

The penetrating gaze of the Empress was fixed upon the girl.

"You are foolish not to confide in me," she observed. "If your affections are engaged, you should say so with frankness. If they are not, you cannot surely be so obstinate and selfish as to blindly oppose my plan for providing you with a suitable home, and a husband whom, not having seen, you cannot dislike."

Elsa was silent. The thought of Paul Engelhardt came to her like an angel of deliverance, and from that moment she knew that she could give him the answer he wished. But how confess this to the stately Empress in the presence of Rudolf? It was a horrible pause both for brother and sister, and at last Maria Theresa mercifully put an end to it.

"I will give you a fortnight for consideration, after which you shall again have audience and let me know if you are pliable to my wishes for your good. Then I may endeavour to help your brother."

The Empress rose and swept from the room, thinking as she went, "The boy is a genius; the pretty sister is a stubborn, silly spoilt child." Immediately on her departure a chamberlain came in and handed Rudolf, as payment for his effusion, a purse containing six ducats (not quite £3), which he would fain have refused had he been able; then the brother and sister found themselves escorted out of the palace.

It required all Rudolf's affection for Elsa to keep him from feeling irritated with her for having, so to speak, intro-

duced a jarring note into this wonderful scene, when he had been face to face with the goddess of his dreams, and heard his music in her praise rehearsed before her. But the devoted sister had self-control enough to dwell exclusively on the delightful part of the interview; and, indeed, she rejoiced for Rudolf's sake that such success had waited on his song.

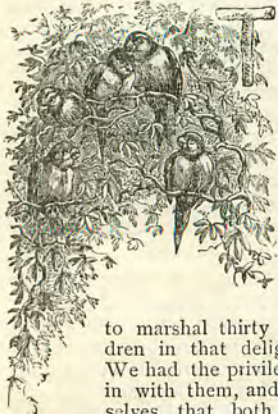
For herself, when she was quiet and alone, she would think what was best to be done; she would in some way endeavour not to affront the Empress, and yet to preserve her independence.

"Another summons to play at Prince Kaunitz's reception!" cried Rudolf, on re-entering their *appartement*. "Elsa, sister mine, success has come at last!"

(To be continued.)

WHAT WE SAW AT THE CHILDREN'S JUBILEE FÊTE.

By ANNE BEALE.



THE Duke of Wellington is reported to have said that there was no general who could marshal thirty thousand soldiers in Hyde Park; but our generals of the *Daily Telegraph* and School Board have managed to marshal thirty thousand children in that delightful enclosure. We had the privilege of marching in with them, and we flatter ourselves that both rank and file comported themselves gallantly.

As the end and object of this army of juveniles was to keep the Queen's jubilee and see Her Majesty, there was no fighting; indeed, such was the good conduct of the little men and women, that we heard neither quarrelling nor ill language; all was joy and harmony. So perfect were the arrangements that each detachment marched to its special tent without apparent impediment, and we found ourselves in the one appointed for our brigade, in front of the rations apportioned to the members thereof, without let or hindrance. As each of the ten tents was but a repetition of the others, the description of one may suffice for all.

A narrow table covered with red baize was placed from one end to the other, and laid with paper bags three abreast, on each of which was a jubilee medal. Behind the table were big barrels of lemonade, with long ladders, and "serving men" to ladle the beverage into the cups prepared for it. In front of the table were "noble lords and ladies gay," also servitors, ready to distribute bags, medals, and lemonade. Each bag contained a meat pie, a bun, a piece of cake, and an orange, and we were afterwards told that it took two or three days and nights to prepare the thirty thousand of each of these dainties for the recipients, and that the ingredients were of the best. Indeed, none of the officials had slept much that night.

Up streamed the children, accompanied by their teachers, school by school. There would

be nearly three thousand to each tent, and as they passed before the long table in single file, each received a paper bag, and was decorated by a jubilee medal, in addition to the badge they already wore as the happy few chosen from their respective schools. This choice had been a terrible anxiety both to teachers and taught, since only seven out of every hundred children could be selected. Some teachers adopted the plan of drawing lots; others that of standards; others, again, regular attendance and good marks. We witnessed the results, and they were very satisfactory.

Of course we preached our little sermon when we could, and hoped "they would be good, and keep their medal, and serve their Queen," and very emphatic were the answering affirmatives.

"Take away your lemonade, and be sure to bring back the cups," was the order to each, strictly obeyed. And of lemonade there was no stint, for the children were imbibing it all the day. The weary teachers had also their bags, and when, at last, all were furnished with provisions, it was pleasant to follow them to the green sward, and watch them begin to consume them. It was only a beginning, for like wise bees, most of them hoarded a portion, and many ignored the cravings of hunger to carry a part home.

"We mustn't take any away," said one obedient girl to another, and when we assured them they could do what they liked with the food, they were quite content.

