

The Wide World in a Page

OPENING OF FESTIVAL OF EMPIRE

King's weather all the day; such crowds as South London has never before sent out to greet her Sovereign in her streets; and at the end a huge, warm-hearted reception from a vast assembly at Sydenham that outflowed in tens and scores of thousands from the densely-filled aisles and transepts of the Crystal Palace. The voice of mourning has indeed changed into a paean of welcome, and yesterday was no unfitting occasion for his subjects' first great sublime salutation of their King. There was a spirit of delight in the very air; the green of summer was returning—nay, was already come; a light breeze fanned a myriad flags; and the sun burned down from a cloudless sky all the afternoon. All along the road that their Majesties were to follow, young and old alike had waited patiently for hours that for this first time they might greet their Sovereign in such holiday attire as they could command. Particularly pleasant was it to notice the careful way in which borough after borough along the route had made due arrangements for the presence of the little ones who sat or stood or knelt—and who could blame them for fidgeting at times in their excitement?—some with parti-colored paper whisks in their hands, some with excited little flags, and some, so loyal as almost to be treasonable, with paper facsimiles of the Imperial crown of England on their little heads!

In the grounds of the Crystal Palace there was, indeed, a strange and, to many, a moving spectacle. By a happy fantasy that was none the less striking for its occasional touch of the grotesque, Lord Plymouth and his colleagues have ventured upon nothing less than a representation in little of the greatest features of the Empire from one end to the other. It will, perhaps, suggest the scale in which this happy idea has been carried out to mention that the Houses of Parliament at Ottawa, are represented by a model—probably one of the most marvelous make-believe structures that have ever been set up in the world—which has cost the Canadian Government £70,000. The Parliament buildings of South Africa are hardly less striking, and there is a very serious and important truth in the claim made by the Festival Committee that never before in the history of the metropolis has the home-keeping Londoner been afforded anything like this opportunity of realizing with any approach to truth the varied aspects of life in different parts of the Empire. One could hardly imagine a more useful hour of education than one spent in the company of a competent guide in circling round the overseas pictures in the curious little railway that takes one in turn past scores of pictures typical of our far-flung Dominions.

There is something that clutches at the very heart-strings of those who know Britain beyond the water in the occasionally almost uncanny truth of the scene that unfolds itself as one passes by. The dry cane stalks rustle and a full-blooded negro makes his way through them to a small clearing, whence—with just the action of a man who has momentarily straightened his back for a moment's rest—he watches with caramel eyes the passage of the little train. A moment later there is a sudden picture of the deepest Indian jungle. One could have wished, perhaps, that the fauna of India had not been quite so lavishly collected in so small a space, but there are few men who have left the beaten tracks in India who will not recognize rather as nature than art, the perfect suggestion of the tropics that is afforded by a clump of orange-flowers, that is reflected in a little forest pool beneath the foliage that almost shuts out the sun overhead. Good, too, is the suggestion of the ragged pile dwellings of New Guinea. The scenes of domestic life overseas tempt many to get out at the next stopping place, and retrace their steps in order to see more carefully the processes of sheep farming in Australia, or find out the exact meaning of the strange machinery required for the diamond fields of Kimberley or the blanket reef of the Witwatersrand. Once more the sheep and cattle browse peacefully in their pens on Sydenham Hill, and one is tempted to remember the well-known verses on the original construction of the Crystal Palace here:

As though 'twere by a wizard's rod,
A blazing arch of lucid glass
Leaps like a fountain from the grass,
To meet the sun.
A quiet green, but few days since,
With cattle browsing in the shade;
And lo! long lines of bright arcade
In order raised.

The festival has done something to restore the feeding cattle to the hill. It is hard to praise too highly the cleverness with which the architects—we had almost called them the artists—of this little Centure railway have used the natural opportunities of the route. Already the rhododendrons in the Indian forest, real every tree, have under the stress of the sun of the last few days broken out into crimson flame. In short, if ceaseless work, limitless expenditure, historic interest and undoubted beauty can make a great venture a success, this, one of the greatest of ventures, is assured of a triumph.

