

Wednesday } Shri Upasmi Maharaj's  
18th May '27 } Birth-day.

In spite of going late to bed the mandali members were all up and about by five o'clock early this morning. As soon as all finished up with the morning wash and tea, <sup>they</sup> got busy in preparing for Baba's Ceremonial Bath. As is usual on such occasions a finely decorated temporary Bath-Room was stretched up near the Dhoomi Seat, while on the sight of the previous Sai-Durbar a grand pavillion also stood up with bunting, flags, leaves and various other decorations attached all about it: Besides the holiday scenery for the eyes, the different village bands were no less active in making the ears hear the existence of the joyous occasion. By eight o'clock when Shri came into the Bath-Room quite a number of people from the surrounding villages and the city had got together near the place besides all the Meherabad and Meher-

and outstation guests including Babar and Achilla from Boma.

Ashram residents. The ladies ~~first~~ were the first to wash Shri's feet, then followed the Ashram boys, the mandali and visitors respectively. After this ceremony, <sup>at first</sup> Shri took a bath by himself ~~and~~ <sup>but</sup> once again allowed the mandali, <sup>also</sup> to lend a hand in doing so. As soon as Baba finished up putting on the clothes, Rustumji picked Him up on his shoulders and amidst deafening cheers carried Him to the Pavillion. Here Shri was placed on the richly decorated special seat and then the Asti-Pujas were carried out with great devotion and enthusiasm. ~~In the~~ ~~and~~ The garlands and flowers put on and showered upon Baba ~~was~~ during these ceremonies were so profuse as to almost envelope His rosy features in a heap of roses and other flowers. When all had finished paying their respects, Baba repaired to the school premises and sat there for sometime hearing Adli playing the Harmonium and also singing a few songs. In the meanwhile Shri ordered the boys and the mandali to take their meals. The same Rice and Dhal and sweet balls (miz) that were prepared over night for the public feast "Piriri" were ~~taken~~ ~~by~~ served out to the mandali and the boys too. At the same time the public were also begun to be served. Under Bua-Sahib's supervision some of the prominent residents of Arunagadu carried out the distribution of food very promptly and properly ~~to all those who came amongst~~

the large number of guests, mainly poor villagers.

The touchables and untouchables were served out separately, but the same food was given to all and no distinction was observed in the quality or quantity of the food ~~served~~ which <sup>was</sup> freely and liberally served to all to their satisfaction.

The feeding continued till three o'clock in the afternoon and more than four thousand persons were fed in this way.

#### A Poor Parsi Boy.

During the feeding a young boy came upon the scene in a pitiable condition. He looked covered with dust and dirt and half starved out, with a cotton lungi and a piece of cloth tied round his legs as his full dress. He looked every inch a ~~smoked~~ mohomedan beggar but upon enquiries he declared himself a Parsi although he did not have the "Sudra and Kushti" upon his person. The boy was conducted before Shri who cross-questioned him through signs and alphabet-pointing. In broken sentences and amidst tears the boy conveyed that his name was Burjor Sarkari, that he was badly treated by relations and friends and was penniless and homeless and craved for a shelter. But it was <sup>also</sup> quite clear that he was not frank ~~with~~ in his replies and wanted to hide something. However Baboo's cross-examination led him to admit his having been in Poona recently and so Shri sent for Baboo cyclewala and enquired of him if he knew anything about the boy. As luck would have it Baboo at once recognised him as the boy whom Sailor had sometime ago placed in <sup>the</sup> service of a Parsi gentleman at Poona taking pity on his



helpless condition but he did not work there properly. And this explanation took the boy off his guard. He at once admitted having pinched away thirteen rupees from the cash of his last employee and having gone here and there in Bombay and Nagpur before coming here. In spite of his follies the young boy seemed to be in a very pitiable condition and did not fail to evoke Shri's sympathy. At first Baba advised him to go to his last employee, make a clean breast of all his mischiefs and after securing the party's free pardon come here and then shelter would be given to him. But the boy was all tears and sobs at the prospect of going back to the place where he had no doubt committed a theft fearing being arrested and handed over to the Police instead of being pardoned. Shri encouraged him in crying out for sometime, and thus clearing his ~~softer~~ heart of the suppressed emotions of fear and repentance, ~~when~~ Baba gave him some figs to eat, and then ordered him to take a bath, put on new clothes that would be given to him, and ~~partake of~~ eat ~~dine~~ to his satisfaction. Thus within a short time quite a new boy stood before all, looking a typical Parsi youth with the usual "Sudra Kushti" and a pair of neat and clean trousers and a shirt on. Once again Baba asked of him through signs whether he wanted to stay here or go to Poona to secure pardon for his last mischiefs.

This time Burjor seemed quite calm and composed and replied that he would do so

what Shri would tell him to. So finally Shri decided to let him remain here and instructed Abdulla to approach the boy's last employee with Sailor and secure a pardon from them for his faults and also to find out if there was ~~nothing~~ <sup>anything</sup> very serious against him.

## Ceremonies And Procession.

Between four and five thirty in the evening Bhaosahib provided a fine Bhajan singing to all to the accompaniment of drums and harmonium and displayed his usual skill on the "Sublas" more prominently. An hour or so after this was passed, <sup>by Baba</sup> in stray discussions with the visitors while the mandali got busy in preparing for the rest of the programme of the day. Then Shri was conducted into the pavillion in a procession to witness the ceremony of the day. For sometime Mr Anjal pleader gave a nice "Puranic lecture" dwelling on the benefits of the close-contact of Saints and some special features from Njami Maharaj's life. At exactly seven o'clock the bath ceremony was gone through with the usual swinging of a small decorated cradle by all amidst the Arti repetitions and showers of flowers. Following this there was a great rush of people towards Baba to pay their respects to Him. Then Rustomji again picked up Baba on his shoulders and seated Him in the Palanquin and the procession started towards the Hill. By this time Khan Sahib Irani also joined the procession and walked to and from the Hill with the rest. Amidst the usual scenes of wild enthusiasm, cheers, Bhajan and music the procession slowly wended its way over the Hill.

Here again Baba's Asti-Puja was devotedly gone through by all. The same din and devotion was witnessed amongst all while returning from the Hill and Baba was again "insisted" upon riding in the Palanquin which all the while dangerously swayed in all directions over the shoulders of the enthusiastic mandali.

It was nearly nine o'clock that all came back to the pavillion and within half an hour more all finished having Shri's Darshan dispersed. All the outside visitors going away to their respective places and retirements.

At nine thirty the boys and the mandali had their supper and got ready to witness the last item of the programme, a dramatic performance by some of the mandali.

But Dhakey whom the last item had been entrusted pleaded his inability to carry out the programme as he said all were too busy to get ready for the drama. At first Baba refused to accept excuses but after sometime conveyed his pardon on the condition that Dhakey should repeat a nice long story instead of the dramatic performance. Dhakey agreed to this, and just as he began his story, Padri let out a remark loud enough to reach Shri's ears, that tea was very welcome on such a occasion as this. Shri took the hint with a smile and at once passed order for tea for all, which was served out at ten.

Baily arrived by the night train according to a telegram sent to him today. At ten thirty all were asked to retire for the night.