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THE CORONATION OF KING EDWARD VII.

At noontide on the 9th instant, amid a scene of unparalleled splendour, in which was represented the joyous enthusiasm of the Empire, His Gracious Majesty King Edward VII. was first acclaimed as the rightful Sovereign of these realms, after which his title received solemn recognition by the Crown being placed on his brow as the seal and sign of kingship. The elaborate ceremonial observed was formularized not for display but to express as far as is possible by symbolic actions what is meant, what is implied, what is invoked in and by the coronation of a British King. No ceremony can be made too impressive, nor any symbolic actions too vivid, nor any accompaniments too magnificent for such an august occasion, which stands alone in grandeur amongst the pages of history that have thrilled and awed the imaginations of men. A British King's throne stands in almost sublime isolation amongst the lofty places of the earth. As Schiller says, "It is an ancient, consecrated Throne, which rests in long, holy possession, fast fixed in custom which is bound by a thousand tough and stringy roots to the pious faith of the people." The British throne rests indeed upon the hearts of the people, whereas in other lands the monarch represents rather the physical force of government than the loyal affection of the nation. An English King is the symbol of popular, constitutional government; he represents the whole nation, as is not done by either an autocratic or elected chief ruler; the authority of the former rests on bayonets, that of the latter on ballot boxes, into which only the favourable votes of a section of the people are cast.

The antiquity of the Coronation ceremonial is sneered at only by persons to whom Providence has denied the faculty of imagination, whose historic studies have not taught them one of their most impressive lessons regarding the power that usages consecrated by centuries have over the wills and sentiments of mankind. The love of ceremonial, the belief in the efficacy of ceremonial acts seems a human instinct. Let those who see nothing in a ceremonial act try to abolish the custom of using the ring in marriage, the affixing of a seal to a deed,

of raising the hat or the sword as a respectful salutation, of uncovering the head in a church, of bowing the head to ladies and a score of other acts which are simply symbolic ceremonies. Indeed, if some sarcastic critics of the Coronation were successful in abolishing all symbolic usages, as they seem anxious to be, they would degrade man from being the head of creation to a rank lower than some of the beasts for human language, oral and written, and his gestures indicative of desires and feelings are all mere symbols.

The Coronation ceremony is a religious function of intense solemnity. The King in the midst of a devotional service attended by representatives of all orders in the realm, conducted by the chief clergy of Britain's ancient Church, is called upon to swear that he will govern his subjects in righteousness as the servant of God. The Coronation ceremony raises the King to the highest plane of duty and responsibility which a human being can occupy. It is well indeed for such obligations to be assumed amid and as a part of the solemnities of a religious service, for only by the assistance of Divine guidance and inspiration can a British King fulfil the duties of his royal state and live a kingly life before His Maker and his people.

King Edward VII. has shown some of the noblest traits that adorn a throne. He is wise, a lover of peace, a promoter of Christian and philanthropic enterprises, a friend of the poor and an example to the rich, while he stands by ancient usages which have the halo of time's consecration, he moves forward abreast of the times, honouring old precedents by creating new ones to meet modern needs, just as the old were in their day. King Edward is worthy to be the son and successor of Queen Victoria; it would be difficult to frame a nobler eulogy. Of Queen Alexandra all that is honourable in a woman can be said. The fierce light that beats upon a throne has failed to reveal a speck or flaw in her lovely character or life. With devout thankfulness that the King was restored from a very dangerous sickness to be crowned by an Empire's loyal affection we echo the jubilant prayer:

**GOD SAVE KING EDWARD!
GOD BLESS QUEEN ALEXANDRA!**