

CHAPTER III

Baba's Moral Teachings

Was Baba a teacher of morals and of Moksha Marga? This is hard to answer. Up to the last, Baba concealed his greatness and his nature and even his activities from vulgar gaze. It is the chosen few, the Ankitas, that benefited from him, who discovered that Baba was a teacher, and the highest form of teacher and trainer¹. But as they mostly maintained secrecy, the world wondered at Baba, and many were asking, and are even now asking sometimes derisively, what Baba could teach, and what his cult is which is not widespread to-day. A District Magistrate before whom S.B. Dhumal (Pleader of Nasik) appeared in a criminal appeal, and whose mind Baba influenced so as to make him give verdict in favour of a Sai devotee, overriding all forms, conventions and procedure, asked 'What does Baba teach?' This was about 1911 when no books on Baba had been written. Even pamphlets were hardly available and the world had no conception at all of Baba's works, teaching, or cult. Dhumal's answer was, 'His teaching would be suited to the individual approaching him and the District Magistrate must himself go to Sai Baba to learn his teaching'. But the Magistrate was not sufficiently serious to approach Baba and get his teaching. Similarly there are many light-hearted people asking about Baba's cult and teaching. To all these the best answer that should be given is that they should get serious enough, unlike the District Magistrate mentioned above, to learn it and to make an effort to approach his bhaktas, and read the literature about Sai Baba. A dip into the History or the Gospel of Sai Baba or Sai Satcharitra might reveal a portion of Baba. But most of our readers might not be prepared to make a detailed study of such big books on Sai Baba, and, therefore, it is necessary to answer the above question briefly and indicate in a few words what might be called Baba's teaching or cult as the term is loosely employed,

¹ *Jo saducha ankita Jeeva Jlianci Tyacha use 8tiara Niranjanala CArti Song*), i.e.. the burdens of the person marked out as his own by the Sadguru are borne by that *Samartha Sadguru*.

Baba was not really starting any cult. Cult implies that it is something narrow and not applicable to the Universe. Baba was just a highly gifted person with numerous divine qualities, especially in his contacts with those anxiously approaching him each grasping some particular truth or aspect of Baba. It is only when we put together the contact and the results of contacts of the tens of thousands that met Baba, during the 50 or 60 years of his life at Shirdi, that anything like a fairly full account of his teachings or trainings can be obtained. Without attempting or professing to reveal the entire teaching we shall just select a few salient features of Baba's teachings, and the reader may peruse other books or even the earlier portion of this book more carefully to discover Baba's essential teaching more fully.

When the author (Sri B.V.N. Swami) was staying in Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's Ashram, the President of the Ashram once declared that he could not understand how Sai Baba went on like a juggler performing miracles and what the use of all that was, and what Baba could be supposed to be teaching. He also asked what Baba's marga might be. This was about 1936 or 1937. Then the Swami was so puzzled, he made a mental appeal to Baba that light should be given to him to answer these questions. Then the thought occurred to him that he should write about Baba in Tamil, his mother-tongue and avoid English which alone he used in the articles he had so far written about Sai Baba in 1936 in 'Sunday Times'. As he proceeded with the work in Tamil of the life of Sai Baba, thoughts were rearranged and aspects of Baba were perceived in a harmonious connection, and then the truth gradually dawned upon the Swami that Baba was a teacher of the highest sort and a trainer also, and not merely a teacher by utterances, but a Bhagavatottama, a Samartha moulding the completely dedicated and surrendered sishya so as to turn the sishya's soul into his (Guru's) own likeness. "*Apana Sarika Karitat tatkal*", — That is, The Sadguru turns the sishya into his own likeness immediately', says Tukaram. This process of Baba involves the full application of all his Samarta Sadguru powers, all the yoga powers inherent in his divine nature. Chamatkars would only be utilised as part and parcel of the process of shaping the sishya into the Guru's likeness.

