

AN AUCKLAND LADY'S IMPRESSIONS OF THE GREAT JUBILEE IN LONDON.

It were impossible to imagine any spectacle more magnificent and impressive than that which it was our good fortune to witness on that now celebrated day, the 22nd of June, when our Gracious Sovereign, Queen Victoria, drove in state from Buckingham Palace to St. Paul's to render thanksgiving for her long and prosperous reign. The burst of enthusiasm which rose from every one of the assembled thousands as our Queen passed by—a magnificent display of love and loyalty—can never be forgotten, and will be recounted by those who heard it to future generations in far off ages. No one who heard the shouts of 'God save our Queen' can doubt the position which Queen Victoria holds in the hearts of all her people.

London was *en fete*. The whole city had given itself over to jubilee and holiday-making. The crowds, however, were not so great as had been anticipated. Thousands of additional spectators would probably have been there had they known there would be standing room, and had they not been alarmed by the exaggerated reports of danger which were spread abroad everywhere. Thanks to the excellence of the police arrangements, no serious accident occurred, and only a very few trifling ones—the result of a little carelessness on the part of the spectators. Indeed, the police force cannot be too highly commended for their part in the day's proceeding, and London had a reward in the perfect order maintained throughout for its enforced submission to police and military authority.

The Queen had her usual good fortune in the way of weather; a better day could not have been chosen. It was rather dull in the morning, which was an advantage

for those obliged to stand, but as the time for the procession drew nigh the clouds departed and the blue skies appeared as if Heaven itself wished to partake in the general thanksgiving.

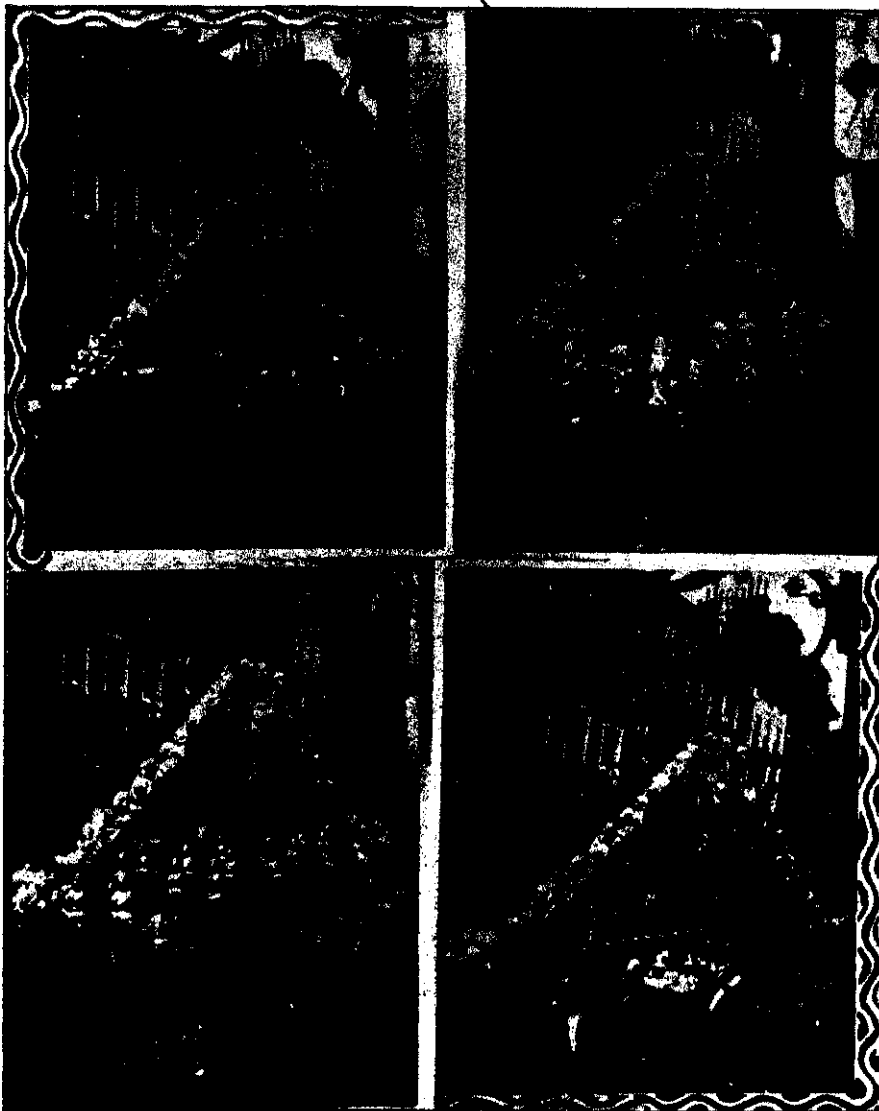
Owing to the rumours about the expected crowds, we left home about 6 a.m. Even at this hour there were from 19 to 25 in each compartment in the train, but with very little discomfort we reached our seats in Fleet-street about 7.45. Already people were beginning to mass together, anxious to secure good places in the streets—every available seat had been secured some time before. Shortly after we arrived a Band of Balasceva Pensioners came to take their seats to view the procession. Their reception from the crowd was very touching. Songs of victory were sung in their honour, and cheer upon cheer arose for these grey-headed old heroes. The more feeble they were, the more hearty the greeting, and it has been said that nowhere on the line of the procession was the cheering louder than when a squadron of the regiment to which they had once belonged passed by the veterans who have made its name immortal.