But there was a special feature yesterday which lent a peculiar interest of its own to the well-known grounds and slopes of Paxton's huge building. All through the afternoon, as all London must have noticed, the stations on the suburban lines and on the central tubes were lighted up by a brilliant company in rich

and fantastic costumes, such as might, indeed, have been seen elsewhere in recent years, but which has never yet been drawn from the ranks of London for a full and noble presentation of the story of the greatest city in the world. It is impossible, of course, to express an opinion as yet of the forthcoming pageant of London. That is a secret known in its entirety to but few. But the visit of the King and Queen to Sydenham yesterday suddenly stirred into life the glories of the coming spectacle. Thousands of brilliantly-clad figures flashed in the brightness of the sun. There Romans, Normans, Plantagenets, Tudors, Stuarts, Ironsides, and Georgians, with just an Ancient Briton here and there, formed and reformed groups upon the vast pageant-ground—which, by the way, has been laid out with unusual skill. Outside, they loitered in their hundreds all over the great terraces. Five hundred more were present at the great concert, and yet a thousand more were at any moment of the afternoon ascending or descending from the upper station or the lower to join the dense masses of their fellows in or near the pageant-ground. Here went by a company of entrancing little damsels of from six to eight; they may have been wood-sprites or naiads, but were much more likely to have been the little playmates whom Puck or Robin Goodfellow used to tease so unmercifully in the days before Dimchurch Flit. There a long procession of ecclesiastics lent a note of sombre brilliancy.

Punctually at half-past three a volume of cheers told of the coming of the King, and the great concert began at once within the transepts of the Palace.—London Daily Telegraph.

HELP FOR POOR WOMEN

The Duchess of Marlborough is the originator of a project for the improvement of the welfare of poor women and girls, in whom she has shown much interest for some time, and which is being discussed by the English newspapers.

The Duchess believes lodging houses for these persons could be conducted on a perfectly sound financial basis, and therefore require no support from the rates. They do so in Glasgow and Manchester, the only two cities in the United Kingdom where lodging houses for women have been tried.

Her idea is that small houses to accommodate about 50 women each should be erected in several districts for a start; instead of having one big institution, as poor women cannot afford to travel far to and from their work. At present in London the only places where poor or unemployed women can find shelter is in the rescue homes provided by certain religious bodies. Such evils, she contends, as the white slave traffic, the degeneracy of the race and the high state of infant mortality can be traced to the absence of moral supervision and the impossibility to acquire clean and healthy habits of life in the lodging houses which the girls are at present obliged to frequent.

Speaking at a meeting at the Guild Hall in advocacy of the scheme, the Duchess said: "The moral training received by a girl is often not practicable enough to enable her to withstand the temptations to which she is exposed in a common lodging house. For a higher standard of life we must obtain decent lodgings and responsible conditions of life for the women workers."

GUARDING THE BANK OF ENGLAND

Hereafter the Bank of England is to be protected by the guards from the Tower, instead of by one of the battalions at Chelsea or Wellington Barracks. With this change the old custom of having the guards march nightly to the bank will be revived.

Providing a garrison for the bank dates back to 1780, the time of the Gordon riots. The mob had already taken Newgate and was ready for a frolic in the nation's treasury, but the files of grenadiers inside overawed the rioters, who departed very peacefully toward Bunhill Fields.

Since that time the bank has had a nightly guard of grenadiers or Coldstreams to strengthen the garrison of clerks and porters who patrol the building. The soldiers are made very comfortable, the commanding officer being provided with a dinner for himself and two friends and an allowance of wine.

The vaults of the Bank of England frequently contain \$250,000,000 in money. The lock of the vaults requires several keys, each in possession of a different person. Access is gained through heavy iron doors to where untold gold lies piled on trucks (to facilitate removal) or heaped against the walls in sacks.

