

CHAPTER VII

G.S. Khaparde

In the life of Sai Baba, the description of the starter of Sai worship and an account of other leading apostles and propagandists should be followed by a brief reference to later workers in the same field. Yet Sri Upasani's work carries us far into the third decade of this century (20th). Thereafter it devolved on less prominent workers, who yet had each notable achievements for Sai's mission to his credit, B. V. Dev and others should now engage our attention. Yet as G. S. Khaparde has been included in the list of workers and as he was regarded by Upasani in the light of a Guru, still more because his (G.S.K's) high social and political standing in the country attracted public notice to Sai Baba, who had power to release him from the jaws of Government prosecution in 1911-2 and because his daily diary (kept at that time at Shirdi and published later to the

public through S. L. Masik) forms an important source book for Sai history, he is given a prominent place here next after Upasani.

The late Hon'ble Dewan Bahadur Ganesh Sri Krishna Khaparde, Advocate of Amraoti, was a notable figure in Indian politics and law courts of Central Provinces (now Madhya Pradesh) and in the Legislative Council. He was a redoubtable lieutenant of the extremist leader Bala Gangadhar Tilak in the Indian National Congress. The British Government was greatly afraid of the extremist section which drove home the lesson taught by Dadha Bhai Naoroji in 1904 National Congress, 'Swaraj is India's Birthright and must be granted'. The extremists wanted complete independence of India and adoption of every conceivable method by the people to get rid of the foreign yoke and roused the masses. But the moderates, formed a powerful party in the Congress headed by Sir Pherosha Mehta of Bombay, one of whose lieutenants was H. S. Dixit. who was a very successful lawyer practising at Bombay, a Member of the Bombay Corporation, and a Member of the Bombay Legislative Council. An accident to his leg in England drew H.S. Dixit to Sai Baba in 1909. The repressive activity of the Government trying to imprison and harass extremist leaders drove **G.S.** Khaparde, an extremist leader, to Baba's feet. Both G.S.K. and H.S.D. were thinking of their worldly need of Baba's help and fancied that they were coming of their own accord to Baba. But Baba revealed the truth when he said that in a former birth Baba, G.S.Khaparde, H.S. Dixit, Bapu Saheb Jog (the priest), Shama (Madhav Rao Deshpande), and Dada Kelkar were all together living with their Guru in a blind alley, and Baba added, 'I have therefore, brought all of you together'. (B. C. & S, 502). Baba also mentioned (B. C. & S, 56), when a devotee objected to people coming to him for temporal benefit, 'Do not object. My men first come to me on account of that only. They get their hearts' desires fulfilled, and after being comfortably placed in life, they follow me and progress further. I bring my men to me from long distances under many pleas. I seek them and bring them to me. They do not come of their own accord. I bring them to me. However distant, even thousands of miles away my people might be, I draw them to myself, just as we pull birds to us with a string tied to their feet'.

Already before the end of 1908, there were signs of the minds of the Members of Government in Bombay, Central Provinces, Delhi, and other places getting ruffled and arrangements were being made to prosecute the heads of the extremists including Lokamanya Bala Gangadhara Tilak. Tilak was prosecuted at Bombay. The Government being so powerful in the country, charges of sedition under 124-A I.P.C, a conveniently plastic and all embracing provision against patriots were sure to end in conviction. Still the lawyers were putting forward as much of defence as they could in such cases, chiefly with a view to point out to the public in India and Europe that what was considered ordinary and proper language in the mouths of opponents of Government in Europe and America were considered grave offences in India, punishable with transportation for life and forfeiture of all property, and this enabled Government to strangle the agitation for popular freedom in the country. Lokamanya Bala Gangadhara Tilak's trial thus was launched and finally ended in his conviction of six years of imprisonment in India and Burma. In pursuit of the same policy, other extremists in other Provinces were subjected to similar trial.

Even on the 5th December 1910, and much more in 1911 December, G. S. Khaparde, the Amraoti lawyer, with a very good practice and a very powerful influence in the extremist circle, both inside and outside the Congress, naturally expected that his turn would come to be placed in the dock with its natural results— loss of liberty, loss of health, loss of money, etc. He had the good fortune of having heard about Sai Baba's wonderful personality, that he could grip the minds of even the highest officials and was at the same time a saint of the highest type and that it would be a privilege to meet him for any person anxious to secure temporal as well as spiritual welfare. Sai was visited by both officials and nonofficials—Mamlatdars, Collectors, Judges, society leaders, etc.—who met him and fell at his feet.

On the 5th December 1910, G. S. Khaparde visited Shirdi and found numerous officials, high and low, and masses crowding to the feet of Baba. Baba was teaching people in parables and was able to protect, for instance, police officers, such as a head constable charged with extortion at a court, and to get

them acquitted, and was rendering great temporal and spiritual help to all and sundry. By 12th December 1910, he got permission to go away and left Shirdi. It is after that date the most serious time for G.S. Khaparde began. The year 1911 was a period of trials for all extremists, as Government had the support of the Moderates for crushing the Extremists and G.S. Khaparde being high up in the list of extremists naturally stood in the same perilous position. Any vigorous activity of patriots sufficed to increase the severity of the policy of repression which therefore attained Makshasic dimensions in all Provinces. Khaparde realised his own danger. Though he had a very lucrative and roaring practice especially on the criminal side, part of his clientele fell. It was feared that the man who today argued as a lawyer would tomorrow be locked up in jail, at first as an under-trial prisoner and finally sent away to the Andamans or some distant prison. His income declined. With it also his health and the spirits of all the members of his family. But he had already known where his Palladium or Sanctuary was. So on the 6th December 1911, he arrived at Shirdi. Even at his previous visit, Baba had said on 9-12-1910. 'This is your house. Why should anybody fear when I am here?'¹ This assurance was again given to Khaparde. But as his funds were low, he and the members of his family who often visit Shirdi, were very anxious that he should go back to Amraoti to resume his practice. However clever he might be as a lawyer, he himself could not say when the Government might pounce upon him and send him to prison. But there was one person in the world who could say it, who had that knowledge and who could exercise his powers to sniff out all danger from him completely.