About 8.30 traffic was entirely stopped and in a marvellously short time the streets were lined with soldiers and police, and all the entrances from side streets blocked by companies of Dragoon guards. As may be imagined, the scene before us was a very pretty one. From Temple Bar on the right to Ludgate Circus on the left, and thence up Ludgate Hill, above which we could just catch a glimpse of the great Dome, every building was gaily festooned with flowers, with red, white, and blue bunting; every window was filled with gay spectators, and the streets were brilliant with beautiful floral decorations, and with the red coats of the Grenadiers. Here and there a small contingent of some regiment or a naval detachment was stationed, adding yet another dash of colour to it all. We believe nearly 50,000 troops were present, guarding the route. We were interested in watching some troops of the Ambulance Corps pass, and there was a ring of sympathy in the salute they received from those comfortably seated in the well-lined stands and windows.

It was not till after 10 that a gay little procession came into sight. At the head was the Lord Mayor astride a small black charger—a very handsome one, which he

rode bravely. With his flowing robes of purple velvet, which completely covered the horse behind, a cloak of rich ermine across his shoulders, and an odd three-cornered hat, he made quite a picture, though a rather amusing one. It was difficult to imagine how he could possibly have mounted in such garments. The popularity of His Lordship was evident as he rode past looking thoroughly pleased with everything. He was on his way to Temple Bar, there to await the Queen, and to present her with the pearl sword of the City of London. Immediately behind rode the Sheriffs, in red gowns and sables, and then the Aldermen and Councillors in blue, seated in the gorgeous State carriages. We returned to our occupation of watching a London crowd, whose good nature and wit is proverbial, when very soon the increasing excitement told us of the arrival of the first part of the procession at Temple Bar. This was formed by the Colonial troops and Premiers. They were preceded by Field-Marshal Lord Roberts on a snow-white horse, looking every inch of him the true soldier of whom England is so proud. Excepting Her Majesty, there was no one who got a heartier welcome than he. Along the whole route there arose ringing cheers and shouts of 'Bravo, Bobs!' the nickname by which he was known to his soldiers in the famous Afghan campaign. We felt very proud as all the Colonials passed, but naturally we looked forward especially to seeing our gallant band of stalwart Maoris, and many were the shouts of 'Tena koe!' as they rode on, looking ready for any service, and holding their own bravely with any corps that preceded or followed. No less proud did we feel as our equally gallant Premier and his wife, the Right Hon. Mr and Mrs R. J. Seddon, followed closely behind, and shared in the reception. The Premiers drove in twos in State carriages, each following or followed by a detachment from their particular colony. The various troops succeeded each other in quick succession. First came the Canadians, followed by riflemen from New South Wales, whose picturesque costumes were much admired by the spectators. Their feathers distinguished them from the Victorians, whose maroon facings contrasted prettily with the buff-coloured tunics Queensland Mounted Infantry. The New Zealanders, South Australian, and Cape Mounted Rifles, all with spiked helmets, were followed by the Mounted Infantry from Natal and the Trinidad Yeomanry. The Ceylon Mounted Rifles were brilliant in scarlet tunics with white helmets, and the Cypriot Zaptiehs, on their fine little Arab chargers, in dark blue uniforms with red fez and sashes, created quite a sensation. But the greatest ovation was kept for a small band of Rhodesian Horse, headed by Captain Maurice Gifford, whose empty sleeve caught the sight of