A PAGEANT OF EMPIRE

A Playlet for School or Home Performance

BY

SILVEY A. CLARKE

WITH MUSIC BY

OLIVER J. JANES

ONE SHILLING NET

London
SAMUEL FRENCH, LTD.
Publishers
36 Southampton Street
STRAND, W.C.2

New York
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25 WEST 45TH STREET
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Turn to next page of cover.
CHARACTERS IN THE PAGEANT

George (a little English Boy).
Rosie (his Sister).
Spirit of Empire.
Kitty (a little Australian Girl).
Frank (a Boy from New Zealand).
Mafetari (a Maori Boy).
Dinah (a little Girl from West Indies).
Sudan Boy.
Kaffir Chief.
Fisherman from Labrador.
Eskimo.

Lolya (a little Boy from Ceylon).
Monya (a Hindu Girl).
San Muan (Burmese Girl).
Patrick (Irish Boy).
Dilys (a Welsh Girl).
Malcolm (a Scottish Boy).
Boy from Borneo.
Boy from Straits Settlements.
Lullaway (Girl from Pacific Islands).
Trapper (from Canada).

(More characters can be introduced if the pageant is to be acted at school, by including some more of the African peoples and smaller places of the British Empire. If fewer people are able to perform, some of the less important places already mentioned can be omitted.)
(For descriptions of costumes see page 12.)

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A PAGEANT OF EMPIRE

The Scene is an ordinary room with a trestle table or light, easily-moved bamboo table in the centre. This is covered with pens, ink, books and other schoolroom necessities.

There is a large map of the world fixed on the wall at the back of the room, and all the British possessions are marked very strongly in red.

The lights are rather low to suggest twilight, but these should be easily turned full on at the entry of the Spirit of Empire.

There should not be much else in the room besides two ordinary wooden chairs, so as to leave plenty of space for the grouping of the characters.

(The lights are rather low to suggest twilight, and Rosie and George are seen sitting at the table doing their homework. Every now and then George glances at the map at the back of the stage and appears to study it deeply.)

George (shutting the book he is reading with a bang, and stretching his arms wearily). It's no use, Rosie, I can't see to read another single word.

Rosie (also shutting her book, and collecting the pens, ink and papers together as she speaks). Neither can I, and in any case, I'm tired of doing silly old geography! Who wants to know all about other countries, and learn lists of stupid towns and where they are and all about them? I'm jolly sure I don't!

George (musingly). Oh, I like geography all right, but I wish it could be made a bit more interesting. It is so hard to have to remember all about places you
have never seen. If only we could visit all the countries we read about! I wish we could! That would be ripping!

(The lights go up suddenly, and the Spirit of Empire enters.)

Spirit of Empire. I'm afraid you can't do that, George, at least, not at present, though some day—who knows? But if you like, I will ask some of the people from other countries to visit you now.

George) (jumping up in surprise). Oh! Who are you?

Spirit of Empire. Don't look so startled, children. I am the Spirit of that wonderful British Empire you were learning about, and I am going to call on some of your brothers and sisters from other lands to come and visit you here. Help me to move this table and these chairs as we may expect quite a large company, and we want room to receive them all.

(The three of them move the table and the chairs away so that there is plenty of room on the stage, and also so that the map at the back can be clearly seen.)

Now for our first visitor—a little girl.

(She claps her hands, while Rosie and George move to one side of the stage, leaving the centre clear for Kitty, the little Australian girl, who enters carrying some ripe fruit and some corn.)

Kitty (smiles at Spirit of Empire and then turns to Rosie and George). I am Kitty from Australia, and I have brought you some fruit and corn to show you what we grow in our sunny Southern States.

Rosie. We are ever so pleased to see you, Kitty, and we hope very much that you will enjoy your visit here. Please will you tell us about yourself and the sort of things you learn at school?

Kitty. Oh, we learn very much the same sort of things that you learn, but we sing songs about the kan-
garoo and the kookooburra bird, instead of about the lark and the huntsmen and that kind of thing. I would sing you one of the songs if I had more time to spare, but they are rather long. So instead, I will sing you a verse of that wonderful song about the British Empire to which we all belong, and you shall join in the chorus with me.

(She sings the verse about Australia in the "Song of Empire," and they all sing the chorus in a stirring way.)

