kaka (HSD) in a Vimana". Dixit had a very happy (totally painless) death in the train when thinking of his Guru-God Baba and gladly thanking him for securing the train for him though he came late. The Gita verse declares that what we think of in our last moment that we become (VIII-6).

Again, there was perhaps some constitutional help for many a devotee who under Baba's influence began to realise the great truth which our scriptures proclaim, namely, that God is in everything and that the advanced sadhaka sees God in everything and sees everything as God. These are the very words of the Gita, (e.g. V 29-31, VII 19, X 20-39). But hardly ten in ten thousand amongst those that read the Gita daily as Parayana would have any experience of seeing either God in the things they behold or seeing everything that they see as God. But under Baba, a poor woman of Shirdi began to feel that a snake was really Baba. Some others developed the feeling that the dog or the beggar that approached them was really Baba. If the dog and the beggar excite in them feelings of reverence (for which purpose Baba tried to make his devotees avoid cruelty and irreverence to dogs and beggars), this is a stepping stone to the achievement of the above mentioned goal of the scriptures. One step in this

advance is to see Baba or God first and oneself next in all creatures and all creatures in oneself.

1. *Sarvabhuteshu chatmanam sarvabhutanicha atmani
ikshate yoga yukta tma sarvatra samadarsanah*

(VI 29)

2. *Yo maam pascyati sarvatra sarvam cha mayi pascyati
Tasyaaham na pranascyaami sa cha me na pranascyati*

(VI 30)

3 *Bhuteshu Bhuteshu Vichitya Dheerah
Pretya Asman Lokat Amrita bhavanti.*

These mean, respectively,—

1. The Yogi whose self has been tacked on (to Brahman), with his equal vision towards all sees the one Supreme Atman in all creatures and all creatures in the Self.
2. He who sees Me everywhere and sees everything in Me, to him I do not perish, and he never perisheth, but is always with Me.
3. The sages or wise ones find in every creature the Supreme Self and casting off their bodies become immortal.

This higher stage of advanced bhaktas is thus described in the sastras; and Baba's disciples and pupils having the perfect God-realiser Baba for their guidance should naturally be expected to reach it. Some must have reached it.

From the reminiscences of Chandorkar that are now left to us, we are unable to perceive that he reached it or was nearing it. Baba however trained several people including Nana Chandorkar in the steps necessary to enable one to consider every creature God. It is easy for us to read "*Bhuteshu Bhuteshu Vichitya Dheerah*" or "*Sarva Bhuteshucha Atmanam*" or '*Atmowpamyena sarvatra samam pascyati*' - B. G. IV.32. But in practice, it is indeed the hardest to look upon even one creature or one object as God. Why even to get the state of mind of dealing with perfect God when dealing with Baba, was and is impossible to most people. How can such persons treat a dog or a cat, a beggar or a snake, as God? In order to overcome the almost insuperable objections to treat

everything as God or as Baba, he coached up his devotees and showed them the basis for such an advance. In the case of Nana Chandorkar, he enabled him to take the first step in this direction by convincing him that the poli placed before him (Baba) and eaten by the fly was really eaten by Baba, because He was Nana's inmost soul or *antaryami* (as demonstrated by a *chamatkar* of his), and therefore, the fly's inmost soul. He could similarly show Hansraj that the cat that stole or ate away his curds was himself (Baba), because the blow given to the cat by Hansraj produced a weal on Baba in the very place of the stroke on the cat's shoulder. But how many steps can a man be pushed up a palmyra tree by one standing on the ground? One must climb up oneself. So, many persons made very slow advance in this matter. Nana's advance in this direction also appears not to have been marked by any remarkable strides of success. This power to see Baba or God in everything is said to be best achieved by putting the collyrium of love on one's eyes. A Gopi in her intense love to Sri Krishna began to see every thing dark as Krishna, such as Tamala trees or clouds just as a thief sees a police man in every bush. A lover sees his beloved's face in the moon and in everything that is beautiful. This is a peculiarity of the way in which the highly emotional mind works, and this psychological truth is pressed home in Srimad Bhagavata, Skanda XI. If you wish to have thorough absorption in God or anything else, the course for it is that the *Dharan*, *Dhyana* and *Samadhi* should be perfect, that is, the most intense that the constitution is capable of. The *dhyana* may be due not necessarily to devotion or love, but may be due to lower psychological states such as hatred or fear. Hiranyakasipu hated the Lord and saw him everywhere and Ravana, in his fear of Rama, began to fear that every sound beginning with 'Ra' would denote Rama.

