

# The Modern Coronation Service

(By W. J. Passingham, Author of "Angels in Aldgate," "A History of the Coronation," etc.)

To describe the pomp and splendour, the significance and the overpowering solemnity of a Coronation service adequately is a hopeless task, since with it all there is an emotional atmosphere—to which even the most hardened spectator is not immune—that mere words fail to embrace. Only the actual eye-witness can appreciate fully the vast wonder of it all, that traditional splendour presented in the same glorious and ancient fane for nearly nine centuries, and which is experienced on no other occasion than a coronation.

Arrayed in crimson, gold, purple, and ermine, breasts blazing with decorations and glittering jewels, the nobles and leaders of the whole Empire—as well as potentates from almost every other country in the world—crowd in on the Theatre from all sides. All that is noblest and best in the Anglo-Saxon race is there to witness the crowning glory of and pay homage to a King and Emperor.

And the setting is Westminster Abbey, shrine of a great and ancient people who have influenced civilization as perhaps no other race in the long history of the world.

"Here," says Jeremy Taylor, "where our kings have been crowned, their ancestors lie interred, and they must walk over their grandfathers' head to take his crown."

Although our kings are no longer buried in the Abbey, it remains the setting for the Coronation and its age-old ritual which, though shorn of some of the ancient ceremony, is still per-

forms before the High Altar there with all the solemnity, beauty and dignity of medieval days. It may safely be said that a man who could witness an English Coronation ceremony and remain unmoved is not an Englishman—if, indeed, he be human at all. While the Coronation service may seem bewildering at first, careful attention to the proceedings will reveal a number of acts all of which have a separate and special significance.

The first care on the morning of Coronation Day is to see that the Ampulla is filled with oil, and, together with the spoon, ready for use upon the Altar of the Abbey Church. Archbishops and Bishops Assistant are vested in their copes, and a procession is formed immediately outside the west door of the Abbey. This procession re-

mains waiting there until notice is given of the approach of the King, and then, slowly, it begins to move back into the church.

The Coronation service begins when the Sovereign enters Westminster Abbey at the west door, and he is received with the well-known anthem: "I was glad when they said unto me, We will go into the House of the Lord," etc.

While the anthem is being sung the King passes up the body of the church, into and through the Choir to mount a set of stairs leading to what is called the Theatre. This is simply a platform constructed according to ancient precedent between the Choir and the Altar, so that all those present may have an uninterrupted view of the proceedings. The height of the Theatre has varied throughout the centuries, and is not nearly so tall nowadays as once was deemed necessary. At Edward the Sixth's Coronation, for example, there were some twenty-two steps mounting upward to the dais from the west side.

On reaching the platform the Sovereign kneels in private prayer, and other leading figures in the ceremony follow his example. Then the Archbishop of Canterbury, together with the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Great Chamberlain, the Lord High Constable, and the Earl Marshal, go to the east, south, west and north corners of the Theatre in that order. With the Sovereign standing by his Chair, and turning each time in the same direction as the Archbishop, the following question is asked in a loud voice from the four cardinal points.

upon the Altar. When this ceremony is ended two Bishops, vested in copes, sing the Litany—while the Choir sing the responses:—"O God, the Father of Heaven . . . etc."

When the Bishops have returned to their places, the Archbishop begins the Communion Service.

"O God, who providest for Thy people by Thy power, and rulest over them in love; grant this Thy servant . . . our King, the spirit of wisdom and government, that being devoted to Thee with all his heart, he may so wisely govern this kingdom that in his time Thy church and people may continue in safety and prosperity; and that, persevering in good works to the end, he may through Thy mercy come to Thine everlasting kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord . . ."

At this point in recent coronations the Commandments have been recited. One of the Bishops now reads the Epistle—"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake . . ." The Sovereign and the rest of the congregation stand while another of the Bishops reads the Gospel. This is followed by the singing of the Creed:—"I believe in one God the Father Almighty . . ."

