

King Edward's Best Crown

KING Edward VII has ordered a general overhauling of the jewels of state preparatory for the crowning event of his life, scheduled for June next. The keeper of the royal jewels and his assistants are executing the king's commands with ceremonious energy and will doubtless have the crowns and other precious insignia of imperial pomp and power in line order for the coming coronation.

It is said that four crowns will be used in the ceremony. The chief one, known as Queen Victoria's crown, will be the one actually used in the ceremony of crowning the king; the second one will be used in crowning the queen consort and the other two will be worn by their majesties during the services following the actual crowning.

These, together with the sword of state, the scepters and coronation ring, all taken from the tower by order of the earl marshal of England, are in the custody of the dean of Westminster during the coronation services.

The Queen Victoria crown, also called the state crown, is a dazzling mass of precious stones, 3,693 in all, and many of them have interesting histories. There is a magnificent sapphire, which is said to have come from the ring of Edward, the Confessor. Then there are sixteen small sapphires, eleven emeralds, four rubies, of which one belonged to the Black Prince, four drop-shaped pearls, 273 other pearls, 1,363 brilliant diamonds, 147 table diamonds and 1,274 rose diamonds.

With all this mass of jewels the whole crown weighs only thirty-nine ounces. It was made in 1838 for Queen Victoria's coronation from jewels taken from old crowns and is valued at \$1,800,000. The cap is of crimson velvet lined with white silk and has an ermine border.

It is not the most costly royal crown in Europe; that distinction is asserted for the crown belonging to Portugal, which is valued at \$8,000,000. The crown which represents the smallest outlay is that of Roumania. It is made out of a bit of old cannon captured at Plevna.

The most beautiful crown is that of the king of Denmark. It is simple in design, but of artistic workmanship, the leaves by which the circlet is surmounted being curved and veined by precious stones, and each leaf ornamented by a magnificent jewel.

The oldest crown in Europe, which is also the smallest, measuring only six inches in diameter, is the iron crown of Lombardy.

The one crown which is distinguished as the sacred crown is that of Hungary. It is revered by the people, being regarded as a palladium. Two nobles of ancient lineage and a troop of halberdiers guard it night and day in the castle of Buda, where it is kept.

In olden times no king could reign in Hungary unless the sacred crown had rested on his brow, and if he died before he had been crowned, his name was stricken from the record of kings. Even a pretender acquired a quasi title to the kingdom if by force of stratagem he could possess himself of it.

Twice the crown has disappeared, but how or where it was found the first time is unknown to this day. The last time it was found buried in the ground. A magnificent sapphire is its bright particular ornament. This is surmounted by four beautiful green stones of some unknown kind, lapidaries disagreeing as to what the gems are. A sapphire of matchless beauty also adorns the imperial crown of Austria.

The potentate who possesses most crowns

is the pope, eight at least being stored at the Vatican. Many of them are simply gifts and have no special significance. Napoleon I was the donor of one to Pius VII. This is the handsomest one of all, having a beautiful emerald. A queen of Spain was the donor of another. The principal papal crown is a triple one.

In Spain and Belgium the crown does not figure in the coronation services. The feature of the ceremony in both countries consists in the king's swearing to preserve the constitution and laws of the country. Nor is it a matter of course that a czar should be crowned, though Nicholas and his consort were crowned with great pomp at Moscow. The czar being a religious as well as a temporal lord, the crown in shape is modelled after a bishop's mitre. Again, in this case, a sapphire is the most beautiful stone in the crown. There are five diamonds resting on a magnificent ruby, which form the cross surmounting the crown.

Outside of Europe the crown becomes a rarity. The sultan, for example, possesses no crown, coronation being unknown in Turkey. In place of this is substituted the investiture of the monarch with the sword of Osman. The saber is girt around the sultan with the words: "Take it with faith, for ye have received it from God."

The shah of Persia has a crown, if such it can be called, which is variously described as resembling a flower pot and a bonnet. The small end is open, the other closed. It is made of cloth of gold, with serings of hanging precious stones, with here and there tufts of feathers, ornamented by diamonds, rubies, emeralds and pearls. At the top is set what is perhaps the greatest ruby in the world, an uncut, absolutely flawless stone as large as a hen's egg.

Pointed Paragraphs

Chicago News. The spider is an expert fly-fisher.

Look out for hard times; the days are getting shorter.

Mosquitoes have no pedigrees, yet they are often full-blooded.

A childless marriage isn't a howling success in one sense of the term.

If the victim remains single there can be no objections to love at sight.

Some women who see things as they are drive their husbands to seeing them double.

The man who finds fault with his neigh-

bor's religion should spend a little time re-peating his own.

It is easier for one wise man to fool a dozen fools than it is for a dozen fools to fool one wise man.

Of course the serpent knew things were coming his way as soon as he discovered a woman in the garden.



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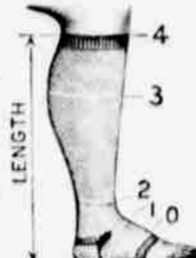
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