

CHAPTER IV

H.S. Dixit

The next person of whom an account should be given in Sai history is H.S. Dixit (Hari Sitaram Dixit), a well known solicitor of Bombay. The reasons for giving him prominent mention so early in Baba's history is that he was very largely responsible for the establishment and progress of Shirdi Sai Sansthan, the affairs of which were managed by him as Hony. Secretary very ably and enthusiastically up to the time of his death, i.e., 5-7-1926. He was also responsible for drawing large numbers to Shirdi and filling them with admiration and enthusiasm for Sai Baba. The 'Sai Lila Masik', the Mahratti monthly organ of the Sai Sansthan, which had the same result, was mainly his work, up to July 1926, most of his experiences and those of his friends (numbering 151 and more) swelling the first four volumes of that journal, and still giving excellent guidance to devotees.

H. S. Dixit was born in 1864 of high caste Nagari Brahmin parents enjoying a high position and affluence at Khandwa. His scholastic career was bright as he secured a first class in Matric and good marks in F.A., B.A, and LL.B. He very soon settled himself as a leading solicitor at Bombay, and his name frequently appeared in the Law Reports and in the press as distinguishing himself as an able advocate in sensational cases, e.g. Bhavnagar Exposures, Sedition trials against Poona Vaibhava, Lok B.C. Tilak and Globe and Times of India, etc. He attained great fame and wide popularity and commanded high esteem both with the people and the Government. He had numerous public activities, political,

social, municipal, etc., by means of which he was rendering good and valuable service to the public. In politics, he was in the Indian National Congress, and he was the redoubtable follower of Sir Pherozesha Mehta. He was an elected member of the Bombay Legislative Council from 1901 till he gave it up to devote himself to spiritual progress under Sai Baba. He was also an elected fellow of the Bombay University, a Notary public, and Justice of the Peace. He achieved great fame by his bold speeches (e.g. by being the sole protestor against Valedictory address to H. E. Lord Sandhurst who prosecuted Tilak) and action in the Councils. He helped bodies by serving on Committees with his keen intellect and strenuous observation and study. He was Secretary of the Indian National Congress of 1904 at Bombay wherein D. Nowrojee stated its goal to be attainment of Swarajya. He rapidly rose by his influence and ability to greater and greater positions of honour and, had he continued in that line, he would surely have achieved a Knighthood, membership of the Executive Council and appointment as Commissioner of some Province with ample emoluments and gunfire salutes. But his destiny and rinanubandha drew him to other lines, and the turning point was what looked like a mischance. He was in the Bombay Corporation also as a Councillor; and he frequently served on other public bodies. He was a patriotic and self-sacrificing man, and for the sake of principle and public good, he readily resigned his position in the Corporation, and worked hard for national welfare. About 1906 he went to England. There he had some accident in which his leg was injured. In spite of repeated efforts, the injury could not be cured. The limping impeded free movement, as there was pain if he walked a few furlongs. Not only did it make him look awkward, but also it made him less fit for his numerous activities, personal, domestic, political, legal and public, and thus had the double effect of giving him an inferiority complex and a disgust for these aspects of life, thus preparing him for the nobler and holier life. About 1909, Nana Saheb Chandorkar advised him to go and see Sai Baba, the wonderful personality at Shirdi, who might cure his lameness, the same year he went to Ahamadnagar in connection with some Council election business to the house of Sardar Kaka Saheb Mirikar, who was a Sai bhakta, and who had with

him a huge picture of Sai Baba. Dixit saw the picture and his reverence was heightened.

Learning of Dixit's desire to go to Baba, he (Sardar) sent for Madhava Rao Deshpande otherwise known as Shama, Baba's constant attendant, who had gone to Ahamadnagar, and asked him to take Dixit to Baba. Accordingly, Shama took him to Baba in 1909. This very first experience which Dixit had in connection with Baba strengthened his attachment to and admiration for Baba, especially because he had from infancy a great desire to be with sadhus and saints. He repeated his visits to Shirdi frequently, and in 1910 resolved to have a building of his own there. So the foundation stone was laid for a wada there in December 1910, popularly known afterwards as Kakawada or Dixit wada. The work was pushed through and completed in five months (i.e.) in April 1911. From the very beginning Kaka wanted only a small room for himself upstairs for Ekanta Dhyana (solitude and meditation). The rest of the building was used by pilgrims i.e., the public.

Baba's kindness towards him was manifested from the very beginning, and Baba expressed this to others also. He told Anna Saheb Dabolkar 'Kaka Saheb is a good man. Be guided by what he says'. He told R.B. Purandhare to be with Kaka Saheb and assist him. The greatest interest in a saint for any serious minded person is, and ought to be, spiritual interest. So, though originally Dixit's idea was to go to Baba for the cure of his lameness, he soon gave up that idea and said 'Lameness of the body does not matter much', and wanted Sai to cure the lameness of his soul. Sai made distinct promises to Dixit, whom he always called 'Kaka', meaning uncle. As many persons called him 'Kaka', Sai Baba also called him 'Kaka'. One of the early notable statements of Baba was "I will take my 'Kaka' in a vimana" (B.C.S.,100) meaning thereby that he would give Kaka a happy end— *Anaayaasa Marana* and *Sadgati*. Baba did give him both as will appear from what follows.

Dixit in 1909 was a leading solicitor with a highly lucrative practice and had made his name in notable trials. He had abundance of social contact and great influence in social and political matters. In 1909 he was only 45 years old, and he

had a very good prospect of amassing much wealth and achieving many honours in social and political matters also. Perhaps due to early contact with saints, such as Datta Maharaja, his mind, however, was drawn away from worldly attractions, and the meeting with such a wonderful personality as Baba gave a powerful impetus. On account of rinanubandha Baba drew him (see B.C.S. 502). Almost from the beginning of his contact with Baba he resolved to have Satsanga with Baba, and to embark on a spiritual career under Sai's guidance, whatever may be its consequence on his worldly affairs. Though his income was ample, his generosity and liberality left very little fluid resources remaining with him and, barring his three bungalows at Bombay, Ville Parle, and Lonavla, which did not yield any income, he had no other property. Yet Sai's attraction being strong, his visits to Shirdi were more and more frequent and his attention to practice was greatly diminished. One consequence of this diminution was that his partners in the solicitor business, viz., Rao Bahadur S. Narayandas and Dhanji Shah, broke up their partnership with him, and he had to form a new firm with a newly enrolled advocate Purushotham Rai Markhad for his partner. That gentleman also, on account of Dixit's frequent absence and lack of interest, withdrew from his partnership. Other partners also, Maneklal, etc., very soon left him alone or rather he left them very soon, and his income from law became very little. From 1911 onwards, his practice may be said to have been nil, though Baba asked him to go to Bombay to practise. He obeyed Baba and went to Bombay, but returned soon as his heart was at Shirdi and not at Bombay. All his friends, acquaintances, and admirers were astonished when he closed his lucrative practice in 1912, and several people were saying that 'A Fakir called Sai Baba had cast a fascination on him that pushed him to Shirdi and made him crazy'.

Sai Baba distinctly undertook the full care of Dixit and his family to enable him to carry out his spiritual work. Baba's express words to Kaka were '*Kakatula Kalji Kazli Mala sara Kalji Ahe*'. That is, 'Kaka, why should you have any anxiety or care? All care and responsibilities are mine'. (B C.S. 29). On the first occasion when he said this, Baba gave him indisputable proof that the undertaking, though vast and unlimited by time and circumstances, was real. No ordinary man with

human powers will or can give such an undertaking. But it was Baba, possessed of divine powers, that gave it. When at Shirdi Baba gave this undertaking, Kaka's daughter, aged about eight, was in his bungalow at Ville Parle, and was playing close to a huge almirah with a large number of big dolls in it. She climbed up the almirah, and the same (with all the dolls) fell upon her, but strangely enough, no dolls fell upon her; and no damage was done to her by the fall except the breaking of her bangles and the consequent scratch. Kaka learnt of this incident only later, and understood what divine power and kindness were in Sai (his Gurudeva) when he gave the undertaking, which he fulfilled thus at once at Ville Parle.

Dixit could never forget that Sai's powers and nature were divine, and that all responsibility for him and his family rested on Baba's divine shoulders, and that there was no need to apprehend any harm. His heart was free from anxiety, fear or worry though lucrative practice, with high social and political position and prospects, was lost by his clinging to Sai at Shirdi ignoring his worldly affairs. Ordinarily the change from affluence to lack of funds would be painful. But in the case of Kaka Saheb, his habits were very simple. He reduced his needs to the minimum, and avoided every sort of luxury or unnecessary expenditure. The loss of income or wealth would be considered a great evil by others; but he, as the "Ankita" or earmarked child of Baba (who undertook all responsibilities), and as a student of the spiritual life and a special student of Bhagavata, remembered what Lord Krishna says in Skanda 10, Adhyaya 27. *Tarn Bhramscayaami sampatbhyo yasya cha ichchaami anugraham i.e.* 'I deprive him of all wealth, whom I wish to bless'. His keeping away from courts, society, and public work might make life dull and insipid to him but he realised that he was being trained by the Sadguru for something higher, i.e., Sadgati, by shedding the popular confusion of wealth with welfare and of enjoyments with happiness.

