

Queen Victoria's Jubilee

LONDON, June 19.—So far as I can see, a procession has value in but two ways—as a show and as a symbol; its minor function being to delight the eye, its major one to compel thought, exalt the spirit, stir the heart and inflame the imagination. As a mere show, and meaningless—like a mardi-gras march—a magnificent procession is a sight worth a journey to see; as a symbol, the most colorless and unpicturesque procession, if it have a moving history back of it, is worth a thousand of it.

After the civil war ten regiments of bronzed New York veterans marched up Broadway in faded uniforms and bearing faded battle flags that were mere shot-riddled rags—and in each battalion as it swung by, one noted a great gap, an eloquent vacancy where had marched the comrades who had fallen and would march no more.

Always, as this procession advanced between the massed multitudes, its approach was welcomed by each block of people with a burst of proud and grateful enthusiasm—then the head of it passed and suddenly revealed these pathetic gaps and silence fell upon that block, for every man in it had choked up and could not get command of his voice and add it to the storm again for many minutes. That was the most moving and tremendous effect that I ever witnessed—those affecting silences falling between those hurricanes of worshipping enthusiasm.

There was no costumery in that procession, no color, no tinsel, no brilliancy; yet it was the greatest spectacle and the most gracious and exalting and beautiful that has come within my experience. It was because it had a history back of it and because it was a symbol and stood for something, and because one viewed it with the spiritual vision, not the physical. There was not much for the physical eye to see, but it revealed continual areas—limitless horizons to the eye of the imagination and the spirit.

A procession to be valuable must do one thing or the other—clothe itself in splendor and charm the eye or symbol-

ize something sublime and uplifting, and appeal to the imagination. As a mere spectacle to look at, I suppose that the Queen's procession will not be as showy as the Czar's late pageant; it will probably fall much short of the one in Tannhäuser in the matter of rich and adorable costumes, in the number of renowned personages on view in it. It will probably fall short of some that have been seen in England before this.

And yet its major function—its symbolic function—I think, is that if all the people in it wore their everyday clothes and marched without flags and music it would still be incomparably the most memorable and most important procession that ever moved through the streets of London.

For it will stand for English growth, English achievement, the accumulated power and renown and dignity of twenty centuries of strenuous effort. Many things about it will set one to reflecting upon what a large member of this world England is to-day, and this will in turn move even the least imaginative to cast a glance down her long perspective and note the stress of her progress and the insignificance of her first estate. In this matter London is itself a suggestive object lesson.

I suppose that London has always existed. One cannot easily imagine an England that had no London. No doubt there was a village here over a thousand years ago. It was on the river somewhere west of where the tower is now. It was built of thatched mud huts, close to a couple of limpid brooks, and on every hand for miles and miles stretched rolling plains of fresh green grass, and here and there were groups of trees. The tribes wore skins—sometimes merely their own, sometimes those of other animals. The chief was monarch, and helped out his complexion with blue paint. His industry was the chase; his relaxation was war. Some of the Englishmen who will view the procession to-day are carrying his people's ancient blood in their veins.

It may be that that village remained about as it began, away down to the Roman occupation, a couple of thousand years ago. It was still not much of a town when Alfred burnt the cakes. Even when the Conqueror first saw it, it did not amount to much. I think it must have been short of distinguished architecture, or he would not have traveled down into this country to the village of Westminster to get crowned. If you skip

down three hundred fifty years further you will find a London of some little consequence, but I believe that that is as much as you can say for it. Still, I am interested in that London, for it saw the first of two processions which will live longer than any others, in English history. I think the date of one is 1415, the other is that of 1897.

The compactly built part of the London of 1415 was a narrow strip not a mile long, which stretched east and west through the middle of what is now called "the city." The houses were densest in the region of Cheapside. South of the strip were scattering residences which stood on turfy lawns which sloped to the river. North of the strip fields and country houses extended to the walls. Let us represent that London by three checker-board squares placed in a row, then open out the San Francisco "Examiner" like a book and the space which it covers will properly represent the London of to-day by comparison.

It is the difference between your hand and a blanket.

It is possible that ancient London had 100,000 inhabitants, and that 100,000 outsiders came to town to see the procession.

The present London has five or six million inhabitants and it has been calculated that the population has jumped to 10,000,000 to-day. The pageant of 1415 was to celebrate the gigantic victory of Agincourt, then and still the most colossal in England's history.

From that day to this there has been nothing that even approached it but Plassey. It was the third and greatest in the series of monster victories won by the English over the French in the hundred years war—Crecy, Poitiers, Agincourt.