G.S.K. had ample proof that Baba had knowledge of everything that was happening everywhere and could control the minds of everyone and control objects also including the elements. So he like others felt perfectly safe in Baba's immediate presence. Whenever he got letters or telegrams at Shirdi offering cases, the desire was strong to get back to Amraoti. So his sons and relations and clients came to take him away. Shama on his behalf frequently asked Baba whether he could get back. Sometimes Baba seemed to encourage him by giving affirmative answers. But Baba would soon recall them and say 'Go tomorrow',

which was Baba's way of saying 'Do not go'. Baba wished to make perfectly certain that Khaparde would not be prosecuted. 'My eye of vigilant supervision is ever on those who love Me' said Baba, (B.C. & S. 9). and he was perpetually watching the minds of the Governor and the Home Member of the Central Provinces Government and elsewhere; and he revealed to Mrs. Khaparde what he did and how he watched. It is quite evident that the Government Members were considering the prosecution of Khaparde for sedition in respect of many of his speeches. There would be no difficulty in finding matter for prosecution under 124-A, Indian Penal Code, in the speeches of Khaparde or any other patriotic extremist, for anything and everything may be easily twisted and brought under 124-A. But the Government were noting that the sensation created in the public mind by the trial of Lokamanya was itself a powerful impetus to the demand for Indian Independence and, therefore, if possible, they should avoid sensational trials. In the case of Khaparde who came to Baba on 6th December 1911 and stayed on at Shirdi with Baba for 3 months or more, refusing to accept cases in various courts, rumours got abroad that Khaparde had got crazy and had been fascinated by a crazy fakir at Shirdi, and, therefore, had refused offer of cases and given up practice, politics, society and everything else, preferring the company of a fakir. Such rumours must have reached the ears of the Government Members or made to reach their ears by Baba, and Baba must have made them think, 'Let sleeping dogs lie'. That is, the foreign Government had more advantage to gain by not ordering more prosecutions of leaders which would keep up political excitement in the country. It is this decision among high places which was obviously denoted by Baba's words.

It is noted in Khaparde's diary dated the 29th December 1911 as follows :
'He (Sai Baba) told my wife that the Governor came with a lance, that Sain Maharaj had a tussle with him and drove him out; and that he finally conciliated the Governor'. G. S. Khaparde adds—

'The language is highly figurative and, therefore difficult to interpret'.

Being too close to the trees, he could not see the forest. At this distance of time, there is no difficulty whatever to interpret the above words. Sai Baba had

given him *abhayam* saying, "Why fear when I am here?" and he was carrying out his duty of protection. That protection involved the prolonged stay of Khaparde at Shirdi, but with his extremely aggressive worldly attachment, the confinement within Shirdi was obviously irksome to the impatient spirit of Khaparde. Sai never confers a temporal benefit without attaching to it a spiritual benefit also. '*Saburi*' (Patience) or calm self-possession amidst trials is wanted alike for spiritual and temporal purposes and comes easily to men who can surrender themselves and all they call theirs to Baba, like Bala Saheb Bhate and H. S. Dixit. G. S. Khaparde in his diary notes the great calm that prevailed in the hearts of these two and also appeared in their faces, and expressly mentions that they turned a new leaf after they came to Baba. Staying with Baba is the best stimulus and help for surrender and *sahuri* (patience). Baba gave this stimulus and help to Khaparde also, but his nature could not receive them fully. Khaparde notes in his diary on the 30th December 1911, that is, the day next to the reference to the

Governor that Baba narrated (as he often did) a small tale calculated to impress (on G.S.K.) the virtue of patience. The impression of the tale on Khaparde however was poor. Baba noted his impatience and told him on the 1st January, i.e., next day, that he (Khaparde) was "anxious to run away." He dismissed all the company with him and retained only Khaparde to tell him that. But still the impression on G.S.K. was poor. The very next day his son came to take him back to Amraoti, for his absence therefrom meant loss of income and increased expenditure. On the 3rd January 1912, his son and one Gopal Rao asked Baba for permission. Baba gave it first and soon after rescinded the permission. Shama also went and asked Baba leave for Khaparde's departure. Baba replied that Khaparde had his house both at Shirdi and at Amraoti and that he might stay where he liked, and that he might never return to Amraoti. That settled the matter. Some time later, when pressed about the same by Shama, Baba said, 'Conditions are not favourable to Khaparde for his return to Amraoti'. Moreover, Khaparde was far too deep in the world and the world was far too deep in him, and Baba wished to give him a double advantage by his stay at Shirdi to escape prosecution and to advance in detachment. Unfortunately, the

very high degree of attachment to the world that persisted in Khaparde despite his great learning in sacred books and his daily prayers, attendance at a good number of puran, bhajan, and kirtans, prevented his receiving adequate benefits from Sainath Maharaj.

Baba's company was the highest education one could get. As a Mahratta saying goes, 'Let us stay with saints. If they do not give us Upadesa, let us note what they do and say. That is the best Upadesa'. H. S. Dixit had the very great advantage of six or seven months' stay with Baba, and he also kept a diary in which he noted not only what he did and other visitors did but also all that Baba did and said. G S.K's diary is printed in the *Sai Lila Masik'*, the official organ of the Shirdi Sai Sansthan, Volumes II and III, in English, for he kept his diary in English. He gives such varied information about Baba, and his visitors especially about the stories that Baba narrated. That is. his diary is justly regarded as a valuable mine of information about Baba; and 'he may be regarded as the *Shirdi Pepys*. There is considerable resemblance between Pepys and Khaparde, in their mentality.

Only 3½ months were over, when Baba had completely swept out all traces of ideas of prosecution of "the extremist Khaparde". Baba had extinguished the idea of prosecution from the minds of all responsible authorities. Evidently it was after the official files regarding Khaparde's Prosecution were sent to the record room to be lodged that Baba allowed Khaparde to return to Amraoti. Meanwhile his stay at Shirdi was not without benefit to him. Khaparde was a master of Sanskrit and Maharatti. He was conversant with the chief books in both these languages on spiritual subjects, and as there was some leisure for him after perusing the daily newspapers, and chats with visitors, he studied those books. He went on reading *Parama Amrita*, an excellent and exhaustive treatise on spiritual topics in Mahratti and Panchadasi in Sanskrit, (the latter both he and Baba labelled as 'our treasure house of information'). Khaparde was studying Ranganatha's Mahratti summary 'Yoga of Vasishtha' and listening to Gathas of Eknath, Das Bodha, etc. Baba's moral tales and Baba's chamatkars were also the subject of his talk with his usual companions there, viz., Upasani Maharaj,

