

IS SAI BABA LIVING AND HELPING NOW?

Sai Baba seems determined to solve the above question to the satisfaction of innumerable enquiries found here, there and everywhere in the country. It is not merely a question arising from curiosity. It often arises from necessity. Persons there are in thousands who get into trouble and cast their eyes about in every direction in quest of relief. 'Is there no God? Is there no Saint? Is there no Mantra? Is there not anything that will come to my rescue?' Is that what a person cries out. At such stages when there is some person or other in the neighbourhood connected with Sai Baba, then that person in distress runs up to Sai Baba, with the assurance (born of need) that He is not only living and helpful, but that He is the *only* person that can help one in such junctures. Therefore it is of the utmost importance that people throughout the country should be kept informed in their own languages or in any common language, English or Hindi, of the fact that Baba is now living and working to benefit all and sundry in a way in which no other person known to us is shown to be working. There is no other person shown to have such *chamatkaric* superhuman power and intent solely upon benefiting all persons that put their trust in him. Of course, mere *chamatkar* or magical feats or psychic power, unaccompanied by a noble purpose or by divine qualities is not worth the attention of pious persons intent on achieving their own spiritual welfare. But supranormal events always draw the attention of the educated and cultured classes and of others. So, without further excuse, we shall proceed to describe and narrate various circumstances and events which carry conviction to the mind of even the dullest that Baba is living, is powerful, is beneficent and is just the divine person that one needs in any juncture.

Baba's *lilas* or *chamatkars* are very varied and have extended over a very long period. Somewhere about the close of the last century they began. They are continuing still up-to-date, and from time to time in new places and in varied ways. Baba is showing all people irrespective of religion, caste, age, sex, position etc, that he is that superhuman, beneficent power that people call their *Ishta* or *Ishta Devata* or *Guru-Deva*, and that he is available to any earnest soul and responds to every earnest call. There are several books (notable *Gospel of Sai*

Baba and Sai Satcharita) setting out Baba's lilas upto recent times. For the sake of convenience, we may begin with Baba's recent lilas through Matru Sri Krishna Bai of Ramacbandrapuram nearRajahmundry, East Godavari District, Andhra State. Her husband is Mr. Sehagiri Rao, Superintendent of the office of the Accountant General, Posts and Telegraphs, Simla. That gentleman got first a very superficial contact with Baba, as numerous South Indians at Nagpur (where Mr. Seshagiri Rao was at the time) were adoring Baba and communicating facts about Baba, It is the need, as we already stated, that creates faith. On one occasion in 1946 Mr. Seshagiri Rao was in a tight fix. In his official capacity as Senior Divisional Accountant, Nagpur Telegraph Division, he was entrusted with the Treasury keys, and he had put them in a drawer and kept the key of the drawer alone with him. One morning when he came and opened the drawer, to his dismay he could not discover the keys. There was no sort of explanation for the disappearance of the keys. All the same he would get into hot waters with his superior and might suffer in his prestige and position. He did not know what to do. So, he suddenly offered a prayer that if **Baba** is really powerful and helpful, he should discover for him the keys. Soon after making that prayer he went to the box again and opened it. This **time** alone, behold! the keys were there right in front of him, and it was a wonder where they had gone, how not found at so many previous searches by himself and his servants, and how suddenly they reappeared. So, he had some faith in Baba. But it was his wife that had to play the all important part of a very powerful, spiritual dynamo for the spread of Sai propaganda, She also had at first only a very superficial knowledge of Sai Baba. In 1950, in May-June, she was with her father at Ramachandrapuram and her husband had come from Nagpur to stay at Ramachandrapuram for recuperation of his health. He wanted to start back on the 16th June 1950 to Nagpur. But suddenly on the 14th she took ill. She did not get up from her bed until 10 in the morning, whereas her usual hour for quitting bed was between 5 and 6. So, the husband went into her room at 10 a.m. to see what the matter was. She slowly opened her eyes and called him to her side. Her voice was feeble. She said weeping. "I am going to die; please look after