For a person steeped in worldliness and spending 95 per cent of his time in worldly company, all chances of spiritual progress depend upon sequestration and solitude and entire absorption in holy company amidst holy surroundings. Therefore it is that our sacred books prescribe that after Grihasthasrama has

been enjoyed to a certain extent, we should retire and live in the forest, i.e.. in Vanaprastha Asrama (SB XI(18) 1-11). Kaka Saheb had already 25 years of practice and worldly Grihasthasrama and was ripe therefore for Vanaprasthasrama. In his case, however, he had no necessity to go to a reserved forest. His life at Shirdi from 1912 onwards (i.e. from his fortyeighth year) may be considered to be his Vanaprasthasrama. To make that effective, i.e., to give him Vanaprastha Asrama. Baba told him. 'Kaka, remain in your wada upstairs. Do not go here or there. Do not come here (even to the Dwarakamayi)' which was crowded and distracting. Kaka obeyed this injunction strictly. Then he found his absence at the darsan of Baba for 2 O' Clock Arti very painful. Through Shama he prayed and obtained permission to attend it and the Arti at Chavadi. Thus Baba kept him for nine months in solitude. This is strict Vanaprastha or Vanavasa. Alarmed by the change, his wife at Ville Parle tried to give him her company and came to Shirdi. At Kaka wada, ladies should not go upstairs; that was the rule. When Shama broached the question to Baba whether during his wife's stay downstairs, Kaka should go down for sleep or sleep upstairs only, Baba emphatically said that Kaka must sleep upstairs. Thus Kaka's Brahmacharya and rigorous tapas were maintained, and his wife returned quickly to Ville Parle. One the occasion of her departure, Sai Baba repeated his assurance that he was entirely responsible for Kaka Dixit. He told her 'Have no fears at all about Kaka, / *will took after him myself.*

The regular study by Kaka (prescribed by Baba) when he was upstairs was an excellent purificatory preparation for self-realisation and God-realisation through bhakti and jnana. Kaka had gone through Harivarada, i.e., a Maharatti commentary on the 10th Skanda of Bhagavata. Then Kaka went to Baba and asked him, 'This is finished. Should I read this again or read any other pothi?' Baba said, 'Go on with the parayana of Eknath Brindavan pothi'. Amongst the numerous works of Eknath, none is named 'Brindavan Pothi'. So Kaka Saheb took Eknath's Bhagavata, 11th Skanda, and asked Baba whether that was Brindavan Pothi. Baba said 'Yes'. Kaka did not understand, and others also did not understand why Baba called Eknath Bhagavata 'Brindavan Pothi'. But when

Kaka came to the end of the book, he found the last stanza of the last, i.e., 31st, Chapter in which the author Eknath says.

Haa Ekaadasca navhe Jann

Eka tisaam Khanache Brindavama

Etha nitya base Sri Krishna

Swananda puma nijasatla

which means—'know this (book) is not Eleventh. It is the 31st storeyed Brindavan. Here Sri Krishna always resides, in his own essence, full of his own bliss'. Kaka and all wondered how thoroughly familiar Sai Baba was with Eknath Bhagavata by seeing that he referred to what was stated in its last stanza (in the 31st Chapter). When Dixit's daughter Vatsali died, that day a copy of Bhavartha Ramayan came to Dixit by post. He gave it into Baba's hands. Baba holding it up side down dipped his hand in it and took up the passage where Rama condoles Tara after Vali was slain and asked Dixit to read it. What is there that Baba did not know? When Bhagavata was over, Kaka Saheb asked Baba, if he should study Bhagavad Gita with commentaries. Baba ordered him to go on with concentrated study of only two works, Bhagavata and Bhavartha Ramayana. He had not merely to study but also do *Mananam* (meditation) and observe *Acharanam* (to have his conduct based on the scriptures). After the nine months were over, Baba stopped his severe practice of seclusion, and Dixit was permitted to go and visit Bombay also.

VAIRAGYA

Dixit's vairagya developed steadily along with his love of the Guru. His Guru both by example and precept showed him the absurdity of the worldly man's desire for much wealth and how little was necessary even to an ordinary sadhaka. Especially after Baba had assumed all his responsibilities, he noted how needless it was for him to spend attention and time or energy as before to acquire or preserve wealth. Two instances may be cited as typical of this teaching of Baba. In the early years of Kaka Saheb's contact with Baba, he earned large fees. On one occasion when he came to Shirdi, he came along with a trunkful of rupees (may be Rs. 1000), which he earned in a Native State. He

came to Baba, placed the trunk before him, showed him the rupees, and said, 'Baba, all this is yours'. Baba at once said, 'Is that so?' and plunged both his hands in the box full of rupees and gave away heaps of rupees to the people that crowded round him like bees for honey. In a few moments, the trunk became empty. This incident is narrated by Garde, a Sub Judge friend of H. S. Dixit, who was watching all the time the face of Dixit to study the reaction on his face to the rapid scattering of his hard earned money by Baba. Though any other person in his position would have felt the loss of money very bitter. Kaka Saheb was unmoved. That showed how he had hardened in his vairagya at the feet of Baba. He learnt again that the silver so highly valued by the world was but mud to the Sadguru, who was a "*Sama loshta asma Kaanchanah*" i.e. one to whom a clod, a stone and gold were equally indifferent. B.C. (6) 8, (14) 24

On another occasion, when Dixit got a cow, Baba said, 'This cow was formerly a Jalna man's, before that an Aurangabad man's, before that, Mahlsapathy's; God knows whose property it is'. Baba's statement was an exposition of the Isavasya Upanishad, which says,

havasyam Ida(g)m sarvam Yatkincha Jagalyaam jagat

Tena tyaktena bhunjithah Ma gridah, Kasya Sviri dhanam

which means, 'Whatever thing is in the world is covered by God. Renounce that and be happy, Covet not. Whose is property? or covet not any one's wealth, yours or others. Property is always changing hands and changing shapes. It is not perpetual. So it must be kept away (from the soul) to attain happiness.' Thus we have to regard all property as coming and going "*Agamaapayinah*" B G(2) 14 and should avoid getting attached to it. Baba's undertaking responsibilities for Dixit and family was so wide that Dixit felt himself always under Baba's care and had no need to fear. Baba's words to Khaparde, Dixit, and others were, 'Why fear when I am here?' Baba gave ample proof to Dixit of his thorough knowledge of all events, past, present and future, taking place here, there, and everywhere, and his power to see to the exact fulfillment of his promise or prediction.

By constantly staying with Baba, Dixit noticed that Baba had this Antarjnan" or *Chittasamvit* or *Ritambhara Prajna*, and that he had also vast

control over men, creatures, and inanimate things of Nature. For instance in 1917, Kaka Mahajani, who was at Bombay, was requested by the son of his master Thakersey Sail to go to Shirdi and take Baba's advice as to what would be the best course for his master's health. Mahajani said that as Dixit was at Shirdi, it would be sufficient to write to him. But the master's son said that Mahajani should actually go to Shirdi as nothing else would satisfy his father. When this conversation was going on at Bombay, Baba told Dixit at Shirdi, "What deliberations and consultations are going on there!" The next day when Mahajani turned up at Shirdi and mentioned about his master's health, Baba told Dixit. This is the matter we were talking about yesterday. Is it not?' Dixit compared notes with Mahajani and found that while Mahajani and his master's son were talking at Bombay, Sai at Shirdi was fully aware of that fact. On one occasion, immediately after Arati. Sai Baba told his devotees. (B.C.S. 406,) 'Be wherever you may, say whatever you may, and do whatever you may, be sure, I am aware of what you say or do'. This is *Ritambharaprajna*, which only perfectly realised souls like Sai have. Some others may through yogic practices, mantras, or by the use of spirits, acquire mind-reading, clairvoyance, and, within limits, may even be able to say what some persons at some places do or say. But ordinarily such yogis cannot always and without effort, be all-knowing at all places like Baba. Thus Dixit was convinced that Baba had these divine qualities (far superior to magical feats) and also the divine power to know or control the future and protect him.

A well-known story says that even the great Vyasa who codified the Vedas could not get definite knowledge of the future. When Dasa asked his Guru Vyasa when the former's death would take place, Vyasa did not know it, and therefore went with his pupil to Yama, who also did not know it. Vyasa then went with the other two to Mrutyu (Death). He also did not know, and all the four went to Kala's (TIME'S) place, and there at the place of Kala, the pupil died, and Kala's register showed the stanza.

*Yada Vyasaschcha Dasaha Yamena Mrityuna saha
Kaalasya griham Aayanti Tadaa daso marishyati*

which means:— "Dasa will die, when Dasa goes to Kala's place with Vyasa, Yama, and Mrutyu".

Let us now contrast this with Baba's knowledge of the future. On one occasion, Kaka at Shirdi got fever, and then when he went to Baba, Baba told him, 'You better get away to your bungalow at Ville Parle. This fever will last only "four" i.e. a few days. But have no fears. It will pass away, and you will get all right. Do not allow yourself to be bedridden. You can go on eating sira (semolina pudding), as usual'. Kaka Saheb accordingly went away to Ville Parle. There his fever was increasing. Dr. Demonte was called and he diagnosed the fever as Navajvara and he directed the patient to remain in bed and take the prescribed medicine. Baba had told him, '*Padighevum Nakos*' that is, 'Avoid lying in bed'. So, Kaka sat up on a swing (Palang) and he went on eating sira, a dish full of ghee and semolina, which fever patients are medically advised to avoid. The fever steadily increased, and the doctor was aghast at Kaka's throwing his instructions to the winds. He called on a fellow doctor to diagnose, and both of them said that things would take a very serious turn, if Kaka Saheb kept on violating medical advice. But Kaka told his doctor Demonte that he had sent for him to have friendly and cheerful company and that he was sure, as Baba said 'This fever would pass away in a few days' and that the doctor would not be blamed as he (Kaka) was sure to recover. Dr. Demonte thought that Kaka was being fooled by some fakir. But to his surprise and that of others, Kaka's health, though it went on from bad to worse, suddenly regained normality on the ninth day.

Thus Kaka Saheb was confirmed in his absolute belief in the divine protection of Sai Baba, and the absolute truth of every word that Baba uttered. This faith is called '*Nishta*', one of the two coins which Baba insisted on being given by the disciple as Dakshina to the Guru (namely, '*Nishta* and *Saburi*'. *Saburi* means patience, courageous, cheerful and persevering).

These qualities were steadily developing in Dixit, and these two coins (Nishta and Saburi) he gave to Sai Baba, his Gurudeva. There were frequent occasions to revive and strengthen these qualities in Kaka. For instance, on one occasion,

Kaka went to Baba thinking he should present him a garland and Rs. 25. But he first presented only the garland. Then Baba said 'This garland calls for Rs. 25'. Kaka gladly noted Baba's Antaryamitva i.e. knowledge of all minds. On another occasion, he had gone on with his puja to Sai Baba in his quarters but he forgot to offer the usual betel and nut after naivedya. When later he went to Baba, Baba asked for the betel and nut. This convinced Dixit that Baba was watching him every moment of his life and his every act. Again Dixit was a perfect gentleman with excellent manners and a very good heart. Dixit would not scandalise any one. But on one occasion, it so happened that he joined in scandalising Lord Christ. A little while after, he went to Baba for massaging him. Baba was angry and said, 'Do not massage'. At once Dixit remembered that he had scandalised Lord Christ, and that Baba was therefore angry. He repented his mistake and resolved never to commit such mistakes again. Kaka had the immense advantage of what Roman Catholics call "practising the presence of God." They deal with an unseen God and take immense pains to realise his presence before them at every moment and few of them succeed in this herculean effort. In Kaka's case, the presence of the divine watching him and directing him every instant of his life was evident, too patent for him to ignore and the consequent elevation and freedom from fear and care, quite easy and natural for him. Whether he was talking ill of Christ or resolving to fast or whether he failed to offer betelnut to Baba at his private puja to Baba's photo, Baba was on the watch, and when Kaka went to Baba later, there was the appropriate rebuke or demand.