As for Baba's margas, the answer became patent from considering Baba's own words as to what his teaching was. When one Uddhavesa Bua appeared before him, Baba told him to read the purana in which Baba had spoken to Uddhavesa Bua, and in which he was still speaking to him. Bua could not find out what that purana could be. Baba asked him to go and fetch the book that was being read at the wada. That was Ekanath's XI Skanda of Srimad Bhagavata. Baba suddenly inserted his finger into the middle of the book and asked Uddhavesa to look into it, for there as Sri Krishna he had already taught Uddhava of the Dwapara Yuga and again through the same as Sai Baba was now teaching the same truths to this Uddhavesa Bua of the Kali Yuga. The Ekadasa Skanda is mostly Krishna-Uddhava samvadha or Uddhava Gita, as it is called. So, he discovered that Baba was the same as Sri Krishna. '*Main Allahum*' denotes that fact, *Brahmavit Brahmaiva bhavathi* This means. 'The Knower of Brahman is Brahman'. This is an authoritative aphorism of Hinduism, and is a patent psychological truth. With the aid of all this, the Swami discovered the answers to the posers and conundrums put to him. What is Baba's teaching? It is the same teaching in his Gitas, the Arjuna Gita and the Uddhava Gita. What are his margas? The same margas as are advocated in the above two. That is, practically all the margas. All roads lead to Rome. 'All margas lead to God' is the object of all teaching. When the question is asked. "What is Baba's mission?", the answer must be given that a person having one and only one mission is having a very narrow existence.

Sai Baba, Sri Krishna, Sri Rama, are all divinely gifted or perfected souls and expressions of divinity transforming every one who comes into contact with their divine personality especially those who are drawn through Rinanubandha by their divinity and that is the purpose or mission of their lives. So, Baba has not one mission, but a hundred missions. Protecting the good (virtuous), punishing or reforming the wicked, establishing Dharma (Virtue) or its hold on the people, are the functions of divine personalities, and Baba was performing all these functions. A mission may come in as a part of these functions. Studying these Gitas one sees that there is no meaning in asking for any one marga expounded

by the Divine Person. Saints expound all the margas and find which marga or combination of which margas would suit each approaching devotee, and give the same to him. Thus Baba adopted every marga but in particular one may note that the predominance in his methods was neither for ritual nor for

Vedic study, but for living in consonance with the Supreme manifestation of Divinity in himself. His mission is to help every one, that means, of course, everyone capable of benefiting, not persons who come in an unreceptive mood like the Valambi Station Master. He quoted occasionally his master's or Guru's behest that "as he had received liberally from his master he must similarly distribute liberally amongst those that approached him". Baba was distributing not merely wealth, worldly relief and comforts, but also spiritual gifts and spiritual blessings to all and sundry that were capable of receiving those benefits. Baba once quoted in the presence of Lele Sastri,

Apichel siiduracharo bhajate mam ananyabhak

Sadhureva sa mantavyah samyak vyavastito hi sah.

This means, 'Even the most wicked, if he concentrates on or worships ME, the Lord, then he must be deemed to be a Sadhu or a good person. He has begun rightly (and he would soon turn into pure ways and attain spiritual heights)'.

Thus Baba checked vice and weakness in men, giving them purity, strength, etc., and enabling them to rise spiritually. Baba has benefited a large number in this way, but of these we may give a few instances to show how 'Suduracharah', very wicked persons, were benefited by him morally and spiritually. One D.V. Sambhare had the misfortune of serving under a master given to drink, and himself was getting into the grip of the vice. Baba once appeared to him in a dream, sat on his chest, and told him, 'Once or twice will I give you warning. If no heed is taken of the warning, then I will let you have your fate'. The man noticed that he should mend his ways, and swore that he would not touch liquor. However, when his master was sending away his children from India, he gave a feast, and, of course, drinks played an important part. The glasses went round. When the master came to fill up the glass of D.V. Sambhare, Sambhare (being afraid to mention the name of Sai Baba) said 'My

doctor advised me against drink'. The master in a jovial mood said that his doctor also gave him the same advice, but he honoured the advice more in the breach than in the observance. He asked Sambhare to drink. It was a perilous situation. But suddenly by Baba's grace all the electric lights went out, and the whole hall was plunged in darkness. The Master went out to see the cause of the failure of lights. Meanwhile, Sambhare's neighbour obliged Sambhare by himself draining away the whole cup placed before Sambhare. The lights suddenly reappeared, and when the master came, he found that the glass placed before Sambhare was empty and he imagined that Sambhare had taken the drink. This is how Baba saved one of his bhaktas from the temptation of drink.