my children". This was a stunning statement and a great shock to the husband. He asked her, 'What are you ailing; from !' She Said, "I cannot say what I ail from, but I feel terrible pain.'Mr. Seshagiri Rao thought that this must be heart attack. Then she pointed to a portion of the room, and said 'There, that fellow, that fellow; I am nearing my death by reason of that fellow ' Then Mr. Seshagiri Rao thought that it was all hallucination, and the best thing would be to get medical aid. But she again said, "You do not believe me. I see that fellow is there. You tell me that I will become all right." Mr. Seshagiri Rao asked his father-in-law to get medicine. She could not even gulp down water. So, some medicine was forced down her mouth, and yet she was restless. In the evening at 6 or 7, she again called her husband to her said, and repeated, "I am going to die. You do not believe me."To overcome her fears, the husband took a photograph of Sai Baba (which had been given to him by his Nagpur clerk) and kept it under her pillow and told her, 'This Sai Baba (photograph of Sai) will ward off all evil spirits." He was not quite sure that Sai would, but necessity made him say it. Then he went upstairs to sleep. Downstairs the lady was sleeping and her father was watching. At 12 midnight the lady cried out, 'Father, father, I am dying. Somebody is taking out my life.' Then the father got up and rushed and saw that her body had already been partly dragged out of the cot and her legs were dangling down. He put her body into her bed and retired. Then a conversation was heard in her room. The lady was uttering the name of Sai Baba and Raghavendra Swami. She said that these two had come to rescue her. She asked her father, who ran up to her. 'Lift up the pillow. **Take out a** packet, and put its contents into my mouth.' That gentleman thought she was raving, as nobody had put any packet of medicine under her pillow. But she repeated her words, and said, "simply obey; do not argue." Then the father lifted up the pillow, and there was a packet there. That was opened. It contained a tulsi leaf as big as a betel leaf. There was also Vibhuti. Then he took up both these, put the vibhuti into her mouth and retired. She then had very good sleep. The father on further examination found that the whole of her sari was covered with vibhuti and (here were "Kolam" borderline marks of vibhuti on all the four sides of the cot. Then the

husband came down and saw all these things for himself. In addition, he noted the impression of a hand on her head. Thereafter she recovered completely. Some time later Krishna Bai said that Raghavendra Swami and Sai Baba wanted one anna nickel piece to be kept under her pillow. Her husband placed it under the pillow. They were waiting to see who would take that one anna piece, and how it would disappear. They went for their meals. At that time, in Krishna Bai's room some conversation was going on. He got up and entered the room. He found the room was full of a sweet smell. She said that the one anna coin was taken away by these two, namely, Raghavendra Swami and Sai Baba, and in its place they had left something, and she wanted them to see what it was. The husband removed the pillow, and found that there was no one anna piece, but in its place, there were fresh tulsi leaves and bilva leaves. These were left as a protection to her. That is what she said. That day she was all right, and, therefore went upstairs to sleep. At 12 midnight again there was some conversation in this lady's room. The husband went up and found that she was reciting four Gita stanzas.

B.C. IV (7)(1) Yadayadahi

B. G. (8) (2) Paritranyasadhunaro

B. G. V (22) (3) Ananyaschintayantomam

B. G. XVIII (66) (4) Sarvadharm Parityajya

Raghavendra Swami had asked her to get these by heart. She pleaded that she did not know Sanskrit, it seems. But Raghavendra Swami did in fact, teach her these four stanzas, and other parts of Gita, explaining their meanings also. She said that Raghavendra Swami and Baba had kept three things under her pillow, in addition to tulsi leaves and bilva leaves. She said, "Please look for them". Seshagiri Rao lifted up the pillow and searched. He found three things, namely, (1) a packet of vibbuti (2) a big tulsi leaf enclosing kumkum and (3) mrittika, that is, the sacred earth of the tulsi plant used with great reverence by Madhvas especially - the lady belongs to the Madhva Sect, Later her husband went to his own room, and found under his own pillow sandalwood paste in two pieces. His father-in-law also had the same in his room. They were all fragrant.

These evidently were shown to them to put faith in Baba and to believe that there is some superior and great powerful force which cannot be easily understood by ordinary men.

From that time onwards, as a regular feature at about 6-30 p.m. vibhuti marks would appear on the forehead of the lady. This went on for 8 months, that is, till about February, 1951. That was seen by many people. Then Sai Baba asked the lady to do Sai puja on all Thursdays. Her puja was very peculiar. During that puja, she would be going on talking in an undertone, something midway between delivering a lecture and loud thinking. On closer examination of what she spoke, the husband found she was discoursing on philosophic truths, Gita slokas, their meanings, the definition of Maya, Prakriti, etc. Some phenomena also began to be exhibited through her or by her. At the beginning of the puja she would place an *empty* dubba (a closed receptacle) in front of her, and at the close of the puja, mysteriously that empty dubba would be found to *be full of vibhuti*. This is from Baba himself This vibhuti was distributed to all people as Sai prasad. Another remarkable fact was that Baba said on one occasion that 'this lady had eight more births to get Mukti (Liberation) but he would compress all those eight births into this very birth on account of his infinite compassion for her. He could not prevent prarabdha but could compress prarafadba. So she had to die and come back to life every month in the course of eight months. During her monthly period, she would become hopelessly ill, her face would show signs of a dying person, i.e., livid pallor. Yama kinkaras would come, their songs and shouts would be heard in the room etc. There were also other indications of impending death, that is, on all the four sides of the cot, lines which had been drawn with Vibhuti previously would disappear. At such times, *Baba*. said, 'She and all connected with her should make Nama Smaran' *i.e.* remember God. Even doctors who attended on her at such times would join in the Nama Smaran. At 12 midnight, she would cry out, 'I am dying'. Immediately Mr. Seshagiri Rao and others would cry out 'Baba! Baba!' Her life actually did depart from her body which became a livid, corpse, and then Sai Baba again gave her life. On one occasion, she vomited blood from her mouth. Sixteen times are vomited, and