Once Kaka resolved to observe fasting for the night. But as Baba did not encourage unnecessary observances, he repeatedly told Dixit to take his night meal. So Dixit gave up his idea of fasting. This reminds us of St Mark II 18-21 wherein Jesus informed people that his disciples were not fasting as other devout people did, as the children of the bride chamber would not fast so long as the bridegroom was with them. As long as Jesus watched over his disciples and kept them pure, fasts and vigils were unnecessary. When Baba was there to keep Kaka free from lascivious thoughts and tamasic disposition, there was no need to

fast. Even after 1918 Kaka was feeling Baba to be the God within. He struggled against evil thoughts and tendency to idle gossip or acceptance of low levels of thought and action. He prayed within himself to Baba to correct him and guide him. Even if his thoughts strayed, he would pray Baba to forgive him and strengthen him in his avoidance of the same or similar falls.

Baba was watching not only over Kaka, but over all his relatives also. One day Kaka received a letter that his younger brother at Nagpur was ill. Then he said to Baba, 'I have received this letter and I am of no service to him.' Baba said, 'I am of service'. Kaka could not make out why Baba said so. But at that very moment, at Nagpur, a sadhu came to attend upon his brother, and cured him of his illness, and used the very words of Baba, namely, 'I am of service'. Kaka thus found that across 1,000 miles, Baba could see what went on and could carry out what was necessary for his sishya's relatives.

Dixit had such perfect reliance on Baba that before taking any step in any important matter, he would go to Baba and get his orders and follow the same to the very letter, even though the course was running counter to his own judgment and feelings or those of his friends and relations. Baba once tested and proved his implicit obedience while enjoying the fun of the test. B.C.S. 619 gives the account which shows that Bade Baba, Shama, and Ayi all shrank from assisting Baba or carrying out his order that a goat thoroughly weak and about to die should be slaughtered with a knife at the mosque—while Kaka Dixit alone stood the test and was bringing down a knife over the neck of the creature in implicit obedience to an apparently horrid command. B.C.S. 619 gives the account thus—

619. Once a goat entered the mosque, old, famished and just about to die.

Baba (to Bade Baba):—Cut that goat with one stroke. Bade Baba—(Looking at it with pity) How are we to kill this?

Ayi So saying, he went away from the mosque.

Baba:—Shama, you cut it. Fetch a knife, from Radhakrishna

(Ayi sent a knife; but learning the purpose, recalled it.)

Shama:—I will go home to fetch a knife.

Shama went home and stayed away there.

Then Baba to H.S.D.— 'You fetch a knife and kill it.'

H.S.D. went and fetched a knife.

H.S.D.—Baba, shall I kill it ?

Baba— Yes.

H.S.D. lifted up the knife and held it up in hesitation. Baba—What are you thinking of? Strike.

Dixit obeyed and was bringing the knife down.

Baba—Stop. Let the creature remain. I will kill it myself but not at the mosque.

Then Baba carried the creature a few yards, after which it fell dead.

Some might suppose that such intimate relation and dependence of the disciple might snap if the Guru left the body. But that was not so. After Baba left the body, Dixit, like several other staunch devotees, intently concentrated on Sai Baba, and after prayer cast chits before Baba, and asked some child to pick up a chit at random, and the directions of the chit were Baba's orders and were safe to follow always. One instance may be cited of Dixit's trust in consulting Baba through chits and its proving a reliable method and Baba's proving a reliable helper of himself and his relations. After Baba's samadhi Dixit tried to revive his practice especially for the sake of others. His brother Sadashiv Dixit, BA., LLB., tried to practise at Nagpur, etc., and failed to secure any practice or appointment. Dixit then consulted Baba through chits and acting on the chit-accrued order brought Sadashiv over to Bombay. But even at Bombay, Sadashiv failed to secure any success. Kaka wondered how Baba's order of advice should prove so useless. He was thinking of sending his brother away from Bombay, but as Deepawali festival came in, the brother was detained for that festival. Just at that time, leading persons from the Cutch Samsthan came to consult Kaka Dixit as to which person should be selected as a sufficiently reliable officer on a high pay of Rs. 1000. When Kaka suggested Sadasiva's name, that was readily accepted, and he became Dewan of that State. Baba springs his surprise at the last moment when he gives his blessing and justifies the fullest confidence reposed in him by Dixit, etc. Damodar Rasane employed a similar practice, and says in his

experiences (Vide Devotees' Experiences, Volume II) that Baba's answer on chits to him were always found to be correct (N. B.—Powerful faith alone can elicit a reply).

About Sai Baba's nature, H.S. Dixit entertained no doubt. He was "simply God; especially after he shed his body. He was God—whether in the flesh or out of it, i.e. in Samadhi" B.C.S. 49, 51, 52 62-89 58, & 149. (Baba heard and hears the prayers and troubles of all at all times and places and answered and answers their prayers. What is more, he deeply loved and loves his devotees as his own children and babies (BCS 42). Once pointing to a baby, Baba said, 'When this child sleeps, we have to be awake and guarding (B.C. & S. 34). Baba was and is always doing this for his devotees. Kaka Dixit ever felt that Baba was always behind him and supporting him B.C.S. 24-30, 32—42. His mind was thus freed from fear, anxiety or care, and could happily allow itself to concentrate on and lose itself in the lilas of Sri Krishna and Rama in Bhagavat and Ramayana or of Sai. He was fond of puja as also of parayana. His parayana consisted of Bhavartha Ramayana and Eknath Bhagavata. He was fond of Bhajan, especially Sai Bhajan, and was singing to himself 8 or 9 songs of Baba, especially at evening time, when he would be pacing up and down his terrace. He had a good knowledge of music, and could even compose songs. When he composed a song, Kaka Mahajani asked him to compose more songs. But Dixit's reply was that there were many classic songs and it would be absurd on his part, when these with their holy associations were available, to add his own songs of inferior merit. But the more important objection was according to Dixit that such composition would strengthen egotism in him, and make him feel 'I am a composer: I have done such and such a thing'. Such abhimana, he was killing out of himself, and his humility and simplicity were marked features in his character.

When he found that Baba was perfectly reliable in providing him with everything that was necessary for his temporal and spiritual welfare, he might ask what made Baba attract him (Kaka) to his feet in 1909, and thus undertake all responsibility for him. The obvious answer is, 'Rinanubandha'. We find in G.S.

Khaparde's diary written at Shirdi that (B.C & S. 502) Baba said to Khaparde, 'You, I, Kaka (H.S. Dixit), Shama, Bapu Saheb Jog, and Dada Kelkar, were living together with our Guru in a blind alley in our former birth, and I have, therefore, drawn all of you together in this birth'. Baba avowed in vary general terms (B.C.S. 56) that all the devotees who came to him were drawn by him to himself; and they were not voluntary visitors. When a boy ties one end of a string to a bird's foot and pulls it, the bird must come to him. So, these devotees must come to him. though they were not aware of either the fact of his pulling or the reasons for his pull. The reasons for approaching Sai Baba as for approaching God. so far as they were known to the devotees, were always worldly. Damia once objected (B.C. & S. 56) to devotees coming to Baba with worldly objects, and said they should be driven away. But Baba answered him that he should not say so. He said that he himself drew the devotees to him for one object or another, and after the devotees were satisfied, they stayed on with him. It is the *aarlha* (sufferer) who goes to God and not the man without troubles.

B Gita VII 16 ;—

Chaturvidhaa bhajante innaam Janas sukrutino Arjuna

Aartho jijnaasurartharthi Jnaani Cha bharatarshabha

Krishna says:- 'Four classes of men come to Me, O Arjuna — those in distress, those who desire to know, those seeking wealth and the Jnanis or fully realised men'.

Persons who approach God or Gurudeva are mostly persons who have worldly troubles seeking worldly relief. It was the lameness of H.S.Dixit that made him think, at the suggestion of Chandorkar, of approaching Baba, He did not come with a view to get a Guru when first approaching Baba; but on account of Baba's wonderful powers and nature, and on account of Dixit's contact with a sadhu named Datta Maharaj in his earlier life, he noted at once that Baba was preeminently fitted to be a Samartha Sadguru for himself. Baba's wonderful powers over men. and things, and also wonderful love, operating to benefit thousands if not myriads of persons in all sorts of places and conditions greatly impressed Dixit. Baba was obviously, like Sivaji's Guru Ramdasv preeminently a

Samartha Sadguru, i.e., one to whom any one desirous of achieving both temporal and spiritual welfare should resort and stick, life after life. To most people however Baba did not appear to be a Guru at all and he seldom declared himself to be a Guru. But on one occasion he quaintly or silently admitted or avowed his Gurudom and its wonderful nature. It was once the lot of H. S. Dixit to elicit this avowal from Baba. It came in connection with a commonplace request for leave from Baba for Dixit and others to go to Bombay. When Baba said, 'You may go' (B.C. & S. 176), some one asked Baba, 'where to go?' Baba gave that a spiritual turn and said 'Up', meaning evidently "to Heaven or God". The question was asked 'What is the way?' Baba answered, "Many ways there are from many places." Baba added, "From this place (meaning Shirdi or Baba's Masjid) also there is a way. But the way is full of obstacles. There are tigers and bears on the way. If one is careless, there is a deep pit into which one may fall". Then Dixit asked Baba, 'if there is a guide?' Baba answered, 'In that case, there is no danger or difficulty. The bears and tigers will move aside'. This was a clear statement that persons wishing to reach the goal, viz., God, could do so even from Shirdi. Kabir's song "*Guruvina Kona balhave Vat*". If there is no Guru, who will show the way? If they have the help of a Guru (guide), they will have no difficulty, and they can safely reach their goal. Of course, the sishya must have *ntshta* (faith) and *saburi* (courage and perseverance). Unless he gets out of worldly attachment, lust, anger, etc., he can never be attached to his Guru or God; and, therefore, the complete, unconditional and perfect surrender of "*Tan, Man, Dhan*", i.e., mind, body, and possessions by the sishya, at the feet of the Guru is very necessary. Confidence in the Guru is a necessary prerequisite for getting the help of the Guru. Dixit offered his *Tan, Man, and Dhan*, at his Guru's feet with perfect confidence. He gave up practice. He gave up society, politics, social esteem, etc., which were dear to him in former days, and stuck to Shirdi to render service to Baba and the bhaktas, both before and after 1918 upto the very end of his life. One may ask, as many of Kaka's relatives asked, "What is to happen to the relatives and dependants of Kaka, if Kaka gets vairagya and stops earning?" A similar question was asked about Balakram Manker, who was the

chief earning member of his family, and who was suddenly attracted to Baba, and gave up his earning activity by staying with Baba or alone on Machendragad Hills under his directions. When the relatives asked Baba 'What is to become of Manker's sons if he ceases to earn?' Baba's answer was, 'I will provide for Manker's sons' (B.C.S. 31). Baba has really provided for them, for they are all occupying high and enviable financial positions now.