Another person whom Baba saved similarly from this strong vice of drinking was a goldsmith's son, whose health and even soul were getting seriously imperilled by his increasing addiction to drink. He was advised to go to Baba of Shirdi. He started for Shirdi; even during the railway journey he found his bad habit was losing its hold on him, and when he came to Shirdi the desire for drink was not there. Baba then blessed him and sent him back, and for a good time, he was free from the vice. But this goldsmith had a family God, who wanted drink, and the leavings of the Gods, the Prasad', had to be taken by all the devotees, and thus, he once again got into the old monster's clutch. The habit then grew, and ultimately, the man was ruined by over-drinking.

About other evil habits also Baba has rendered very interesting service. Sri Ramaswami Iyengar, a doctor, accompanied his patient Rao Sahib Subbiah Chetty to Shirdi. There the doctor vowed that he would not take betel and nut (of which he was very fond) after visiting Shirdi. In spite of that vow, the desire for betel was strong upon him. As he sat in a bullock cart along with Subbiah Chetti, the sight of Subbiah Chetti's betels in his hand was too powerful, and the doctor ate some. This man, who had forty years been chewing betel. i.e., betel, nut, and chunam found on this occasion that the betels had burnt up the entire mucous membrane of his mouth. Thereafter for 15 days he could not take pepper water or eat even ordinary food. His vow was thus enforced on him through physical disability by Baba. In the case of Subbiah Chetti himself, he had vowed that he

would give up his habit of taking quids. When he returned from Shirdi, he asked his servant to bring him tobacco. When it was brought and placed before him it looked to him like dung. He felt a repulsion for it and asked the servant to take it away. Thus Baba strengthened the inside - the mentality - of Rao Sahib and enabled him to observe the vow.

Baba is not only a teacher but a controller from within - the ever-watching Guardian angel. One might easily remember how he played the part of the University Proctor in the case of Rao Bahadur H.V. Sathe. He had by mistake and carelessness allowed himself to visit the house of a lady with bad reputation, and was closeted with her under circumstances which made his moral ruin imminent. The door was apparently closed. But suddenly it was thrown open, and on the threshold Baba's figure was seen making gestures to Sathe, "What! You have come all this way to your Guru and now you are descending to Hell! What an excellent course!" Like a thief caught in the act, H.V. Sathe felt greatly ashamed and left that lady's house never to visit it again. Similarly his attempt to beat his wife, with a stick for her refusal to accompany him to see the land recently acquired was the occasion for Baba's acting again the watchful guardian angel. Megha was sent by Baba to Sathe, and he came running to Sathe's quarters saying, 'Baba wants you,' just when Sathe lifted up his whip to strike his wife. Thus Sathe was saved from the sin of cruelty on this occasion as he had been saved from the sin of sexual immorality on the previous occasion.

Baba's helps of a similar sort were rendered to many other devotees, even who never saw him before Mahasamadhi. Baba is still exercising his Proctorship and still guiding and warning people. But there is one disadvantage. Baba was dealing with large numbers of devotees. It was not possible to make the entire lot moral and properly behaved, in spite of all the efforts of Baba to correct them. In B.C, &S. 153, Baba Said 'I have been considering long and thinking day and night. All are thieves. But we have to deal with them. I prayed to God night and day for their improvement. God delays and does not approve of the (i. e. my) attitude or grant the prayer. I will wait for a month or two and then see. But living or dead, I will have what I have been praying for. I will not go to Teli or Vani nor

beg of them. People are not good and devoted. They are unsettled in mind. A few friends will gather and talk divine wisdom, and sit and contemplate.' Again in 1918, he said 'People have got bad and give trouble. They are pestering me for money. Moreover, they become shameless. Now I am disgusted'. Once in such a disgusted mood, he went to Nimgam and told the zamindar of the disgusting way in which devotees behaved at Shirdi and added that he wanted to leave Shirdi.

In spite of all this, Baba had to stick on to his place, for Rinanubandha required him there, and he slowly and gradually developed some persons, who would mend others and carry on his work. He told Upasani Maharaj to stay for four years with him. But that Maharaj could not find himself strong enough to continue for more than three years and so left Shirdi without even taking permission of Baba. Baba had told him, "You and I together have to work and improve people and hence the papa purusha in you has been driven out". Baba wanted Upasani Maharaj to develop along lines marked out by him. But unfortunately, Upasani Maharaj took his course at a tangent from Sai Baba's and went off on his own ideas, which were so wholly at variance with Baba's. Baba had to put up with it. Thus Baba did not find all his plans for the moral improvement of others that came to him quite successful. Yet he did his best. He kept several people to Brahmacharya for the required period, namely, Tatya, Dhumal, etc. He regulated the lives of those who wholly surrendered to him. Yet, the work of moral regeneration was not and could never be complete. While doing service, incidentally the work of conveying moral teachings was carried on by Baba, and he gave occasional talks about morality. But we may sum up the whole in the way in which he himself put it to Shama, namely, 'Behave properly', and the way in which he put it to Rao Sahib Galwankar, 'Behave with integrity and probity'. This advice is represented by the Sanskrit stanza.