At Agincourt, according to history, 15,000 English under Henry V., defeated and routed an army of 100,000 French. Sometimes history makes it 8,000 English and 60,000 French, but no matter, in both cases the proportions are preserved. Eight thousand of the French nobility were slain and the rest of the order taken prisoner—1,500 in number, among them the Dukes of Orleans and Bourbon and Marshall Bouccault, and the victory left the whole northern half of France an English possession. This wholesale depletion of the aristocracy made such a stringent scarcity in its ranks that when the young peasant girl, Joan of Arc, came to undo Henry's mighty work,

fourteen years later, she could hardly gather together nobles enough to man her staff.

The battle of Agincourt was fought on October 25th, and a few days later the tremendous news was percolating through England. Presently it was sweeping the country like a tidal wave—like a cyclone—like a conflagration. Choose your own figure. There is no metaphor known to the language that can exaggerate the tempest of joy and pride and exultation that burst everywhere along the progress of that great news.

The King came home and brought his soldiers with him—he and they are the idols of that nation now. He brought his 1,500 captive knights and nobles, too—we shall not see any such output of blue blood as that to-day, bond or free. The King rested three weeks in his palace, the tower of London, while the people made preparations and prepared the welcome due him.

On December 22d all was ready.

Translated, this is the narrative of the spirit correspondent who is looking down upon me at this moment from his high home admiring to see how the art and mystery of spelling has improved since his time.

“I was commanded by my Lord, the Lord Mayor, to make a report for the Archives, and was furnished with a fleet horse and with a paper permitting me to go anywhere at my will, without let or hindrance, even up and down the processional route, though no other person not of the procession itself was allowed this unique privilege during the whole of the 21st and the 22d.

“I rode solitary—in state, as it might be—and was envied, as I could see, and did not escape comment, but had a plenty of it, for the conduits were running gratis wine and the results were accumulating. I got many ribald compliments—on my riding, on my clothes, on my office. Everybody was happy, so it was best to seem so myself, which I did—for those people’s aim was better than their eggs.

“A place has been reserved for me on a fine and fanciful erection in St. Paul’s churchyard and there I waited for the procession. It seemed a long time but at last a dull booming sound arose in the distance and after a while we saw the banners and the head of the procession come into view, and heard

the muffled roar of voices that welcomed it. The roar came continuously towards us, growing steadily louder and louder, and stronger and stronger, and with it the bray and crash of music; and presently it was right with us and seemed to roll over us and submerge us and stun us and deafen us—and behold, there was the proof of Agincourt passing by.

“All the multitude was standing up—red-faced, frantic, bel-lowing, shouting, the tears running down their faces; and through the storm of waving hats and handkerchiefs one glimpsed at the battle banners and the drifting host of marching men as through a dimming flurry of snow.

“The King—tall, slender, handsome—rode with his visor up that all might see his face. He was clad in silver armor from head to heel, and his great two-handed sword at his side, his battleaxe at his pommel, his shield upon his arm, and about his helmet waved and tossed a white mass of stuffy plumes. On either side of him rode the captive dukes, plumed like himself, but wearing long crimson satin gowns over their armor. After these came the French Marshal, similarly habited. After him followed the 500 French knights, with robes of various colors over their armor; and with each two rode two English knights, sometimes robed in various colors, sometimes in white, with a red cross on the shoulder, the white-clad ones being Knights Templar. Every man of the 3,000 bore his shield upon his left arm, newly polished and burnished, and on it was his device.

“The Knights were a long time passing. Then came 5,000 Agincourt men-at-arms and they were a long time, and at the very end, last of all, came that intolerable old tun of sack and godless ruffler—Sir John Oldcastle (now risen from the dead for the third time)—fat-faced, purple, with the spirit of bygone and lamented drink, smiling his hospitable, wide smile upon all the world; leering at the women; proclaiming his valorous deeds as fast as he could lie; taking the whole glory of Agincourt to his single self; measuring off the miles of his slain, and then multiplying them by five—seven—ten—fifteen, as inspiration after inspiration came to his help; the most inhuman spectacle in England; a living breathing outrage; a slander upon the human race. And after him came Mumming and Blethering, his infamous lieutenants. And after them his “Paladins,” as he calls them, the mangiest lot of starvelings and

cowards that was ever littered, the disgrace of the noblest pageant that England has ever seen. God bless their souls in the place appointed for all such.

“There was a moment of prayer at the temple, the procession moved down the country road, its way walled on both sides by welcoming multitudes, by Charing Cross, and at last to the Abbey for the great ceremonies. It was a grand day, and will remain in men’s memories.”

That was as much of it as the spirit correspondent could let me have. He was obliged to stop there because he had an engagement to sing in the choir and was already late.

The contrast between the old England and the present England is one of the things which will make the pageant of the present day impressive and thought-breeding. The contrast between the England of the Queen’s reign and the England of any previous British reign is also an impressive thing. British history is 2,000 years old, and yet in a good many ways the world has moved further ahead since the Queen was born than it moved in all the rest of the two thousand put together. A large part of this progress has been moral, but naturally the material part of it is the most striking and the easiest to measure.