Dada Kelkar, Bapu Saheb Jog, and occasional visitors like Mrs. Koujalgi, Balakrishna Upasani sastri, N.G. Chandorkar, C. V. Vaidya, B V. Dev, Mr Mankar, etc. The talks he had were always full of much spiritual food for reflection and absorption. His maintaining a diary should have served a double purpose, namely, not only to make a record for future reference but also to constitute a good photograph of his mind and the influences brought to bear on it at that time. Psycho-analysts advise their visitors to note down freely all that occurs to them, page after page, and day after day. This is a valuable means to discover how the mind of the writer works, what its predilections are, and what its peculiar avoidances. Mr. Khaparde's diary when placed side by side with H. S. Dixit's is a valuable index to show the difference between the two²⁰ and the points of similarity between them. H. S. Dixit was an England returned M.L.A., a successful lawyer, and an active Congressman. But he retired from all these and in 1912 was leading the life of a Vanaprasta with Baba enjoying thorough peace and developing considerably in his spiritual state. Khaparde also was an active politician, lawyer, and an England returned Congressman, who had retreated to Shirdi and stayed there though not with a view to making spiritual advance, but mainly with a view to ascape from the Governmental claws, when that British Government was trying to clutch at his throat. Khaparde was in matters of study of religious books far more advanced than H. S. Dixit. In fact he was a teacher of a group at Shirdi for Paramamrita, Panchadasi, and Yoga Vasishta classes and lectured on contemplation and other similar subjects to his small class. Sri Upasani Baba declared about 1936 in the presence of this author that he regarded Khaparde as his Guru, evidently by reason of his teachings in those classes at Shirdi. But Dixit's advance in calmness and appropriation of Baba's

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- ²⁰ *No doubt comparisons are said to be odious. But when two eminent politicians, eminent also in the service of Sai. have both of them maintained diaries and these are published, a few thoughts may be humbly offered in any biography of Sai about them. But nothing written here detracts from the great merits of either of these.

spiritual gifts was much greater and Dixit's death revealed that he had been "taken in a vimana" as promised by Baba after being rendered fit for being taken in a vimana, i.e., after dedicating himself to Sai Baba and rendering a whole life of service to Baba and humanity. With Khaparde there was no such dedication. His heart was engrossed too much with the world. From Baba he went back to practice and politics, to accumulate wealth and fame, and he achieved practically all these, i.e. all that he could or should expect from the part he played in politics and social affair. His son after successful practice became a Minister, and he (G. S. Khaparde) himself became a Member of the Council of State. After living for a long time he passed away full of honours and fame and that is just what one would expect by reading his diary maintained at Shirdi.

In the list of the chief "Sources for Sai's History" one is glad to note that Khaparde's diary is a notable source of information. So far as it goes, it contains references to all external things that took place at Shirdi during his stay and the talks and behaviour of Sai Baba which may be noticed by any spectator. The tales of Baba that are narrated in the diary are the notable exceptions to the view that the diary is mainly worldly. One other important exception to the rule of worldliness, the one matter of which Khaparde could give direct information, is a matter of considerable importance. Khaparde notes on several dates that Baba cast on him and on some others a '*Yogic glance*', a sort of *Saktinipata*, as a result of which the person receiving the glance, e.g. Khaparde, was immersed deep in an ocean of bliss for hours and hours. On some dates he says Baba gave no yogic glances. These glances were probably part of the inducement by Baba to pull Khaparde away from the depth of his worldliness and external attachments in order to make him lead a life of surrender, detachment and *Atma Nishta*. We note the frequent mention of Khaparde's morning prayers everyday and we may presume that in these prayers, he endeavoured to get free from his cares and troubles. Evidently these prayers were the usual prayers e.g. *Pratah Smarana* and not special ones nor addressed to Baba. He was firmly convinced that Baba knew everything and could arrange everything, and he felt that while remaining at Shirdi he was perfectly safe from molestation from any quarters. But

he was too much overpowered by the ideas in his religious books to feel and say that Baba was God. In fact when writing a preface to M. W. Pradhan's 'Glimpses of Indian Spirituality', decades after he had left Shirdi, he writes that Baba came very near to his idea of God, not that Baba was God to him. His preface (in 1936) to an English translation of Upasani Baba's utterances shows how little of the self had been snuffed out from him and what spiritual stage he reached. He writes there in a patronizing way to defend Upasani Baba against the attacks that had become innumerable and that defence perhaps was the only object of the preface or foreword.

Khaparde never revealed in his diary the innermost portion of his heart. In fact the diary is an extrovert diary. It is quite possible that Khaparde derived notable benefit for his soul from his contact with Baba, but he has not expressed it either in his diary or in any of his writings that we come across. The public have in any case to be grateful to Khaparde for maintaining his diary for nearly four months of his contact with Baba and making them available for Sai history. He was undoubtedly a great religious scholar and one who could perceive the greatness of Baba. The fact that he had achieved great fame and name in politics, law, and social affairs (denoted by Baba's terming him. 'Sarkar'¹) would also have rendered his stay at Shirdi an additional means of spreading Baba's name abroad.

Two very important things about Khaparde are not found detailed in the diary, viz the facts of Mrs. G. S. Khaparde's previous births and previous service to Baba, and Baba's withdrawing the plague from his son Balwant's body to himself. The last is to be found in Shama's statement (See Dev. Exp.). From Dec. 1911 for 3 months plague raged at Shirdi and Balwant, son of Khaparde, had an attack. There was the bubo and fever, and the mother of the patient went to Baba with tears asking whether it was to sacrifice her child that she had come to Shirdi. Baba spoke in parables assuring her that all would be well. She could not understand him and later Baba showed on his own person bubos and told her that he had to bear all these to save her son. He also said that he had saved Balwant and that his orders were supreme, *Ajna Apratihata*. Accordingly Balwant

recovered and so also Baba. This reminds one of a similar sacrifice of Baba on behalf of another devotee. Mrs. Tarabai Sadahsiv Tarkhad of Poona came to Shirdi with a long-standing eye trouble which her doctor could not diagnose or cure. She came to Shirdi and sat before Baba. Baba cast his glance at her eyes and her eyes ceased to pain or water and Baba's eyes were watering. That was an end to her eye trouble, and she wondered how instantaneously Baba worked the cure of a disease which baffled doctors. Similarly Noverkar with high fever sent his son with Rs. 500 to Baba. Baba received the sum and at once limbs began to shiver. Baba explained that he had to bear the burdens of his devotees. Noverkar was of course cured.

In the case of Khaparde, Baba mentioned no doubt the rinanubandha noted already in this chapter. The most interesting statement of rinanubandha was in respect of Mrs Khaparde. One day when a number of naivedyas were placed one after another before Baba he did not touch any one of them. When Mrs. Khaparde's naivedya was brought, he at once put it into his mouth. Then Shama, who occasionally took liberties with Baba, asked why he was so partial to Mrs. Khaparde's naivedya and Baba gave an account of Mrs. Khaparde's love and service to him birth after birth. Baba said, 'She was formerly a cow of a bunya and gave (me) plenty of milk. Then she was born of a mali (gardener) and later went to a Kshatriya. Then she married the bunya. Then she was born a Brahmin. After a long spell of time, I am seeing her again, and the food she gives me is sweet (with her love)'. Mrs. Khaparde's prema more than Mr. Khaparde's self-interested visit to Shirdi it was that operated powerfully on Baba and made him take so much trouble for each member of that family, Baba did not give mantra upadesa except in exceptional cases. Baba gave it to Mrs. G.S.K. thus: Go on saying "Rajah Ram, Rajah Ram".