About Kaka Dixit. at the very outset, Baba had answered this question by saying, '*Kaka Tula Kaiji Kasli; Mala Sara Kalji Ahe*', i.e.. 'Dixit. why should you have any care? All care is mine'. Baba, having said this, would be the last person to break his promise of bearing the entire responsibility for Kaka and his relatives. Several incidents would be mentioned to show that before the Mahasamadhi of Baba in 1918 and after, Baba did bear all that responsibility.

First we shall take Dixit's sons and narrate an incident or two. In 1913 Kaka Dixit's boy was reading at Bombay at Ville Parle, and Kaka was with Baba at Shirdi. Just a month or two before the examination, the boy had continuous fever. So Kaka's brother wrote to him to come up and look after the boy, but when the letter was shown to Baba, he told Kaka not to go, but, on the other hand to send for his son to Shirdi, where there was neither doctor nor medicine available. So, the boy's uncle sent him up to Shirdi unwillingly, and strange to say, without hospital, doctor, and medicine, the boy improved in health and got alright at Shirdi. Then the uncle wrote that the examination was on 2-11-1913, and the boy must be sent up for studies. But Baba did not allow it, not even for attending the examination on 2-11-1913, though the boy's uncle wrote that the boy should be sent up. Kaka asked for leave. But Baba did not allow him to start. It looked as though Baba was seriously injuring the boy's prospects. But what happened at Bombay? The examination to be held on 2-11-1913 had to be postponed to 6-11-1913 as a plague rat was found in the examination hall. Again for the 6th, the boy was requisitioned. Again Baba forbade the boy's departure. The boy did not go up. The explanation appeared soon. Again there was a plague rat in the examination hall, and the examination had to be postponed to the 13th. Baba

ordered the boy to be sent up for that date, and he attended the examination and passed. (B.C. &S. 375)

We have already seen how Baba looked after Kaka's daughter Vatsali when an almirah tumbled down upon her. How did the fall of the almirah, with the heavy articles inside, not hurt the girl? In B.C. & S. 35, Baba says, 'I will not allow my devotees to come to harm. I have to take thought for my devotees. I stretch out my hands, four, four hands, at a time to support them. There were some cases, however, in which Baba finds himself prevented from doing anything, and that is what happened finally in the case of Vatsali. When she was in Shirdi, she got fever and Dixit was simply trusting to Baba. But this time instead of saving her, when the fever had far advanced, Baba appeared to her in her dream, and said. 'Why should you be down here? Come and be lying under the margosa tree'. This was ominous, and the very next morning, Baba asked Shama, 'Is Kaka's girl dead?' Shama replied, 'O, Deva, why are you speaking so inauspiciously?' Then Baba replied, 'She will die in the afternoon'. She died accordingly at that time. To enable Dixit to bear the blow Baba gave him a prescription. Kaka took in his hands Bhavartha Ramayana and handed it over to Baba. Baba then dipped his hands into the book, and opening it, at the page in Kishkinda Kanda, where Rama kills Vali and consoles his widow, asked Kaka to read and digest the same. When death is inevitable, Baba wants his devotees to be strong-minded enough to recognise the fact of its inevitability^{10*} and bear the separation. Death is not always an evil. Baba conveyed this truth to Kaka at least on one other occasion. An old woman with her only son was at Shirdi, and a cobra bit that boy. The old woman ran to Baba, and asked for udhi to save the life of her son. Baba did not give any udhi. Then the woman went out. But soon she returned beating her breast wailing aloud that her son was dead. She implored Baba to revive her son. Baba gave neither udhi, nor other help, and

¹⁰ *Avascvtun Bhavi Bhatvanam Pratikaro Shaved yadi*

Tatha Dukkhir- na lipyeran Nala Rama Yudhishtirah

i.e. If the fated events could be escaped by efforts, then Nala, Rama and Yudhisthira would not have been so much afflicted by sorrows.

said nothing. But Dixit was there. His sympathy was very much excited, and he requested Baba to help her, The woman's plight is heartrending. Please revive her dead son for my sake'. Baba replied, 'Bhav, do not get entangled in this. What has happened is for good. He has entered a new body. In that body, he will do specially good work which cannot be accomplished in this body, which is seen here. If I draw him back into this body, then the new body he has taken will die, and this body will live. I will do this for your sake. Have you considered the consequences? Have you any idea of the responsibility, and are you prepared to take it up?' H.S. Dixit desisted from pressing his request. The current idea of the worldly man that death is always evil is incorrect and the wise man is he who cares for life only as long as it lasts and meets death without fear when it comes (B.C.S. 314).

In the case mentioned in B.C.&S.362 (of which probably Dixit was aware), Baba mentioned to S. B. Mohile, who took his daughter to Baba for the cure of her split upper lip in 1913, 'I can cure her. But it will be of no use. The girl is of divine sort, and her life, consequently, will be very short, and she will die in March 1914'. That was just what happened. Similarly, Vatsali was also of divine sort. She was one whose *prarabdha* karma ended with her infancy, and, therefore, she would have a good end. The death from her point of view would be an advantage.

As for Dixit's own financial position, there was, for a long time, a period of depression, but there was no positive distress. Contentment was ingrained in Dixit, and he was always saying to himself.

Tevile Anante, Tase Rahave,

which is the same as

Alia Rakhega Vysa Rahena Mania Rakhega Vysa Rahena

This means, 'We must be content with the lot assigned to us by God'. So, he was generally contented and retained his mental peace in the midst of lack of funds and income. However, special occasions arose and his faith in Baba was tested and confirmed. Some time after Baba passed away, Kaka had to meet a heavy obligation of Rs. 30,000 to be paid to a Marwadi. The day for payment was

drawing near, and Kaka could not see how to get funds for meeting this large demand. One night, as he was sleeping, he had a dream, and in his dream, his creditor was pressing him for payment. In the dream, he assured the creditor, 'Oh, don't you fear. I have my friend Sir Chunnilal, Sir Chimanlal etc. all of them knights, and they will provide the money'. Suddenly, he woke up and remembering the dream, he bitterly repented his stupid folly in relying upon 'Sir' this and 'Sir' that who are just the persons who will fail to help at the crucial moment. He felt that the only person on whom he could rely for getting help was Baba, and cursed his folly in relying upon such useless human help. He resolved not to think of these 'Sirs' at all, and to rely confidently and boldly upon Sai Baba alone to furnish him with the funds and that too in time. His views are thus expressed in stanza 343 in Sai Natha Mananam:

Nathe nah pitrushotlame trijagahtcim ekadhipe chetasaam

Sevye xwaxya paadasya darari vihhow sayeexware tishtate

Yam kamchil purushaadhanmm laghubalam sarakhyam alpartadam

Sahyaarthum inrigayamahe naram aho mudha varakaa vayam.

which means— "While there is our supporter Purushottama, i.e., the supreme person, that Lord of the three worlds, worthy of the soul's worship, the omnipotent Sayeeswara, we (i.e. I) turn to some weak and low person with the title "Sir" who gives little, for help! Alas what folly is this!"

He sat up in his office room on a chair and was waiting and waiting till the actual date of payment came. Till the last date and last moment, no money was forthcoming. But at the last moment, a young man, the son of a rich friend of his, came asking for his advice. He said that after his father's death, he was managing his property, and had to find an investment for his money. He said, just then he had brought with him Rs.30,000/- and wanted to know from Dixit what would be the best investment. Kaka, after explaining the pros and cons of other investments, finally told him that he himself was in urgent need of Rs. 30,000/- and he would be glad to have it on any reasonable terms, but that it was his duty to explain to the lender that his practice had gone down, that his income was very low, though his properties in the shape of bungalows were there, and that it

was his duty to point out the danger and disadvantage of lending to such a person. The young man, however, made up his mind to lend the money to him on account of his need and on account of his being his father's friend, and thus the creditor of Dixit was paid in time. But who could know that the sum of Rs. 30,000 was with a person with a mind to be influenced to lend it to Dixit? Baba alone could know. Baba alone could influence the possessor of the funds. It is just like this that at the crucial moment Baba acts often! For instance Baba operated on the minds of Brahmins to come to do *Pitru Sraddha* for Jog just at the nick of time (B C. S. 377-8). He influenced the appellate Magistrate's mind to deal summary justice to his convicted servant Raghu. He influenced the minds of Government members to refrain from granting sanction against Khaparde for prosecution (BCS 402-5). He influenced the minds of all and sundry to turn Upasani Maharaj back to Shirdi in June 1911 (BCS 635). It is this Baba who knows all facts and grips all minds who brought Kaka's friend's son in time with Rs. 30,000 to clear off Kaka's debt, and Kaka had many instances like this confirming him in his attitude of utter childlike reliance on his Guru even in financial matters.

But financial matters are not the most important. It is the ripening of the soul, the getting rid of past vasanas, the building up of strength and the perfecting of peace on the basis of perfect *nishta* and *saburi* that do matter; these are higher, far higher than mere finance. Baba undertook the responsibility for Dixit in these matters also. He expressly stated that he would take his Kaka in Vimana. What did that mean? Taking in a vimana is what occurs in puranas. When holy persons like Tukaram die, their souls go to Heaven in Vimana. So, Baba's words were understood to mean that Kaka would have excellent Sadgati. Kaka was assured of his future and also that his death would be happy and peaceful. Many pray for it thus-

Anaayaasena maranam vinaa dainyena jeevanam

Dehi me kripaya sayin raksha raksha maheswara

The prayer constantly on the lips of Dixit in the nine padas he repeated was for unshaken faith (*Achanchala bhakti*).

