

4 feet 7 1/2 inches in length, tipped with a steel point, and having at the top a sphere and cross of gold. It is said that a piece of the Cross is contained within the sphere.

The Great Sword of State has a velvet scabbard, ornamented with national heraldic badges and designs in bosses of metal work, and quillons in the shape of a lion and a unicorn. It is borne by the President of the Council at the Coronation.

St. George's Spurs were made for Charles II. They are of the "prick" pattern, and are richly wrought in gold.

The Bracelets are of gold, and may be the same as were made originally for Charles II., but, if so, they have been considerably worked upon since. They are 1 1/2 inches broad and 2 1/2 inches in diameter, and they have the national badges—the Rose, Harp, Shamrock, and Thistle, enamelled in colours upon them.

The Golden Eagle or Ampulla is said to be the same as was used for containing the sacred cream at the Coronation of Henry IV. There is now little left, however, of the ancient work, except perhaps the screw at the neck. The bird has been provided with new wings, feet, and pedestal, probably by Sir Robert Vyner, and it has been newly chased all over. It was preserved from destruction in the seventeenth century by being kept at Westminster Abbey. It measures about 9 inches in height.

The Coronation Spoon is of silver gilt, and is thought to date from the 12th century. It is 10 inches in length. The handle is ornamented with champeve scroll work and some pearls, and the bowl is divided by a ridge down the centre. At the Coronation the Archbishop uses this spoon to dip his fingers in for the anointing.

Bracelets have from earliest times been emblematical of Sovereignty, and were worn by the Kings of Babylon and Assyria. Even now, in Persia, only the Shah himself or his sons may wear them. They were used at the Coronations of various English monarchs, notably those of Richard II., Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth.

The bracelets which are at present among the Crown insignia are supposed to have been those made for Charles II., and are one-and-a-half inches in breadth, and two-and-a-half inches in diameter. They are of solid gold, lined with crimson velvet, and bear the emblems of the three kingdoms and the fleur-de-lis of France in exquisite champeve enamel work. The Irish harp is in pale blue enamel, the rose of England in deep crimson, the thistle in pale greens and purples, and the fleur-de-lis in a rich deep yellow.

**THE CORONATION CHAIR.**

The coronation chair, of which a picture appears elsewhere in this issue, is of considerable historic interest. Known as the chair of St. Edward, it is an old-fashioned seat of hardwood, gaily painted, and was used in ancient days for the coronation of the Scottish kings. Edward I., known as Longshanks, brought it to England in 1296, after defeating the Scottish king, John Balliol, at Dunbar. Since then the chair has been kept in Westminster Abbey. Under the seat is a board supported by four lions. On this is the famous Jacob's stone, on which Jacob's head is said to have rested when he dreamed of seeing the ladder which reached to heaven. This stone was originally the royal chair of Ireland. It was called Fiatal, or the stone of fate. This stone is said to have been taken to Spain by Cathol, king of the Scots, but was brought back to Ireland by Simon Brech, leader of a band of Scots, about 700 B.C. The gods gave this stone to the Scottish people with the promise that a scion of their race should always reign over the land which retained possession of this relic. Sir Walter Scott tells us that Fergus, son of Eric, probably a descendant of Brech, was driven out of Ireland, and landed in 503 B.C. on the coast of Argyleshire, bringing the stone with him. Later it was brought

by King Kenneth of Scotland to Scone Castle, and the Scottish kings were crowned on it from that time till Edward I. destroyed the royal residence of Scone and took the stone to London. The Scots formerly believed that it gave forth musical sounds when the rightful ruler seated himself upon it, but remained mute when a usurper was crowned. The conveying of this stone to England was regarded as a national humiliation by the Scots, and in the treaty concluded between England and Scotland, in 1328, one of the conditions was the return of this ancient treasure. Edward III. gave orders that it should be sent back, but for some unknown reason they were never obeyed. When James VI. of Scotland ascended the throne of England under the name of James I. the aforementioned prophecy seemed to have been fulfilled. The stone is undoubtedly a relic of remote antiquity. It is not, however, of meteoric origin, as many have maintained, but a block of red sandstone containing an unusual proportion of iron. It was once carved, gilded, and painted, but these decorations have entirely disappeared. In modern coronations it is covered with a gold cloth.

**THE COST OF CORONATION**

**IMMENSE SUMS REQUIRED FOR THE RITE.**

The jewellers, robe makers, and Court costumiers of London will reap an abundant harvest from the Coronation of Edward VII.