During the recitation of the Creed, a Bishop takes his place in the Pulpit, at the northeast corner of the Theatre, and waits to begin the sermon—which by ancient tradition must be short as well as appropriate to the great occasion. After the sermon opens certain movements begin unobtrusively to take place in the Theatre. The King, who has remained uncovered during the singing of the Litany, now puts on his cap of crimson velvet, while the Bishop of Durham stands at his right hand. On the King's left hand the Bishop of Bath and Wells, and the Lord Great Chamberlain take up their positions. Two Bishops detailed to support the Queen stand on either side of her. In a chair covered with purple velvet sits the Archbishop of Canterbury. On the north side of the wall other Bishops take their seats between the Archbishop and the Pulpit. On the west side sit the Dean of Westminster, and the Prebendaries of Westminster.

After the sermon the Archbishop rises, and stands before the King to administer the Coronation Oath. First the Archbishop inquires:—"Sir, is your Majesty willing to take the Oath?"

The King: "I am willing."

Archbishop: "Will you solemnly promise and swear to govern the People of this United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Dominions thereto belonging, according to the statutes in Parliament agreed on, and the respective Laws and Customs of the same?"

The King: "I will."

Archbishop: "Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the Laws of God, the true Profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant Reformed Religion established by Law? And will you maintain and preserve inviolably the Settlement of the Church of England, the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government thereof, as by law established in England? And will you preserve unto the Bishops and Clergy of England, and to the Churches there committed to their charge, all such Rights and Privileges, as by Law do or shall appertain to them or any of them?"

The King: "All this I promise to do."

Then the King rises from his chair—assisted by the Lord Great Chamberlain, and with the Sword of State carried before him—and approaches the Altar. Here he uncovers and makes his solemn Oath before all the people. He says his right hand upon the Holy Gospel in the Great Bible (presented to him by the Archbishop), and says:—"The things which I have here before promised, I will perform and keep. So help me God."

The King then kisses the book, and signs the Oath.

(It is a point worthy of note here that the exact words of the Oath are nowhere set out in the original manuscript of the "Liber Regalis.")

The original Coronation Book, on which English kings from Henry the First to Henry the Eighth took the Oath, is now one of the most closely guarded relics in the manuscript department of the British Museum. Since the time of Henry the Eighth, and the fundamental changes in religion for which he was responsible in England, a new book is provided for each coronation. It is claimed for the original Coronation Book that it was once the property of King Aethelstan the Saxon, and it must be numbered among the world's priceless manuscripts.



The King's Crown

After the Oath is taken there are preparations for the most sacred act of the whole Coronation ceremony. When the King returns from the Altar to his chair he (together with the Queen should she be crowned with him) kneels while the Archbishop of Canterbury recites the following prayer:—"O Lord, Holy Father, who by anointing with oil didst of old make and consecrate kings, priests, prophets, to teach and govern Thy people Israel; bless and sanctify Thy chosen servant . . . who by our office and ministry is now to be anointed with this Oil, and consecrated King of this Realm. Strengthen him, O Lord, with the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of wisdom and government, the Spirit of counsel and ghostly strength, the Spirit of Knowledge and true godliness, and fill him, O Lord, with the Spirit of Thy Holy Fear, now and for ever. Amen."

Now the choir sings the Anthem:—"Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anointed Solomon King; and all the people rejoiced and said: 'God save the King. Long live the King. May the King live forever. Amen!'"

While this anthem is being sung the King, assisted by the Lord Great Chamberlain, takes off his crimson robe and Cap of State, and supported and attended as before, walks to the Altar. He now sits down in St. Edward's Chair—which is placed in the centre of the area near the Altar. "Four Knights of the Garter hold over him a rich pall of silk, or cloth of gold. Now the Dean of Westminster takes the Ampulla and Spoon from the Altar, and pours some of the Holy Oil into the Spoon, and with it the Archbishop anoints the King—now kneeling—in the form of a cross.