"My last prayer is: May my prema (loving devotion) at your feet increase! God, may my prema increase at your feet. Baba, may my prema at your feet increase!" According to the main mass of the followers of Bhakti marga, the goal or the highest point reached by the bhakta is perpetually staying at the feet of God with firm unwavering *achanchala bhakti*, and, if one is not able to reach permanent stay at the feet of God in this very life, he prays for perpetual contact (birth after birth) with his Guru Deva who would secure that goal for him. In the Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 8, Verse 6, it is said

Yam yam vapi smaran bkaavam tyajati ante kalebaram

Tain tarn eva eti koimteya sada tad bhaava bhavitah

It is pointed out, 'Whatever a person thinks of at the time of his death, so becomes he in his next life.' So the advice given by Lord Krishna is —

Tasmaat sarveshu kaaleshu maam anusmara yudhya cha

Mayyarpita manobuddhih maam eva eshyast asamschayam

This means, 'Think of me always with mind and intellect surrendered to me. You will surely come to me'. So, many people try to think of God at the last moment of death. But it is by no means easy to persons, who have spent most of their time in worldly attachments, to think of God when life is parting. We shall describe fully later on how Dixit was able to think of Baba always and therefore at the time of death, the manner of which must be fully set out at the close of this chapter.

It may be noted that the chapter on H.S. Dixit might be of greater help to most readers than chapters on devotees like Upasani Maharaj, Kusa Bhav, etc. Dixit was a worldly solicitor or businessman and was not marked out for any extraordinary spiritual career like that of a Sadguru. What is important in Dixit's life is that from his ordinary level of a businessman, he made the very best use of his life after 45 years of it were over, and by the kindness of Baba, he was able to surrender himself more and more to his Sadguru and to attain, as a result thereof, perfect reliance on Baba's assurance that every responsibility of his would be borne by Baba, and the consequent fullness of peace and calmness. He could and did carry on his affairs, spiritual and temporal, with poorna *nishta* and *saburi* in his Master, being assured of getting the best out of his life, i.e., the

position for reaching the goal of life. This is all that most of our readers can aim at. They can see that Kaka had first a brilliant worldly life and an equally brilliant or even more brilliant success in the spiritual line, and that he died a happy death, 'being taken in a Vimana' by the Guru. Every one of us, though we are not face to face with Sai Baba as Dixit was between 1902 and 1918, can still have even now the same faith, the same surrender and the same assurance from Sadguru Sai that he will look after all our concerns and the consequent fearlessness and calm with the certainty of happy death like Kaka's. Sai Baba is not dead. He is God, and cannot die. When his body was lying in the Dwarakamayee, he appeared to and told Lakshman, 'Jog thinks I am dead; no, I am alive. Therefore do pooja and arati'. He has repeatedly said that his tomb, (i.e., He as *Apantaratma* or *ishtamurthi* or Perfect *Avalia*) will speak and move with those who make him their sole refuge. Baba said, 'I shall be active and vigorous from the tomb also. Even after my Mahasamadhi, I shall be with you, the moment you think of me at any place. As soon as a devotee calls unto me with love, I will appear. I require no train to travel' (BCS.47-52).

Some readers may think that H. S. Dixit had the advantage of constantly meeting and hearing Sai Baba and getting strengthened thereby which they, the readers, do not have. But, if one is earnest in his desire to concentrate on Sai, one can hear and move with Sai now, not through any extraordinary *chamatkars* (though these do take place even now - for typical instances see September 1953 and June 1955 'Sai Sudha'), but through very ordinary means available to all, such as getting the vast literature on Sai Baba in various languages, and having *sravana*, *manana*, *nidhidyasana*, etc. of the same. One can get the same pooja, bhajan, harikatha, meditation or concentration on Sai as H. S. Dixit had. No doubt, Kaka Dixit had the opportunity and power to serve Sai Baba and his Sansthan for 14 years at great self-sacrifice, but similar service is open now to many of us, each according to his own opportunities and abilities. Sai Seva and Sai dhyana, the two main factors that built him up under Sai are still available to all of us. Dixit had the sadhana prescribed by Baba of nine months of solitude and seclusion (Vanaprastha Asrama) to concentrate effectively and exclusively

on Baba, Who prevents any of us from trying to get similar seclusion and concentration? Some may think that Sai Baba when he was in the flesh, undertaking all responsibilities, could afford Dixit better protection in all affairs than Sai could afford to give us now; but this view is wrong. Dixit from 1918 to 1926, when Baba was not in the flesh, was enjoying Baba's protection, see, for example, the provision of Rs. 30,000/- to meet his debts. It is only the fainthearted and ill-informed people that will doubt whether Baba will afford them protection now, and that from hour to hour. But if the readers were to take pains and read and zealously absorb the experiences of devotees after 1918, they will feel assured that Baba's protection is as sure today as it was before 1918. To doubt it will only mean lack of faith in Baba and in his utterances, (see B.C. & S. 51} where Baba says 'Even after Mahasamadhi, the moment you think of me, I will be with you at any place', and also lack of belief in such great personalities, like D.D.

Rasane, S.B.Dhumal, M.B.Rege, and so many others. There are many amongst us now who experience the benefits of the kind and constant attention of this guardian angel Sai in daily affairs, assuring us that we are His men (*Saduchya Ankita*), and that he bears our burdens as promised, of *Yoga kshemam Vahaamyaham*. It is only a question of faith. If faith is strong, the response is quick, and the feeling of enjoying His superhuman protection gets established and makes the mind peaceful and happy. Hence even the careful study of this one chapter on Dixit's life or any other chapter might enable several readers to lead their own life exactly on the lines of Dixit's life, developing their faith and their patience more and more every day. Their patience may be based on the principle of contentment emphasised by Dixit's Slogan: *Tevile Anante Taisech Rahave*.

This means that we should be content with the lot assigned to us by God. Faith is best and perfect when it recognises that Sai is God, and that Sai's

utterances are never wrong or false^{11*}. Such a faith can conquer mountains and that is what we should have. We should be strong minded enough to brush aside contemptuous remarks of people (ignorant though well meaning people who refer to our faith as blind faith). For instance, when Kaka Saheb lost his practice and when under the very nose of Baba his daughter died people could not appreciate his Sai bhakti. Even Anna Saheb Dabolkar thought first 'If Sai Baba could not save Dixit's daughter at Shirdi, what is the good of a Guru?' One might as well say, 'When my dear ones die, what is the good of God?' Faith is not a guarantee that there will be no death evil in the world, nor pains in life. But as in the above case, intense faith makes the devotee brace himself up against all inevitable calamities, and learn more and more of God's scheme for our life, that life is not intended to be a bed of roses and a treasure house of wealth or total avoidance of poverty. Faith enables the devotee to see what life is and what God's plan is, and improve one's own attitude to life. We are God's slaves and surrendered instruments. God (Guru-God) is doing the best for us in the circumstances, and we should never murmur, but maintain peace of mind. The numerous ways in

¹¹ or the innumerable instances of Dixit's finding that Baba's knowledge of distant events and foreknowledge of the future were perfect and unerring, we shall cite one more. H.S. Dixit was the sole living witness to a will he drew up and when that will came up for probate in the Bombay High Court, he had necessarily to be summoned. The summons was served at Shirdi and Dixit was legally bound to appear in Court at Bombay as witness and the party's agent came to Shirdi to take him. But Baba did not give him permission to start. This looked awkward—nay risky. But at Bombay the case was adjourned that day to another date. Even for the subsequent postings. Dixit was not allowed to start- Baba knew that the hearing would not take place. The citing party got vexed and was considering if the only remaining course was the issue of warrant to secure Dixit's presence should he adopted He wired to Dixit This time. Baba sent up Dixit and he was examined in Court. Baba knew exactly at what point he should stop detention. The risk which seemed imminent to others Baba knew and acted suitably.

which the soul and its faculties expand are outlined in Dixit's life and other devotees' lives. We should recommend our readers to start by perfect surrender and perfect faith in Baba's assurances to the surrendered. Dixit always felt that Baba, as assured by Him, was supporting him, was behind him always and was looking after all his concerns, and hence he avoided fear and anxiety. We recommend the same attitude to our readers. Who will surrender and believe? Who will surrender his *Tan, Man, Dhan*, i.e., body, soul and possessions, and believe in Baba's assurances of complete protection and also in Baba's perpetual presence, and his watching and guiding us and being ever ready to appear before us, if necessary? These assurances of Baba, our Gurudeva, are the same as the assurances given in Dwapara Yuga through the mouth of Lord Krishna—

Ananyaas chintayanto maam ye janaah paryupaasate

Teshaam nityaabhi yuktaanaam yogakshemam vahaamyaham

That is, 'if you completely surrender yourself and concentrate on Me and Me alone, if you are ever intent on Me, then I shall guard what you have and give what you require' (See B. C. & S. 20). Baba says, 'If one devotes his entire mind to Me and rests in Me, he need fear nothing for body and soul. If one sees Me and Me alone and listens to talk about Me and is devoted to Me alone, he will reach God (Chaitanya)'.

Reader, have you noticed that a classic work like Shakespeare's Hamlet or Kalidasa's Sakuntala, when read over and over again, reveals new meanings, and new beauties, say, "even after the thirtieth reading? If you have developed faith, your reading of Baba's Gospel, Baba's life, Baba's acts and words would reveal to you new meanings, new applications, and new opportunities for you to serve Him and mould yourself. That perpetual freshness of Sai's love and His sayings is the test of the strength of your faith. Age does not wither Sai, nor custom stale His infinite variety. May Baba give you all full faith, and with it ample support for faith!