the vomit still went on. Seshagiri Rao just then returned from his office. All the medicines he tried to stop the vomit failed. Then he took Baba to task for not curing his wife. Baba through the mouth of his wife answered. "Your husband is abusing me, because I do not cure you. I can cure anybody but not you. If you are to be cured now you will have to take another birth to work out your prarabdha. So you must undergo this trouble now. Again he said, 'When I have assured him that there is no danger to life, why should he be angry?' So saying he stopped the blood vomit in a most miraculous way. As she was lying down, something like a root fell on her hand from above, and that stopped the blood vomit. Sai Baba was not opposed to cure her disease, but he wanted that her prarabdha should be worked out. On the last and final, occasion, the Lord of Death himself came (Yama).

All people including Seshagiri Rao were by the side of her bed. They left a sudden fragrance in the room and an overwhelming fear in their hearts. That indicated that Yama was present. Then some conversation was going on in the room between the unseen Sai Baba and the unseen Yama. Yama said that he had to do his duty. Baba said, 'Go on. Carry out your duty. Sounds alone were heard by those in the room. Then Mr. Seshagiri Rao and others were all overjoyed. Thus, all her future janmas due to prarabdha were wiped out. She recovered her health soon. The lady through Baba's favour was able to have *clairvoyant* ideas as to what things were going on and where. On one occasion, she and her husband had to leave Rama-chandrapuram for Nagpur. The lady said at 3 p.m. 'Let us start'. But by starting at 3 p.m. they would not get any train at Rajahmundry for Bezwada, according to the railway time table. At Rajahmundry they would have to wait for several hours. But as his wife insisted, the party started, and by bus they reached Rajahmundry at 6 p.m. They went to the booking office and asked about trains. The booking clerk said, 'The train which should have come in the morning has come only just now. You can start and go to Bezwada. The booking clerk gave them the tickets. So they reached Bezwada at 1 in the night. They were so late that they did not know where to stay. But at Bezwada there was Mr. Seshagiri Rao's cousin. Mr. Seshagiri Rao

did not know his address. There was no one to tell them of his address. Suddenly, a young boy of sixteen came and said, 'I will take you to the house of a municipal councillor who will direct you.' He took them to the municipal councillor who showed Seshagiri Rao the house of his cousin. The young man suddenly disappeared. The lady said, 'That young man must be Baba himself.' Again, sometime later, Mr. Hanumantha Rao, the father of the lady got a letter which bore the mark of Shirdi as the despatch station with a signature purporting to be that of Sai Baba attached to the bottom of the letter. The postal mark was Rahata Post. The letter said, 'Go and see the puja performed by your daughter at Nagpur.' It also contained Gita slokas. There was also warning that Hanumantha Rao should not treat the lady merely as his daughter. He must treat her as Baba's disciple. So, in obedience to the letter, he came to Nagpur and saw her puja. There he was impressed with the wonderful spirituality of his daughter's puja.

Baba said that he must carry out certain things through Krishna Bai. In order to communicate his ideas Baba was writing on plantains. This was one of the things which the father saw. Baba wrote sometime on several plantains but at other times on one. Sometimes Baba would write on very small leaves in microscopic letters. One evening when Seshagiri Rao was meditating in his room, Baba appeared and told Krishna Bai in her room, 'Your husband is praying to me in his room. Why not your husband come here? When the husband went to her room, he saw a wonderful thing. The table near her was smeared with vibhuti. On that, a huge person sat. That was Baba. The breadth across the two parts of his nether body on the table were over four feet. This phenomenon was repeated at Ramacbandrapuram also twice or thrice. One of the men said at a puja, 'Let us see how Baba is eating.'" The pooja room was full of a number of Baba's pictures. On one picture, under the mouth, a small peda was placed. This peda moved from the mouth of one photograph to another photograph, and, after going to the last photograph, disappeared. Then the audience said, 'We are satisfied as to your eating.' Again this lady's grandmother came up one day and said that she would believe in Baba if Sai Baba himself put one peda prasad into her mouth.