GEORGE. Thank you, Kitty, that was very pretty. Now please make yourself at home. I am sure we should all be much more comfortable if we were to sit down while we waited for our guests.

Kitty. A good idea of yours, George.

(They sit down cross-legged on the floor, still leaving the centre of the stage clear. The Spirit of Empire moves more to the back, so that with her trident she is able to point to each place on the map as the visitor is mentioned. The New Zealand national anthem is played, and Frank comes striding in, full of life. He smiles heartily at them all.)

FRANK. Hallo, chums! I am Frank from New Zealand; may I come in?

THE OTHERS. Rather!

FRANK. And may I bring my chum? He's a little bit shy, but he will come when he hears my voice.

ROSIE. Yes, of course, call him in. We are all waiting to welcome him.

(FRANK goes to the door and calls "Coooooo-eeeeee!"

A little Maori boy comes in and bows to the company.)

GEORGE (eagerly). Oh, I know who you are! You are a Maori, aren't you?

MAFETARI. Yes! My name is Mafetari, and Frank
has brought me along to meet some of my chums from other countries of the British Empire.

Rosie. I'm so glad you have come, Mafetari. Please come and sit here and tell us about yourself.

Mafetari. I don't go to school, you know, but I learn all kinds of wonderful things when I am busy with my job.

The Others. What is that, Mafetari?

Mafetari. Well, there are some trees where I come from which are known as kauri trees. From these trees comes a sort of turpentine, which gives us kauri gum. This gum is used principally in the making of good varnish. So (he smiles at Rosie and George) my work so far away may have helped to make your chairs and tables look so nice and shiny.

Rosie. I shall always think of that when Mummie is buying varnish, Mafetari.

Frank. Of course, we do other things in New Zealand as well. There is a great deal of mining—coal—

George. Gold, silver, and antimony! There, I knew that all right, didn't I?

Spirit of Empire (smiling). You are really getting quite clever, George. Now, I think we have another visitor.

(Music of some negro melody is heard—either on the piano, or some one off the stage singing a negro song or plantation tune. Enter Dinah, carrying a raffia basket with oranges, bananas and sponges.)

Dinah. Hallo, everybody! Do you know me? I'm Dinah from the West Indies, where the diamonds in your brooch come from, Rosie, and where your morning coffee is grown, George. I've brought you a little gift. (She holds up the sponge first of all.)

George. Lend me a glass, some one, quickly. I'm sure I'm not very dirty, though (he looks at his hands) perhaps I have got some ink on me.

Dinah. I don't mean that you are grubby, brother George. I only meant to show you what we give to our Motherland. Please don't be cross with me.
Rosie. George isn’t cross with you, Dinah. He is only joking. We are all ever so glad to welcome you here.

Dinah. Thank you, Rosie. Now perhaps you will accept these bananas and oranges which I have grown specially for you. *(She hands the raffia basket to Rosie.)*

Rosie. Thank you so much, Dinah, and a little later on perhaps you will sing us one of those jolly darky songs that you know?

Dinah. Of course I will, if we have time.

Spirit of Empire. We shall all enjoy listening to it presently, Dinah, but we must wait until our other guests are here.

*(Beating of drums is heard, and the Sudan Boy and the Kaffir Chief come in.)*

Kitty. Oh dear! They do look fierce.

Spirit of Empire. Don’t be frightened, Kitty, your little brothers from far away will not harm you. They too are members of the British Empire. These people are from Africa *(pointing to it on the map)*, and they could tell you wonderful tales about leopards, lions, crocodiles and other wild animals.

Sudan Boy. Yes, we come from a land of hunting and fighting, and strange beasts and birds. Listen, I will sing you a song.

*(He sings the verse about Africa in the "Song of Empire," and they all join in the chorus.)*

Kaffir Chief. Perhaps one day the little British boy will visit us, and I will make him welcome among my savage people. They shall treat him as my friend.

George. I hope that I may come to your land, so rich in great and wonderful minerals, when I am grown up.

Rosie. Here are some more friends come to see us.

*(Enter a Fisherman from Newfoundland, and a little Eskimo Boy.)*

Rosie. We are very glad to see you here with us.
Perhaps you will tell us something of the land from which you come?