Yatra yatra mano dehi dhaarayet sakalam dhiya

Snehat dveshat bhayat vaapi yaati tattat sarupatam.

SB XI (9) 22

This means, 'Whenever one concentrates oneself completely, heart and soul, on any object, whether by reason of love or hatred or fear, one reaches *sarupya* of that, that is, becomes of the same form as that'. This is common experience, for,

if you are thinking only of your favourite object, all vague sounds take the name of your favoured object. A man sat in church hearing some French or Latin ritual and when asked what it was, said, 'All my eye and *Betty Martin*'. A Gopi, who went out selling curds, instead of saying 'Curds for sale', said, 'Krishna for sale' This, therefore, shows the advantage of those who are capable of such intense emotional heights. They get to *sarupya* losing themselves. No doubt these would be put down as mad people by the mass, and surely they would mostly be unfit for the ordinary work-a-day life. But they succeed in their aim, namely, reaching the Supreme goal.

Keeping these observations in mind, we should note if there is any such line of advance, at least to a noticeable extent in Nana's case. His faith in Baba was undoubtedly very great, but still his constitution, or the degree of progress made by him, prevented him from losing himself in Baba. His faith was great enough as shown in the following case. One day, when he was going along the road in company with his wife, some person came and said that his own wife had evil possession or some trouble for which Baba's udhi was wanted as a remedy. Nana, finding no udhi at hand, picked up some earth from the road, and, remembering Baba, applied it, not to the visitor's wife, but to his own wife's forehead, and told the visitor that the remedy had been applied. This shows remarkable faith of Nana in Baba. But still it does not seem to have gone up to the degree of self-annihilation by a process of emotional intensification, In BG. 9-22 Sri Krishna said—

Ananvah chintayanto maam ye janaah pari upasate

Teshaam nityaabhiyuktaanaam yogakshemam vahaamyaham.

(IX 22)

This means, Krishna says to Arjuna, 'if men think exclusively of Me (or identify themselves with Me) and serve Me completely, and perpetually contact Me, the acquisition and safeguarding of good for such people is burden borne by Me'. In the case of Baba, who is no other than Krishna, he was looking after the welfare and providing goods and safety (*Yoga Kshema*) to such Ankita devotees or children, even though they fell short of the perfect *ananya chinta, pari upasana*

and nitya abhtyukti ideal. He, however, helped people to increase the contact with him by decreasing their external contacts and activities so as to march on to the ideal. Nana marched on fairly successfully in his course —though he did not attain the required self-annihilation that some devotees of Baba achieved.

With these comparisons we should stop this chapter for several reasons: (1) Superficial readers may lay to their hearts these points on which Nana did not achieve complete success and fancy that his life was a failure. They may consequently lose their reverence for him and that would be a great mistake. The author bows down to Sri Nana Chandorkar for the marvellous progress he made and the very great good he has achieved for us all—in fact he was responsible for our Sai faith and is our God-father or God-grandfather, our spiritual atavus. (2) Comparisons with all devotees is neither possible nor desirable. (3) The comparison and contrast provided here will suffice to guide us in our attempt to get fuller ideas of the unthinkable (*Achintya*) perfect Sai Baba.

Critical and analytical studies or moral and spiritual states, and steps useful for achieving and causes of failure to achieve the same have been made or noted in this chapter at great length. It is best to set out as much of these as possible and as early as possible in the book and hence these have been applied to Nana Saheb Chandorkar. But what has been said about him applies to many other devotees whose progress is described later, though there is no express reference to that fact in later chapters. Careful readers who go through this book with a view to get a full grasp of the subject of religious progress, especially for the purpose of helping on their own development would note this application of the studies to other devotees—and, may be, to themselves. We are not the guardians or judges of other souls. Only our own is committed to our care.