

4th May 1927.

Visit To Sherri.

The last three days were full of the new Ashram activities. Both Shri and the mandali did and talked about nothing else save this Institution. Not that, efforts after improving & adjusting ~~and~~ the Ashram affairs more and more or the campaign of giving it a wider and wider publicity have lessened down even now. The main programme of everyone's activity continues to be the quick development of this small little

concern as it is at present, into a really grand Institution. So far the Ashram news besides being published in the sixteen news-papers mentioned on page 241, have also appeared in some well known vernacular papers such as the Urdu daily Khilafat of Bombay etc.

Since the 2nd inst separate cooking for the Ashramites has also been started, and according to the same the boys get the daily food as follows:-

Milk tea and wheat bread for breakfast.

Dhal-rice & ~~the~~ ^a vegetable dishes for Dinner

Two vegetable dishes and wheat-bread for Supper

Every one of the boys have also been supplied with a new pair of chappals (sandals) each, which are all of a uniform pattern.

A new clock worth Rs 50/- has also been ordered out for the Ashram, along with cricket hockey and foot-ball games requisites.

Even the plan of building a permanent structure of palatial proportions with emblems of all the great religions displayed about it is being freely talked out.

Time alone will prove to what extent this new venture develops, as with all the plans of improvements and enlargements the Mandali is well aware of the fact that it all depends upon Babi's apparent whim and fancy! ~~It is~~ The Ashram may really grow into a grand concern both internally and externally or it may also be 'shut up' in the next week. For the present however

it seems that Baba is working very seriously for its success on a very large scale.

In spite of these pressing engagements, as per His usual kindness Shri accepted ~~a marriage~~ the invitation of a devotee to attend a marriage ceremony at the latter's place so far away as at ~~Ratn~~^{Sherri}, a distance of about thirty^{four} miles from Tacherabad.

And according to the same Baba went there with a few of the mandali in a motor lorry this evening at four o'clock, and after participating in the gay function to the great delight of the devotee and his friends and relations, returned late at night. But the visit was not without an element of ~~a~~ dramatic excitement about it. No sooner that Shri took His seat in the ~~bus~~ 'bus sent by the host ^{and it reached Kakai's place in the city} that He seemed to be displeased suddenly and got down from it, and 'said' ~~so~~ He did not feel like going! It was not an empty threat.

Baba actually retired into Kakai's house asking Vishnu Ramji and Jal to proceed on and attend the ceremony on His behalf. To their ^{holy} ~~great~~ 'horror' the three mandali members soon actually found themselves being rushed through a barren country side in ~~a~~ that tin pot of an ~~old~~ 'Ford' bus without having Baba with them. The old car with its loose fittings and worn out cushions bumped and jumped along the poor surface of a country road with a vengeance!

No wonder that Shri did not like to ~~take~~ ride 34 miles in such a conveyance and "bached out" at almost the very start! When these three representatives reached Sherri, they were well received but a keen disappointment was felt all ^{round} for Shri's personal absence.

These hindoo marriage ceremonies, for all their pomp and show badly lack a suitable refreshment to the guests. This shortcoming was keenly felt by the three members, who after the uncomfortable motor spin of thirty four miles, in the absence of any refreshment felt themselves as if they were observing a fast! Besides, since Baba had not come personally, the hosts talked of sending them back the following day by one of the public motor lorries instead of placing a special conveyance at their disposal for their return the same evening. This prospect of having to pass a night at this uncomfortable out of the way place enhanced the trio's disappointment greatly. At six o'clock the bride-groom started in a procession for the bride's place with the usual noisy accompaniment of the village tom toms. Just as the marriage ceremony was about to be performed that to the pleasant surprise of everyone concerned Shri Baba suddenly appeared at the bride's place and duly participated in the function!

It seems that following the departure of the three mandali members, Baba again decided to grace the occasion, and so another 'bus was procured, which happened to be a new 'Chevrolet' and so the journey was covered speedily and comfortably and just in time! At the conclusion of the marriage-ceremony hundreds of people had a rush at Baba to pay Him their respects.

Sometime after sunset, after Shri ^{had} blessed the

new couple that He and the party started for the return journey amidst ringing cheers.

At Ahmednagar the party also visited Ray's and Anna's places, and by ten o'clock at night found themselves safely back at Faheerabad.

5th May '27.

A new order was issued by Shri today for the visitors. That all such outside visitors excepting the mandali members should not be allowed entry into the school and other premises here. They should be asked to wait near the Dhoomi and only approach Shri when He was seated there or was out about there. At the places of other Saints too people have to wait for sometime, particularly at Tajuddin Babi's place at Nagpur where even people had to wait for days together before they could approach Him. So Shri conveyed what harm there was if one had to wait a little here too, instead of being freely allowed to approach Him wherever He was seated and engaged otherwise.

To enforce this new rule Shankarnath was appointed to keep a watch throughout the day particularly near the school and see that outsiders did not enter the premises unless otherwise permitted to do so.