Fisherman. I come from Newfoundland, a country of vast forests, where most of your wood comes from. It is the country, too, of the largest fisheries in the whole world—a land whose rivers and streams yield huge quantities of salmon and cod. My little friend here (he brings the Eskimo Boy to the fore) comes from Labrador.

Eskimo. Yes, I come from the great frozen country where the snow is round us like a huge white blanket. Yet it is a wonderful land, and I wish you could all visit it.

Rosie. So do we, but I am afraid that is impossible. Now make yourselves at home, for I think we have still some more friends coming.

(To the music of "The Indian Love Lyrics," played very softly, come Lolya, Monya, and San Muan. They walk slowly in time to the music.)

Monya. I have come from India, a land of lions and tigers and great snakes. I bring you rice and curry from our sunny land. (Hands a big bright bowl to Rosie, which she puts on the table with her other presents.)

Rosie. Thank you very much, Monya from India, that fairy-tale land of wonderful temples and glittering jewels.

Lolya. I have come from the Garden of the East, for that is what they call the beautiful island of Ceylon. My name is Lolya, and I am proud to meet so many of my little chums from other parts of our far-flung Empire.

San Muan. And I have journeyed all the way from Burma, a land of rivers, rubies, jade, silver and——

George. Pagodas, too. I learned that from my book just before our guests began to arrive.

Rosie. You mustn't interrupt like that, George. Be quiet now, because our little chums from the East are going to sing to us.
(The last three arrivals sing the verse about India from the "Song of Empire," and all the others clap. Then they join in singing the chorus. Shouts of merry laughter are heard outside, and three children rush in with linked arms. They are Patrick, Malcolm and Dilys.)

**Spirit of Empire.** I think these three chums hardly need any introduction, but in case our guests from overseas are not quite sure of their names, I will tell them. *(She holds the hand of each in turn.*) This is Dilys from Wales, the country of song. This is Patrick from the Emerald Isle, and Malcolm from the land of the heather and the kilt.

**Rosie.** We know them ever so well, and we would love them each to sing a verse of one of their national songs.

**The New-comers.** We should love to!

*(They each sing a verse from some song such, as "Wearin' o' the Green," "The Bluebells of Scotland," and the "Ash Grove.")*

**Spirit of Empire.** Now here come two little brown boys from far away. One is from Borneo—

**George** *(almost to himself).* Where the Wild Man in the story came from!

**Spirit of Empire.** And the other is from the Straits Settlements. They will dance for us if we ask them nicely.

**Rosie.** Please, little friends, we should enjoy watching you dance.

*(The two native boys do a weird dance, then, while the others clap them heartily, they sit down in the semicircle that has by this time been formed.)*

**Borneo Boy.** I'll tell you something, chums—would you like to eat birds' nests?

**All.** Birds' nests?

**Borneo Boy.** Yes, really truly birds' nests! There are some special ones that come from my home that are very good indeed to eat.
Rosie. Ugh! I don’t think I should like them!

Straits Settlement Boy. Then perhaps you would like a pudding made from the rice and sugar and nutmegs which we grow where I live? Or even some pineapple. How about that?

All. That sounds very much nicer!

(Sounds of a ukelele are heard, and Lullaway comes in.)

Lullaway (dreamily). I am Lullaway, and I come from the Pacific Islands. My home is very beautiful, for wondrous flowers grow there, and gay birds hover in the palm trees. It is a land of sunshine and idleness.

George. The very place for me!

(At that moment the Canadian Trapper comes in.)

Trapper. Lazy fellow, George. (Looks round.) Hallo, everybody! Of course you know me? I’m a Canadian trapper, and my word, I know some of the boys in the British Isles envy me! I have some adventurous times when I am out trapping, but I have times of great danger as well.

George. You must be very brave! Perhaps some day I will come to Canada and visit you.

Spirit of Empire. Yes, maybe you will, George. (She looks all round.) I think this is about all the friends we can invite just now, so we will listen while our cheery chum from Canada sings us a song.

(The Trapper sings the verse about Canada from the "Song of Empire.")

Spirit of Empire. Now I think we will all get up and sing the chorus together—just like one big family of boys and girls.

(They all rise and join hands in a semicircle round the Spirit of Empire.)

Kaffir Chief (looking slowly round at the company). I never dreamed our Empire was as big as this, and that we had so many chums of different nationalities.

George (slowly and wonderingly). Oh—I never
realized that it is every bit as much *your* Empire as it is ours!

