



THE QUEEN ATTENDS COMMONWEALTH CONCERT. — Her Majesty the Queen, seen here wearing a crinoline type evening gown with the ribbon of the Order of the Garter, attended a special concert given by Australian and New Zealand artists at the Royal Festival Hall, London.

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Queen's Household Has Many Officials

Who is the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod? The Clerk of the Closet? The Master of the Queen's Musick? Who is the Lord Steward, the Keeper of the Privy Purse, the Keeper of the Jewel House?

Few people could tell you offhand. And of those who could, fewer still could describe the duties and traditions attaching to many of the appointments in Her Majesty's Household.

The Royal Household is a complex organization; it is a general term applying to the machinery of monarchy revolving around the person of the Queen, but includes a majority who do not minister to her personal comfort but discharge State duties. And "household" includes, in the physical sense, Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle, and the great rambling Abbey and Palace of Holyroodhouse in Scotland.

The servants (using the term in the broadest sense) of Her Majesty are necessarily diverse in their titles and duties. Taking precedence are the great Officers of State—the Lord High Steward, the Lord High Chancellor, the Lord High Treasurer, the Lord President of the Council, the Lord Privy Seal, the Lord Great Chamberlain, the Lord High Constable and the Lord High Admiral.

Influential Positions

When these officers were first created all were members of the Royal Household and held the most influential positions in the realm—for in those days the King's servant took to themselves the government of the country. With the passage of centuries certain offices were allowed to lapse, while the seventeenth-century revolution put Parliament before the King. The King-in-Parliament could change the law, but the King alone could not.

Today only three of the Great Officers of State take any real part in the daily life of the nation—the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Privy Seal and the Lord President of the Council. The remaining six are today mainly ceremonial in importance and unrelated to day-to-day affairs.

Until the fifteenth century, the most powerful person at court was the Lord High Steward. He was the Sovereign's principal Officer, but he could so easily exploit his vast influence for his own ends that his office was merged with the crown and is now only granted to a subject for a few hours at a time, such as a coronation or the trial of a peer.

The Lord High Chancellor is the second great officer of state. He is the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, and he is the highest judicial officer in the land. On official occasions he takes precedence over the Prime Minister. He appoints judges and justices of the peace, presides over the Supreme Court of Judicature and the Court of Chancery, and has special jurisdiction in other matters. He is, for instance, the legal guardian of all minors in the care of the courts, is patron of many ecclesiastical livings, is legally in charge of all idiots and lunatics and is chairman of the House of Lords. The appointment is really political nowadays and the holder is invariably a member of the Government in power.

The Lord High Treasurer is one of the appointments held "in commission"—i.e. the duties are handed over to others to carry out. At one time he literally was a treasurer. He handled the King's "treasure" and, by fair means or foul, added to it. He was responsible for the appointment of all commissioners entrusted with the collection of revenue for the Crown. Today the office is executed by five or more persons, known as the Lords of the Treasury, of whom the most important is the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the man in charge of the nation's cash-box.

The Lord President

The Lord President of the Council, the fourth great officer of State was, until the reign of Queen Elizabeth I,

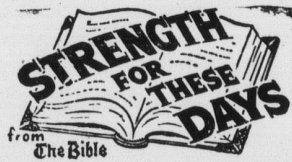
immensely powerful. The administrative powers of the Privy Council were then important. Today it is a sinecure office, given to some leading member of the Government who needs the status, but whom it is not intended to tie down with departmental duties.

The Lord Privy Seal has charge of the seal which must be affixed, on the warrant of the Queen, to charters, pardons, and many other documents before they are passed for the Great Seal. This office is of great antiquity, and nowadays is of considerable status, though, again, not entailing departmental duties. The Lord Privy Seal is usually a close confidant and advisor to the Prime Minister.

The sixth great office of State, that of the Lord Great Chamberlain, dates back to the days of Henry I, when it was invested in the father of the Earl of Oxford and his heirs and held by his descendants up to the eighteenth century. His most important duty is the care of the Palace of Westminster and the House of Lords. Its holder is responsible for all arrangements when the Queen visits Parliament in person.

A Queen Appointment

The Lord High Constable is a queer appointment—it lasts for only one day, the day of the coronation. Although dating from the reign of King Stephen, the Norman who ruled from 1135-54, it has long since ceased to be a hereditary continuous appointment.



Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned; forgive, and ye shall be forgiven. —(St. Luke 6, 37.)

When we pray God for forgiveness, do we first in our hearts forgive those we feel have wronged us? Do we judge and condemn others for errors and shortcomings without confessing our own? Let us always remember what Christ Jesus said of the greatest virtue—charity.

At one time he was supremely important, being the head of the feudal forces under the Sovereign and president of the Court of Chivalry, the main authority of martial law. The office was much abused and in the sixteenth century was fused with the Crown.

The office of Earl Marshal, now held by the Duke of Norfolk, goes back to Norman times. He is the head of the College of Arms and the greatest authority on ritual and ceremony.

Finally, and ninth, comes the Lord High Admiral. Once he managed the Royal Navy, but today the appointment is held in commission (entrusted to others—in this case the Lords of the Admiralty). The First Lord is the political head and a member of the Cabinet, while the First Sea Lord is the professional head.

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