Once Baba told Kaka Saheb, 'If you talk ill or find fault with any one, that moment (immediately), I feel that pain'. Thereafter Dixit, who used to be short

tempered, conquered his temper, and became completely suave, humble, self-controlled, and agreeable. This illustrates how Baba builds us up and saves us. When Baba's life left his body in October 1918, that was a great blow to all his bhaktas. But there was further danger of confusion and conflict about the disposal of Sai's body. The proper disposal of the Sai body was essential for the carrying out of his mission, because Baba had said, 'Even from the tomb, I will be active'. Where was this tomb to be? Who was to build it? In whose charge was it to be? The almost universal belief of people (Hindus and Muslims alike), when Baba passed away was that Sai Baba, living in the Mosque, was a Muslim, and so the Muslims including Bade Baba gathered the body, and they wished to be in charge of his tomb. Baba was a famous Aivalia. His tomb would be visited by innumerable people, and miracles would be performed there. The offerings by the visiting pilgrims would be abundant. The tomb would be a very important place. Hence the Muslims thought and said that they should be in charge of the tomb. Unfortunately, they were few in numbers, and they had not the influence or the means to erect a suitable tomb for the Aivalia. The Hindus stressed the fact of custom (*mamul*) that the vast mass of people that worshipped Baba were Hindus, and, therefore, they were the proper persons to arrange for the tomb to be worshipped. The Kopergaon Mamlatdar arrived on the scene and asked each party to put forward its representation with largely signed mahazars. The Hindus were in larger number, and their mahazars also were numerous, the Muslim signatories to the Muslim Mahazar were very few. As for Baba's own wishes in the matter that was not well known. He never talked about it. But during his last illness he said 'Carry me to the Wada', (i.e. Buty wada). Buty was quite willing that his building should become the tomb of Baba. The Mamlatdar pointed out his difficulties. He said that if all parties agreed, he could give directions for the disposal of the body in accordance with the terms of the agreement. If they did not, he said, they should go to Ahamadnagar, and get the District Magistrate's decree, and he (Mamlatdar) would have to act upon that decree. Then Dixit was ready to go to Ahamadnagar. As he was a solicitor of high repute, the Muslims thought that if he went to Ahamadnagar, he would get the District Magistrate's

order in his own favour, and they would be nowhere. So, they came to an agreement with the Hindus that Baba's body should be in Buty wada, and, as usually the management of the tomb, etc., should also be with the Hindus, but Muslims should be allowed free access even though it was in a Hindu gentleman's house, and that Mamul should continue. So, the Mamlatdar himself passed an order, and Baba's body was buried without any difficulty at Buty wada, where it still remains. That was only a temporary settlement. The more important matter was as to the guidance of the future. That should be a scheme sanctioned by the District Court of Ahamadnagar. H.S. Dixit with his remarkable legal ability, his worldly wisdom, and great bhakti, drew up a Scheme and presented it with the signatures of number of influential devotees. That was sanctioned by the District Court in 1922 and that governs the Shirdi Sai Sansthan and Baba's tomb and other affairs. The property of the Sansthan vested in a body of trustees with managing committee of fifteen. Dixit contented himself with being the Honorary Secretary, and his able management pleased all parties. H.S. Dixit thus laid firm foundation for the success of the Shirdi Sai Sansthan, and he must be given the credit for its present position. This may be ranked as one of his great services to Sai and to the public or to humanity.

Baba was looking after the spiritual welfare of Kaka Dixit in a way which is fairly understandable, whereas Baba's dealing with Upasani Maharaj was highly unintelligible and mysterious even to Maharaj. In the case of Dixit, there does not seem to be anything mysterious, though the inside mysterious working so characteristic of Baba must have benefited Dixit also. But Baba did not direct him to sit quiet and do nothing *uge tnuge* as Upasani was asked to. On the other hand, the method adopted in his case was just the usual methods adopted by all Gurus, viz., scriptural study, bhajan, puja and a general enforcement of faith in the Guru. No doubt the development of faith in Kaka by Baba was peculiarly good and strong by reason of (1) Baba's definite assurance that he undertook all responsibility for him, temporal and spiritual, and (2) by Baba's showing unmitigatedly that he was all-knowing and all-controlling even in respect of future events. Dixit's summons in the will case and nine days' fever were two excellent

illustrations to show how definitely Baba saw or controlled the future, and how firm and fully justified Dixit's faith was in Baba. There were hundreds more of such experiences of Dixit.

As for upadesa, Baba gave no upadesa mantra but every word, act, and omission of Baba was full of instruction and inspiration. For 10 years, i.e., 1909-1918, Dixit studied every word, every act, and every deed of Baba. This study itself was Satsang, apart from the personal contact which Dixit had with Baba.

*Santapasci sadaa jave tyanche javali baisave
upades te na deti tari aikavya tya goshti
techi upadesa hoti tyachi kashta nashta hoti
Vasudeva hmane santa sange kariti pasanta*

This means, 'Let us go to saints and stay by their side. If they do not give any upadesa, let us listen to whatever falls from their lips. Every such word is upadesa. By their force all our troubles vanish. Vasudeva (the author) says, 'Bliss comes from Satsang'. This was the experience of Kaka Dixit and of every devout person that went to Shirdi to see Baba.

Kaka Saheb treasured these utterances, deeds, etc., of Baba, and his notes of them have been compressed into articles in the Sai Lila Masik which Kaka Saheb started about 1923, and they are found under the headings '*Maharaj's Anubhav*', '*Bodha paddhati*' and '*Bol*'. Almost every serious devotee going to Shirdi contacted Kaka Saheb, and communicated his experiences to him. Kaka's services through starting Sai Lila Masik. and recording the experiences are undoubtedly great and valuable service to Sai and the Sai movement.

We may give a few points in the general improvement made by Kaka and the successive points in his life, that is, spiritual life and the goal of life. The most important item for any progress is the suppression and practical annihilation of all worldly desires (*sarva sankalpa sanyasa*). That is the first step. Love of the world (wife, wealth, etc.) prevents love of God. The more we forget and depress worldly love, the better our chances of increasing our love of God. That is just what took place in Kaka Saheb's case. His increasing attachment to Baba resulted in

increasing visits to Shirdi and in greater contact with Baba. That is one side of the shield. The other side of it was the decreasing contact with family, friends, political and social contacts, clients and cases. This resulted in the lowering of his income and loss of practice and prestige. If this produces sorrow or pain, the spiritual progress will be slow. But under Baba's care, decrease of income and decrease of contact with former friends led to an increase of *vairagya* and indifference. Dixit's *vairagya* was greatly strengthened by nine months' solitude (solitary confinement in his room) at Shirdi. Baba was proving an all round guardian angel, and Dixit's progress in moral and spiritual fields developed steadily. We shall note just a few points indicative of that progress.

When Bapu Saheb Jog, who acted as honorary pujari of Baba, asked Sai Baba, 'I have served you with sincerity and earnestness: in what form will I have the benefit thereof and when?' the answer was, 'Your perfection will be when you give up all worldly attachments, wear kupni (as sanyasi) like me, and beg your food (having nothing else to care for).' Such perfection did not come to Jog during Baba's life time. A few years thereafter, Jog became the pujari of Upasani Baba, took sanyas and died. His tomb is there at Sakori. As Kaka's services to Baba were quite as good as Jog's, nay far superior, Kaka hoped that he could become a sanyasi too. Even before that, seeing that there was a special set of people dining with Baba in the same *pankti* (row), Kaka hoped to be in the *pankti* to sit along with Baba like Fakir Baba (called also Bade Baba). Baba first gave only prasad to Kaka Saheb, but soon Kaka began to dine at Baba's Masjid, and finally Baba allowed him to sit along with him in the same *pankti* for meals. Baba also gave him a kupni to wear. Kupni is for fakirs and sanyasis. When G.G. Narke wished to have one, Baba declined to give the gift—as Narke was not to be a Sanyasi.

Kaka Saheb wore the kupni at Shirdi. but was not wearing it in his journeys or at Bombay. The dining along with the Guru is not merely an honour. It gives a special spiritual bent, and removes even the faintest traces of the feeling of (Brahmin) caste superiority or habitual aversion that feven Nana Chandorkar, etc. could not obliterate.

One is possibly reminded of other bhaktas who had also great bhakti and did great service to Baba, but who would never bring their minds to Kaka's level so as to forget the difference of caste and position, and remember only that Sai was God and accept his prasad and *Pankti Bhojan* as specially holy. One other bhakta seeing Ganga flowing from Baba's feet could not make up his mind to drink the holy Ganga water from Baba's feet but merely sprinkled the water on his head.

With Kaka Saheb (who had the benefit of being in England for some time) differences of Hindu and Muslim did not count. One instance of this may be cited here. After Baba's passing away, Bade Baba, or Fakir Baba, wished to live at Shirdi, but the houses being mostly Hindu houses, there was no one to rent a room to him. Strong was the prejudice to allow a Muslim into a Hindu house. Then Kaka determined that he should give and did give Fakir Baba accommodation in his wada in spite of the protests of the Hindu pilgrims. Even N. G. Chandorkar protested against the accommodation being given to Fakir Baba. Kaka brushed aside even that objection, and he gave Fakir Baba accommodation at his wada.

Dixit's samatva was of a very high order and was based upon the high principles, which he imbibed from Baba, that he should see God in all creatures and things. Readers would note how Chandorkar and Upasani Maharaj were taught this by Baba.

To Dixit's mind nothing was low or bad, and if there was any trouble in any creature or person, his sympathy was excited. He was known from very early days as a very liberal host inviting all people to his table and even at Shirdi at his wada, a mess was run and many people including Upasani Maharaj were fed free at Kaka's expense. At Ville Parle as at Lonavla, he would daily invite all persons, not merely friends but also fresh acquaintances to dine with him. His bungalow was described aptly as Annadana or Darmadana Hindu hotel; and this prevented many from starting a hotel business at Lonavla during Dixit's lifetime. But apart from human feeding, Kaka had his *atithis* (guests) in cats, dogs, ants, flies, etc. Readers may remember Baba's instruction to Chandorkar in regard to

Atithis, that *atithi* feeding is best done by taking some food and throwing it out where cattle, ants, dogs, etc., will come at their own time and eat the food. These are the real *atithis*.

Kaka Saheb at Ville Parle had a number of cats and dogs feeding with him, and his bungalow was always full of these cats and dogs. Even at Shirdi when he sat for his meal, cats would come, and he would offer them rice with ghee with the fullest feeling that God was inside them (*Iswaro Jivakalaya Pravishto Bhagavan Iti*). Readers would remember (1) how Nana was instructed by Baba that inside each body Nana should see and revere the soul within, which is but a part of the Universal soul, and (2) how Namdev ran to offer ghee to a dog that had picked up a slice of roti, i.e. dry flat bread, from his plate (thereby polluting the plate) and was running away. Kaka Saheb's sympathies were powerfully attracted to all creatures. This is a highly important step for expanding one's sympathies to all (*Sarva bhuta hite rafah*){E.G.5 (25), 12 (4)} thus overcoming *mamata* and *ahankar* (and without the conquest of these two, Siddhi or achievement of the goal, i.e. identification of self with Paramatma is an impossibility). Once indeed, he yielded to the common frailty of thinking that serpents were the cause of many human deaths and. therefore, at the sight of serpents, one must kill them (an advice found in books and pamphlets issued by Government). He asked Baba whether people should not kill serpents to save themselves from snake bite (and death) (See B. C. and S. 298). Baba's answer was, 'No, you should not kill it. The serpent will not kill us unless it is ordered by God; and if God so orders, we cannot escape it.' But this doubt was at Kaka's earliest stage. As days went on, his outlook changed completely. He would not kill snakes or scorpions, both of which infest Shirdi, even now.

