

# SHRI SAILEELA

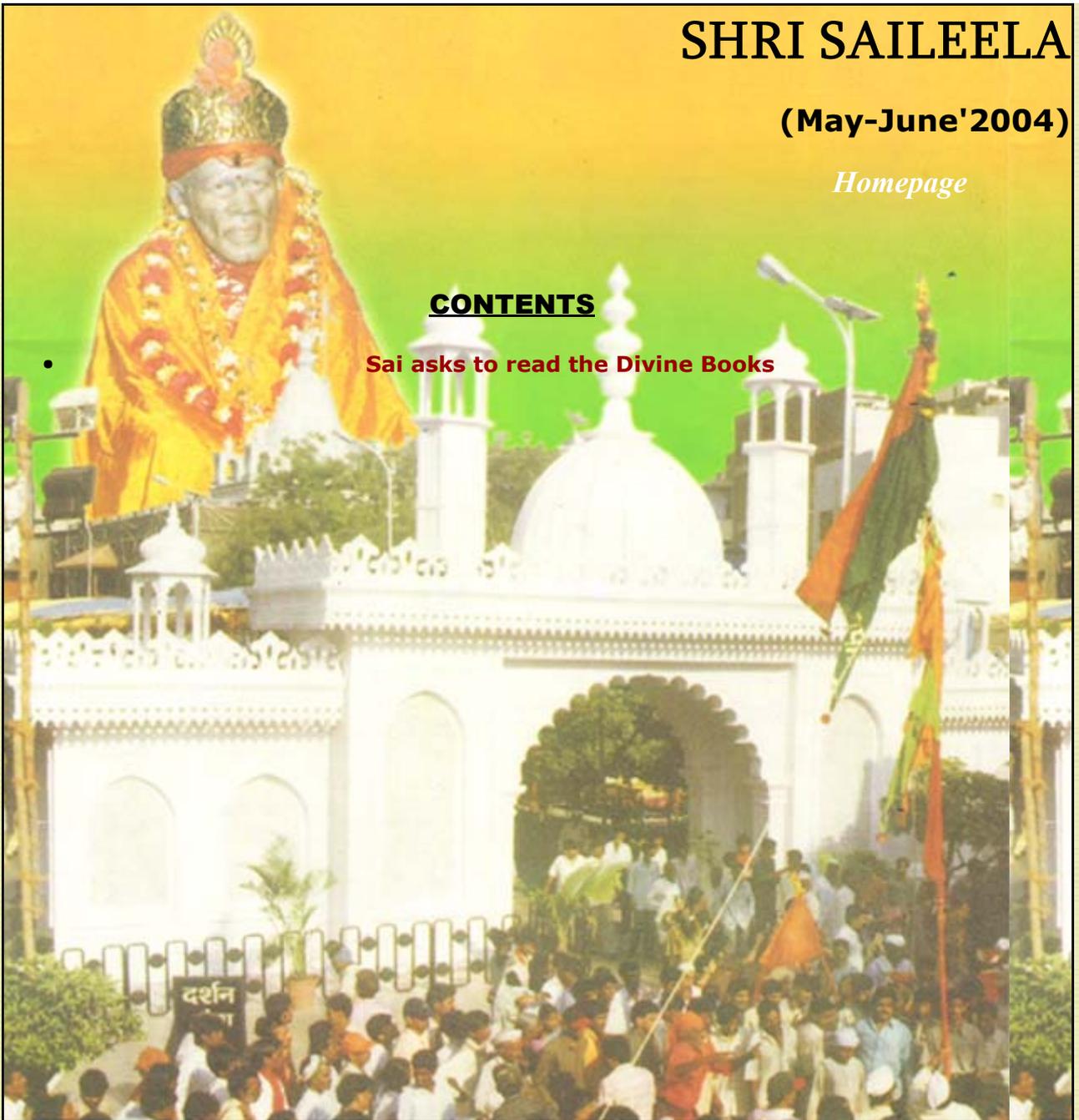
(May-June'2004)

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**Sai asks to read the Divine Books**



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## SADGURU SAI ASKS TO READ THE DIVINE BOOKS FOR THE SPIRITUAL BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE

If the devotees desired casually to read some religious book, they placed the book in Baba's hands and received it back as '*prasad*'.