Referring to Mr. Khaparde's ambition, Baba stated that the ambition was deeply ingrained and evident in a previous life also. Baba stated that in a former birth, 'You (Khaparde) were with me for two or three years, and went into royal service, though there was enough at home to live in comfort.'

Baba's help, therefore, to Khaparde's family was partly temporal but the most notable part of it was the development of Mrs. Khaparde's soul stage after stage in furtherance of which he gave her Rama mantropadesa.

Strangely enough, the husband's diary makes no mention of such highly important and interesting facts.

A few words more about Sri Khaparde's diary are here called for. The first point that has struck many a man who saw the printed diary in Sai Lila Masik, Volumes II and III, is that it is extremely dry and so very uninteresting to the general reader as to make him skip over the pages. However, here and there some highly interesting matter about Sai Baba gleams through the rest just like bits of gold gleaming through a mass of mire or ore. No doubt the ore is valuable and no part of it is usually thrown away till it is subjected to the proper chemical process for extraction of the precious metal. Here also a good deal of the diary will be found to have its value when dealt with properly. But who are the persons who can so deal with it? Usually, the devotee is not possessed of the necessary patience or ability. No doubt to every Sai devotee, anything connected with Sai becomes important. Small things about chilm, about songs, about the way Baba walked, about the persons he met, are all found to be highly interesting to certain sets of persons. But to many others the matter may be either unattractive or repulsive. However, in the case of this diary most of the matter can be turned into interesting matter by a proper historian or biographer taking up the same and piecing out the necessary parts from it and putting them into the biography or history that he is compiling. In fact the great value of a diary like this is its historical value. In the matter of ascertainment of dates and facts, its value is indeed very great.

We shall just mention one instance.

Upasani Baba was a very important person who came under the influence of Sai Baba and attained to great heights, and the facts of his biography are therefore of very great importance in understanding him and his history as also the way in which Baba dealt with him. One gets sometimes puzzled when he notes that Sai Baba mentioned that for four years Upasani was to stay at Shirdi and at the end

of that period he would attain to full-blown divinity. According to Upasani Lilamrita, which is either a biography or at least chronicles of Upasani, written practically to his dictation and revised by him carefully, mention is made that Sai Baba stated that Upasani had undergone the four years and had attained full divinity. A student of Upasani's life, who may have great reverence for Upasani, would still be compelled to admit that the full-blown expression of divinity did not occur in Sri Upasani's life, that is, in any portion of Upasani's life up to the end of it in 1941, and he may, therefore, wonder how Sai Baba could have made such an inaccurate remark as that stated above. Here then comes the value of this Khaparde's diary. Upasani had clearly forgotten the date of his arrival or even the year of his arrival and the year or the date of his departure from Shirdi. He fancied that he had really spent four years under Sai and thus dictated to his biographer that four years had been spent and the biographer puts it into Sai's mouth as though he uttered it. As for the date of his arrival, Khaparde's diary discloses that Upasani had not been at Shirdi in December 1910 and therefore did not arrive that year at Shirdi. Again in his entry of 8-12— 1911 Sri Khaparde notes that Upasani vaidya who was not at Shirdi in the previous year, was present at Shirdi in 1911, was under an order of Baba to stay for four years there, and was living at Khandoba's. That fixes the arrival date of Upasani as June 1911. And about his departure also similar investigation, though not in this case with the help of Sri Khaparde's diary, furnishes proof that he departed not in 1915 but in 1914 itself. Therefore it is an unavoidable conclusion that Upasani did not spend four years as required at Shirdi but only three years and therefore one begins to understand how Sri Sai Baba's words about him that he would attain full-blown divinity had not been fulfilled. No doubt Sri Upasani attained divine qualities of a certain sort and carried on splendid religious work, but that is not the same as saying that he attained complete divinity, and thus we find the use of Khaparde's diary used strictly as a history source book for purposes of research in dealing with Sai Baba and his devotees.

Again one may admit that chronology and history might receive too much of attention. Neither Upasani nor Sai Baba cared for chronology as such. In point of

fact, Upasani Baba dissuaded people from going into research about the origins and dates of the earlier period of his life. However, people with great affection for Baba, naturally wish to discover as much as they can inspite of the saying *Nadimoolam Rishermoolam Vicharyam na kadachana* which means, 'Do not go into the origins of sacred rivers or Rishis'. The obvious reason is that many a man who has great reverence for these might discover that their origins were quite contemptible and might run the risk of losing his reverence for these in their later developments. Take the Godavari for instance. It is a grand river which is highly venerated and referred to as Ganga, but its origin high up in the Triambak hill shows it to be a petty thing, a tiny spring, and though it is worshipped there by some, there is nothing suggestive of anything great about it. So one is apt to lose one's regard for Godavari by seeing its origin. The origin of Palar, Cauvery, etc., may similarly be found to be petty and not worth the trouble of visiting. About great Rishis, the origins of Vyasa and Narada, for instance, are extremely unfortunate. Vyasa was the offspring of Parasara through his sudden contact with a fisherwoman whom he happened to meet on the banks of a river. Parasara immediately proceeded to contact the woman because he considered the moment auspicious for the production of good issue. Vyasa was that product. Hence the question of Vyasa's caste has been raised, and respect for Vyasa's grand productions is apt to be imperilled by those who consider his origin as important. About Narada also, it is mentioned in the Bhagavata that he was the issue of a slave girl, and anyhow by his efforts he had risen high and obtained a momentary sakshatkar or vision of God. When he wanted that vision to become permanent, he was informed that his birth having been so low, he was not to have permanent sakshatkar in that janma and so he had to take another birth and in the subsequent birth he had perpetual sakshatkar. So the man with a tendency to cavil at things might consider the utterances or productions of Narada like Narada Bhakti Sutras lose their importance or value by reason of Narada's being once a dancing girl's child. We have gone very far afield in explaining above stanza, but to come back to the main point, there is nothing low in the known life of Upasani Baba and practically nothing at all is known about

the origins and early life of Sri Sai Baba. There is a certain cloud of mystery hanging over every period of Sai Baba's life and Baba allowed it to remain so, evidently because there is no necessity to remove that mist. The haze of uncertainty adds to one's reverence just like the haze about the morning sun adds to its beauty in several seasons. Therefore the ascertainment of history and facts is not a necessity or condition in all cases, and one may overdo his attachment to history and that perhaps is the reason why neither Upasani nor Sai encouraged research into history. But to a modern mind, historical research becomes a patent necessity and the educated feel naturally an interest to ascertain facts and their proper arrangement or presentation. Without these, even a holy person's life loses a certain portion of its value. Taking Sai Baba's own case, lack of arrangement in the materials presented by Sai Sat Charitra, which is only a disorderly conglomeration of various events and utterances in Baba's life, puzzles one and leaves one unsatisfied. We have many gems everywhere one feels, but one feels also at the same time what a brilliant diamond necklace can be made out of it if only the diamonds can be arranged in proper order. Hence we must not ignore the value of a history source book.