ABORIGINAL MANKIND

It appears from a discovery in a cave among the cliffs of St. Brelades Bay, on the south coast of Jersey, that there was a German invasion of England even before Adam's time. Some English scientists have unearthed there a specimen of the Neanderthal man, whose habitat in the days before imperial preference came to trouble us was in the valley of the Elberfeld.

The Neanderthal man, who, according to scientists, was a "low brow," was a bit of a traveler in his time. He has been found in France, Belgium, Germany, Austria and in parts of Asia, but it was not believed until his

discovery in Jersey that he had attempted to invade England.

Even now loyal British explorers decline to admit that he came to England, but hold that when he arrived in Jersey that little island was a bit of what is now France.

His teeth, nine in number, have been examined by Prof. Keith, of the Royal College of Surgeons, who says that they belong without doubt to an individual of the Neanderthal race, but are in certain features more primitive than even the teeth of the Heidelberg mandible, usually regarded as the earliest remains of man discovered in Europe, and assigned to the glacial period.

Apparently Neanderthal men, though they did not possess automobiles, had some rare sport, as buried with the man found in Jersey were specimens of the woolly rhinoceros, fleet reindeer and two varieties of horse.

"VIVE LE ROI!"

Melanie is a little French servant, who lives with an English family in London. She has not been there very long, and has not had time to learn the niceties of the language. But she is generally pleased with her English life, except that she finds it rains a great deal and the sky is often gloomy with the smoke of the great city.

The other day she was sent by her mistress to accompany "Miss Jenny," the daughter of the house, in Hyde Park. And when she arrived there and was about to cross the Row she was brought to a standstill by a large crowd. Knowing that the English are serious people, who do not waste their time merely for the pleasure of wasting it, she waited to see what would happen.

And, presently, the king and the queen went by on horseback. Riding in front of them were two of the Royal children, and three equerries were in attendance in the rear. The king and queen bowed right and left, and the crowd took off their hats and applauded with their hands, and the little "bonne," knowing no English, but apprehending from her young English companion that it was the great Sovereign of the English people, cried in her native tongue in her excitement and joy, "Vive le roi! Vive la reine!"

Now, Melanie called so loudly, and in so strong a voice, that every one heard, including their Majesties, who smiled very graciously, and, reining in their horses, they came close by to where the young girl stood. She was all fluttered with fear, until the king spoke and said, in beautiful French: "There is a person here who has greeted us in French; we want to thank them." Whereupon the young servant plucked up courage and owned that it was she who had cried "Vive le roi!"

At this reply the king redoubled his graciousness, and the girl lost all fear, and said she had cried out involuntarily.

Then his Majesty said: "It is the first time that any one has called 'Vive le Roi!' in French since I came to the throne. My father often had the pleasure of being greeted in this way."

Then the queen asked in French, which she seemed to speak with less facility than the king, "Have you been long in London?" and Melanie answered: "About six months."

"I think the English 'bien gentils et bien polis,'" she further answered the king, and made his majesty laugh by saying she would like England very much if it did not rain so constantly.

And when she told the king that she came from the French Department of the Drome, he replied: "Ah, the country of M. Loubet!"

Then the conversation came to an end, and the "petite bonne" ran home to tell her employers of her wonderful adventure, and to embody it in a letter to her father in France.

And that is how this incident, revealing the kind heart of a king and queen, has passed into history.

THE AUSTRIAN EMPEROR

Disquieting reports concerning the health of the Emperor Francis Joseph continue in circulation. It is admitted semi-officially that the doctors insist on the necessity of a considerable change in His Majesty's ordinary customs, and in order to spare himself from official duties and to avoid the dangers from extremes of temperature he possibly will be obliged to abandon his annual visit to Ischi and go instead to the Southern Eon. The Emperor-King, however, still shows reluctance to change the habits of a lifetime.