Then, when that book was read, it would be most beneficial. It would achieve the highest welfare of the orators and the listeners, as it would be full of '*prasad*'.

Some offered the pictures of the *Dashavatar*, some the *stotras* of the *Dashavatar*, some the *Panchratni Gita* and other holy books and pictures.

Das Ganu's '*Sant Leelamrut*' and '*Bhakta Leelamrut*', also '*Vivek Sindhu*' were offered and Baba gave them to Shama.

"Shama these books are for you", he would say. "Keep them, at home, properly protected." Shama bowed and obeyed the orders and kept them tied in a piece of cloth.

With this thought, the devotees also bought books from the shops to place in Baba's hands and to receive them back as '*prasad*'.

Though Baba's nature was kind and generous, to do this also needed courage, so they took Madhavrao along with them, to tackle the situation.

At the opportune time, he would put the book in Baba's hands. Just as Baba knew the importance of the book, he also knew about the devotee's abilities.

Who could know Baba's intentions ? But reading and listening to this collection of books were a means of purification for his devotees.

Now Shirdi has become a sacred place and Baba's disciples would come from different and distant places, and gather from time to time to celebrate, gain wisdom and praise the Lord, in a series of sessions.

These books would prove useful then. Shama would show them after taking them out from their wrappings. We will no longer be there; but these books will embody the knowledge.

Whenever the devotees would read these very holy books, whether at Shirdi or elsewhere, they would recollect (Baba and his teachings). This seems to be a reason for making the collection.

Whether it be the *Ramayana* or the *Bhagvat*, or any other book dealing with spiritual matters, or reading the life stories of Ram, Krishna and others, it is only Sai who comes before the mind's eye.

It seems as if Sai himself is playing the part of the great characters in these books; and the narrator and the listeners see Sai's image before them, every time.

According to the *Shastras*, if a book is offered to the *Guru* or given as a gift to a *Brahmin*, therein lies the welfare of the donor.

### EKNATHI BHAGVAT

Once the devotee Kaka Mahajani, who liked reading the *Bhagvat*, carried with him a copy of it and came to Shirdi.

Madhavrao came to meet him. He picked up the book to read it and went with it to the *Masjid*. Baba casually asked him.

"Shama, what is this book in your hand ?" Shama told him about it. Baba took it in his hands and returned it after seeing it.

The same book, the same copy, the same *Nath Bhagvat* was earlier given to Mahajani as the *prasad* from Sree's hands.

"This book does not belong to me. It is Kaka Mahajani's. I borrowed it as I desired to read it." Shama clarified.

Yet Baba said to him : "The fact is that I have given it to you. You keep it in your collection tied in a piece of cloth. It will be of use to you."

Be it so. After some time, Kaka came again to Shirdi and brought with him another copy of the *Bhagvat*. He placed it in Baba's hands.

It was given back as *prasad*. "Preserve it well," Baba instructed. "This alone will stand in good stead for you," Kaka was assured.

"This itself will prove most useful to you. Do not give it to anyone, certainly," he said this with a lot of solicitude. Kaka bowed with love.

That is the *Nath Bhagvat*, full of devotion to the *Guru*, which Sai has acknowledged, and which Dixit read regularly.

This book, written for the salvation of the world was told to Brahma (the Creator) by Narayana (Vishnu) and was the seed sowed by him in the field, which Narada reaped.

That farm was cultivated in ten fold ways by Badrayan and Shuka selected a few best ears of the corn for the sake of Parikshit in his threshing ground in the scuttle.



Sridhar Swamy cleaned it. Janardan Swamy measured it and Nath prepared plenty of delicious dishes from it.

The eleventh chapter, which is the mine of devotion, love and happiness, from the *Vrindavan* with thirty-two corners, is the chapter which Dixit read regularly.

During the day he would read and explain that (to the other devotees); and at night he would read *Bhavartha Ramayana*. This book was also ordered by the *Guru* and Dixit followed that authority.

