

modern Coronation, for then was used for the first time the Coronation Chair which *Edward First* ordered to be made in 1300 to enclose the *Stone of Scone* which he had captured from the Scots. In it all our sovereigns except only *Edward Fifth* and *Edward Eighth* have been either anointed or crowned. Little now remains of the elaborate decoration with which it was originally enriched by *Walter of Durham*, the King's painter. It is interesting to note that the chair was designed to take the Stone of Scone, it was not just a matter of chance.

When the Queen arrives at the great West Door of the Abbey the grand procession which has been marshalled in the built-on annex, begins to move up the Central Nave and Choir while the Choir sing the anthem, from Psalm 122 :—

"I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the House of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together."

This anthem has been sung at the entry into the church since the Coronation of *Charles First*. It is now sung to the fine setting of the late *Hubert Parry*.

As the Queen emerges from beneath the organ loft she is greeted by the shouts of the Queen's Scholars of Westminster School: "Vivat Regina Elizabetha! Vivat! Vivat! Vivat! This is the only Latin now used in the service, and the privilege of being the first to acclaim the sovereign has been exercised by the Westminster boys, certainly for the last 12 Coronations.

So the procession passes through the choir to the raised platform (a platform built up into the transept on a level with the Altar) between Choir and Altar, and the Queen takes her seat on the south side of the Sanctuary. Immediately she has done so, the Archbishop of Canterbury, accompanied by the great Officers of State and by Garter-King-of-Arms, goes in turn to the four corners of the platform (called the "Theatre") and at each corner presents to the people :—

"Queen Elizabeth, your undoubted Queen: wherefore all you who are come this day to do your homage and service, are you willing to do the same?"

The people then make reply, "God save Queen Elizabeth."

The Queen meanwhile stands in full view by the Coronation Chair, facing each side in turn.

The *Recognition*, as it is called, is a survival from the past, for it preserves the ancient form of the ratification by the people of the election of the sovereign. It is in fact a kind of "banns of marriage," for in theory, at least, opportunity is given for dissent. It contrasts therefore with the shouts of the Westminster boys which represent the spontaneous recognition of their sovereign by the people.

The formal recognition is followed by the administration of the *Oath*, which is put to the Queen in a series of questions by the Archbishop. By this she promises to govern her peoples according to the laws of the land and to uphold the Protestant Faith. The Queen then goes to the Altar and, kneeling there, lays her hand on the Bible and swears to perform and keep the *Oath* which she has promised. She Signs it and returning to her chair she repeats and also signs the Declaration prescribed by Act of Parliament.

This completes what may be called the *Introductory Part of the Service*.

The *Communion Service* now begins and at once the atmosphere changes to one of devotion and deep religious significance, for in it, the Queen dedicates herself to the service of her peoples and is solemnly consecrated, like a Bishop, for her task. It is fitting therefore that after the choir has sung the hymn "*Veni Creator*" ("*Come Holy Ghost, our souls inspire*") the anointing should follow. This is really the central part of the service—the most sacred and mystical part of the rite—the hallowing of the sovereign instead of, as in the case of bishops, the imposition of hands.

The Queen now moves to the Coronation Chair which faces the Altar in which she sits and over which four Knights

of the Garter hold a canopy. Meanwhile, the choir sing the anthem "*Zadok the Priest*" (now and since the Coronation of *George Second*, to the setting by *Handel*). The Archbishop, assisted by the Dean of Westminster, anoints the Queen on the hands, the breast and the crown of the head—Queen *Victoria*, for reasons of delicacy was anointed only on the hands and head—the Archbishop saying :—

"And as *Solomon* was anointed King by *Zadok the Priest* and *Nathan the Prophet*, so be you anointed, blessed and consecrated Queen over the peoples, whom the Lord your God hath given you to rule and govern."

At this point a King is invested first with a sleeveless garment, corresponding to a bishop's rochet, known as the *Colobium Sindonis*, and then with the sleeved *Supertunica* or Close pall of cloth of gold lined with crimson silk, together with its girdle or sword belt. It is curious that although these garments were certainly worn by both *Queen Anne* and *Victoria*, there is no mention of them in the rubrics of their Coronation Services.

Victoria does tell us in her diary that immediately before the Anointing she retired to *St. Edward's Chapel* and "put on the supertunica of cloth of gold in the shape of a kirtle, which was put over a singular sort of little gown of linen trimmed with lace."

The Spurs are then brought from the Altar, and in the case of a Queen Regnant, instead of the heels being touched with them, she merely touches them with her hand and they are then taken back to the Altar.

After this the Archbishop receives the sovereign's sword and after laying it on the Altar he, assisted by other bishops, places it in the Queen's right hand, thereby showing that it is not delivered to her as head of the armed forces but to :—

"Do justice, stop the growth of iniquity, protect the Holy Church of God, help and defend widows and orphans, restore the things which are gone to decay, maintain the things that are restored, punish and reform what is amiss, and confirm what is in good order."

If the precedent of *Queen Victoria's* Coronation is followed the Queen, unlike a King, is not actually girded with the sword but rising immediately, goes alone to the Altar, where, by an act of symbolism, she offers it in the service of God. She is then invested with the Stole and then the Robe Royal or Pall of Cloth of Gold which is buckled in front like a cope.

She has now received all the royal vestments and then follows the delivery of the regalia, each with its own significance. First the Orb, the symbol of independent sovereignty under the Cross, the Archbishop saying as he places it in her hand :—

"And when you see this Orb, thus set under the Cross, remember that the whole world is subject to the Power and Empire of Christ our Redeemer."

The Orb is now a globe surmounted by a jewelled cross, but in mediaeval times it was a kind of sceptre; the cross surmounting a stem or staff which rose from the globe.

The Ring, "the ensign of Kingly dignity," is next placed on the fourth finger of the Queen's right hand and represents that she is wedded to the State. Then comes the Sceptre with the Cross, signifying "kingly power and justice" and then the Sceptre with the Dove, signifying "equity and mercy."

The great moment has now come for the actual crowning.

The Archbishop goes to the Altar, and taking *St. Edward's Crown* in his hands, he lays it on the Altar and says the dedicatory prayer; to quote the rubric :—

"Then the Queen, still sitting in *King Edward's Chair*, the Archbishop, assisted with other Bishops, shall come from the Altar; the Dean of Westminster shall bring the Crown, and the Archbishop, taking it of him shall reverently put it upon the Queen's head. At the sight whereof the People, with loud and repeated shouts, shall cry,
"GOD SAVE THE QUEEN."

At the same moment the Peers and Peeresses and the Kings

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