JAPAN AND AMERICA

The racial problem at issue between Japan and America is a source of perennial apprehension to the Japanese. It is realized that, although the anti-Japanese proposal in California has been shelved for the time being, it has not been disposed of forever by any means.

A newspaper like the Yorodzu goes so far as to assert that unless pending questions between the two countries can be successfully solved the Japanese will have to withdraw from the United States sooner or later.

"It cannot be denied," says this organ, "that anti-Japanese feeling is becoming more and more prevalent among Americans, irres-

pective of the success or otherwise of the agitation in California. Some of the works of national defence in America are undoubtedly undertaken to provide against possible Japanese attacks. The fortifying of the Panama Canal, which was approved by Congress with a large majority, was evidently prompted by the foregoing consideration. In short, the American people appear to be determined to exclude Japanese from their country, by peaceful means if possible, and even at the point of the bayonet if necessary."

A NOBLE SCENE PAINTER

Ten dollars a week as a scene artist's assistant in a studio at Hendon is the salary of a tall, slender, sun-browned youth, who is known to his working companions as Arthur Wellesley. He is in reality Viscount Dangan, eldest son and heir of Earl Cowley. He is working for Mr. A. P. Bernard, scenic artist to the Quinlan operatic company, which is to tour with grand opera, starting in October, and the Viscount is working on the scenery of the 13 operas which will compose the repertoire.

"The fact is," said Viscount Dangan, who is only 20, "I was put into the army against my will, didn't like it, and left. My tastes are bohemian, you know, and I joined a music hall company as stage manager in Dublin, where my regiment was stationed."

"Last April I left the company and was engaged by Mr. Quinlan as a paint room laborer in the studio at a salary of \$6 a week. I had to clean the palettes, make colors and do all sorts of odd jobs. At the end of the week I got a 'rise' of a dollar, and a fortnight ago I was appointed Mr. Bernard's assistant at \$10 a week. So I'm getting on, you see."

"I have had nothing but what I have earned since I left the army, but I am perfectly happy. My hours are from 9 in the morning until 10 at night. What I shall ultimately become I do not quite know, but my ambition is to act professionally in serious drama."

RAJAHS UP TO DATE

An Indian rajah is said to have ordered from a London firm "one fire escape, suitable for use when out shooting tigers." This tiger escape is now on its way to the hunting box of the sporting rajah, says the New York Herald.

The manager of the firm of Messrs. Merryweather described the contrivance as a patent sliding carriage escape fitted with two telescopic ladders which will reach to a height of 35 feet. It is painted khaki color, so as to be inconspicuous in the jungle, and is mounted on high wheels to facilitate transport.

It is understood that the rajah will use the escape for climbing trees, though when there are no trees available he will be entirely dependent on the escape for his safety. As it takes about 30 seconds to elevate the ladder it will be wise to keep it elevated all the time to be ready for a surprise by the tiger.

Big game hunters are chary of discussing the value of the escape until they hear what success attends the rajah and his skikaris in the jungle.

Talking about rajahs recalls that some exceedingly large insurances are being offered at Lloyds on jewels to be worn by Indian princes attending the coronation. One policy for \$420,000 has been issued and in another clause of the policy providing that the jewels shall be stored in strong rooms here when not in use.

Owing to the high rates, comparatively few policies have been so far issued, although the potentates from the Far East are reported to be bringing enough gems to ransom a dozen kings.

London is practically the only place where insurance of these valuables can be effected, and as the value of the jewels will be, it is said, very great, substantial rates are quoted for policies.

PERSIAN RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION

I understand, says the Times' Persian correspondent, that the British request for an option to construct a railway from Khor Musa to Khoramabad is not made in any sense dependent on the granting of a concession for the Teheran-Khanikin line to Russia. As I have already pointed out, Russia has hitherto made no request for this concession, and whereas the proposed English line would be highly advantageous to British trade, the advantages of the Khanikin line to Russia are very problematical. Complete harmony between Great Britain and Russia appears to prevail in the matter.

The government is still without a solution of the serious difficulty in Shiraz.