Slokardhena pravakshyami yad uktam granthakotibhih

Paropakarah punyaya papaya pampeedanam

This means, 'In half a stanza I shall tell you the teaching which has been set forth in crores of moral books. That is benefiting humanity is punya (merit). Hurting others is sinful'. This is a teaching that even children, and sometimes creatures

like dogs also, can understand. Baba expected people to act up to this teaching. What other teachings he gave, we shall set out below, at least in part.

When a great Saint leading a perfectly pure life as a Samarth Sadguru and helping thousands that came to him in the course of about half a century on their way to God is to be described, his utterances are sure to cover practically the entire field of ethics and spirituality, and it is neither possible nor desirable to make anything like an attempt to give a full account of his moral teachings. It will be enough for us to note a few more of the prominent teachings that came from him to benefit his immediate devotees that have revealed their experiences to us. This is specially so because Baba's influencing his devotees was not and is not mainly by any sort of express teaching.

He was moulding his children, as he called his devotees, from inside and he used not merely words but also his gaze, his touch, and even his aura or the will power to remove undesirable tendencies and influences and replace them by useful and holy ones. An excellent instance of such exercise by him is the case of Bala Saheb Bhate.

Bala Saheb Bhate was a brilliant graduate employed as Mamlatdar or Tahsildar at Kopergaon from 1904 onwards. Many of his friends and acquaintances, from near Bombay especially having to go to Shirdi, met him on the way at Kopergaon, and when they declared their object, were jeered at by him, and when they desired him to try himself, he was laughing at them to scorn and would not care to visit. But in 1909, he was actually visiting Shirdi - one might say accidentally except for the fact that Baba's wonderful influence was unseen; and what appears as accident might really well be Baba's pulling. In 1909, when he visited Baba, he just sat before him and looked at Baba. The very look of Baba pierced and transfixed him. He sat on for half an hour, then for one hour, and when reminded by those near him that it was time to move away, had not the slightest inclination to move away but remained, and it was with difficulty that he was pulled away from Baba. Here is a case of what we may term to be fascination. The person whom he loathed and held in high contempt had exercised a fascination over his mind that he could not overcome. He was so

deeply attached to him that he stayed another day, and a third day also at Shirdi though he had no official business there. He made up his mind that, his life's goal being Baba, he should stay with him and that for ever. Wife, child, office, property, all these were simply blacked out of his mind, and the one thing dominated his mental vision was Baba. When at last he was compelled to go, he soon came back again and was thus frequently at Shirdi. At last he made up his mind to give up his office. He remained at Shirdi without even applying for leave of absence. He forgot his official and family or social interests so much so that Baba had to tell some of his official friends like Nana Chandorkar to write on his behalf an application for leave. He had become absolutely indifferent to the office which was till then the be-all and end-all of his existence. In fact, he was the pet of the Collector, as he turned out the best work in the whole of the district. All that went for nothing, and Baba held him by an iron grip. On the fifth day of his stay, Baba put *aageru* cloth (*kashayu* cloth) over his shoulders, and after that his change of heart was complete. This is what he himself in 1913 told O.K. Gurde, who was Sub Judge at Khamgaon. a friend of his. Here, in this case we cannot say that this man's obstinacy and materialistic outlook were overcome by any moral teaching. There was no teaching here. There was only the inner influence changing his heart.