There is one other matter which one has to mention in connection with Khaparde's diary. Khaparde went on writing the diary in the way in which he would maintain his diary at home for his domestic events, that is, more with a view to keep it as a reminder to him later on when he should attempt to recall which persons on which days met him and what transpired. He was not writing the diary under the orders of any psycho-analyst. Far from submission to psycho-analysis, the diary rather maintains a reticence which one can easily understand when one notes that the writer of the diary had no idea of getting dissected and observed under the microscope of any overzealous scientific student of his life. So far indeed is he free from that set of ideas, that he does not mention even highly important facts necessary to understand his own conduct. The diarist does not say why he visited Baba in 1910 and again in 1911. The diary discloses very little clue to understand it. One has to make extraneous researches and then find out the actual cause of his visits.

Sai Baba was a great spiritual personality and every one would take it that Khaparde went there to get the punya of even a momentary contact with such a high personality as Sai. But that will be a misreading of the facts. On both the occasions, Khaparde had important reasons and these were discovered by looking into the political history of Government activities of persecuion and or prosecution of patriots. With reference to the 98 days' stay of Khaparde (December 1911 to the middle of March 1912) a few incidents are noted which give a clue to the object of his visit. Baba did not allow him to depart and mentioned that the times were not favourable for his departure, and that Baba met the Governor who came with a lance to pierce Khaparde and put him aside, Strangely enough, instead of stating that this meant that his prosecution under section 124-A was being warded off, Khaparde simply notes 'The language is figurative and hard to interpret'. Those of us who are in the know of things find it the easiest language to interpret whatever may have been the reasons for Khaparde's saying that the interpretation was hard.

Apart from the above, the value of a diary in understanding the stage at which he had arrived in his spiritual condition and how Baba operated on him from the spiritual standpoint, is naturally very great. We see that Khaparde went to Baba not at all for spiritual improvement but merely to seek protection from Government persecution and prosecution which none but Sai could give. But Sai Baba always attached a string to his grant of protection. With the grant of temporal benefits he imperceptibly improved the spiritual condition of the recipient. Here, in Khaparde's case, a few facts in the diary disclose how Baba dealt with him.

The first point to notice is that Baba did not force the pace of spiritual advancement in this visitor's case any more than in others' cases. Baba would have had excellent reasons to immediately promote Khaparde's spiritual interests because Khaparde had been in one of his previous janmas a fellow pupil along with Baba under the same Guru, and in another janma had been a member of the same family with Baba, having sufficient to live upon but still, getting impelled by high ambition, Khaparde chose to leave the family and seek royal service in

order to advance his economic or other position. This just gives a hint that ambition was deep in the nature of Khaparde not only in the 19th century birth but in previous births as well. Such a person would have had excellent help for striving high up in the spiritual line. Yet Baba did not force the pace. He allowed him to take his own time and adopt his own ways for his spiritual amelioration. Like 95 per cent of the orthodox religious people, Khaparde also had his religious convictions and ideas of spiritual improvement. Therefore, he went on with his prayers, attendance at bhajans, and study of Panchadasi, Paramamrita, Yoga Vasishta, Dasa Bodha, etc. These no doubt have their value, but most of the orthodox people make the study of these and the adoption of the other programmes mentioned above, the be-all and end-all of religion. They stop all their spiritual practices with these. In Sai's course these formed a very minor item in one's spiritual advancement. The main thing is to surrender to the Guru wholeheartedly and be at his mercy for everything, depending upon the Guru for everything and treating him as the all-in-all of the sadhaka. Khaparde was certainly not prepared to make such a surrender. In fact the two great essentials for a sadhaka are (1) *Nishta* and (2) *Saburi*, that is, full faith in the Guru and a readiness to wait long, very long for seeing the benefits. Baba had adopted that course himself and had given *Nishta* and *Saburi* to his own Guru. As for Khaparde, he was not prepared with full *Nishta*, that is, full faith in his Guru. He maintained his old line of thought, that is, great attachment to wealth, comfort, name, position, and a slight veneer of religiosity combined with respectable life as quite sufficient for his purpose. With such a mentality, one could not expect any great advance in his spiritual condition. Sai Baba did not force the pace and make him surrender all that.

Sai knew or foreknew or foreordained the subsequent life of Khaparde after releasing him from the immediate danger of persecution namely that his ambitions and energies were all to be utilised in totally different fields and his greatness was to consist in becoming an M.L.C. and the father of a Minister of the Central Provinces etc. All that Khaparde achieved. No doubt he has made a fairly good advance in religion as understood by him. However great that

advance may be, especially from his own standpoint, that advance cannot be treated as advance from Sai's viewpoint. Any Sai sishya would see that all that is insignificant and practically amounts to nothing when compared with what Sai could achieve for him had he surrendered himself to Sai. But in the case of Khaparde he was very far from attempting the Sai viewpoint.

Humility and a readiness for poverty were the prerequisites for one to benefit by contacting a Samartha Sadguru. In the case of Khaparde, he (Khaparde) notes that, when his wife massaged the feet of Baba, the latter said that Dixit should give Rs. 200 to her. This at once mortified Khaparde. His pride felt wounded at the idea that he, a practising lawyer, should be thought so low as to make his wife receive Rs. 200 from a Bombay lawyer like Dixit, though his (GSK's) funds were indeed very low and he badly required Rs.200 or more. Later he understood that the Rs. 200 was only symbolical, that it meant Dixit's achievement of (1) poverty and (2) patience or contentment with his poor lot. Khaparde rebelled at this idea also. He did not want poverty. He did not go to Shirdi to remain poor for ever. On the other hand he wanted to amass wealth and attain high position and Sai was his cat's paw to get at the desired things. Khaparde never forgot that he was an Hon. Member of the Council and had visited England, was high up in politics and looked up to by all and sundry as a great social and political leader and a highly learned scholar who could even teach Panchadasi to Upasani and others. The diary frequently mentions that his position was all in all in his eyes and when others came to Shirdi, he was an institution to be visited by them just as they visited Baba. He spent his time in talks with such visitors and in his study of the daily papers to note especially what happened in the world generally, perhaps with special reference to his own condition and the possibilities of his own delicate position getting more delicate and more dangerous. A psycho-analyst studying the diary would at once declare that the mentality displayed in the diary is almost the antipodes of what the mentality of a sadhaka like Dixit should be and was. Dixit made considerable advance and, as Khaparde notes, turned over a new leaf, and there was a calm visible on his face due to his internal peace. He notes the same in the case of