the ever sympathetic onlookers, as in the East End procession a day or two before it was this officer who was the object of enthusiastic cheering, showing the appreciation of his service in the recent war in Matabeleland. Then came the Colonial Artillery and the Garrison Artillery from Malta, Sierra Leone, and then we saw perhaps the gayest and part of the Colonial troops—the Infantry. Following the band of the Victoria and St. George Rifles marched some troops from Hong Kong—Native police in loose blue snits, quaint mushroom hats, all with the inevitable pigtail; the Sikhs, resplendent in blue and gold turbans; sturdy little Dyaks from Borneo; the Native police from British Guiana, all came in for their share of admiration. The gay uniforms of the Ceylon Light Infantry and detachments from the Straits Settlements delighted the people, as did also the admirable precision of all their movements. The pipers of the London Irish Volunteers and some Canadian Highlanders called forth great applause, and then the procession ended in a splendid troop of Canadian Dragoons, who formed a brilliant background to the Infantry. Never before has the Metropolis witnessed a display so representative of all our Queen's domains. This long line of troops from every distant possession was something quite unique, and there could have been no greater evidence of Britain's all-reaching power and influence.

Having been charmed beyond all anticipation with the splendour of the Colonial troops, we scarcely knew what to expect in the procession to follow, and the dazzling brilliancy of the royal pageant surpassed even our wildest dreams. The tallest officer in the English Army, Captain Ames, of the 2nd Life Guards, reported to be 6ft. 8in., rode at its head, but he was so closely followed by four tall troopers of the same regiment that we scarcely noticed his gigantic proportions. A naval detachment followed up quickly with six guns; the bronzed sailors in their plain blue coats met with as hearty a reception as any of the more brilliant squadrons to follow. Time will not allow us to enter too closely into detail of all the troops. We can only try feebly to convey a small idea of the general effect. Till the carriages arrived the order of the troops was the same throughout—a detachment of the Royal Horse Artillery with six guns; three mounted bands belonging to three different regiments, followed by three squadrons of the same regiments with their colours; another band of Royal Horse Artillery, and so on. Lovers of music would have been charmed with the martial strains from the cavalry banda. The horses themselves seemed to feel the spirit of it, and marched in perfect time. The brilliancy of the bands was something marvellous, their uniforms literally dazzling with gold and silver. They and all the squadrons were superbly mounted. To lovers of horses there must have been a continuous breaking of the tenth commandment till the last charger disappeared. It is impossible to compare, all were so splendid, but I think the Scots Greys must be mentioned as the favourite squadron. The Life Guards on their coal-black war horses, the King's Dragoon Guards and the Queen's Bays were the first three regiments, a line of brilliant colour, flashing and sparkling with gold and burnished steel. More artillery preceded the 3rd and 7th Dragoon Guards and the Lanciers. The representatives of the 'Union Brigade at Waterloo,' our much-loved Scots Greys and the Inskilling, got a tremendous reception, and their tattered standards called forth another outburst. The light cavalry, the 3rd, 8th, 10th, and 15th Hussars, the 12th Lancers, all were cheered in their turn, followed by the representatives of the 'Death or Glory Boys' of Crimean fame, referred to above. When all the troops had passed and a number of



SNAPSHOTS ON DIAMOND JUBILEE DAY IN LONDON.

- 1. The Colonial Body Guard. The N.Z. Forces in the second row.
- 2. Foreign Princes.
- 3. Life Guards.
- 4. Carriage of Royalty.