People laughed at the idea. But late in the night, she suddenly woke up and said something like a lizard had fallen into her mouth. Light was brought, and it was discovered that it was not a lizard but a peda that was in her mouth. So, she got convinced that Baba was working lilas there. Mr. B. Venkataratnam, Ex-Minister of the Madras Government, attended her pujas. On one occasion, when she was going on talking in a peculiar, unconscious way, like one possessed, she asked him whether on such and such a day some body did not go to his house for food, whether he had not tried to send him away, and whether he did not accommodate that man on that day when he insisted on accommodation. Again Baba through her asked, 'Did he not ask for Rs. 2 when leaving the place?' Mr. Venkataratnam's reply was in the affirmative to all these questions. Again Baba asked Mr. Venkataratnam, whether on the day previous to his coming to Ramachandrapuram, he did not give a two-anna piece to a beggar on the way. Mr. Venkataratnam admitted it. Then Baba said, 'I was that beggar.' Similarly, Sri G, Viswanatham Chetty, Joint Registrar of Co-operative Societies, attended her puja. He said while leaving the place that he had a heavy programme and therefore could not return for a long time. But after he left, the lady said, 'You will see that he comes back and for three days attends the puja.' Actually for a variety of reasons, Mr. Chetty could not leave Ramachandrapuram for three days and he did attend puja on all the three days. (The above are extracted from Mr. K. Seshagiri Rao's lecture at the Mylapore A. I. S. S. Sai Mandir in February 1953 in obedience to Baba's order to him to publish all he knew of Baba's lilas as manifested through Srimathi Krishna Bai).

Mr. G: V. Chetty had plenty of experiences of a most convincing sort, and therefore, he is a staunch bhakta. On one of the earlier occasions, that is, at the commencement of his contact with Sai Baba, there, he had striking proofs of Baba's being alive, being useful and responding through human voice to the callsof his bhaktas. Out of true devotion, when he was proceeding one day to Ramachandrapuram from Kakinada, he got a very large rose garland, called 'Nela Malai' in Tamil, because its rolls from the neck to the ground. That garland was full of roses and the number of petals may therefore be easily guessed to be

something in four figures. This garland was placed round Baba's neck i.e. on the portrait. He also carried flowers, fruits, etc. When the puja was over, he noted that somehow (mysteriously) every petal of every rose in that huge garland had on it written 'OM SAI. If any one of us attempts to write 'Om Sai*' on rose petals, the chances are that very few petals would be left on the stalk, and the petals would all be on the ground. Besides, it would be a matter of several hours for us to complete the inscription on thousands of petals. On the other hand, suddenly in a few minutes the whole garland became full of inscriptions. Mr. G. V. Chetty was blessed with response in other respects also. The plantains he took got inscriptions on them. **He** had taken an apple and placed it before Baba. At the close of the puja, the lady asked him to take the apple. Then he wondered 'What, with no signs of Baba accepting, am I to take the apple?' He only thought so but said nothing. But Baba knew it, and through the mouth of the lady said, 'What does he say that there is nothing worth of note? Let him lift up the apple.' When the apple was lifted up, it was noted that the bottom portion had disappeared, cut off clean with a knife, and the cut portion had disappeared, that is, accepted by Baba. Inscriptions and removal of cut part were all done by invisible hands while he and all were in the pooja room. Seeing that Mr. Chetty was quite happy and quite sure that his offering had been accepted by Baba, Similar to this, numerous other incidents took place. Mr. Chetty got also specific answers for his problems about his son, his daughter, etc. Baba's answers were so clear and full that he (Mr, Chetty) could answer clearly the question at (be top of this pamphlet without a moment's hesitation, that Baba is undoubtedly living and is undoubtedly helpful at least to those who have faith (bhakti) in him. Now, on one of those occasions, Baba's lilas took a peculiar shape. *One* Mr. Ramachandra Rao from Nagpur, businessman and a devotee of Baba, through that lady, and some others came to Ramachandrapuram. They had an idea that a temple must be built for Baba, and that instructions must be got from Baba. They put the question to the lady. The answer was that Sri B. V. N. Swami, President of the AH India Sai Samaj, must come. Sri B. V. N. Swami, and with him a number of bhaktas started from Madras. The chief amongst the