Amusements were legion, and the teachers said they ran from Punch and Judy to marionettes, Aunt Sallies, lucky bags, and other diversions, in anything but regular scholastic fashion. They saw no play "played out," and when some luckless, ill-informed wight uttered a cry of "Here's the Queen," off scampered the thousands to the boundary-cord, hustling one another to no purpose; for the Queen had not arrived. This happened often.

Meanwhile, the teachers sat about on the chairs provided for them; that is to say, ostensibly for them, but monopolised by the children. Low be it spoken, two special requests made to the visitors were totally disregarded; these were, to see that the chairs were reserved for the teachers, and the paper bags put into the pockets of the youngsters when emptied. The children usurped the seats; the wind, the bags. The Park was strewn with the latter, and we pity those who

will have to gather them up. Perhaps the teachers had the worst of it that day, inasmuch as they had all the labour, and the sports were not for them. Some to whom we spoke looked solitary. They had come from a great distance—one from Deptford, who knew no one; another from her holiday in the country; others from every point of the compass. We are all, perhaps, most interested in the East-enders, just because we have heard so much about them; not really because they are poorer than North or South-enders; so we managed to have some talk with teachers from Bethnal Green, the Docks, and elsewhere. The dress of our thirty thousand must have astonished all beholders, and we tried to ascertain whether they were really so poor as represented. The white frocks and blue or pink sashes, the hats with flowers or feathers in abundance, the flounces, laces, and above all, the tidy boots and stockings, amazed us. There were comparatively few of the ragged, and even these were wonderfully smartened up to meet their Queen.

"My children are of the very poorest," said a kindly teacher, summoning some of them, and introducing them. "This little girl helps her father, who is a milkman, and yet never loses her school. She is in the sixth standard. All the parents have done their best to dress them neatly for to-day."

"I am afraid they spend more than they ought, and think of nothing but fine clothes," said another, and we wondered if they did not follow the example of their so-called betters.

There was a group of conspicuous-looking girls in blue Tam o' Shanter caps with tassels, and their teacher explained that they were thus easily recognised and assembled; while the boys of the same school had blue badges round their caps, with the motto in gold of "God save the Queen." All testified to the maternal desire to make the best of their offspring—and who shall blame them?—and all, or most, spoke of their poverty. One, however, thought that many respectable tradesmen sent their children to the Board school who had no right to take advantage of it.

Still pondering over this anomaly, we had it solved by a gentleman, who said he had worked over twenty years among the poorest inhabitants of Bethnal Green. "To dress the children for to-day," he remarked, "many of the mothers have pawned, perhaps, their last possession. Call it vanity if you will; but

this is a day to be remembered as long as they live." Then he praised the School Board with all his heart. It had humanised the children; it had given them self-respect; it had turned dens of juvenile thieves into honest homes; it had helped to improve London. He was of opinion that the world was mending daily, and that education was the artificer. "I know children who go off in vans and on all sorts of expeditions with their friends in the summer, and come back again willingly to school in the winter. They would all learn, if they could be fed; but their parents can't feed them."

Four o'clock, and a summons to receive the memorial cups. We were obliged to defer our speculations, and return to the tent to assist in the distribution. This was less systematically performed than that of the medals, for the ladies and gentlemen had wandered off on their various devices, and only officials remained. We stuck to our colours, however, and had the gratification of handing the cups as fast as we could. They were white, with two medallions in brown of our Queen: one as she appeared in her girlhood, the other as she appears now, after her fifty years of unblemished reign.

"Are the teachers to have one?" was the oft-repeated question.

"Certainly. Who can deserve it better?" was the reply.

Assuredly, none appreciated more the memorial gift. Some of the children expressed regret that the mugs were handleless.

"They are like jam-pots," said one, with more truth than politeness.

"They are fashionable," we suggested.

"I'd rather have a handle than the fashion," was the unsympathetic answer.

While these thirty thousand mugs were being presented in the ten tents, constant cries of "Here's the Queen! Here she is!" distracted the juvenile mind. False alarms again; for Her Majesty did not arrive until between five and six, and her part in this presentation ceremonial did not take place simultaneously with ours. In token, however, that the Queen put all the cups into the hands of the children—that would have been a gigantic undertaking—she actually gave a representative one to Florence Dunn, a girl of twelve, selected from St. Mary's Western School, Marylebone, for regular attendance. She had been at the school since 1880, and had not missed once.

"Why did the Queen give it to her?" inquired a group of girls who surrounded us, and when we explained, "Oh, there's a many like that," said one, somewhat aggrieved.

Close at hand was a quiet little septett in grave costume, who looked much as if they might have been of the number. They were surrounding a gentleman in shovel hat, and the youngest was seated on his knee. The girls were dressed in brown, with sailor hats, trimmed with a blue ribbon, on which was engraved in gold letters a single name. "Beltana" attracted us, and we asked the meaning of the word of its wearer.

"We are from St. Paul's Schools, Dockstreet. This is our vicar," was the answer.