Bala Saheb Bhate, a retired Mamlatdar, who had the same calm on his face, though he had forsaken the lucrative office of a Mamlatdar, without anything to fall back upon. Yet he was able to achieve great calm. These are the exact opposites of Khaparde. Baba's dealing with such a person on the spiritual side is highly interesting. In some matters Khaparde's moral and spiritual condition was far from being satisfactory, and it was known to Baba. Of course, this should not be discussed either in the diary or in this biography, but there is sufficient hint given of that position in Baba's dealings with him mentioned in the diary.

Khaparde notes that Baba gave him advice in a fatherly way keeping him (Khaparde) alone for giving that advice. To show him that at the age of 58 he should no longer be thinking of sex gratification, Baba gently gives a hint by calling his wife 'Ajibai', meaning 'an old lady'¹. Khaparde unable to take the same viewpoint mentions the same in the diary regarding it as something unintelligible whereas for one who is able to read between the lines and note what is behind the scenes and what was to happen later on, it is clear that Baba was pressing the button just at the proper point and gave a valuable suggestion.

Again as to the possibility of further progress, especially in the matter of reaching God, that is realising Satchidananda, nothing could be done in dealing with a sadhaka in Khaparde's condition unless he should thoroughly submit himself to Baba's rigorous discipline. Yet what did Baba do? Did he give up the task as hopeless? Certainly not. To Baba nothing is hopeless. Khaparde could work at reaching Satchidananda, but not at that time nor perhaps in that life. So, he eggs him on to great efforts in that noble direction. He gives him a Pisgah sight of that promised land. He favours him with a few Yogic glances off and on, the effect of these yogic glances being to immerse Khaparde deep in a pool of bliss without any external visible stimulus whatever. Khaparde's joys in getting a fat sessions case or success in a sensational trial or getting loud plaudits or cheers from the mass listening to his humorous and highly cutting utterances, and his domestic joys were perhaps the highest that he had experience of. Till he came to Sai all his joys evidently were joys due to external causes, but when Baba's glances came, without any external stimulus, (without any fee, or birth of

a grandchild or applause) he was feeling waves of joy swallowing up his being for hours. This is an indication that the soul has vast resources of the highest sort of bliss independent of external stimuli. This is a very valuable spur to one to work hard and proceed to realise Parabrahma or Satchidananda, which would give him joy and peace without any external cause for ever. This is one of the valuable spiritual services rendered to Khaparde by Sri Sai. There may be one or two more of that sort noticeable in the diary, but perhaps in this article unconsciously the dissection of Khaparde has gone to unpardonable lengths, and it is high time that such dissection stopped. A careful reader of his diary might light upon the other points not mentioned here, that is, points in which Sai Baba analysed his character and promoted the chance of his reaching a high spiritual state and reaching God or Satchidananda.

One thought that preponderates in the mind of any one studying carefully the diary of Mr. Khaparde and the possibilities that he had before him is the extent to which those possibilities were achieved. One clear possibility is that a person who had been a fellow student with Baba in a former janma under the same Guru and one who was a member of the same family with Baba and who left the family to seek royal service would be a person who would be advanced by Baba to the fullest spiritual height that Baba could help him to. Baba's powers were immense. He himself said (B.C.S. 91) 'I have very great powers', as shown in the case of Upasani and others. Baba could mould the inmost soul of any person attending upon him with a receptive and passive mood of surrender. So it was possible for G.S. Khaparde to have reached great heights like that of Sai Baba himself. But from the facts of Khaparde's life being now well known since he died in 1938 we note that none of these possibilities ever got achieved. On the other hand he was just developing on the lines he had before he approached Baba and had a brilliant life purely from the conventional or worldly standpoint. The world was too much with him to allow him to benefit by the Sai approach. As Wordsworth wrote :

The world is too much with us; late and soon.

Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers.

Wordsworth says that it is much better to be a pagan and have visions of Proteus and Triton rather than be a highly civilized man without any such visions. But worldly men will always be worldly men. Few care to change their nature completely and begin a new life. To get to great ends, one must abandon all earthly ambition and face poverty and obloquy, if need be, calmly and cheerfully and hold on to the Guru as the be-all and end-all of one's existence. This high ideal we find in the diary is held up before Khaparde for his consideration and concentration. But he never cared to accept that ideal. Passivity was anathema to him. He preferred even at Shirdi, when he could always contact Baba, to spend his time reading up every bit of newspaper and writing letters to friends. Once Baba wanted to draw his attention to the absurdity of frittering away time like that at his age and stage and Baba asked him what he was doing and what he had been doing in the morning. His answer being writing letters, Baba's comment was 'it is better to move your fingers instead of sitting idle'. The next day, even in the act of writing letters, Khaparde went to sleep. The *tamas* in him was so powerful that he was frequently indulging in long sleep when he ought to have attended to *artis* and classes or kept busy. For a healthy man of only 58 (Khaparde's age at that time) day sleep was not wanted at all. Yet Khaparde was having long spells of day sleep and sometimes he slept away when the noonday *arti* was going on in the Masjid. When Baba was told that Khaparde could not be roused up by people calling at his place, Baba said that he himself would wake Khaparde up. Khaparde was roused up just before the close of the noonday *arati* about 1 or 2 p.m. and thus was made to attend that *arti*. Baba gave him good advice not to allow this *tamasic* tendency of oversleeping, but Khaparde was unable to follow that advice. Hence for one reason or another, the ideals kept before him by Baba were not achieved even in such small matters as keeping awake.

As for facing poverty, Khaparde notes how bitter it was to him. On the 1st February 1912, when Baba said that Dixit should give Rs. 200 to his (K's) wife, Khaparde notes in his diary as already stated 'Has it come to this? I prefer death to this'. He adds that Baba wanted to put down his pride. But his pride could not

be put down. Baba wanted to show the pettiness of the "great objects"¹ that were greatly moving the heart and soul of Khaparde.