First he anoints the King's head, saying:—"Be thy head anointed with Holy Oil, as kings, priests and prophets were anointed."

(On the breast) "Be thy breast anointed with Holy Oil."

(On the palms of the hands) "Be thy hands anointed with Holy Oil, and, as Solomon was anointed king by Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet, so be you anointed, blessed, and consecrated King over this People, whom the Lord your God hath given you to rule and govern, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Now the Dean of Westminster, having received the Ampulla and Spoon from the Archbishop, restores the insignia to the Altar. The Archbishop of Canterbury stands and pronounces the following blessing:—"Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who by his Father was anointed with the Oil of Gladness above his fellows, by his Holy Anointing pour down upon your head and heart the blessing of the Holy Ghost, and prosper the works of your hands; that by the assistance of His heavenly grace you may preserve the people committed to your charge in wealth, peace, and godliness; and after a long and glorious course of ruling this temporal kingdom wisely, justly, and religiously, you may at last be made partaker of an eternal kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

After the blessing the King rises from his knees, and again sits in the Chair of St. Edward, while the Knights of the Garter give back the pall to the Lord Great Chamberlain. As the Dean

of Westminster approaches the King, the monarch rises to be clothed in the Colobium Sindensis and Supertunica. Again the Dean goes to the Altar and returns with the Spurs, which he delivers to the Lord Great Chamberlain who, kneeling down, touches the King's heels with them. The Sword of State is now delivered to the Lord Great Chamberlain who places it upon the Altar, while he who delivers it brings another Sword—in a scabbard of purple velvet—which is girt upon the King. Now the Sword of State is blessed as it lies upon the Altar, even as of old a knight's arms were blessed, while the Archbishop says the following prayer:—"Hear our prayers, O Lord, we beseech Thee, and so direct and support thy servant King . . . who is now to be girt with this Sword, that he may not bear it in vain; but may use it as the minister of God for the terror and punishment of evil-doers, and for the protection and encouragement of those that do well, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

The Archbishop now takes the Sword of State from the Altar, and delivers it into the King's right hand—the Archbishop of York and the Bishops of London and Winchester assisting with these words:

"Receive this Kingly Sword, brought now from the Altar of God, and delivered to you by the hands of us the Bishops and servants of God, though unworthy."

The King is now girt with the Sword by the Lord Great Chamberlain, and when he sits down the Archbishop says:—"With this Sword of Justice, stop the growth of iniquity, protect the Holy Church of God, help and defend widows and orphans, restore the things that are gone to decay, maintain the things that are restored, punish and reform what is amiss, and confirm what is in good order; that doing these things you may be glorious in all virtue, and so faithfully serve our Lord Jesus Christ in this life that you may reign for ever with Him in the Life which is to come."

Then the King ungirds his sword, and, walking to the Altar, offers it there in the scabbard. He returns to sit down in St. Edward's Chair. The Peer who carries the sword in the Coronation procession now approaches the Dean of Westminster and offers his redemption money for the weapon—which is according to ancient custom one hundred shillings. Having thus redeemed it, he receives the sword from off the Altar. He now draws the sword from its scabbard, and thereafter carries it naked before the Sovereign during the rest of the solemnity.

Next is the ceremony of robing the King, who rises from his chair for this purpose. The Master of the Robes delivers the Royal Robe, or Pall of cloth of gold, to the Dean of Westminster who clothes the King while the Lord Great Chamberlain fastens the clasps. When the King is again seated in the St. Edward's Chair the Orb is brought from the Altar by the Dean of Westminster and handed to the Archbishop of Canterbury. As the Archbishop delivers the Orb to the King he pronounces the following blessing and exhortation:—"Receive this Imperial Robe and Orb, and the Lord your God endue you with knowledge and wisdom, with majesty and with power from on high, the Lord embrace you with his mercy on every side, the Lord clothe you with the Robe of Righteousness, and with the gar-

## Here's a Health Unto Their Majesties

COMMODORE RESTAURANT  
Hamilton Block, Third Ave. Phone 176

ments of salvation. And when you see this Orb thus set under the Cross remember that the whole world is subject to the Power and Empire of Christ our Redeemer."