Since the queen first saw the light she has seen invented and brought into use (with the exception of the cotton gin, the spinning frames and the steamboat), every one of the myriads of strictly modern inventions which, by their united power, have created the bulk of modern civilization and made life under it easy and difficult, convenient and awkward, happy and horrible, soothing and irritating, grand and trivial, an indispensable blessing and an unimaginable curse.

She has seen all these miracles, these wonders, these marvels, piled up in her time, and yet she is but seventy-nine years old. That is to say, she has seen more things invented than any other monarch that ever lived, and more than the oldest old-time English commoner that ever lived, including old Parr; and more than Methuselah himself five times over.

Some of the details of the moral advancement which she has seen are also very striking and easily graspable. She has seen the English criminal laws prodigiously modified and 200 capital crimes swept from the statute books. She has seen English

liberty greatly broadened—the governing and lawmaking powers, formerly the possession of the few, extended to the body of the people and purchase in the army abolished. She has seen the public educator—the newspaper—created and its teachings placed within the reach of the leanest purse. There was nothing properly describable as a newspaper until long after she was born. She has seen the world's literature set free through the institution of international copyright.

She has seen America invent arbitration, the eventual substitute for that enslaver of nations—the standing army—and she has seen England pay the first bill under it and America shirk the second—but only temporarily; of this we may be sure.

She has seen a Hartford American (Dr. Wells) apply an anesthetic in surgery for the first time in history and for all time banish the terrors of the surgeon's knife, and she has seen the rest of the world ignore the discoverer and a Boston doctor steal the credit of his work. She has seen medical science and scientific sanitation cut down the death rate of civilized cities by more than half, and she has seen these agencies set bounds to the European march of the cholera and imprison the black death in its own home.

She has seen woman freed from the oppression of many burdensome and unjust laws; colleges established for her, privileged to earn degrees in men's colleges—but not get them; in some regions rights accorded to her which lift her near to political equality with man; and a hundred bread-winning occupations found for her where hardly one existed before—among them medicine, the law and professional nursing. The Queen has herself recognized the merit in her sex. Of the 501 lordships which she has conferred in sixty years, one was upon a woman.

The Queen has seen the right to organize the trade unions extended to the working men, after that right has been the monopoly of guilds of masters for 600 years. She has seen the workman rise into political notice, then into political force, then (in some parts of the world) into the chief and commanding political force. She has seen the day's labor of twelve, fourteen and eighteen hours reduced to eight, a reform which has made labor a means of extending life instead of a means of committing salaried suicide.

But it is useless to continue the list. It has no end, England's growth in Victoria's time.

There will be complexions in the procession to-day which will suggest the vast distances to which the British dominion has extended itself around the fat rotundity of the globe since Britain was a remote, unknown, back settlement of savages with tin for sale, two or three thousand years ago and also how great a part of this extension is comparatively recent; also, how surprisingly speakers of the English tongue have increased within the Queen's time.

When the Queen was born there were not more than 25,000,000 English-speaking people in the world, there are about 120,000,000 now. The other long-reign Queen, Elizabeth, reigned over a short 100,000 square miles of territory, and perhaps 5,000,000 subjects. Victoria reigns over more territory than any other sovereign in the world's history ever reigned over; her estate covers a fourth part of the habitable area of the globe, and her subjects number about 400,000,000.

It is indeed a mighty estate, and I perceive now that the English are mentioned in the Bible:

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

The long-reign pageant will be a memorable thing to see, for it stands for the grandeur of England, and is full of suggestion as to how it had its beginnings and what have been the forces that have built it up.

LONDON, June 22.—I got to my seat in the Strand just in time—five minutes past 10—for a glance around before the show began. The houses opposite, as far as the eye could reach, in both directions, suggested boxes in a theatre snugly packed. The gentleman next to me likened the groups to beds of flowers, and said he had never seen such a massed and multitudinous array of bright colors and fine clothes. These displays rose up and up, story by story, all balconies and windows being packed, and also the battlements stretching along the roofs. The sidewalks were filled with standing people, but were not uncomfortably crowded. They were fenced from the roadway by red-coated soldiers, a double stripe of vivid color which

extended throughout the six miles which the procession would traverse. Five minutes later the head of the column came into view and was presently filing by, led by Captain Ames, the tallest man in the British army. And then the cheering began.

It took me but a little while to determine that this procession could not be described. There was going to be too much of it and too much variety in it, so I gave up the idea. It was to be a spectacle for the kodak, not the pen.