bhaktas was one Mr. S. N. C. Sriman Narayana Chaudhry, formerly Public Prosecutor (at Guntur) whose mental health was affected, and who consequently, could not practice. They took with them three apples and one casket (sambatam) full of halva, and this was opened by Swami and again closed after noting that it was full. All these with other fruits and flowers were taken to Ramachandrapuram, which was reached at about 11-30 a.m. on 18-3-1952 and placed in the small puja room about 10'x10', where puja was going on, and where the entire ground floor, was full of bhaktas and their offerings. On a wall there were many pictures of Sai Baba, The lady herself (Krishna Bai) was in deep concentration and going on with Sai puja. At the close of the puja (i.e. by noon or 12-30 p.m.) her father asked the devotees the question. 'Have you counted your offerings?' The swami and others laughed, because there was no necessity to count what they offered to God. But then S. N. Chaudhry said that he had placed three apples for naivedya, but there were only two then. It was impossible physically for anyone to get into the room across the seated bhaktas and carry away one apple. But there it was, that one apple had disappeared. The lady herself then lifted up the casket and opened the lid and lo! and behold! there was a deep ploughing up of the halva. A finger had evidently been inserted and a good quantity of halva removed. Where the removed halva had gone, and who removed it was a mystery. The only explanation was that Baba had accepted the halva prasada also. On the fruits that had been placed, inscriptions were found. It was made clear to S. N. Chaudhry, Sri B. V. N. Swami, and others that Baba was gracious enough to accept the presents of the party. Then Mr. S. N. C answered to himself the question at the head of this pamphlet. He felt firmly convinced of the truth that Sri Sai Baba is living now, and is mysteriously helping his devotee by acceptance of their gifts. This at once effected a change in him. He was no more abnormal. He lost his diffidence, fear, etc. From that day onwards, he began to attend to his private and other work, and he could also attend court and is now having good practice. So, many other persons also got convincing answers to the above question. As for the Swami, he found that the lady at the close of the puja was rapidly lecturing away in Telugu

on matters of philosophy and religion. The best lawyers and pandits there could not repeat or translate what she said. On the second day, questions were put to Baba through her. The answers came. The answers related to the health of some of the visitor present, their relations and other matters. On the whole (the answers were intelligent and satisfactory. This again helps us to answer the question mentioned above. As for the main matter, for which Sri B. V. N. Swami was invited, the answer was that Sri B. V. N. Swami's present work was quite satisfactory, that he need not do anything more than simply remain at headquarters and ask his devotees and friends to carry out Baba's work, and that everything would get on all right. That settled the question of Sri B. V. N. Swami's responsibility for a new temple building. But Sri B. Venkataratnam Garu was there. He is the President of the Co-operative Bank at Rama-chandiapuram. He, with the help of others, has succeeded in building a beautiful temple and placing in it marble images of Sai Baba, Radha and Krishna and he has carried out the other instructions of Sai Baba, as to the fitting up of the temple and the pratishtha itself. That installation took place on 11th April 1954, that is, on the Rama Navami day. The puja by the lady is now going on in that temple.

The best way of winding up this small pamphlet is to refer to very recent instances in the East Godavari District. Some twenty miles from Pithapur Railway Station are the Thotapalli Hills, and on them, His Holiness Sri Omkara Swami has put up a Shami Ashram, that is the main mother Ashram. He is carrying on his life of peace and propaganda for peace with the aid of an English Journal *Peace* and a Telugu Journal *Shanti*. The Swamiji's work is mainly philosophical. He is the author of 'Cosmic Flashes'. showing his elevation of thought and dignity of expression with a mastery of style rarely to be seen.

What, however, came to this philosophical Swami at the beginning of this year was Sri Sai's grace to inspire in him some more spiritual development based on attachment to Sai. It is for such spiritual developments that Baba shows his chamatkars. About March last, chamatkars began in the Thotapalli Shanti Ashram in a strange way. There was Birthday celebration going on and some lady devotees of the Swami had gone there. They were staunch Sai bhaktas, and

they carried their Sai pictures, etc. with them. After the usual pujas on that Ashram were over, these ladies sat up in a small room and carried on their Sai puja. Others of the Ashram and visitors joined them. This Swamiji, seeing the vast crowd and the insufficiency of the room, asked them to go upstairs to his own meditation room. Then perhaps as a result of the Swami's dedication of his meditation room for Sai Mandir, Baba's lilas began to be shown abundantly. Naivedyas placed included plantain fruits, and inscriptions in Telugu letters (Sai) appeared on these fruits. On the flowers placed before Baba, inscriptions similarly appeared. People were wondering, and one of those present placed a wood apple as an offering to Baba and prayed that an inscription should appear on it. The letters 'SAI' appeared on it. His Holiness Omkar Swami himself came up with a coconut without bark, and placed it as an offering before Baba. Then the letters 'SAI' in Telugu were found to be written on the two sides of the coconut. The Swami is retaining that coconut with these inscriptions. Faith, full faith began to develop all round. Sri Rajaji of the Ashram had a gold ring and he offered it to Sai Baba with these words. 'Baba, I will give this to you in case you write your name on it', and placed the ring before the picture in the puja. At once the Telugu letters 'SAI' appeared on the ring. Some others who did not believe began to offer watches, chains etc, and placed them before Baba, and the name 'Sai' appeared on every one of them.