After this exhortation, the King hands the Orb to the Dean, and by him restored to the Altar. Now comes the Keeper of the Jewel-House to deliver the King's Ring—the Wedding Ring of England—to the Archbishop. The latter places the Ring on the fourth finger of the Sovereign's right hand, saying:—"Receive this Ring, the ensign of kingly dignity, and of defence of the Catholic Faith; and as you are this day solemnly invested in the government of this earthly kingdom, so may you be sealed with that Spirit of Promise which is the earnest of an Heavenly Inheritance, and reign with Him Who is the Blessed and only Potentate, to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

The Dean of Westminster now brings the Sceptre with the Cross and Sceptre with Dove from off the Altar to the Archbishop. In the meantime the Glove, presented by the Lord of the Manor of Worsop, has been drawn on to the King's hand. As the Archbishop delivers the Sceptre with the Cross, he says:—"Receive the Royal Sceptre, the en-

"O God, the Crown of the faithful, bless we beseech Thee and sanctify this Thy servant . . . our King; and as Thou dost this day set a crown of pure gold upon his head, so enrich his royal heart with Thine abundant Grace, and crown him with all princely virtues, through the King Eternal Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

At this juncture there is much rustling and shifting of feet among the vast and distinguished congregation, for the great moment of the whole Coronation ceremony is now at hand. The Dean of Westminster approaches the Altar, and takes in both hands the Crown of St. Edward which is in turn delivered to the Archbishop of Canterbury who reverently places it on the Sovereign's head.

And in that moment the pent-up emotions of the vast audience finds relief in one mighty shout:—"God save the King!"

There is a flashing of reflected light as with one movement Peers and King-of-Arms put on their coronets. A fanfare of trumpets, and by a clever arrangement of signals, guns at the Tower of London, Hyde Park, Windsor Castle, and other places boom out a crashing salute to the new Sovereign. When the shouting has died away, the Archbishop continues:—"God crown you with a crown of glory



The State Crown

formed before the High Altar there with all the solemnity, beauty and dignity of medieval days. It may safely be said that a man who could witness an English Coronation ceremony and remain unmoved is not an Englishman—if, indeed, he be human at all. While the Coronation service may seem bewildering at first, careful attention to the proceedings will reveal a number of acts all of which have a separate and special significance.

The first care on the morning of Coronation Day is to see that the Ampulla is filled with oil, and, together with the spoon, ready for use upon the Altar of the Abbey Church. Archbishops and Bishops Assistant are vested in their copes, and a procession is formed immediately outside the west door of the Abbey. This procession re-

"Sirs! I here present unto you King . . . the undoubted King of this Realm; wherefore all you who are come this day to do your Homage and Service, are you willing to do the same?"

And a mighty shout rings through the old Abbey, as once it frightened the birds in forest glades. "God Save the King!"

Thus ends the Act of Recognition. Now the trumpets sound, and the Bible, Paten, and Chalice are brought by the Bishops and placed upon the Altar. The noblemen who have been privileged to carry various pieces of the Regalia in procession—with the exception of the Sword-Bearers—draw near to the Altar, and each in turn delivers the insignia he carries to the Archbishops, who deliver them to the Dean of Westminster, who places them

upon the Altar. When this ceremony is ended two Bishops, vested in copes, sing the Litany—while the Choir sing the responses:—"O God, the Father of Heaven . . . etc."

When the Bishops have returned to their places, the Archbishop begins the Communion Service.