It is the essence of happiness and devotion to God - a second edition, as it were, of the *Dnyaneshwari*. This is a great obligation on Maharashtra by Nath.

Having an early morning bath, doing daily worship of Sai and other deities, offering *naivedya* and having done the *arati*, then, afterwards along with other listeners, having taken the *naivedya* of milk and some fruits, he read the *pothi* at full length, full of respect, as a daily ritual.

That *pothi*, which was enjoyed by the great devotee of God, Tukaram, and was recited by him a thousand times in solitude on the Bhandara hill, how can its sweetness be possibly described by anybody ?

Sai *Samartha* had asked Dixit who was a devotee full of faith to read the divine book, which is beneficent and capable of leading beings to their salvation.

One need not go and stay in the jungles; because God himself appears in the *Uddhava Gita* (chapter 11). Those who recite it with full faith can reach God directly.

In *Mahabharata*, there is a dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna; but this one between Krishna and Uddhava is better than that. It is that which is in the *Bhagvat* brought out in words by Eknath, with fond understanding.

So be it. This beneficent book, together with the *Bhavartha Dipika*, of Dnyandev, the great and merciful Sainath made people read in Shirdi.

Sakharam Hari Jog was commissioned by Baba to read it at Sathe 痲 wada and the devotees were greatly benefitted.

Baba would often persuade the devotees to recite the book and would plead with them out of compassion to do so, for their own good.

*Dnyaneshwari* is the commentary on the *Gita*, which is given the title *Bhavartha Dipika*, while Nath advocates the philosophy in a nutshell in the eleventh chapter of the *Bhagvat*.

Once, a *sannyasi* named Vijayanand from Chennai left Chennai for Mansarover with great enthusiasm.

He had seen a Japanese traveller 痲 map of Mansarovar and that gave him a great desire to have *darshan*.

Shirdi was on the way and he had heard about Baba 痲 fame. With a desire for *darshan*, he came searching for him.

Sai *Samartha* was omniscient and knowing that the *sannyasi* 痲 own death was near, hear what he said to him, with attention :

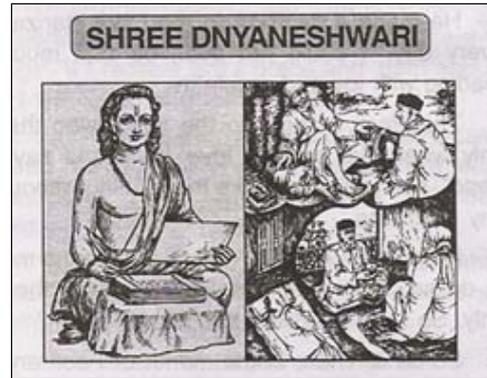
添our store of past merits is considerable, so you have come here. Now attend to what I say and realise the greater purpose of life.

From tomorrow start reading the *Bhagvat*, truly. Do three readings during three consecutive weeks, conscientiously.

Being desireless, hear that book or read it with concentration, and contemplate on it night and day.

The Lord will be pleased and bring to an end all your sorrows. Illusions and attachments will disappear and you will attain great happiness.

After performing your ablutions, concentrating on the Lord, complete this vow that I have told you and you will be free from attachments. 鑄



**B**alasaheb Deo had an interesting experience of this kind in fulfilling his vow. His wish was fulfilled and he was enjoined to *bhakti*.

There was no way out except to do service during the day for his livelihood. But at night, why should there be obstruction in his exertions for spirituality ?

He had the desire since a long time to regularly read the *Dnyaneshwari*. But due to some difficulty or the other, he was not able to do so.

Just as he read one chapter of the *Gita* every day he wanted to read one chapter of the *Dnyaneshwari*; but he could not do so without interruption.

When he undertook the reading of any other religious book, he could do so regularly; but as for the *Dnyaneshwari*; which he greatly loved, it eluded him.

Once Deo took leave for three months to first go to Shirdi and then to his home at Pound for rest.