An authority, consulted by a representative of an English paper, estimates that the tradesmen of the West End would benefit to the tune of a million and a half. Three-quarters of this would be spent by private individuals, the rest by or on behalf of the Crown.

The Coronation of George IV. cost the country a million of money; that is, the tax payers were practically mulcted in that sum. But Edward VII., with his natural dislike of all display and ostentation, has not, of course, indulged in the gorgeous extravagance of his predecessor.

That the Coronation of George IV. transcended almost any other ceremonial of the kind that has taken place in this or any other country appears to be beyond doubt. Its impressiveness may be measured from the subjoined extract from a private letter written by a lady who was privileged to be present, and who was escorted by Sir Walter Scott:—

"Here is the longest sheet I can find," she writes, "and were it ten times longer and had each of my ten fingers the pen of a Walter Scott busy at its point, a tenth part of all I have seen this day ten days would hardly suffice to tell."

At four o'clock on the morning of the Coronation of George IV. ten miles of carriages were already wending their way towards Westminster. In public and private expenditure the ceremonial cost close upon two and a half millions.

James II. did not aspire to such colossal display. He was possessed with a desire to be "economical," and on that score abandoned the Coronation procession. Nevertheless, he unselfishly allowed more than £100,000 to be spent in adorning the Queen for that grand occasion! In comparison, very modest indeed was the cost entailed at the Coronation of William and Mary. However, £3703 15s 5 had to be spent in jewels for the Regalia, as the Master of the Jewel House naively reported that "though he had the Regalia in his possession it had been dismantled of the jewels."

Genuinely economical was William IV. He actually suggested to Earl Grey, the Prime Minister of that time, that the Coronation should be dispensed with altogether. As it was, no procession took place, and the banquet was for the first time omitted. In connection with King Edward's crowning all the nobles in the country will be present at Westminster, wearing their coronets and full robes, with their resplendently jewelled Orders. In many cases coronets would have to be purchased, for several comparatively newly made earls have not yet gone to the ex-

pense of purchasing these symbols of their high estate. An earl's coronet costs from £300 to £450.

To a greater extent new robes would be required—ranging in price from £60 to £500. The Royal robe of crimson velvet, furred with ermine and bordered with gold, will cost close upon £1000. That of George IV. reached just double that sum. The late Queen's crown was specially made, the precious stones being taken from the old crown, which did not fit her. The same plan has had to be adopted for the King.

**FARTHING CORONATIONS.**

**WHAT SIGHTSEERS PAID AT THE CROWNING OF EDWARD I.**

"I wish to hire a window overlooking the route of the Coronation procession," wrote a provincial gentleman to a London agent some time before Christmas, "and am prepared to give £10 for the day."

"I cannot get a window in a good position for less than £30," was the agent's reply. "That figure will be increased 50 per cent. by Christmas."

The demand for vantage points whence to view the great pageant set in early with grim earnest. A colonial millionaire signed a contract for three windows in the West-end at £500 a window.

These figures contrast strangely with the sums paid to view Coronation processions in the past. Half a farthing was the price of a seat to see the first Edward wend his triumphal way to the throne. A wave of prosperity appears to have swept through the land at the time of the succession of Edward II., for as much as a whole farthing was cheerfully paid to view that monarch's progress through the streets. Edward III. must have felt a thrill of pride when he learnt that his subjects valued him at double the amount of his predecessor—that is, one halfpenny.

But this record was in turn hopelessly beaten by Richard II. People paid a penny to see him, though grumblers declared that "the show was not worth the money."

When Henry V. came to the throne people paid as much as twopenny to cheer him on his way. People were extravagant with their money at Henry VIII.'s Coronation, when fourpence was demanded for a seat.

When the great Elizabeth came to the throne, however, her subjects, in the exuberance of their loyalty and joy, paid another twopenny. The historians of James I. dilate at great length on the growing wealth of the country, of which there could be no more striking evidence than the fact that thousands of people on the line of the procession paid 1/ each for seats.

Charles II. found his subjects in the best of tempers, so much so, indeed,

that they paid half-a-crown to look at him as he passed—a generosity attributed to the relief felt at the riddance of the Roundheads. William and Queen Anne doubled this price, while the country quite lost its head over George II., and disbursed half a guinea.

It was not until the accession of George IV. that anything like modern Coronation prices were reached, though they seldom exceeded £5 for a seat. Enormous sums were paid to witness the late Queen Victoria's progress to Westminster; but those sums are quite moderate compared with the prices that seats have fetched on the present occasion.



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