

Parades of Beauty Escape from St. Helena

(Continued from Seventh Page.)

lain and had to be up to snuff. It was the first grand electrical parade that ever rolled before the eager eyes of the subjects of Ak-Sar-Ben. Less than a dozen were in line, but every float was a surprise, a joy, a revelation. Besides the few floats there were only a half dozen bands and less than fifty horsemen in line. But they were there. No detailed information had been given out and before the parade moved the streets were packed to their utmost, it being utterly impossible to estimate the crowds, and guess too many. One had feature of this, though, was the explosion of the tire of the justly celebrated, imported tricycle a few minutes before the start. Fifteen men were to have ridden this instrument of death and destruction. The wheel of this unsainly thing was fifteen feet in diameter and it blew up with a mighty blow.

This parade was viewed from the grandstand in front of the city hall by Mayor Moores and the members of the city council. The biggest personage in this parade was "His Royal Nibs, Samson." He measured thirty feet from seat to crown and he was sitting down. It was Samson's first public appearance and the people didn't blame him. The "Jonah and the Whale" float was also a winner in this procession. Every float was brilliantly illuminated and the experiment was the beginning of the electrical parades which have marked Ak-Sar-Ben's coming each year since.

On the night of September 23, 1897, King Ak-Sar-Ben came into the land of plenty to bless his subjects, heading a electric pageant, the floats in which were scenes of history of the land of Quivera from the founding of Jamestown to the opening of the Transmississippi exposition. It was announced as the greatest parade of the carnival week and for once Omaha people, who formerly had stood and gazed, raised their voices in loud applause.

Ak-Sar-Ben was welcomed to his own on the evening of October 5, 1898, by a dream of the moon told in pictures and the poetry of Granada embalmed for the delight of thousands. The king came second in a chariot of gold and the governors rode on horseback. Alhama's Palace afforded the theme and the legend of the wonderful building from the founder to Boabdil was aptly illustrated. It took twenty floats to do this the way the subjects of Ak-Sar-Ben do things and these, with the numerous bands, made a procession many blocks in length. It was glorious, this entrance of the mighty potentate. President William McKinley reviewed this parade from a stand in front of the city hall.

The famous parade of September 26, 1899, marks an epoch in the history of Quivera. An important epoch. It was the introduction of the mirth-producing, eye-blinding, most awful, tormenting confetti. The largest crowd of any previous occasion had assembled to watch the parade when the first handful of confetti was thrown. It took like wild fire and went faster. With the confetti came the king, heading a pageant of comic floats. This inscription on the first float announced that which was to follow: "Quaint and Merrie Sports and Pastimes for ye young and old. By ye King's command." It was an original, unique affair.

A civic and military parade was given on the night of September 28 of this year in which those who took part battled with a wind that threatened destruction at every turn. In this the forty-eight members of Company L, First Nebraska, were the favorites. The labor unions of the city were a feature of the parade.

Who will forget the evening of Thursday, September 27, 1900? Who does not recall the destruction of the beautiful but volcanic isle of Hawaii? In honor of the king the volcano Kilauea was working overtime—and this caused the trouble. Trained chemists were on the inside causing fire and smoke to belch forth in great goblets. But the volcano got ambitious. The whole works caught fire and as the king sat and almost wept the flames spread from tree to tree, from town to hamlet, and in a short time nothing but the running gear was left and that couldn't go in Ak-Sar-Ben's parade. This parade was symbolic of Ak-Sar-Ben's possessions—the isles of the sea and everything else. It was a lengthy and gorgeous affair.

Preceding this grand welcome to his royal highness the inhabitants of Quivera gave their first daylight parade in honor of their king. This was on Tuesday afternoon, September 25, and was composed of secret societies, setting forth their missions, and labor organizations.

The last and the best and the most gorgeous of them all was pulled off Wednesday night, September 23, 1901. It was a grand exhibition of mechanical skill. The king came into the city by the way of the Platte canal and brought copious drops of the canal with him. But his subjects were loyal and cared not for the gentle down-pour. In the first float came the king himself. In the royal colors an allegory was worked out, showing to the initiated the strength of the land the king delights to honor with his presence. Despite the fact that the country of Quivera was in mourning for the lamented McKinley, this parade was by far the finest ever given by the subjects of Ak-Sar-Ben. It was a marker of what is to come this year.

Juan Balderacci, who fought with the Boers in the Transvaal until he was captured with Cronje and who, it is said, is the only Boer who escaped from St. Helena, was a passenger on the North German Lloyd steamer Frankfurt, which arrived in Baltimore recently.