On one occasion when Kaka and a number of others were together, a big black scorpion was approaching and some people brought a shoe to kill it. Kaka stopped them, and brought a long stick and placed it in front of the scorpion. The scorpion got on to the stick, and Kaka carried the scorpion and the stick outside, and left the scorpion at a safe place. He would not kill ants, bugs, and flies. As for bugs, there was an exuberant supply of bugs at Shirdi, especially at Kaka's

wada. Kaka himself was a very sound sleeper, and his sleep was never disturbed by bugs. Others were not equally hardy, or insensitive, and when Keating's Insecticide powder was brought by others to kill the bugs on Kaka's bed also, he stopped those friends, and said, 'Don't spread the powder. Human blood is the natural food provided for bugs. My sleep is not disturbed by them. At best they drink only half an ounce of blood, and my body can easily make up that loss. Is not God in bugs also?' he asked. His friends were stunned by his remarks. So, this habit of seeing God in all creatures was an excellent course for Kaka and thus he was able to think of God always. That is the advice given in the Gita and by Sai Baba also.

Sarvabutasthitam yo maam

Bhuteshu Bhuteshu vichitya dheerah

Tastnat Sarveshu Kaleshu Maam Anusmara.

But it is not merely the ordinary thinking of God that Kaka enjoyed. He kept up a special and very powerful contact with God by his bhajan and pujas. At bhajans his eyes would overflow with love, and he had not to depend upon others for bhajan. He could sing very nice bhajan songs, and he had a set of them always ready and sang them in his verandah next to his room at his wada. His modification of Das Ganu's original bhajan songs brought into full relief his powerful faith. Das Ganu's song runs thus —

(1) Kali jamaana mine gamaaya-

Sathiakharaka kiya na Koyi

(2) Sai Raham najara karana, etc

Mai andha hum bandha tumara

Mai naa janu Allah Ilahi

But Kaka sang these thus —

(1) Kali Jamana mine gamaaya

Sathi Akharaka Turn Our na Koyi

(2) Sai Raham najara Karana

Mai andha hum bandhatumara

Mujase Charan dikhalana,

The meaning of Das Ganu's original song is, 'I have gone down to the level of earth, and for the companion to lift me at death, I have none'. But that was not Dixit's mentality. From the outset, Baba had said, 'I will take my Kaka in vimana', i.e. at the moment of death, Baba will be with Kaka and see that he is taken to Him. So Baba promised to be his *Akarka Sathi*. No companion is better than Baba, the Guru-God. Dixit believed in Baba's undertaking, and the events proved Baba's forecast or promise to be true. Therefore, Kaka's words were, 'I have gone down to the level of the earth. For my last moments' companion or protector, there is none except you'. It is this positive and firm assurance that is helpful and necessary. The negative approach of Das Ganu's song is very chilling, unhealthy and undesirable. Kaka, like so many other bhaktas elsewhere, made this amendment as in other cases also. In the next stanza, Das Ganu says "I am blind and your slave. / *do not know God*," But Dixit substituted for the last five words there, "Show me (your) feet". How cheering, healthy and helpful these amendments are! They show Dixit's confidence in his Guru God Baba—as a God that helps.

The entire set of Kaka's experiences have not been published. It is appropriate in closing this account to note how Kaka's assurance of "*Sati Akaraka*", Helper at Death, was well founded. We shall see now his death happened.

KAKA'S DEATH AND SADGATI

In securing a good end to one's present life, Baba pays naturally due regard to the previous ideas of the bhakta, especially when they are based upon traditions or words of the scriptures. It is commonly believed that death on an Ekadasi Day carries a man to Heaven. Kaka Dixit had that belief, and he mentions it in his preface to Sai Sat Charitra, which preface was published in Sai Lila Masik over Dixit's signature in 1923. See page 4 of Sri Sai Lila Masik containing the earliest part of Sai Sat Charitra, Volume I No. I, where he says, 'It is fitting that the death of Hari bhaktas should be on Hari's own day, that is, Ekadasi'

(because Ekadasi should be devoted to Hari bhajan). Dixit notes that Baba gave this Ekadasi death to Kasiram, Appah Bhil and other bhaktas. We may also note here that Mahlsapathy died on an Ekadasi day as also Chandorkar. Taty Patei, etc. Therefore, it is most fitting that Dixit should die on an Ekadasi day according to the current belief of the virtues of death on that day. About Ekadasi, it should be remembered by all readers that it is considered a very special day for the purpose of intense concentration on God, and fasting is prescribed for that day in the verse,

Ekaadascyam ahorathram kartavyam bho jana dwayam

Raatrow jaagaranam kuryat divaacha hart kinanam

with the study of and meditation upon holy works with bhajan. In the case of Kaka Dixit, all these were available; especially, the bhajan and the study were peculiarly suitable. He had excellent company in Anna Saheb Dabolkar, the author of Sai Sat Charitra, and Tendulkar, the composer (along with his wife) of innumerable songs on Sai Baba (found in the Sai Bhajanamala) both of whom were very deeply attached to Sai Baba and prized Dixit's company on that account. The portions which in his daily pothi Dixit had to study on 4-7-1926 were Gajendra Moksha, that is, the giving of Moksha to an Elephant by God, which is contained in Sundarakanda, 21st Adhyaya of Eknath Bhavartha Ramayana. This book was studied by Dixit every night, and on the night preceding his death (i.e. 4-7-26) he had a dream. In that dream he had a vision of Sai Baba and noticed that Baba came up and got into the upper cover of Anna Saheb, and Anna Saheb was holding Baba in a fast embrace with great love. This dream he communicated early morning after waking to Anna Saheb, Deshpande, Legate, and others. His parayana of Eknath Bhagavata also on that very day of his departure was of the portion which dealt with the Ashta Maha siddhis in Chapter XV of Ekadasa Skanda, especially verse 23, which says— *Parakaayam Vis can siddhah Aatmanam Tatra Bhaavayet, Pindam hitva Viscef pranaah Vaayu bhutah shadanghrivat*. This means, 'When a siddha wishes to enter into the body of another creature, he has only to mentally carry himself into the body of that other creature, giving up mentally his own body, carrying himself in an aerial body, just

as a bee leaves one flower and flies into another'. The commentary of Eknath's stanza is extremely brilliant and Kaka Saheb read that with overflowing heart and as described in that stanza, he himself like a bee flew from his body to some other body arranged for him by Baba's Grace at the time of death in accordance with Baba's promise.

On 5-7-1926. i.e. on Ekadasi, he was starting from Ville Parle to go to Dr. Deshmukh's Dispensary at Bombay to see his ailing son Ramakrishna. Anna Saheb Dabolkar had spent with him some time in excellent bhajan and pothi and was starting to go to his own station. When these (with Tendulkar) came up after the scheduled time to the platform, they found the train also was late and came just in time for them to catch it. Both of them and Anna Saheb Dabolkar got in, and the words which came from Kaka Saheb were, 'Anna Saheb, Just see! How merciful Baba is! He has given us this train this minute. He has not made us wait even a minute.' He then looked into his pocket time table and said, "Baba has made the train come late and enabled us to catch it. Or else we would have to be stranded at Colaba and be frustrated. So, this is Sai's grace". Thus, sitting facing Anna Saheb, Kaka Saheb remembered Baba's loving grace and appeared to fall asleep. Dabolkar first thought he was sleeping. When he went near him to hold his head and asked him, 'Are you sleeping?' there was no reply. Then Dabolkar feared that Kaka Saheb had fainted. Making Kaka lie down, Dabolkar noted the apparently hopeless condition of Kaka Saheb. The train was speeding from station to station. Anna Saheb told his friend Tendulkar in the carriage that he should tell the Guard so that they may carry down Kaka's body from the carriage. But as there was a big crowd and heavy rain, he could not do this at Bandra, and so only at Mahim he got down and told the Guard. The Guard arranged to phone to Parel for a stretcher and doctor, and at Parel, the body was taken out. The doctor examined the body and said that life was extinct. On account of the suddenness of death, there would have been difficulties of Inquest. But luckily they got the doctor's certificate, and the body was committed to the care of Anna Saheb. The main point for us to see is how Baba carried out his undertaking to carry Kaka in a vimana. Tukaram was carried to Heaven in a

Vimana, and that was a fine, blissful, and excellent end. But that was a miracle- Without any miracle, Baba had given Kaka a very high end.

There was no pain or fear before life departed from his body. His was a happy death even from the worldly standpoint. But from the spiritual viewpoint it was a highly blissful end. The death in such circumstances meant Sadgati (i.e. blessed future) to the Soul. According to the Gita, what a man thinks of at the time of his death, he becomes, in his next birth. Here Kaka was thinking of his Guru at the close of life as "That wonderful God that delayed the train for him." So, the mood of gratitude and love towards Sai was the mood in which he passed away. According to Bhagavad Gita (VIII), 14, 5, 7, "He who always thinks of Me, being deeply fixed on Me, finds Me at the time of death" and "thinking of Me only at death, reaches My state at death" i.e.. "comes to Me". So Dixit would go to his Gurudeva, and live along with him after his death. Be it noted that Baba's function was to provide Sadgati. Baba stated in B. C. & S. 91, "God has agents everywhere. They have vast powers. I have vast powers'. He has mentioned how he is exercising those powers. In B.C. & S. 90, he says 'Sit quiet, *Uge Muge*. I will do the needful. I will take you to the end.' In B.C. & S. 57, Baba refers to himself thus, 'This is a Brahmin, a white Brahmin, a pure Brahmin; this Brahmin will lead lakhs of people to the *scubra marga* and take them to the goal right up to the end'. In para 95 he says, 'I draw my devotee to me at the time of his death, even though he may die a thousand miles away from Shirdi.' In 96, he says. 'I will not allow my devotee to be lost. I will account to God for all those that have been given to me'. In 94, referring to Upasani's wife, who died in January 1912, Baba said, 'She (the deceased spirit) has come to me'. In 98 he says, 'I put the Rohilla Pishya and Rao Saheb Gal wanker each in his mother's womb'. He said of M.B. Rege's child that died, that it had come to his breast and would remain there eternally.