Some one present, feeling that the rich and the well to-do classes alone were the beneficiaries in the chamatkars, wanted something to be done for the Daridra Narayana and sickly Narayanas. He took up a ball of Vibhuti and offered it at the puja. Lo.'and behold, in a few minutes, the letter 'SAI MANDU' in Telugu appeared on the ball. Mandu means, medicines. The whole ball was therefore the medicine which was consecrated by Baba and could be given to all and sundry. There was a patient with high fever *in* the Ashram. A bit of that Vibhuti 'Sai Mandu' with water given to him removed the fever and enabled him to discharge his normal duties immediately. The Ashram cow had some disease, and the milk drawn from its udder was blackish and this Mandu was smeared over the cow, and Lo! and behold, thereafter the milk yielded by the cow was

sweet and normal. So, Sai had really given his 'Mandu' medicine for the benefit of the dumb, the poor and the helpless. Faith in Sai was very powerful and combined with the previous faith of the Ashramites. This was shown in a remarkable incident one evening. A lady taking leave of the Swami at his Ashram at dusk was going over the lawn to reach her room, but, on the way a serpent crawled over one of her feet and she placed the other foot on its tail. At once she noticed that it was a serpent. She cried out 'OM SAI'; and the serpent instead of striking at her quietly bowed its head, retreated and climbed up a tree.

People said, 'Baba is here doing wonders. So we must build a permanent temple for him', Then a piece of paper was found in front of the devotees with the following written on it, namely, "This is Sai's Sarmidhya (or presence)" in Telugu. The same Telugu letters were seen simultaneously to appear on the wall of the puja room. People were convinced that undoubtedly Sai Baba was present, and was responding to the devout and earnest prayers of the bhaktas there. But as the Swamiji said, Sai being a form of God, He is present not only in one place, and people should not overstress the miraculous appearance of Baba's lilas, though He is more easily communed with there. So Omkar Swami invited and invites people to go there for such holy communion. On RamaNavami night he got up at midnight and wrote out a manifesto containing all the above facts and extending an invitation to all devout bhaktas to go to Shanti Asnram for communing with Sri Sai and not for the mere curiosity or fun of getting inscriptions on watches and chains. As for himself, the Swami declares that he felt that a Divine presence was now covering him up both inside, outside, and on all sides. He has composed songs in English and Telugu mentioning that he felt identical with Sai, and that the feeling was one of Bliss. This appeared in an issue of the Telugu journal 'Shanti' and has been broadcast. This is an excellent answer to doubting Thomases who still ask, 'Is Sai Baba living and will he help or can he help?' Even the dullest intellect must now see that such questions are ludicrous or flippant. We need not repeat other instances where Baba had come to help. The number of such instances now is legion. Baba has shown His

powers at Coimbatore, Madras, and so many other places. We may perhaps make an exception in favour of Coimbatore and Ahmedabad and close this pamphlet.

Coimbatore

Coimbatore was specially lucky in having extraordinary benefits granted to some of its citizens.

During the last great world war, a Coimbatorean, (Medical) Captain Devaraj, was in the Mediterranean on board a ship. The enemy attacked that ship with bombs, and the vessel very badly suffered damage. Captain Devaraj was at one end, and Sri Sai, his Guru-Deva saved him completely from any harm.

This became widely known, and at Coimbatore many bhaktas turned their hearts to Baba. Amongst these one prominent devotee was Sri Soundararajan. He started Sai puja and Sai Bhajan at home. He constructed a small cottage for the public to carry on puja and bhajan at one end of the town. One evening when puja with bhajan was going on, there was a fairly good crowd, and amongst the crowd came in a snake. It crawled over the foot of a boy who in fright cried out 'snake, snake'. But he was the only one frightened. The snake stood coiled 5 or 6 feet from the crowd and seemed to follow the music of the bhajan. It was dangling its head from side to side but kept its place. People who looked at it were wondering what sort of snake it was that was not frightened at the sight of men and could appreciate the bhajan music. It kept on there from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., the time for closing the bhajan temple. The men who were all anxious to depart went away then and came back next morning. What a strange thing was it for them to note! The next morning when they came they saw the snake was still in the Temple. The temple was a mere thatched cottage and not a pucca building. It is near the road side. The people there made up their minds that the snake was nothing but Sai Baba, and that they should offer their worship to Sai Baba by taking heaps and baskets of flowers of *samanai* (Chrysanthemum). A number of devotees stood all round this snake and picked up these flowers and dropped them over the head of the snake uttering the