It was an unconventional introduction; but their kind friend and pastor told us "they

were the orphans of sailors; that they attended his day-school, were called 'clothed scholars,' and were trained for domestic service. The motto on the hat had something to do with shipping and the friends who clothed them. They all came from the London Docks." The rest was cut short by a general rush, for it was a quarter to five.

A mile of children, with their teachers behind them massed on either side of the drive, was a sight never to be forgotten. There were five or six ranks of them, while such as were fortunate enough to secure chairs mounted behind. The front row was seated on the greensward, their mugs at their side, and the crimson boundary-line nowhere. Still they were wonderfully tractable, and their teachers had good command over them.

"We can manage to keep them quiet for a quarter of an hour, but scarcely an hour," said one of the latter, as time wore on, and the Sovereign did not appear.

The sensation of a balloon was too overpowering, and some broke bounds, as if to follow it skyward, others crossed the drive, and by some hidden impulse many rushed off with their memorial mugs, and returned with them brimming over with lemonade. This was a seasonable diversion. So was a good-natured policeman with a wand, whose magic touch caused legs to be drawn in and prostrate bodies placed erect.

"Better not go to bed yet. 'Don't 'ee want to see the Queen?" he said. And everybody laughed.

We beguiled the time by conversation. Many of our neighbours had been fortunate in getting toys from the lucky-dip barrels; some had won fans, dolls, monkeys, Queen's portraits, and what not, by running races. We had before heard the sound of the "flageolet, pipe, and tramcar whistle" similarly obtained, and we had found that, as usual, it was "first come, first served," for some had the lion's share, while others had nothing.

"What a pretty canary! That will be lovely on your mantelshelf," we remarked to a near neighbour.

"It is for the baby; I won it in a race. Oh! the baby is five year old! I won this too," she returned, displaying a jubilee brooch, in which the Queen figured, certainly not "to her advantage."

"That will do for your sister," put in a teacher.

To win something or save something for those at home, was as much the object of the children, as to "dress them becomingly" had been that of the parents. And certainly coloured ribbons and fine feathers were seen to advantage in the juvenile ranks, as were flowing locks and much bedizened head-gear.

There were symptoms of royalty at last, and our enthusiasm began at sight of a mounted soldier. Cheers rose with the words "She's coming!" and when more soldiers came to clear the way, and mounted policemen trotted past, we were all aroused. Even the "bobbies," those natural foes of uproar, received an ovation. But at sight of the Guards we became vociferous.

"Ain't she well guarded!" whispered a little girl named Lilian, mounted on a chair at our back.

"Is that the Queen's luggage?" asked another, as an omnibus rolled past, well surmounted with imperials.

"*Siv-vous-plait!*" broke in a polite lad, scrambling upon a seat. "*Hurrah! here she comes!*" and forthwith he waved a flag.

Off went the hats, out waved the handkerchiefs, up rose the cheers, as Her Majesty actually appeared.

Never had Queen more heartfelt homage from loyal hearts. These men and women of the future became her lieges then and there.

"Don't she look pleasant! Isn't she nice!" broke forth amidst the cheers.

For truly this dearly-beloved Queen did "look pleasant," as she passed through those thirty thousand juvenile subjects. After fifty years of beneficent reign, during which she had worked and wept, rejoiced and grieved like the rest of us, she had still smiles and tears to bestow upon the excited crowds assembled to keep her jubilee. They only thought of her. The Queen! the Queen! was in every heart that day. And the spectacle was unique. Flags, banners, venetian masts, tents, camping ground, all prepared to give an army of children a sight of one whom they had learnt to revere and on whose jubilee the King of kings showered His blessings down. From Him came the glorious weather and the unbroken peace and harmony of a day that will never be forgotten so long as those now joyous hearts continue to beat. It was but a passing glance, still each child was sure that the glance was personal and individual, and that he or she played a special part in the manifestation. Each endorsed the words of the motto that first greeted Her Majesty when she came amongst them, "God bless our Queen; not Queen alone, but Mother, Queen, and Friend in One."

Our enthusiasm gradually subsided, though we still had cheers to bestow on Royal Princes and Princesses, picturesque Indian cavalry officers, archbishops, and bishops, who accompanied the Queen to her loyal borough of Windsor. But the light of the procession, if not of the day, went out with our Queen. No sooner was she outside of the Park than all scampered back to their tents, to secure the last bounty provided by the munificent promoters of the entertainment. We wondered if the Prince and Princess of Wales, who had mingled with the children during the day, were present at the final scrimmage for buns. We were nearly annihilated during the distribution, but managed to survive to watch the cohorts reform and to listen to the plaintive appeals of teachers concerning the how, when, and where of their special contingent; for there were two armies, one going south and one north. They had been so well drilled, however, that they fell in with marvellous precision, and the policemen had more trouble with the crowds of spectators than with them. "Stand aside, and let the children pass," was the cry of these loyal public servants, and we marched out of Grosvenor Gate, fifteen thousand strong, captains and general officers not told.

"God save the Queen!" was the cry as we entered in the morning, and "God save the Queen!" re-echoed as we departed.