What happened there ? There also he read other religious books regularly; but his wish for *Dnyaneshwari* was unfulfilled as the opportune time did not come.

Whenever he took up the *Dnyaneshwari*, some doubts arose in his mind. So his reading became superficial and he could not create love for it.

What is the point in being distressed when he could not succeed in his resolution ? He could not read even five stanzas every day.

He made a decision to read five stanzas every day. 'I could not even do that much reading with joy and regularity.

Therefore, I came to the conclusion that only when Sai created love for it and says "read", that I will undertake the reading without any problems.

I have faith in Sai. When Sai instructs me to do so, I will read the *Dnyaneshwari* then only. So I will wait with this firm decision.'

So be it. Then, in the month of February, 1914, Deo came to Shirdi with his mother and wife to see the pomp of the *Gurupuja* on 'Mahoday Parva'.

Jog asked Deo then why he was not reading *Dnyaneshwari* regularly. Listen to his reply.

"I have a great love for the *Danyaneshwari*; but I am not successful in reading it. Now, only when Baba tells me to read it, I will read it then."

Then Jog told him a stratagem. "Get the *Dnyaneshwari pothi* and give it in Sai Baba's hands. He will give it to you to read."

"I need no stratagem. Baba knows my innermost thoughts. Why can he not fulfil my desire and clearly say 'READ'?"

When he went for the *darshan* of the *Samartha*, he offered him one rupee. "Why one? Bring twenty!" said Baba to him, then.

He brought twenty rupees and gave them. At night he met Balakram. He inquired of him how he had secured Baba's grace.

"Tomorrow, after the *arati* I will tell you the whole story," Balakram assured him and Deo agreed to that.

Then the next day when Deo went to the *Masjid* for *darshan* he was asked for twenty rupees which he gave with pleasure.

Seeing that it was very crowded there, Deo went aside. Baba asked: "Where is he hiding in a narrow difficult place?"

Deo replied: "Baba, here, I am here." Baba then asked him, "Why did you give me only seven rupees?"

Deo replied: "I have given twenty." Baba asked: "Whose money is it?" "Baba, it is yours," he replied. Baba said: "Why are you running away then?"

Come here, come close. Sit near by with a calm mind." Deo followed the instructions, and sat there with a devoted heart.

The *arati* was done as usual. The assembled people returned to their homes. Balakram and Deo met again and the earlier question was again asked.

He asked him about his earlier life and Balakram told him everything from the beginning and how he was instructed in spirituality.

"Have you been told how to meditate? Please satisfy my desire," entreated Deo.

As Balakram was about to start answering Deo's question to satisfy his desire, Baba sent for Deo.

How extremely artful was Sai! He sent Chandru to call Deo. Without wasting a moment, Deo came to meet Sree Sai.

It was afternoon. Sree Sai was seen, leaning both his hands on the wall of the *Masjid*.

As soon as he went, Deo bowed to him. Baba then asked him, "Where, with whom, and what were you talking?"

Then Deo replied: "On the upper storey of Kaka's house, I was hearing about your glory from Balakram and talking about it."

Baba ordered Deo: "Bring twenty-five rupees." Bringing the money immediately, he tendered them to Baba.

"How many did you bring?" Baba asked. Deo replied: "Twenty-five." Baba said: "Come, sit down" and Deo went with Baba to the *Masjid*.

Baba sat near the pillar and there was no one else in the *Masjid*. He said: "You have stolen my rags, without my knowledge."



"I know nothing about any rags," explained Deo. "Then, look for them somewhere here," Sai told him.

"Where are there any rags here," Deo asked at that moment. Baba got up saying : "You search for them. Stealing is a bad habit.

Some brat has taken them ! Look ! Look ! They should be here !" Hearing this, Deo looked again; but he did not find any.

Then raising his eyebrows, Baba looked here and there. With eyes fixed on Deo, Sai shouted at him.

"You are a liar ! Who is here besides you at this time to steal the rags ? I believe you are the thief.

Do you come here to steal, in this way ? Your hair has turned from black to white; but your bad ways have not gone !

I will hit you with an axe. I will cut you to pieces and kill you. Where will you escape from me ? Wherever you are, I will come and kill you.