Presently the procession was without visible beginning or end, but stretched to the limit of sight in both directions—bodies of soldiery in blue, followed by a block of soldiers in buff; then a block of red, a block of buff, a block of yellow, and so on—an interminable drift of swaying and swinging splotches of strong color, sparking and flashing with shifty light reflected from bayonets, lanceheads, brazen helmets and burnished breastplates. For varied and beautiful uniforms and unceasing surprises in the way of new and unexpected splendors it much surpassed any pageant that I have ever seen.

I was not dreaming of so stunning a show. All the nations seemed to be filing by. They all seemed to be represented. It was a sort of allegorical suggestion of the last day, and some who live to see that day will probably recall this one if they are not too much disturbed in mind at the time.

There were five bodies of Oriental soldiers of five different nationalities with complexions differentiated by five distinct shades of yellow. There were about a dozen bodies of black soldiers from various parts of Africa, whose complexions covered as many shades of black, and some of these were the very blackest people I have ever seen.

Then there was an exhaustive exhibition of the hundred separate brown races of India, the most beautiful and most satisfying of the complexions that have been vouchsafed to man, and the one which best sets off colored clothes and best harmonizes with all tints.

The Chinese, the Japanese, the Coreans, the Africans, the Indians, the Pacific Islanders—they were all there, and with them samples of all the whites that inhabit the wide reach of the Queen's dominions.

The procession was the human race on exhibition—a spectacle curious and interesting and worth traveling to see. The

most splendid of the costumes were those worn by the Indian Princes, and they were also the most beautiful and the richest. They were men of stately build and princely carriage, and wherever they passed the applause burst forth. Soldiers—soldiers—soldiers—and still more and more soldiers, and cannon and muskets and lances; there seemed to be no end to this feature. There are 50,000 soldiers in London, and they all seemed to be on hand. I have not seen so many, except in the theatre, when thirty-five privates and a general march across the stage and behind the scenes, and across the front again, and keep it up till they have represented 200,000.

In the early part the Colonial Premiers drove by with the host, and by-and-by, after a long time, there was a grand output of foreign princes, thirty-one in the invoice. The feature of high romance was not wanting for among them rode Prince Rupert of Bavaria—who would be Prince of Wales now and future King of England and Emperor of India if his Stewart ancestors had conducted their royal affairs more wisely than they did. He came as a peaceful guest to represent his mother, Princess Ludwig, heiress of the house of Stewart, to whom English Jacobites still pay unavailing homage as their rightful Queen of England. The house of Stewart was formally and officially shelved nearly two centuries ago, but the microbe of Jacobite loyalty is a thing which is not exterminable by time, force or argument.

At last, when the procession had been on view an hour and a half, carriages began to appear. In the first came a detachment of two-horse ones containing the Ambassadors Extraordinary, in one of them Whitelaw Reid, representing the United States. Then six containing Ministers, foreign and domestic; princes and princesses, and five four-horse carriages freighted with offshoots of the family.

The excitement was growing now; interest was rising toward the boiling point. Finally a landau, drawn by eight cream-colored horses, mostly lavishly upholstered in gold stuffs, with postilions and no drivers, and preceded by Lord Wolsley, came along, followed by the Prince of Wales, and all the world rose to its feet and uncovered. The Queen-Empress was come. She was received with great enthusiasm. It was realizable that she was the procession herself; that all the rest of it

was mere embroidery; that in her the public saw the English Empire itself. She was a symbol—allegorical of England's grandeur and the might of the British name.

It is over now; the British Empire has marched past under review and inspection; the procession stood for sixty years of progress and accumulation, moral, material and political. It was made up rather of the beneficiaries of the prosperities than of the creators of them. As far as mere glory goes, the foreign trade of Great Britain has grown in a wonderful way since the Queen ascended the throne. Last year it reached the enormous figure of £620,000,000, but the capitalist, the manufacturer, the merchant and the workingman were not officially in the procession to get their large share of the resulting glory. Great Britain has added to her real estate an average of 165 miles of territory per day for the past sixty years, which is to say she has added more than the bulk of an England proper each year, or an aggregate of seventy Englands in the sixty years.

But Cecil Rhodes was not in the procession; the chartered company was absent from it. Nobody was there to collect their share of the glory due for their formidable contributions to the Imperial estate. Even Dr. Jamieson was out, and yet he tried so hard to accumulate territory. Eleven colonial Premiers were in the procession, but the dean of the order, the Imperial Premier, was not; nor the Lord Chief Justice of England; nor the Speaker of the House. The bulk of the religious strength of England dissent was not officially represented in the religious ceremonies at the Cathedral. That immense new industry, speculative expansion, was not represented, unless the pathetic shade of Barnato rode invisible in the pageant.

It was a memorable display, and must live in history. It suggested material glories of the reign finely and adequately. The absence of the chief creators of them was perhaps not a serious disadvantage. One could supply the vacancies by imagination and thus fill out the procession very effectively. One can enjoy a rainbow without necessarily forgetting the forces that made it.