Wealth was the chief aim. On the 13th February, Baba pointed out, 'Here is the cow of Dixit. Formerly it was a Jalna man's. Before that it was somebody else's and before that it was Mahlsapathy's. God knows whose it is'. He was pointing out that property was not anything permanent and not worth striving for. On the other hand he pointed out that so far as the absolute needs of the body were concerned, a person who had firm faith had no fear of lacking them. Baba gave the assurance that none who had firm faith in God would be left in want. Baba also gave the assurance that He was powerful and his orders were supreme. Baba also pointed out the obverse of the above story. In referring to one of his earlier lives, he said that his father at that time was a rich man. Having differences with his father, he left his father and went away. Finding a heap of treasure on the way, he was doting on the same and spending his time thereon. This, Baba said, made him a cobra, that is, a very inferior species of rajasic and tamasic creature. This was the effect of over-fondness towards wealth. Baba pointed out that he got disgusted with that later on, left the treasure, and resumed his human form. Thus Baba tried to hold up before Khaparde the pettiness of men who were hankering after wealth, wealth of the world that never lasts. How was Khaparde to get his wealth? Only by seeking the favour of innumerable persons and avoiding the displeasure of others. All this required that his time and attention should be wasted upon petty creatures. Baba told him that he must serve God alone and he also repeated that advice. Baba said, 'What God gives lasts for ever; what man gives does not'. This was repeated time and again to Khaparde, but all that was lost upon him.

Another hint we derive from the diary is that Baba in addition to launching his attack against the pro Kanchana portion of human nature was attacking also the other weakness that humanity is prone to, that is, the pro-kamini passion (sex urge.) That must he made to grow less and less powerful as age advances. Certainly at 58 the sastras want persons to give up Grihastashrama and take to the next, their evening *savanam*, i.e. take to Vanaprastha leading on to Sanyasa.

That cannot be done if the sex element is allowed to preponderate. So Baba conveyed very gentle lessons after giving "fatherly advice" to Khaparde driving others away from the Mosque at that time so that he might give that advice in private to Khaparde. No doubt Khaparde does not give out what the fatherly advice was about. But there is not much difficulty in inferring that the above point must have formed a portion of that advice. Baba at other times also wanted to press home that lesson by insisting upon one's maintaining the lofty human stature one has already achieved and the further levels that humanity leads to. On one occasion, he asked Khaparde pointing to a fruit, 'How many fruits it is capable of producing?' Khaparde's answer was, 'Thousand times the number of seeds in it', Baba assented and said that the vegetable followed a law of its own. This means that vegetable creation can follow the instinct for reproduction *ad libitum*, but humanity has restraints and high standards in order to achieve higher and higher levels of being. As already stated Khaparde's inability to see the same lesson conveyed by Baba when he called Mrs. Khaparde 'Ajibai' is something striking. 'Ajibai' means old lady or grandmother, that is, the grand mother's stage is one at which no further thoughts of sex reproduction should be entertained. Any person would easily see that Baba's use of that term conveyed a hint to Mr. Khaparde that he should no longer regard his wife as one for purposes of sex gratification or reproduction but must treat her as soul companion for spiritual purposes mainly. All these lessons given to Khaparde were lost upon him completely. Neither about wealth nor about sex control was he in a mood to take lessons. He was quite self-sufficient and quite learned enough in the sastras to take care of himself as he thought. The result is that he came to a gold mine like Sai Baba and took away very little of gold. This loss of a grand opportunity to achieve spiritual success makes one recall the well-known couplet —

"Of all sad words of tongue or pen.

The saddest are these. It might have been."

We have all to be alert and profit by the mistakes of others, lest the same epitaph "Lost opportunity" be ours.

With reference to other entries in the diary, we note how Baba was operating. Strangely enough, hints only are given by the diarist, and he does not explain or even express them clearly. Let us take the case of his son Balwant and his plague attack (which has already been briefly set out but which ought to be further expanded). There was plague in the beginning of 1912 at Shirdi. Baba himself was therefore cleaning up the Masjid, and when a deputation of villagers went to him to save them from plague, he advised them to clean up all the tombs and public places and feed the poor. It is following on that there appears to have been a recrudescence of plague at Shirdi and cases of plague did occur. Khaparde's son Balwant got definitely ill on the 19th January 1912 obviously due to the epidemic, and he continued ill for three weeks and he could not leave his bed. It is only on the 8th February following that he could stir. The all-knowing Baba knew what was coming, and on the day preceding the attack of illness, namely, 18th January 1912, he stated in the midst of a lot of foul abuse that he had saved Balwant and that he had saved also G. S. Khaparde. G.S. Khaparde does not attach any special meaning to the swearing and the use of harsh words on that day or on similar occasions on other days. One who has studied Baba's dealings would find a meaning in those harsh words.

Let us note the following case. Gadgi Bua, that is, a very poor saint, who was the owner of only a mud pot, had the ambition to build a grand edifice for charitable purposes and somehow destiny aided him in putting up a grand structure at Pandharpur. (This reminds of George Muller's powerful faith that enabled him to get nearly twenty millions of pounds voluntarily sent to him from time to time in the course of many years to construct many children's orphanages). When Gadgi Bua started building his dharmasala at Nasik, the flow of monetary help stopped abruptly after he reached a limited success only in putting up a set of rooms. Then he felt disgusted and thought that the best thing he could do was to approach a person like Sai Baba for help. So he went to Shirdi and came to Baba. At once Sai Baba uttered a lot of foul abuse, 'hard words' as Khaparde calls them. Gadgi Bua at once understood what they meant. It is not Gadgi Bua that Baba was abusing foully, but he was cursing away and

driving away the bad fortune that hampered the progress of his work. Gadgi Bua laughed at once and Baba also laughed at once. Gadgi Bua went back. His bad fortune had been driven away and money again came enabling him to build the dharmasala he had begun.

This throws light upon the hard words used on the 18th of January 1912 in the midst of which Baba said, 'I have saved Balwant; I have saved Dada Sabebe (Khaparde) whom the fakir wants to kill'. Baba's words were really magical words of power driving away disease, misfortune, etc. It is on the 19th, the day following the hard words, that the fever began and it lasted 21 days and then ceased. All this was foreseen and foreordained by Baba. The hard words of the 18th coupled with the assertion that he had saved Balwant showed that Baba knew that the attack of plague was coming and the attack was going to be innocuous. Khaparde does not give out the fact that Baba had drawn the disease to himself from Balwant. Shama says in his statement that when Balwant's mother went and cried before him, Baba showed bubos on his own person and declared that he had to suffer for his people's sake. That meant evidently that he had drawn away Balwant's disease to his own body. When Balwant was cured, Baba also was cured. These are valuable facts for us to understand the immense power of Baba and his immense kindness which are praised in the *Sej Arti* every night thus: *Ranjavisi tum madura bolini, maya jaisa nija mula ho/Bhogisi Vyadhim turn cha haruniyam Nijasevak dukhale ho, Dhavuni bhakta vyasana harisi*, etc., which means "By sweet words you gladden like a mother. You remove the diseases of your servants and bear them yourself. You run to relieve them, etc." Such wonderful power and kindness ought to suffice to enable one to give up everything and stick to Baba. Baba showed his powers, as the diary shows, to Khaparde in other matters also. When the Patils were quarrelling among themselves, he could stop the quarrel by simply saying from the Mosque, "Don't beat." Similarly he showed control over the minds of not merely Government Members or the Governor but also over those of others like the Magistrate who was trying the case against his (Baba's) servant Raghu on appeal.