Such moral changes were so frequently effected by Baba that it is difficult for us to enumerate them or say which of them is important. The important moral work of Baba was not orally uttered. Even now it is so. It is not the experiences of devotees that matter most to bhaktas. Even today it is his *inner* working that counts in the improvement and building up of the devotee. His presence, his gaze, his touch had all their effect. Narayan Ashram, a Sanyasi, mentions that Baba had four or more ways of touching people's heads. Sometimes he barely seemed to touch. Sometimes he seemed to press out something from the head. Sometimes he made passes without touching the head. Each of these had its own peculiar effect as intended by Baba. Baba's gaze is described by several devotees. Mrs. Sadasiva Tarkhad says that one felt that Baba's gaze was reading one through and through, as nothing could be concealed from him. Baba

was not merely in one's heart, but in every particle of one's body. That is what one felt when Baba was gazing. This power seems to extend even to the eyes in Baba's *picture* kept in the Dwarakamayee. The Pleader of Thana, Sri G.B. Datar, once visited Baba, but being worldly minded, got frightened at Baba's demand for dakshina and remembered that Narayan Maharaj used to return dakshinas given to him along with sugarcandy. But the same Datar, in 1931 visited Baba's Mandir, after reading Upasani Lilamrita giving an account of Sai Baba. When he entered the Dwarakamayee and gazed at Baba's eyes in the picture kept there, he felt the powerful influence of Baba's eyes even in the picture, and declared that Sai Baba alone was his Master and Guru. Many others gazing at Baba's eyes for purposes of trance or dhyana can vouch for similar powerful influence of Baba on the moral and spiritual characteristics of his devotee through his gaze.

Baba in many ways sowed the seed of morals and spirituality in the hearts of those approaching him, and sometimes almost imperceptibly. Whenever he rendered any worldly help, that help was accompanied by a spiritual seed sowing, and the beneficiary remembered Baba with faith, love and admiration for his power, guidance, and kindness. These thoughts were the seeds from which a huge tree of faith would grow up later on and Baba who sowed the seeds mostly, watered and manured his plant, and in many a case, beginning with worldly benefit, the devotee got on higher and higher spiritual levels. This cannot be called moral teaching but only moral elevation. But Baba's moral teachings have a very wide range. And, before closing this chapter, we may just set out a few of his teachings with perhaps an incident or two for illustrating the same.

Baba's teachings are so common that when set out, they may look like copy book maxims, and some may wonder why these should be set out at all, as everyone knows these moral teachings. What Baba taught was not something new and strange. It is the old, old truths of morality and spirituality that have to be rubbed into each soul and lived up to, and, therefore, Baba would place these truths before the devotee when the appropriate occasion offered itself. Anyhow, in order that a curious reader, wanting to know what sort of teachings Baba's were, might get some satisfaction, we shall give below a few of his teachings and

hope that the reader will not stop with mere curiosity but really proceed to read, digest, absorb, and live upto them and make them part of himself. For instance, about contentment and surrender, Baba used to say, 'God is great. He is the Supreme Master.' (The Arabic equivalent of it is "*Allah Malik*", which phrase was constantly on Baba's lips). Baba also said occasionally, when people thought that he was great, 'How great is God? No one can compare with him. God creates, supports and destroys. His lila (sport) is inscrutable. Let us be content to remain as he makes us, to submit our wills to his.' This is the most important doctrine, the doctrine of submission and surrender. Baba Said, '*Allah Rakega Vahisa Rahena*'. This means 'As God places us, let us remain.' Baba also said, Take what comes. Be contented and cheerful. Never worry. Not a leaf moves but by His consent and will. We should be honest, upright and virtuous. We must distinguish right from wrong. We must each attend to his own duty. But we must not be obsessed by egotism and fancy that we are independent causes of action. God is that Actor. We must recognise his independence and our dependence on Him, and see all acts as His. If we do so, we shall be unattached and free from karmic bondage'.

This is the most essential point in all religions. Baba's whole life was governed by it. He appeared to be ever active. But throughout he knew that God was acting, and he was merely an instrument in the hands of God. He said at times, 'God has agents everywhere, and they have vast powers; and I also have vast powers.' But *abhimana*, the idea that I am doing, has to be completely suppressed in order that one may really have spiritual elevation, peace and happiness.