Ashtothra Namavali of Sai Baba, namely, Om Sri Sainathaya Namah, etc. The snake stood all this quietly and when over a thousand flowers had fallen on its head, it was still in their midst, and then they were quite sure and perfectly convinced that this snake was nothing but Sai Baba, and they called it Naga Sai. Then one of the devotees said, 'You are undoubtedly Baba. If we tell people that we worshipped you like this, they will not believe us. So we must take a photograph of you. So, Baba, you must remain in your position till a photographer is brought from the town.' It took more than half an hour for a photographer to come, but the snake was still there. The photographer placed his camera close to it and took an excellent snap of it. Even men - let alone children - snake their heads at the time of taking photographs, and thus spoil the photos. But Sai did not quail in the least. The firm attitude of Naga Sai was shown by the excellent photograph that was the result. Then after 11 a.m. the Naga Sai that had come in at 5 p.m. the previous day left the place. This place is fairly close to the town, and Coimbatore being highly populous, thousands of people, hearing of the marvel, came from the town and beheld Naga being in the midst of the temple and getting worshipped. The photograph is now a standing proof of Baba's lila. Baba showed this lila evidently in order to strike the attention of even the dullest in these days of atheism, indifference, and scorn at religious matters. Something wonderful is necessary to shake people out of all this. So, Baba showed these chamatkars to convince them. This result was that more and more, thousands upon thousands, came day after day to look at the place where Baba came and got worshipped. They put up a Naga Sai temple of Baba at Coimbatore and it is highly popular.

Ahmedabad

Ahmedabad is a still stranger-though not so very dramatic - instance of Baba's chamatkars. Here a well-known lawyer of good standing, Sri C. C. Mankewallah, was the person to whom or for whose benefit Baba's lilas were performed. We may give his experience as it appeared in the September 1953 issue of the Sai Sudha, in the words of Sri Mankewallah himself.

From 1948 to 1952, for five years continuously, I suffered from Dropsy and gastric ulcer. I had no appetite. I vomited blood and could not eat anything or even take water. My weight became abnormal, viz. 300 pounds last year, from January onwards. I was bed ridden. Doctors attended on me. About 1952 April, the chief doctor of the hospital and other consulting doctors of the city gave up hope of my recovery. On one day, the chief doctor noticing that blood in profuse quantity was coming out of my mouth and that my weight due to dropsy was abnormally high, viz. 300 pounds said that there was no sufficient blood in the body and that surrounding poisons would prove fatal in 2 days. Some friends and relations had advised me to worship Sai Baba (whose temple was opposite to my house) in April, 1952 and I had hung up Baba's picture in front of me and worshipped him. After looking into his photo, I got affection for him. First, I had apprehension that I should not worship a Mohammedan Saint. But, the continuous attraction of His photo on my mind and relation's talk gave me a sudden vision of Baba when I was awake at 6 p.m. He then said to me. "I am not a Fakir. But I am an incarnation of Guru Datta. There are nine gems (including me) who are incarnation of Datta, namely. Tajuddin Baba of Nagpur, Dhuniwala Dada of Khandwa, Vishnu Debananda Saraswathi of Narmada, the Mahant of Akkalkote, etc." The next day, I got 2 books in Gujarati on Baba and read them. Some days later when the doctor completely gave up hopes and stated that life will pass away in 2 hours (at noon), then Baba appeared in front of me at about 1 p.m. First a light came from the door and Baba came in that light, and my mother Sri Sivaganga and I saw Him and Heard his words. He said "Baccha, Mad gabra tumara sub dukha me hardeya" to me; and to my mother he said "Tumara sub dukha me hardeya" which means, "Child, fear not, All your disease (or troubles) I have taken away." "Send your grandson Turt immediately to Shirdi."

Then he disappeared through the door. As my son had not sufficient experience of travel and as my sudden death would necessitate the presence of my son for funerals as apprehended by some, I and my mother had to consult together, but we told my son to start in the evening for Shirdi, and he did. At 6p.m. on that day, Baba again appeared and told us. "Do not be afraid. I am with your son also."