Balderacci's recent years have been crowded with adventure, reports the Baltimore American. He has a Spanish name, but states that he is of French parentage, having a father, four brothers and two sisters in Galveston, Tex., his home, where he is now bound to have a rest, not having slept in a bed for four years. He went to South Africa six years ago, when he joined prospecting parties and went 600 miles farther north in South Africa than any previous expedition. He also fought with the Boers in two wars against the Kaffirs. Balderacci had a government position in Pretoria when the British-Boer war broke out. He enlisted in the Boer cause and joined a company of Scandinavians under General Cronje. He was at Magersfontein, Klip river, Belfontein and Paardeburg. He was a mounted dispatch bearer for General Cronje when the Boer forces surrendered to Lord Roberts.

Balderacci has had a horse shot from under him; he has been on the firing line but 100 yards from the enemy and twenty-two comrades fell about him at Paardeburg. He was captured on February 27, 1900, having been in the bloodiest battles of the early part of the war and in service since October 11, 1899.

He was in the second shipload of Boer prisoners sent to the Island of Saint Helena, in the South Atlantic ocean, where 5,000 prisoners were quartered. For two long years he was a prisoner on the is and made famous as the place of exile of Napoleon. Then he and Captain de Fleur decided to escape. The first and second attempts were unsuccessful. They had secured pieces of tin from old water tanks and fastened them into flat tin boxes to be worn against the chest as life preservers. They waited until the Spanish training ship Nautilus anchored at sea off Jamestown harbor. After sunset they stood by a boulder on the beach, stripped themselves, put on the tin life preservers and swam out to sea. This was on April 17, 1902. After several hours in the water Captain de Fleur became exhausted, sank and was drowned. Balderacci was seized with cramps and would have gone down but for the assistance of the tin can and his own powerful physique. After five hours' swimming he climbed aboard Nautilus and asked the protection of the Spanish flag, which was granted him. On the same day the ship hove up anchor and sailed for Spain.

When he went aboard the Spanish ship Balderacci possessed nothing but a diamond ring and the tin can. The ship's company made up a purse of \$300 for him and after a fifty-three-day sail he was landed at Ferrol, Spain. After selling his diamond ring he went through France and Italy to Utrecht, Holland, where the Boer committee furnished him with a passage from Bremen, via Baltimore, to Galveston. Balderacci speaks French, Italian, English, Afrikaander and the Kaffir languages. It is said that Balderacci's family is prominent in the city of Galveston.

West Indian Footwear

The slowly growing army of tourists which goes to Cuba and Porto Rico always notices the graceful footwear of the Spanish-American islanders. It is like that of Madrid modified to suit the climate and conditions of the Antilles. Spanish feet are proverbially small, with the high instep and slender ankle so prized by artists. The shoes necessarily partake of the same characteristics and would attract attention anywhere. The most striking style to the visitor from the United States are the morning slippers worn by youthful belle and staid matron alike. One common kind is a mere sandal consisting of a sole and a single band across the lower instep. The sole may be of fancy leather, felt, twine or woven hemp. Some are made of waterproof cloth slightly stiffened and reinforced in the hollow by a steel spring or piece of leather. The band should, however, be of silk or velvet of some rich color, bright or dark, which throws the foot out in bold relief. The slight pressure which it exerts upon the foot tends to force the blood into the surface and makes each little toe of a delicate pink coral hue.

Another sandal has a sole and an upper which covers the forward half of the foot, only the heel being left bare. According to the natives, this is worn by women who have distorted or deformed their feet by wearing tight boots. In these sandals the upper may be of silk or satin for the wealthy, or of wool, cotton or linen for the poorer classes. The commonest pattern is of fine check in polychrome and next to that a series of brilliant stripes like a Roman scarf. The ultra-fashionable have this piece embroidered in silk floss and silver and gold thread, and jeweled with seed pearls or chips of precious stones. Shoes of this class seem to be a survival of the old Spanish woman's stirrup, which was made in the same shape, decorated and jeweled in similar fashion and differing from the house slipper in being made stronger and provided with a steel or silver frame.

Women Are Barred

No woman ever sings in a choir of a Greek church. There are no organs and no musical instruments of any kind are allowed.



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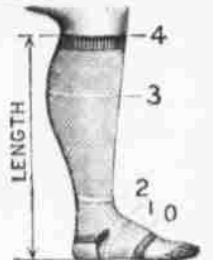
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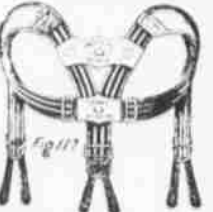
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