"O God, who providest for Thy people by Thy power, and rulest over them in love; grant this Thy servant . . . our King, the spirit of wisdom and government, that being devoted to Thee with all his heart, he may so wisely govern this kingdom that in his time Thy church and people may continue in safety and prosperity; and that, persevering in good works to the end, he may through Thy mercy come to Thine everlasting kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord . . ."

At this point in recent coronations the Commandments have been recited. One of the Bishops now reads the Epistle—"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake . . ." The Sovereign and the rest of the congregation stand while another of the Bishops reads the Gospel. This is followed by the singing of the Creed:—"I believe in one God the Father Almighty . . ."

During the recitation of the Creed, a Bishop takes his place in the Pulpit, at the northeast corner of the Theatre, and waits to begin the sermon—which by ancient tradition must be short as well as appropriate to the great occasion. After the sermon opens certain movements begin unobtrusively to take place in the Theatre. The King, who has remained uncovered during the singing of the Litany, now puts on his cap of crimson velvet, while the Bishop of Durham stands at his right hand. On the King's left hand the Bishop of Bath and Wells, and the Lord Great Chamberlain take up their positions. Two Bishops detailed to support the Queen stand on either side of her. In a chair covered with purple velvet sits the Archbishop of Canterbury. On the north side of the wall other Bishops take their seats between the Archbishop and the Pulpit. On the west side sit the Dean of Westminster, and the Prebendaries of Westminster.

After the sermon the Archbishop rises, and stands before the King to administer the Coronation Oath. First the Archbishop inquires:—"Sir, is your Majesty willing to take the Oath?"

The King: "I am willing."

Archbishop: "Will you solemnly promise and swear to govern the People of this United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Dominions thereto belonging, according to the statutes in Parliament agreed on, and the respective Laws and Customs of the same?"

The King: "I will."

Archbishop: "Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the Laws of God, the true Profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant Reformed Religion established by Law? And will you maintain and preserve inviolably the Settlement of the Church of England, the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government thereof, as by law established in England? And will you preserve unto the Bishops and Clergy of England, and to the Churches there committed to their charge, all such Rights and Privileges, as by Law do or shall appertain to them or any of them?"

The King: "All this I promise to do."

Then the King rises from his chair—assisted by the Lord Great Chamberlain, and with the Sword of State carried before him—and approaches the Altar. Here he uncovers and makes his solemn Oath before all the people. He says his right hand upon the Holy Gospel in the Great Bible (presented to him by the Archbishop), and says:—"The things which I have here before promised, I will perform and keep. So help me God."

The King then kisses the book, and signs the Oath.

(It is a point worthy of note here that the exact words of the Oath are nowhere set out in the original manuscript of the "Liber Regalis.")

The original Coronation Book, on which English kings from Henry the First to Henry the Eighth took the Oath, is now one of the most closely guarded relics in the manuscript department of the British Museum. Since the time of Henry the Eighth, and the fundamental changes in religion for which he was responsible in England, a new book is provided for each coronation. It is claimed for the original Coronation Book that it was once the property of King Aethelstan the Saxon, and it must be numbered among the world's priceless manuscripts.

of Westminster approaches the King, the monarch rises to be clothed in the Colobium Sindensis and Supertunica. Again the Dean goes to the Altar and returns with the Spurs, which he delivers to the Lord Great Chamberlain who, kneeling down, touches the King's heels with them. The Sword of State is now delivered to the Lord Great Chamberlain who places it upon the Altar, while he who delivers it brings another Sword—in a scabbard of purple velvet—which is girt upon the King. Now the Sword of State is blessed as it lies upon the Altar, even as of old a knight's arms were blessed, while the Archbishop says the following prayer:—"Hear our prayers, O Lord, we beseech Thee, and so direct and support thy servant King . . . who is now to be girt with this Sword, that he may not bear it in vain; but may use it as the minister of God for the terror and punishment of evil-doers, and for the protection and encouragement of those that do well, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

The Archbishop now takes the Sword of State from the Altar, and delivers it into the King's right hand—the Archbishop of York and the Bishops of London and Winchester assisting with these words:

"Receive this Kingly Sword, brought now from the Altar of God, and delivered to you by the hands of us the Bishops and servants of God, though unworthy."