From the above we can infer that Baba carried his Kaka in a vimana as promised.

KAKA'S SERVICES TO SAI AND SANSTHAN

There were services rendered by Kaka Saheb with his peculiar position to Sai Sansthan and Sai better than any other devotee. There were many such services but two of them will suffice here.

Baba was getting an enormous income from voluntary dakshinas everyday.¹² There were people casting greedy eyes on Baba's income, such as the Madras Ramadasi group and also the police constables and others who had to keep watch over the miscellaneous crowds gathering round Baba amongst whom there were 32 K.D's at one time.

Generally Baba spent all his time and attention on his devotees. Baba says, 'My eye of vigilant supervision is ever on those who love me'. (B. C. & S. 59, 205-206. 306, 307, 473, etc.) So, Baba was not sleeping at all at night, but was lying down on a plank or on the floor and kept his eyes open, doing Namasmara and trying to see which devotee required help. (B. C. & S. 293 gives a clear account of his plank vigil).

Having kept awake all night and dealing with all the comers throughout the day, he required some time to himself, and that was after his meal, namely, between 1 and 2 p.m. When at that time the curtain used to be dropped down at Dwarakamayee, no one would be allowed to go and disturb Baba in his rest. A rustic cooly, who did not know about this, went in after 1 p.m., bawled aloud, and.

¹² *Every evening, he disposed of the entire collection retaining nothing and saving nothing. Of these some were given fixed amounts i.e., regular daily payments e.g. to Bade Baba of Rs 30/-, to Talya Patel Rs. 9 or Rs. 10 to Lakshmi. the supplier of daily bread, Rs 4, etc. So the average income was calculated by some authorities. and was estimated to be above a Governor's income. This made Justice Chandavarker write an article in the Times of India', when Baba left his body, that Baba had wasted his Governor's income whereas he could have built ships and thus enriched the country. The Government tried to levy income tax on Baba, but Baba had no property to attach, and so, income tax was levied only on Bade Baba, Talya Patel, etc.

disturbed Baba's rest. He had been sent to fetch Syamakarna, a horse, gifted to Sai and having brought it to Shirdi, he went for his hire to Radhakrishna Ayi and Shama, who said that they had no money, and that he should ask Baba for it. So he went up to Dwarakamayee and shouted, 'Baba, Baba, give me my cooly hire.' Baba, his rest having been disturbed, was in a furious mood, and he flung a brickbat at him, which caught him on the head and drew blood. He went out crying and complained that Baba had caused him grievous injury, and what with the police and other people hovering about, there seemed to be imminent peril of a police complaint being launched against Baba. Usually if the person charged be a rich person, large sums are extracted from him. That seemed to be the likely result in this case. Luckily H. S. Dixit was there at the time, and, scenting the danger he sent for the injured rustic, and showed him how improper it was for him to disturb Baba at his rest for the sake of cooly wages for bringing the horse. H. S. Dixit, who was always just, generous and worldlywise, told the man that instead of wages, Baba would provide him with a profession, that is, he would immediately be paid Rs. 200, with which he could purchase a cart and bulls which he could use for transporting bhaktas to and fro between Shirdi and the Railway Station and thus serve not merely the bhakta public and Sai, but also his own interest; for he would be daily getting his bread and more than that, he would have an assured income thereby, instead of working merely as a cooly, which yielded a precarious income. That man accepted the Rs.200, and there was no case. He got his cart and bulls and was plying his trade of cart driving between Shirdi and Kopergaon railway station thenceforward. This is one instance wherein Dixit's Guru bhakti combined with worldly wisdom enabled him to render remarkable service to Sai, to the injured man, and to all. The second service has been mentioned already i.e., what Kaka did to attract people, prevent disputes and settle a scheme for the Sai Samsthan to look after Sai Samadhi, etc.

With reference to the religious goal, i.e. reaching God, mentioned already perhaps it is better to close this chapter with a few more observations to clear

doubts that may arise in the minds of readers sharply aware of philosophical and conventional differences amongst Hindus of Dvaitism, etc., as to technique.

Dixit was directed by Baba to concentrate his energies on the Path of Devotion, the bhakti marga and, therefore, on the Personal God especially as portrayed in the Bhagavata and Ramayana. In the Bhagavad Gita, however, the Impersonal is more prominent and frequently overshadows the Personal, and in some bhashyas, drowns it. Perhaps in the Bhagavata, Skanda XI, also there is a fair addition of the Impersonal to the Personal. The stress, however, in the Bhagavata and Ramayana is on the Personal. There is a difference in the constitution and stage at which a devotee of Baba has arrived. That decides for him whether the Impersonal or the Personal or both should be the subject of his attention, and Baba, as the Antaryami, the inner witness of the hearts of all, knows the exact state and stage of each. He, therefore, knew that Kaka was fitted only for the worship of the Personal God and asked him specifically to confine himself to two works, namely, (1) Eknath Bhagavata and (2) Eknath Bhavarta Ramayana. Even though Dixit took a copy of the Gita with commentaries thereon to Baba and asked him whether he was to study it, Baba's reply was 'No' and that he must continue his concentration on the above two works only. It does not imply that Baba condemns the worship or attainment of the Impersonal or a study of the Gita with commentaries or Bhashya such as N.G.C. had. Baba allows that worship at the proper time and to the proper person at the proper stage. The main thing for us is to concentrate our efforts on religion so as to produce the best possible results. For a lawyer accustomed to hair-breadth distinctions, it will be rather a dangerous waste of energy to start religion with an analysis of the psychology of human self and the philosophy of God, Personal and Impersonal. Though these subjects can never be excluded from entering into one's religious field, they have at first to be kept in the background with a dim perception that a solution of these is arriving in good time by the grace of the Guru who guides one in the Bhakti marga. The Guru will see to it that one's procedure and the result thereof are satisfactory without one's having to solve at the outset these hard conundrums about Personality and Impersonality of the

individual self and the Supreme Self, their identity or difference, and the exact end of all Metaphysics.

We may note incidentally that the difference between dvaitins and advaitins as to the end of life is more apparent than real. Dvaitins deal with a Personal God right up to the end and, therefore, they picture the ultimate goal of the individual soul as resting at the feet of the Personal God for ever and ever. But from ancient times the Personal and the Impersonal are recognised by the seers (Rishis) to be merely two aspects of one and the same Supreme. The dvaitins also find this doctrine as put forward in the Kena and other upanishads and in Bhagavad Gita. Chapter XII. Sri Krishna there points out in the Gita that He has an *Avyakta* aspect—Unmanifest—and that is beyond the reach of the speech and mind and hardly distinguishable from the Impersonal. But as power is conceived to be inherent in the Supreme, that same Supreme might be *Avyakta* or imperceptible or Impersonal at one time or in one aspect especially at the beginning and perceptible and Personal at other times and in other aspects, especially at present. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance to all Hindus to realise God fully (*Samagram*) as both Impersonal and Personal with both *para and apara prakriti*, and this is in accordance with our real nature. Experiences of those who have concentrated on God without any narrow prejudices have shown them that while dwelling in their hearts upon the Supreme blissful person called Narayana, etc., the ultimate residuum is bliss with the absence of any personal factors. Neither the worshipper nor the worshipped is present there. The bare feeling of bliss alone remains. That does not, however, in practice continue for a long time. As Sri Krishna says in the Gita, (Ch. XII) those who try to rest themselves on the *Avyakta* come back to the Personal and dwell upon that as being more akin to the normal state in each individual in which he conceives of himself as a personality practically identified with the organism which puts forward the notion of personality. In the Impersonal, there is no question of foot or our remaining at the foot of the Supreme except in a very vague and metaphorical sense. When this is reached, dvaitism and advaitism do not make any difference in the result of contemplation or concentration. In the case of Sai

Baba, he almost invariably referred to Allah, Hari, etc., but occasionally referred to the widest aspects of the Supreme, namely, being in all creatures and all places without form and being all. That is the same as Brahman which is mostly considered as Impersonal in the Upanishads (Kena, etc.). Especially for a devotee of Baba (as this chapter on Dixit's spiritual progress shows) it is perfectly needless to stress the difference between dvaitism and advaitism. Dvaitins and Advaitins alike can safely follow the lead of Sai Baba and begin with the Personal as invariably everyone must. Then, ultimately, they will see for themselves whether at the end there is any difference between the Personal and the Impersonal. Dixit, whatever his ancestors and his sect might lean to, had no predetermination or preference to the Dvaita or Advaita group and trusted to the safe guidance of the Samarth Sadguru Sai Baba and began his religious course properly. To reach Personal God, it takes many janmas (BG (VI) 48) *Aneka Janma samsiddhah* (VII)-19 (*Baluintim Janmanam ante jnanaran maam prapadyate, Vaasudevah sarvam itii* and then he sees God is All. The All is evidently Infinite and Impersonal while Vaasudeva is Personal. Till that stage is reached, the religious aspirant is wisely content to deal with God as a separate personality and in acting under the guidance of an All-knowing Guru like Sai Baba he is perfectly safe, for mostly the pupil in his burning love to the personal Guru identifies God with him. Tyagaraja of musical fame similarly left the question of preference between Dvaita and Advaita to God himself — "*Dvaitamu sukham.*"

Baba disapproved of his devotees launching upon purely metaphysical disquisitions, i.e. all intellectual feats not required for their present course. By trusting to his guidance, the devotee's progress is assured and he will understand after making some progress, how the above and other problems are solved — especially by noting how Sri Krishna taught in Gita, e.g.,

Brahmanohi pratishta Aham Amritasya Avyayasya cha

Scaascvatasya cha dharmasya Sukhasya Aikantikasya cha

which means "I (your personal God) am the basis of Brahman (the Impersonal God described in the Upanishads), of freedom from Death and Decay, of Eternal Dharma and unalloyed Bliss (BG, XIV 27).

Dixit's life shows us that Baba with his wonderful powers and kindness prepares the pupil, and gives him the full development needed for his stage and takes him step by step — one step at a time — to reach the "far off divine event to which the whole creation (i.e., each creature) moves".