Another important thing for peace and happiness is love of all creation. Baba's moral teachings were conveyed by his own life and activity. Baba loved all creatures, and the underlying motive of every act of his was love towards all human beings and all creatures. Baba said, 'Love all creatures. Do not fight with any. Do not retaliate nor scandalise any. When any one talks ill of you, that is, against you, pass on unperturbed. His words cannot pierce into your body. Others' acts will affect them alone and not you.' One is very strongly reminded of

the teachings of the great Greek stoic teacher Epictetus, when reading these words. As for activity, Baba was ever active and never idle and His advice was, 'Do not be idle. Work, Utter God's name. Read scriptures'. Baba's advice was always simple and capable of being accepted and acted upon by even persons of the meanest capacity and women and children. He told Chandrabai Borkar, 'We should not harbour envy, rivalry, or combative disposition towards others. If others hate us, let us simply take to Nama Japa and avoid their company'. He told the child Bapu Rao N. Chandorkar 'Hearken to the words of your parents. Help your mother in her tasks. Speak the truth and truth alone'. Baba's regard for truth was so well known. He had no interest, nothing in him, to make him swerve from the path of truth and rectitude. He occasionally had to impress on people like Mrs. M.W. Pradhan the virtue of meekness. The lady had a bit of temper. Baba told her, 'If anyone talks ten words at us, if we reply at all, let us reply with one word. Do not quarrel, retaliate, or bandy words with anyone. Do not give tit for tat'.

Baba's Guru had implanted in him from the earliest stage '*Nishta* and *Saburi*'. '*Saburi*' is patience and perseverance with cheerfulness. Baba had to press this home on some, especially those who were of an impatient nature. Uddhavesa Bua of Omkar on the Narmada banks came to him and asked him at once, 'Where is my Moksha Guru and how is he to be got?' Baba counselled patience, and said, 'Wait for five years, and you will know. How can you swallow at one gulp an entire loaf? Wait for five years and then see'.

As for the need for perseverance, that had to be driven home to persons with weak faith. There was a Prarthana Samajist who went to Baba, having caught up some little faith. However, on his way, before he saw Baba, he had a discussion with someone else about the Gita definition of *Sthitha Prajna* mentioned in Chapter II, verses 48-52, and wanted to know whether Baba had the characteristics of a *Sthitha Prajna*. This discussion unsettled his mind, and when he went to Baba, his mind was in a thoroughly disturbed state. Baba noticed at once his unsettled mind and told Shama, 'Take him and tell him something (of experiences of devotees)'. Then Shama took him to his wada and learning what

happened, he gave him this valuable advice, namely, (1) Despise irresponsible and uninformed people's talk, and (2) place your mind at Baba's feet, and then all will be safe. Have Saburi, and you will be safe. When they returned to Baba, Baba told the Samajist that he should follow Shama's advice.

Baba insisted on harmony amongst his followers. He said, 'If you avoid rivalries and bickerings, God will protect you'. This is specially valuable for promoting Hindu-Muslim relations of harmony amongst Baba's bhaktas and their surroundings. Baba also said 'Return not evil. Return good for evil. Others' words cannot harm you'.

Baba preached industry and patience. Baba said, 'Life is lived in vain if no yoga, yaga, tapas, or jnana be achieved'. He asked a devotee, 'Will you sit idle merely eating your food? Have Saburi, that is patience and courage'. Baba set the example himself of tapas. He kept awake the whole night lying on a small narrow plank making Namasmaraṇ, keeping his eyes open, and holding his mind in trance, telling Mahlsapathy to sit by his side and place his hands on Baba's heart. If Baba fell asleep, Mahlsapathy should wake him up. It was by such rigorous and extraordinary vigils that Baba got grey and also by the amount of pesterings he got from visitors of all sorts, desirable and undesirable. Baba's advice to sadhakas like Abdul, his constant attendant, were special and not applicable to all. He told Abdul, 'Eat very little. Do not go in for a variety of eatables. A single sort or dish will suffice. Do not sleep much. Have dhyana on what is read. Think of Allah, Hari Nama, Hari Nama, Hari Nama'. This applies to every serious minded devotee who wishes to reach God. Baba also rebuked scandal-mongering, himsa to animals, and other forms of irreligious behaviour. About scandal-mongering. he knew who was scandalising whom and where. When in S.M. Naik's place scandalising was going on and when Mathuradas came to Dwarakamayee. Baba at once asked. 'What was Naik saying?' The man felt ashamed of the scandal. Baba then said, "The good and the wicked alike come here. Why draw their frailties and foibles to public notice by depicting them?" When Dixil was in his own quarters scandalising Jesus Christ, and then came to Baba, Baba would not allow him to approach him till he repented.

