

THE KING-EMPEROR

Riot Act,' of 1714, is necessary before action is taken to preserve order by the military or other persons not members of a regular police force, is a delusion ; though there is a good deal of excuse for it. For Great Britain, at any rate, is not a 'police State'—i.e. a State in which the police force is brought under one central control, and thus made a regular organ of the supreme government. On the contrary, except for the Metropolitan Police, the police forces of Great Britain are still, as they were in the old days of the village constable and the 'watch,' bodies under the control of the local authorities, the county and borough councils and magistrates, who enrol, equip, and maintain them, though they are subject to inspection by the central government, which makes grants in aid of their pay and up-keep. The chief differences are that, while the old village constable and the 'watch' were compelled to serve, and were not specially trained for their work, the modern policeman of Great Britain joins the force quite voluntarily, is paid a living wage, and is scientifically trained. Yet, local as he is, every policeman, or 'constable' (as he is still more properly called) acts in the King's name, and bears the staff surmounted by a copy of the King's crown.

The same principle applies throughout the whole vast range of that part of the government which we call 'the Executive,' because its main concern is with the enforcement or execution of the law. Whether the executive official is directly appointed by the King, as in the higher ranks of government and magisterial service, or by a local authority, as in the case of a sheriff's officer or a superintendent of police, whether his range of action is wide, like that of the Postmaster-General, or limited, like that of the Justice of the Peace or the Sheriff, each of his acts is done in the name of the Crown. Even so humble an act as the delivery of a postcard bears witness to this truth, in its stamp which bears the King's portrait.