

Newfoundland Pageant at Empire Exhibition.

By MISS S. KNOX.

Of all the dominions of our Empire, none can be better fitted for the art of pageantry than Newfoundland, and the portrayal of the romance of its discovery and the interest of its evolution, is shown in all its picturesque details in the Pageant of the British Empire Exhibition. Beginning "before the beginning" as an Irishman might say, we see John Cabot setting out from Bristol, with the King's Charter, to find new lands. The citizens of Bristol, a gay holiday crowd, are out to speed Cabot on his adventurous journey. It is an animated and merry scene—family groups with romping children, loving couples, falconers, their birds chained to their wrists, bowmen with their bows and arrows—all making the most of the occasion. Through the crowd in their holiday dresses of blue, russet, grey and crimson rides Cabot, richly garbed, on his gaily caparisoned horse; beside him rides his wife, in the becoming wimple and rich flowing draperies of the day, their two sons following closely. As they near the centre of the vast Stadium a dignified train of City Aldermen in red robes with picturesque black head-dresses, headed by their Mayor with the City mace, advance on horseback to meet Cabot and give him the good wishes of the City of Bristol. In his robes of discovery, from another direction, to solemn and moving strains of organ music, the Abbot of Newland moves slowly forward, a blaze of gold, with his cope, mitre and crozier. In his train, followed by a group of monks in black and white robes, in the background, advancing, the Abbot blesses over the assembled people. The blessing of the Church is added to the sanction of the State. The beauty and impressiveness of this scene is something that will be remembered. The solemn ceremony over, Cabot goes forward to the water's edge followed by shouts of "Godwell, Cabot!" and embarks, accompanied by the accompaniments of the waving hands and shouted good wishes of his friends and fellow citizens. As the ship moves across the water and out of sight, the fluttering black-berchief of his wife, sitting motionless on her horse is a symbol of the home he is leaving.

Scene 2 shows the landing of Sir Humphrey Gilbert—a picturesque figure in his red and gold uniform and plumed hat—with his lieutenants and crew. He finds amongst the inhabitants of the island merchants fishermen of all nations—Breton, Biscayan, Portuguese, with cutlasses and pistols at their belts, and a few of the ancient Beothic Indians with their fisher's spears and gay head-dresses. Their chief, a man of noble figure in crimson and turquoise and silver at their head. From the ceremonial tent which has been set up for his reception, Sir Humphrey emerges. The Herald, in his gorgeous medieval dress, reads from a parchment scroll the proclamation. Sir Humphrey Gilbert goes through the ancient ceremony of "digging the turf," and thus takes formal possession of the land "in the name of Elizabeth, by the grace of God, Queen of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith." These proceedings are received with loud cheering by the crowds, a salute of guns is heard from the ship in the harbour, and English flags wave proudly over the scene.

Sir Humphrey Gilbert, attended by his English suite, walks off at the head of a brilliantly uniformed guard, whose spears catch the light as they march.

In scene 3 we see the rough and ready rule of the Fishing Admiral—the Captain who had won the race to port and is therefore made Ruler for the year. Mounted on a pile of casks, surrounded by companions who carry out his arbitrary orders, we see a picture of lawless rule. The islanders in their simple but brightly coloured dresses, many of the women wearing becoming white head-dresses with their pink, grey and russet gowns, the children playing with the goats that form such an amusing addition to the crowd—all discontented with the rule of the gang of practical looking fishermen. The scene is one of disorder, rough horseplay, quarrelling, and drawing of swords among the fishermen. Suddenly a company of H.M. sailors marches upon the scene scattering the unruly rulers, and chasing the "Admiral" off the ground. The senior Naval Officer of the station has been appointed Governor of the island, and he comes on at the head of a band of blue uniformed sailors and addresses the people, promising them a just and ordered government from England. The first Naval Governor of Newfoundland marches off with dignity and ceremony to the strains of naval music and the cheering of the crowds, and so order and a settled government were established in Newfoundland.

grace and beauty which is not surpassed by anything in the Pageant. The scene is dressed as a garden at Government House, at one end is a dais for the Governor's party, flowers and music make gay preparations for the crowd of invited guests. The occasion is the visit of the young Prince of Wales (afterwards King Edward VII) to Newfoundland, and the flower of Newfoundland is bidden to do him honour. The ladies, in hooped gowns of delicate hues, primrose, sky blue, mauve, rose pink, flowered and striped silk—the men with peg top trousers, buff and grey, blue cutaway coats, cravats and side whiskers, children in their quaint little Victorian dresses—all make a picture which brings to mind the paintings on an old fan, delicate and charming.

As they move about the gardens of Government House the graceful curtsies of the ladies, the sweeping bows of the gentlemen, the fluttering fans, the waving parasols, carry the mind back to the spacious days before airs and graces were crowded out of life.

The Governor, Sir Charles Darling enters with Lady Darling, a charming and gracious figure, and attended by his brilliantly uniformed staff. The young Prince appears, heralded by a salute of guns and peals of bells, and attended by a retinue of blue jackets. He is received ceremoniously by the Governor and greeted with graceful bows and curtsies by the assembly. The Governor's Proclamation is read and the Prince makes an inspection of the green and red uniformed Governor's Guard. Then the band strikes up and the ladies are led out to dance in the great Quadrille. The changing gaily colored groups, the graceful curtsies, the brilliant uniforms, all form a picture the beauty of which cannot be exaggerated.

Scene 5 and last, shows the achievement of our oldest Dominion, and brings us to the wonders of today.

We see the first Cable brought ashore in 1858 and carried to the Cable House, where a message is received on Lord Kelvin's mirror galvanometer. Crowds, dressed in the costume of the period, cheer the inauguration of this link between the Old World and the New.

The wonder of the first long distance Wireless is next shown. Senator Marconi passes down the great arena, with the very men who helped him in those first experiments carrying in their hands the actual instruments used. It is the representation of one of the greatest and most marvellous achievements of modern times, an achievement with which Newfoundland must ever be proud to be so distinctively associated.

Then Newfoundland was the goal of the first trans-Atlantic flight in 1919, and we see a graceful plane, lit by a shaft from the powerful searchlight, swoop low over the crowded Stadium. Twice it circles round, and enthusiastic shouts of "Bravo Alcock!" "Bravo Brown!" Another step forward has been made, another link between Newfoundland and the Mother Country has been forged.

This brings to the history of Newfoundland from the earliest days of Empire building to its present record of worthy achievement, presented in scenes that are never allowed to flag and that hold the interest of a vast audience throughout their performance.

Newfoundland's Pageant takes high place in a presentation of Empire History such as has never before been offered, a spectacle which must fill the heart of every British man and woman with pride and thankfulness.

In the Thanksgiving Finale with which the cycle of Dominion Pageants is completed, the Newfoundland car is beautiful and representative. Decorated with fir trees, and with the Newfoundland flag proudly waving, it carries baskets of gleaming fish, the rich harvest of the sea, and a fine specimen of the caribou. A lady representing the Dominion is borne on the car, in dazzling costume of blue and silver, and her long sparkling train is carried by a group of ladies-in-waiting, the whole forming a brilliant and picturesque tableau.

A great many of the tiny tell tales have feather fantasies placed at one side.



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