

CHAKRA NARAIN

The persons that swarmed to Baba's feet generally were persons of the Hindu religion and to a small extent of other religions also. The Hindus, as a whole, are more liberal in their outlook and do not hesitate to approach a *Guru*; to whatever community he may belong, or go to any place of worship and worship any object. The Mohammadans, as a rule, are too conservative to approach a saint shows himself saturated with Hindu ideas and who allows the worship of idols and the worship of himself, especially in a Mosque to the accompaniment of the noise and din characteristic of Hindu worship. The Protestant Christians have similar views and neither of these two classes will go near a place where an idol of a man is placed and worshipped. This explains why the Mohammadan followers of Baba were a very small minority. We do not know of a single Protestant Christian who approached Baba with the spirit of devotion to him.

Chakra Narain was perhaps the only one and one of the few Protestant Christians who had some appreciation of Baba. In his statement in the book, *Devotees Experiences*, Vol. 1, in October 1936, he showed some appreciation of Sai Baba. He admitted that he was not a believer in Baba, but he began to admire his noble qualities, which he came to know when he was ordered to watch Baba. He and some of his men were watching Baba for various purposes including income tax. He conceived a great regard for Baba because he found that Baba was not moved by *kamini* or *kanchana*, woman and wealth. Many women would come to Baba and place their bare heads on his bare feet and sit close to him. But Baba was totally unmoved. He would not care to cast one glance of admiration or love or lust at any face. Baba was clearly an unmistakably unattached *virakta*. This *Fouzdar* was asked to watch Baba regarding the money he received from people. He also had great admiration for Baba. People voluntarily gave money to Baba. If anybody did not give him money, Baba would not hate him or displease or curse him. The same thing about his begging for bread. Baba did not care what it was that was put into his sling or into his tin. The sling carried the solids and the tin carried the liquids, which were given to him. No doubt they all got mixed up and became *Olla Podrida*. Whatever he got, whether food or money, he scattered it with a liberal hand. Food was distributed to innumerable beggars and the money was given away as soon as he got it. When he died, the Government took possession of his cash, and the amount with him was only Rs.16.

Yet daily he gave away hundreds of rupees and Chakra Narain was thunderstruck at the fact that his riches, which they noticed were limited, and that thought there was no stock of cash with him at the beginning of the day, at the end of the day he had paid hundreds of rupees. Wherefrom did the excess come for him to disburse or pay? The Police could not make out. Therefore Chakra Narain concluded that Baba had divine powers. Again he noticed with great admiration Baba's behaviour towards other religions. When Chakra Narain, a Christian, was appointed as Sub-Inspector at Rahata, some of his followers, who were displeased, went and told Baba, "The new *Fouzdar* is neither a Hindu nor a Mohammadan but a Christian." Baba's retort was, "What of that? He is my brother". It must be remembered that Baba was called a *Maharaja* and looked exactly like a *Maharaja* in the midst of all regal paraphernalia. His powers also struck Chakra Narain as marvelous, that is, his powers of clairvoyance and clairsaudience, in popular parlance, but known to scholars as *Antarjnana* or *Ritambhara prajna* or *Pratiba*. He cites one instance. A police officer went and bowed to Baba. Baba asked for *dakshina*. The officer said that he had nothing. Baba said, "See your purse. A fifty-rupee note is in it." Then the note was produced and offered to Baba. Baba took only a small amount of it and returned the rest to him and asked him to keep the balance as he would soon be in trouble and would need it. That is what exactly happened. Soon after his visit, the officer got into trouble and had to use the balance to extricate himself. After thus escaping from trouble that officer in his gratitude sent the balance to Shirdi. Chakra Narain also notes that Baba's *udhi* was being given as a cure and acted as a cure for many cases of illness.