Tomorrow at 12 O'clock you will receive a wire from your son that he has reached Shirdi safe." After 6 p.m. the doctor visited me. He again gave up hopes of my survival and mocked at the above experience which was narrated to him. He said. "This is mere hallucination." In 1 or 2 hours, life would depart. This he said to my mother, and other close relations. Next day, at 12 noon, I got my son's wire "Reached Shirdi safe." Then from that moment, I began to purge. I purged continuously for 24 hours. Urine also passed. No blood passed. Next day, all poisons had passed out in that way, in the stools and urine; and my body became light. It is weighed. The weight was 75 pounds. The heart beating and the pulse were normal. The doctor came when the purging was going on. He was surprised. He was present at the weighing and the resumption of normal pulse and normal beating of the heart. The doctor was satisfied that I had now become safe and was saved by the "mysterious ways of Baba". From that date of my health regularly improved. In 2 months, I could and did take ordinary food. I am alright since then. I am doing regular lawyer's work now as before. I am always praying to Baba. In other matters, e.g., domestic, Baba is guiding me and protecting me. Then I went to Shirdi and I have now completed all my South Indian pilgrimages. I will visit Shirdi again on my way back home. I came to Madras 3 or 4 days back, as the guest of Mr. Ambalsi Khapadia of Adyar. On 8th night and on 9th morning. I had a vision of Baba (about 5 a.m.). He commanded me to visit his temple in Mylapore and all his devotees there. So I came here yesterday and to-day.

In 1953 was the first appearance of Baba to Sir Mankewalla but this did not stop with 1953. In 1954 he had repeated appearance and help of Baba. That was for his benefit. But Baba appeared before him in August 1954 for the benefit of the public. This pamphlet had been written, and attempts were being made to print it in August. There was inordinate delay on the part of some printer who undertook the task of printing it. Meanwhile Baba made use of the delay for furnishing the best answer to the question at the top of this pamphlet. He appeared on the morning of 23-8-1954 to Sri Mankewalla and the message he gave was for publication and broadcasting in this pamphlet and in the History of Sai Baba that

was being written by Sri B. V. N. Swami and nearing completion for which also the following message in the best Epilogue as it is for this pamphlet. This message published in Sai Sudha, September, 1954, runs as follows:—

“It is with great sense of surprise, joy, and blessedness that I am penning these few lines to you, being yester night reminded by ShreeSai Baba, who, with His habitual smiling face, inspired me in semi awakened state at the dawn of the morning to refer this matter to you, and to bring to your notice that Shree *Baba is always present before his bhaktas*. He is the *guiding* and all pervading power that shapes the ends of devotees and even of the universe. He has once saved me from the jaws of death, and he only guides me in all my and everybody's career, in this world. I saw Baba standing before me with his stick laughing, and telling me the above fact and especially asking me to refer the same to you. Why? That I do not know.”

By the grace of Shree Baba after I recovered from (attack of the icy hands of Pluto) death I appeared in many civil and criminal cases including cases under sections 302, 307 I. P. C. murder, and homicide, and I have become successful in all cases. *Every moment in life, I feel the presence of Shree Baba*. I always feel that *like a parent* taking care of his child, *He always takes care of me*. I have sometimes to pass through severe tests in life. I had to struggle hard with worldly affairs, but in all, I am triumphant. Even in spiritual worship, Baba's presence is felt. He always reminds me at the proper time and make* me feel that *he is present watching all my movements, and guiding and shaping* my life's career in a wonderful way.

I again remind you that I am writing you this at the express command of Shree Baba, who has commanded me to refer this matter to you."

Again to make assurance doubly sure, Baba was invited to write his name at Thotapalli hills, Santi Asram on a silver plate. His autograph in Telugu was, accordingly found on the plate. That by the kindness of Sri Omkar Swami was sent to Sri Rajeswarananda who presided on 6-10-54 at the 81st birthday celebration of Sri B. V. Narasimha Swami and presented by him to Sri B. V. Narasimha Swami. It is now kept among articles in the pooja room of the A.I.S.S.

Mylapore Sai Mandir to enable all devotees to see for themselves how Baba is the "Living" God of his devotees actively helping every one in the universe.

From all these the above instances are only an infinitesimal fraction of the miracle and benevolent acts done by Baba throughout the country - one would see that Sai Baba is undoubtedly now living and retaining the same nature and carrying on the same mission. During his life in the flesh up to 1918 at Shirdi, Baba said 'Malm Allahnm.' His nature functions and mission were all divine. There are undoubtedly to help people who put faith in God, especially in the form of Sai. So, Sai is still carrying on his mission of removing the distress, of strengthening faith, of helping devotees of trouble, (Paritranaya Sadhunam), and of leading those who surrender themselves to him to the highest goal that man can attain, (Dharina samstapanartaya). Baba is continuing his life in ethereal or Apantaratma shape without any fleshy body, though whenever he chooses, like Narada and Bhrigu, he does put on his fleshy body and appears to people in order to carry out his high and divine plans for the benefit of individuals or society. This will, therefore, suffice for this short pamphlet to enable people to shake off their doubts, fears, and inertia, and rouse them into a determination to get to know more of Baba, to get more contact with him, and to get all that they want, especially freedom from disease, trouble, etc. with his aid, ultimately freedom from all bondage, sorrow and misery.

“BOW TO SAI PEACE TO ALL”