When you come to Shirdi from home, is it to steal ? Take this back, which is yours. Bring back my rags to me."

Sai became red with anger. He abused him with a string of words, beginning with the mother and the grand mother. He became redder with fury.

Seeing that Sainath was furious, Deo stood still watching him with wonder and full of inner amazement.

Deo was near him and alone and felt that his turn had come to receive a beating. Or was this a beautiful vision of God ? Believing this, he was choked with Joy.

"Will he take the *satka* in his hand now and will he beat me with anger ? I am alone and in his hands now. Let him do what he wills.

But what is this mystery about the rags?' Deo did not understand anything. "Go, go away to one place !" When Sainath said this, he moved towards the steps.

I (Hemadpant) am incapable of understanding this hidden meaning about the 'rags'. If I receive Sai's grace and learn about it, I will relate it to the listeners.

Within a quarter of an hour, Deo again faced Baba, when the abuses were still continuing. "Have you again come up ?" Sai said.

"Go away again to the *wada* !" As Baba said this, Deo obeyed the orders, bowed at Sai's feet and returned to the *wada*.

All that had happened and the manner in which it had taken place was described from beginning to end by Deo to Jog and Balakram.

Baba's volley of abuses continued for nearly half an hour. After quite some time, Baba himself called for the people.

Deo also then came and sat in the midst of others. "The old man must have felt bad," said Sree Sai later.

"What is the value of rags ? Even then I have offended him by using abusive language. But he had committed a theft, so what was the remedy but to speak out ?

So be it. God will see to everything and will benefit him. So, Bhau, will you give some *dakshina* ?"

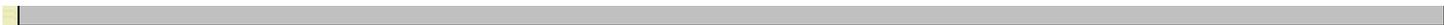
"How much shall I bring ?" Deo asked. "Bring twelve rupees immediately." When Deo saw, he only had a currency note and no loose coins.

Deo told this to Baba. "Never mind I do not want it. In the morning you gave me twice and forgot about it," Baba said.

Even so, Deo obtained the money and gave them to Baba, and bowed at Baba's feet. Hear the words that ensued.

"What are you doing ?" Baba asked. "Nothing." When he got this reply, he said, "Read the *pothi* regularly". This is what he ordered Deo to do.

"Go and sit in the *wada*. Read it regularly. While reading explain the portion read to all with love and devotion.



I am sitting here ready to give you a whole *zari*-embroidered mantle, then why should you steal rags ? Have you got in the habit of stealing ?”

So be it. ‘The words of Sai to read the *pothi* fulfilled my innermost desire and I was extremely happy.

O obeying the order, I then started from that day onwards reading the *Dnyaneshwari* regularly and also started explaining it.

Now I had got the desired orders. The worry of my mind in keeping my vow was removed. From now on, while reading the *Dnyaneshwari* there will be regularity in the work.

Now with my *Guru’s* orders, *Dnyaneshwari* is also propitiated. Irrespective of whatever has happened in the past, I shall now be regular.

I am confident that with Sai’s orders, and with the power of his instructions, I will be able to do the ‘*parayan*’ of the *pothi* without any obstacles’.

“Baba ! I come prostrated before you. I am totally surrendered to you. Take this child, under your wing. Get the *pothi* read by me.”

‘I realised what was meant by ‘rags’. What I had asked Balakram, constituted ‘rags’ and Sai had not approved of that and had, therefore, got angry.

Baba had not liked my questioning Balakram as to how he worshipped or how he meditated on *Parabrahma*.

As Baba was ready to answer any questions himself, why ask questions to one another ? Therefore, I had been tremendously harassed.

‘Harassed’ - that word itself is rude and impudent. He who was overflowing with love for the devotees did not even dream of harassing his devotees. Then the word and its use is wrong.

He did not harass; but he taught me, that ‘whatever is in your mind, all that has to be fulfilled by me and whatever is stolen will never be of any use’.

Though Sai appeared outwardly to be angry he was always calm within. He appeared angry outwardly; but he was full of bliss within.