It is stated that the naval display to which the Emperor William has invited the Archduke Francis Ferdinand will be a parade of the whole German high sea fleet near Swinemunde immediately before or after the Imperial parade, which will be held at Stettin on August 29 in connection with the grand manoeuvres of the German army in Pomerania.

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S RING

Lot 56 was the prosaic description given at Christie's auction room the other day to a ring whose story is known to every school child.

It was the ring given by Queen Elizabeth to the Earl of Essex as a pledge of her favor and mercy in all adverse circumstances. How the ring failed to save his life through the treachery of a woman has passed into history. It realized 3,250 guineas.

Elizabeth gave her favorite the ring with the pledge that if at any time he should fall a victim of the numerous intrigues which were always being woven at her court, the ring, if sent to her, would procure him her protection, or, if necessary, her pardon. Essex fell into disfavor, and was condemned to death. He entrusted the ring to the Countess of Nottingham, a relative of the earl, to be sent to Elizabeth. The story goes that the countess was jealous, and whatever her real motive retained the ring. Elizabeth believed that out of pride and obstinacy the earl had determined not to sue to her for his life, or else that he depended on her love to save him without being asked. Her pride and obstinacy would not brook this. From day to day she allowed the sentence to go unrepealed, and finally Essex lost his head.

Years later, the story goes, the Countess of Nottingham, remorseful on her deathbed, begged the Queen to come to her. Elizabeth did so. The countess made her confession, and Elizabeth seized the dying woman by her shoulders and literally shook the little remaining life out of her.

Another version is that on receiving this confession the heartbroken Queen took to her bed and never rose again.

This ring is of gold, engraved with arabesques, in which is set a tiny portrait of Queen Elizabeth.

INDIA'S VICTIMS

The results of India's fourth ten-yearly census, which has just been issued, show that the last period has been one of great progress.

The total population of India is now 315,001,099, of which number 244,172,371 are in British India and 70,828,728 are in native states. The rate of increase since the census of 1901 has been subject to terrible calamities which have interfered seriously with the normal growth of her population.

Thus in 1897 and 1899 there were two destructive famines, which were followed by desolating epidemics of cholera and fever. Plague appeared at Bombay in 1896 and rapidly spread all over the presidency and to other parts of India. It is estimated that between 1896 and 1901 half a million people died of plague, and practically arrested the natural growth of population.

More was to follow. Between 1901 and 1911 plague carried off six and a half million souls. Two million people died from the pestilence in the Punjab alone, one and a half million in the United Provinces, and thirteen hundred thousand in Bombay.

Plague has, in fact, proved far more destructive of human life than famine.

"END OF THE WORLD."

The prophet Baxter, whose prophecies as to the end of the world were more than once falsified by events, has a successor in the person of the Rev. H. C. Sturdy, M. A., who declared his confident belief at Holborn Town Hall, London, that the world would come to an end in 1916.

The reverend gentleman told his audience, which was by no means a large one, that he had come over 200 miles to deliver his message to them. Coming to his belief as to the impending end of all things, he said it was arrived at through a series of deductions made from various passages of Scripture. But beyond these deductions and the authority contained in them there were other signs, such as the Zionist movement, the Turkish upheaval, and many more events of important significance.

The speaker also quoted several dates which had been mentioned by other prophets, the earliest being 1915 and the latest 1934; but the date given above was his own particular one, and he concluded by enjoining his hearers that the last day was at hand.

DOWNRIGHT SNOBBERY

At a dance recently a young gentleman somewhat inferior in social position to most of those present approached an alderman's daughter—"mightily superior" sort—and rather diffidently asked for the favor of a dance.

The girl looked him stonily in the face for a moment, then turned away with the remark:

"I'm sorry, but I'm—well, rather particular as to whom I dance with."
"Ah, indeed?" was the quiet retort, "then we differ in that respect. I'm not a bit particular. That was why I asked you!"
Then he left her.