Once there was a devotee at Shirdi reviling other devotees behind their back. Baba came along and met that man near the Lendi, and pointed out to him a pig eating human dung. Baba showed him the pig and said, 'What is it doing?' That man said, 'It is eating filth'. Baba said, 'You see with what gusto the pig is gorging itself on nightsoil. But we feel it disgusting. This is exactly how you behave. People fret and fume against their own brethren and kinsmen to their hearts' content. Human birth is obtained after much (punya) merit and after obtaining it, is a man to go to Shirdi and commit moral suicide?'

About cruelty to creatures, Baba was ever watching his devotees, wherever they might be and, whenever they might be indulging in such cruelty. Mahlsapathy had hit a sickly dog near his own place, and when he came to Baba, Baba told him, 'There is in the village a bitch sickly like me, and everyone is hitting it. Mahlsapathy felt that Baba was hitting him. Mrs. Khaparde, a very orthodox lady, was cooking her food at the Wada, and then a dog came near. She flung burning fuel at it. Later on she went to Baba and said 'Baba, come to my house for dinner.' Baba then said, 'Yes, I come and you fling burning fuel at me.' Baba's advice on cruelty to creatures might sometimes seem to be extraordinary. When Dixit asked Baba, 'The serpent kills so many people, and so, should not one kill the serpent whenever one sees it?' Baba answered, 'No. The serpent will never kill us unless it is ordered by God to kill us. And if God has so ordered it, we cannot escape. So, do not kill the snake'. Ever afterwards Dixit avoided killing snakes, scorpions, bugs, fleas, and other creatures. Once a mad dog bit a small dog, and the small dog was thought to be rabid, and big dogs were running away from the small dog. The villagers wanted to club the small dog. It ran through the streets and sought sanctuary behind Baba at the Dwarakamayee. The villagers wanted Baba to drive the dog out so that they might kill it. But Baba told them to get out and saved the creature. After all, the dog proved not to be rabid. Similar instructions given by Baba might take numerous pages to relate. So, we might as well stop this chapter about moral teachings with one quotation, which we copy from Sai Satcharitra.

"Unless there is some relationship or connection nobody goes anywhere. If any men or creatures come to you, do not discourteously drive them away, but receive them well and treat them with due respect. Shri Hari (God) will be certainly pleased if you give water to the thirsty, bread to the hungry, clothes to the naked and your Verandah to strangers for sitting and resting. If anybody wants any money from you and you are not inclined to give, do not give, but do not bark at him like a dog. Let anybody speak hundreds of things against you, do not resent by giving any bitter reply. If you always tolerate such things, you will certainly be happy. Let the world go topsy-turvy, you remain where you are; standing or staying in your own place look on calmly at the show of all things passing before you. Demolish the wall of difference that separates you from Me; and then the road for our meeting will be clear and open. The sense of differentiation, as I and thou, is the barrier that keeps away the disciple from his Master, and unless that is destroyed the state of union or at-one-ment is not possible. "*Allah Malik*" i.e. God is the sole proprietor, nobody else is our protector. His method of work is extraordinary, invaluable, and inscrutable. His will will be done and He will show us the way and satisfy our hearts' desires. It is on account of Rinanubandha (former relationship) that we have come together. Let us love and serve each other and be happy. He who attains the supreme goal of life is immortal and happy, all others merely exist and merely breathe."

In closing this chapter on Moral Teachings, it is once again necessary to draw the attention of the reader to the fact that Baba did not profess to be a teacher, and to more than 99 per cent of his visitors he did not even appear to be a teacher and was chiefly a granter of wishes. But all the same, he was a powerful instiller of principles and virtue into the hearts of those capable of receiving such impress. The one most important fact to remember about morals and Baba is that Baba was the embodiment of all virtues and Baba did nothing which he did not preach. In himself all the virtues were the efflorescence of the central root in him with which he began as a little child, namely, love for the Guru, love that knows no bounds of time, place, or circumstance, and love that sacrifices anything and everything at its altar. Gratitude, service, equality, justice,

consideration and so many other good qualities that were in him and taught by him were the direct issue of this love, and could not have all been sustained without this love. This is the central point to remember about Baba. This enables the sishya to get more and more like unto the Guru, and by constant meditation on him become the soul of the Guru. "*Apana Sarika Karitat Tatkai*" says Tukaram of Gurus. The sishya grows in love, absorbs the love from the Guru, and returns it with all his soul and body, and does not consider himself as anything except as the lover and the beloved of the Guru. Thus he attains moral perfection, spiritual perfection, perfection of siddhis and perfection of every sort This is the natural result of Baba's moral teachings.