The anger that was shown outwardly was on account of affection. Within, he was in divine bliss. One must be fortunate to sing of the grandeur of that Sai’s *leela*.

He who has an intense desire to achieve his objective believes that the volley of abuses is a shower of flowers and blessings, keeping one’s mind fixed on one’s own welfare.

Deo was not shaken on hearing the very abusive words which were offensive to the ears. He was full of love for Baba and he felt that only a shower of flowers had rained on him.

“Only the fortunate can enjoy the milk with which the cow’s teat is gorged. The cattle louse, though near the teats full of milk, prefers blood due to its fate.

The frog lives in the vicinity of the lotus flowers. The bee snatches the honey from the lotus, while unfortunately the frog eats only the filth. There is no limit to the bee’s good fortune.

Similarly, you are fortunate. We are close to one another. Ask whatever you want and get your doubts clarified,” says Sai.

“Observe my obstinacy about the *pothi*. I did not open the *Dnyaneshwari* to read till the moment he said READ. And Baba fully fulfilled my desire.”

How the darling mother spoils the child ! And fulfils his desires ! This is the story of the sweet experience, which strengthens devotion.

Deo said : “He did not stop at merely directing me to read. Before a year passed, he gave me a dream vision. Listen to the amazing question, he asked me.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1914, on Thursday morning, I got a boon of a dream.

Sai *Samartha* appeared in the dream to have come and was sitting on the first floor. He asked me if I understood the *pothi*, to which I replied in the negative.

Another question then followed. 'When will you understand it then ?' My eyes were filled with tears and hear the answer I gave.

'Reading the *pothi* is mere worry unless you shower your grace and understanding it is even more difficult. Baba, I confess this clearly.' "

Baba said : "While reading the *pothi*, you make too much haste. Read it, in my presence, sitting near me."

When Deo asked what he should read, he was told to read *Adhyatma*. As Deo went to fetch the book, his eyes opened.

Deo awakened then. Listeners can imagine the state of his mind when he thought of the dream.

Who else would care to wait for a year and then find out if the child is obeying the instructions strictly and regularly reading the *pothi* ? Who would take on such an unnecessary worry ?

Has the discipline been followed ? Has the lesson been regularly followed ? Where and why is there any failure ? Who else would show this concern ?

What should the reader pay attention to ? What should be given greater importance ? Sai, the loving mother, alone can emphasise this.

**D**hurandar brothers lead simple lives, and so did their children. Even the women in the family behaved in a faultless manner. Lord Vishnu (Chakrapani) was, therefore, indebted to them.

Balaram was one of them. He was a devotee of Vitthal and a person of sacred celebrity. he was honoured in every princely court and he was liked by all.

This gem was born on this earth on 19<sup>th</sup> February, 1878, to a mother who was a devotee of Sree Ram.

He was an ornament of the *Pathare Prabhu* caste, of a famous family and lineage. In the year 1878, he was born in Mumbai.

He had a western education and was a qualified advocate. He was well-versed in philosophy and was well-known as a learned man, everywhere.

He was greatly devoted to the deity Pandurang and supremely inclined towards spirituality. Though his father's family deity was Ram, his own worship was for Vitthal.

All the brothers held good positions and their conduct was always righteous. As they came from a pure lineage, they had a pure culture. But Balaram was unexcelled.

He had the ability to put forward well-reasoned, substantive and appealing arguments; he had a simple and pure way of thinking; a sharp intellect but good and righteous behaviour. These were his virtues and they were worth emulating.

He had served his community and written and published an account of it. On completing the work that he had undertaken, he decided to attain spirituality.

In this field also he surpassed others and after completing the *Bhagvad Gita* and *Dnyaneshwari* became proficient in these texts. He became a man of repute in *Adhyatma*.

He was a great devotee of Sai. He became one with the Supreme Spirit in 1925, at a young age.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of June, 1925, after finishing his journey in this world, he merged in Lord Vitthal.

On an auspicious day in April, 1912, the opportunity arose for the Dhurandar brothers to have the Saint's '*darshan*' in Sai's *darbar*.