**Frank.** Neither did I! But I'm jolly glad we've got to know some of our brothers and sisters from other lands, aren't you?

**All (very heartily).** Rather!

**Spirit of Empire (slowly and distinctly).** Then shall we not through good and ill To one another cling, And be with Britain one great whole Beneath one flag, one King?

**All.** Of course we will!

**Spirit of Empire.** Well then, let us sing our Empire chorus all together, and then we will sing the most wonderful song of all!

(They sing the Empire Chorus from our song, and then all salute and sing "God Save the King")

**The End.**
ABOUT THE COSTUMES

George wears an ordinary suit, or a jersey and knickers.
Rosie wears a gym tunic and white blouse, or an ordinary school frock.
The Spirit of Empire wears a long white robe draped in the manner of Britannia. This can be made from an old sheet or some butter-muslin. She wears a cardboard helmet, gold painted, and carries a trident and a shield covered with the Union Jack.
Kitty wears a cotton frock and a cotton milkmaid’s bonnet.
Frank has knickers and an open shirt. If possible wears a wide-brimmed cowboy hat.
Mafetari is dark-skinned—(this can be achieved by a brown jersey and the hands and face darkened)—and wears a fuzzy skirt of dried grasses and some beads and heavy ear-rings. His hair must be frizzed up.
Dinah is also dark-skinned, and wears a red and white striped cotton frock and has a bright coloured handkerchief round her head. She has a basket of bright coloured raffia, and in it is a sponge, some oranges and bananas.
Sudan Boy wears a loose dress of a vivid blue. He is dark-skinned.
Kaffir Chief is dressed in a skin rug, and carries a hide-covered shield and a long spear. He has a gold ribbon round his dark hair, with a bright ostrich-feather in front. Can wear heavy gold armlets and anklets (made of thick gold paper).
Fisherman from Labrador wears a sou’wester, a macintosh, and rubber wading-boots.
Eskimo wears furs and a fur hood.
Lolya wears loose tunic-dress of white muslin and a white muslin turban.
Monya is light-brown skinned and wears a bright yellow sari, the piece covering her head being edged with gold ribbon. She should wear gilt sandals.
San Muan has dark curls, and wears a loose Eastern frock of vivid red.
Patrick has a rough tweed suit, white shirted, and has a scarf tied round his neck. He has a rather battered high hat, a clay pipe, and carries a shillelagh.
DILYS—short skirted, white blouse, and short red cloak. She has a frilly white cap and over that, the tall black hat, made from buckram and covered with black shiny paper.

MALCOLM wears kilt and plaid of any tartan, and either a tam-o'-shanter or a Glengarry cap.

BOY FROM BORNEO and BOY FROM STRAITS SETTLEMENTS are both brown-skinned, and can wear a pair of old trousers or knickers, and torn, short-sleeved shirts.

LULLAWAY dressed in frock of light yellow with the skirt covered with bright dried grasses. She has curly dark hair in which are red flowers. She is dark-skinned and has many red beads. Carries a ukelele.

TRAPPER has a short fur coat with belt, thick cycling stockings and snow-shoes if possible. Has a dark cap, and carries a gun.

All the costumes used in this pageant can be made quite simply and cheaply from coloured papers or cheap cotton materials. The Eskimo's fur clothing can easily be suggested by making use of old fur rugs, fur pram-covers, old cuffs and collars, or any other discarded fur articles.

Shields and spears are easily made from cardboard, and any other things carried will be found in every household.
A SONG OF EMPIRE

Words by SILVEY A. CLARKE.

Music by OLIVER J. JANES.

Key G. In marching time.

Australia. 1. I come from far Australia To

Africa. 2. From Africa I've hast'en'd here, With

India. 3. From India I've journey'd here, That

Canada. 4. From Canada I wend my way A-

join this happy band, And add a verse to

kindred to unite, I bring my friends from

land of burning sun; To join with you be-
cross the tossing foam, To strengthen this firm

this sweet song About our Mother land,
other states, To swell our Empire's might.

neath the flag That makes our Empire one.

brotherhood, For every place is home.
CHORUS.

Sing us a song of Empire, An Empire great and free; Al-

Tho' our homes are far apart, A happy band are we. In

working for this Empire, We'll never fail or slack—We're

just one mighty family Beneath the Union Jack.

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