Khaparde's diary gives ample proof that Baba was superhuman in his range of powers and in his ability to help people to the greatest heights of human achievement. Letting alone other points, we may refer to the main thing. Khaparde was very good at his sastras and scriptural study. What do they say? They say that the aim and goal of all life is to reach Brahmananda which rests not upon external contact nor upon obtaining anything from outside, but upon the Atma dwelling upon the Atma alone.

Baba gave proof of the fact that he himself was such an *Anna jnani* immersed in *Paramananda* and that he could draw people into that state. This *Paramananda* or enjoyment, not based upon externals, was brought home to the mind of Khaparde by numerous yogic glances already referred to. In his diary Khaparde notes that on the 13th January 1912, Baba gave a Yogic glance. Khaparde adds, 'I was in ecstasy of bliss the whole day'. Other instances also of similar enjoyment vouchsafed to him are noted. All these are most precious gifts and offers of the most precious thing a man could achieve and yet all these were lost upon Khaparde. Why? Because the world's attraction was too great for the attraction of the spirit or Brahman.

Baba's control of the spirit of any one near him is noted in the diary. For instance on the 17th January 1912, the diary mentions 'Baba smiled benignly. It is worthwhile spending years here (Shirdi) to see it even once. I was overjoyed and stood gazing like mad...' On the same date the diarist also notes that Baba (in Dakshinamoorthi fashion) gave silent instructions which though not understood immediately were understood a few hours later, at the Wada arti. In another place Khaparde notes that Baba made him understand things and solve his puzzles merely by giving him his chilm to smoke. Yet with all these inducements, Khaparde in great anxiety, like his own relations, went away from Shirdi to amass wealth and fame and keep to his political, social and legal position or ambition. This, of course, is quite natural, and not objectionable but yet may be considered unfortunate by those who think that achievement of Paramartha is more important than all these. The fact that Khaparde did not take the latter view beams out from the diary. On the 13th March Khaparde was ready

to go away. A person who had seen such wonderful powers of Baba and noted how anxious Baba was to help him on to the highest by the use of his wonderful powers would surely have been anxious to meet Baba again in the flesh, or after Mahasamadhi of Baba, to commune with him in the Spirit. But strangest of all, Khaparde never cared to visit Baba in the flesh except when B. G. Tilak went to see him on the 19th of May 1917, and then stayed with Baba just for a few hours and never thought of visiting him again. As for the enjoyment of Baba's help, after Baba's Mahasamadhi in 1918, we have ample evidence to show that others were able to enjoy the same. But in the case of G. S. Khaparde, there is not the faintest suggestion that he ever cared to develop contact with Baba in his spiritual condition as *Apantaratma*. The reason is patent. The world, world, world, is ever with us and will not leave us, or rather to put it more bluntly, we will not leave the world and consequently the world will not leave us. It is a vicious circle never ending. That is the chief lesson that one derives from a study of this diary. Yet the reader must not fancy that Sri Khaparde's moral or spiritual position was low. His was a bright, high position as understood in orthodox circles and he achieved great success in several walks of life even after changing his original political faith at least as understood by others.

So far as services to Baba are concerned, we may add one more to the list of services. Perhaps Khaparde was instrumental in drawing Bala Gangadhar Tilak to visit Baba in 1917. This undoubtedly added to the glamour and prestige of Baba's durbar. If Khaparde's visit to Baba gave Baba some prestige, the visit of B.G. Tilak added to it a hundred times more. Unfortunately, the pity of the situation is this. In the relevant solitary page of the diary dated 19-5-1917 Khaparde notes it as the date of Tilak's visit without mentioning how and why Tilak made that visit. That information we derive from other sources and that is valuable. Tilak was far more advanced in his religious studies than Khaparde and Tilak's Gita Rahasya is highly valued and Baba himself showed his regard for it by asking one of his devotees who had that book in hand to go on reading it. When such a person visited Baba, it is worthwhile noting that his visit was not made for spiritual reasons. Tilak knew that Sai Baba's powers were vast and that

he knew the future and controlled men's minds. But the reason that made him approach Baba in 1917 was only to find out whether Baba approved of the lines on which he was working for national liberation and when he put that question to Baba, the latter studiously avoided giving him a direct answer. Baba told him, 'You are getting old. You require rest. Why don't you take rest?' This was very significant. Tilak was soon to pass away (in July 1920) and it was high time for him to retire from his political activities and develop his spiritual ones. As for the political aim, nothing more was wanted on the part of Tilak. Work on Tilak's lines had to end. Very soon the national work of reaching Independence was undertaken by a person who was not merely highly spiritually advanced but one whose method of activities, political and spiritual, ensured certainty of success, through the aid of not merely human beings inhabiting the country regardless of their distinctions of race, caste, or colour, but also through the aid of other nationalities and of God. Mahatma Gandhi was coming into the field and his lines were approved of both by Hindus and Muhammadans and his chances of success were therefore indisputably superior to Tilak's chances. Mahatma Gandhi's international reputation was a great factor in helping on the final development; it must be remembered that pressure was brought to bear on Britain in the great war of Hitler against Britain to demolish her empire in India. The sympathies of Russia, America and other great powers were with India, and Churchill was being pressed to liberate India in spite of his distinct dislike to liberate India. Hence, it was Baba's power to foresee the shape that Indian politics was assuming in the hands of the next great leader, who may be justly styled the Father of Indian Independence. That evidently made Baba give the above answer to Tilak. Tilak could not see the future but Baba could. Tilak could safely retire leaving the field entirely open to Mahatma Gandhi and himself concentrate upon his own spiritual interest and upon other religious work for the benefit of the country and humanity. This is not disclosed at all in the diary for, as already remarked, Khaparde's diary is several times more notable for its omissions than for its contents. All the same, the diary is of very great value to devotees who must be immensely thankful to G.S. Khaparde for maintaining it

and allowing it to be published. (G.S.K. 27-8-1854—1-7-1938). His marble statue was unveiled on 2-6-1954 by the President Dr. Rajendra Prasad.