The King is now girt with the Sword by the Lord Great Chamberlain, and when he sits down the Archbishop says:—"With this Sword of Justice, stop the growth of iniquity, protect the Holy Church of God, help and defend widows and orphans, restore the things that are gone to decay, maintain the things that are restored, punish and reform what is amiss, and confirm what is in good order; that doing these things you may be glorious in all virtue, and so faithfully serve our Lord Jesus Christ in this life that you may reign for ever with Him in the Life which is to come."

Then the King ungirds his sword, and, walking to the Altar, offers it there in the scabbard. He returns to sit down in St. Edward's Chair. The Peer who carries the sword in the Coronation procession now approaches the Dean of Westminster and offers his redemption money for the weapon—which is according to ancient custom one hundred shillings. Having thus redeemed it, he receives the sword from off the Altar. He now draws the sword from its scabbard, and thereafter carries it naked before the Sovereign during the rest of the solemnity.

Next is the ceremony of robing the King, who rises from his chair for this purpose. The Master of the Robes delivers the Royal Robe, or Pall of cloth of gold, to the Dean of Westminster who clothes the King while the Lord Great Chamberlain fastens the clasps. When the King is again seated in the St. Edward's Chair the Orb is brought from the Altar by the Dean of Westminster and handed to the Archbishop of Canterbury. As the Archbishop delivers the Orb to the King he pronounces the following blessing and exhortation:—"Receive this Imperial Robe and Orb, and the Lord your God endue you with knowledge and wisdom, with majesty and with power from on high, the Lord embrace you with his mercy on every side, the Lord clothe you with the Robe of Righteousness, and with the gar-

sign of kingly Power and Justice."

Into the King's left hand is placed the Sceptre with the Dove, and the Archbishop says:—"Receive the Rod of Equity and Mercy; and God, from Whom all holy cesires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed, direct and assist you in the administration and exercise of all those powers which He hath given you. Be so merciful that you be not too remiss; so execute Justice that you forget not Mercy. Punish the wicked, protect and cherish the just, and lead your people in the way wherein they should go."

Throughout this exhortation the Lord of the Manor of Worsop has the honour to support the Sovereign's right arm, and so ease the weight of the heavy insignia.

Now the Archbishop takes his stand before the Altar, and, holding St. Edward's Crown in both hands, he says:



Her Royal Highness Princess Elizabeth

and righteousness, that by the ministry of this our Benediction, having a right faith and manifold fruit of good works, you may obtain the crown of an everlasting kingdom by the gift of Him Whose Kingdom endureth for ever. Amen."

Meanwhile the choir sings:—"Be strong and play the man. Keep the Commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in His ways."

The Holy Bible is taken from off the Altar by the Dean of Westminster and handed to the Archbishop, who in turn presents it to the King, saying:—"Our gracious King, we present you with this Book, the most valuable thing this world affords. Here is wisdom; this is the Royal Law; these are the lively Oracles of God."

Having thus Anointed and Crowned the King, the Archbishop now solemnly blesses him:—

(Continued on Page Five)

and righteousness, that by the ministry of this our Benediction, having a right faith and manifold fruit of good works, you may obtain the crown of an everlasting kingdom by the gift of Him Whose Kingdom endureth for ever. Amen."

Meanwhile the choir sings:—"Be strong and play the man. Keep the Commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in His ways."

The Holy Bible is taken from off the Altar by the Dean of Westminster and handed to the Archbishop, who in turn presents it to the King, saying:—"Our gracious King, we present you with this Book, the most valuable thing this world affords. Here is wisdom; this is the Royal Law; these are the lively Oracles of God."

Having thus Anointed and Crowned the King, the Archbishop now solemnly blesses him:—

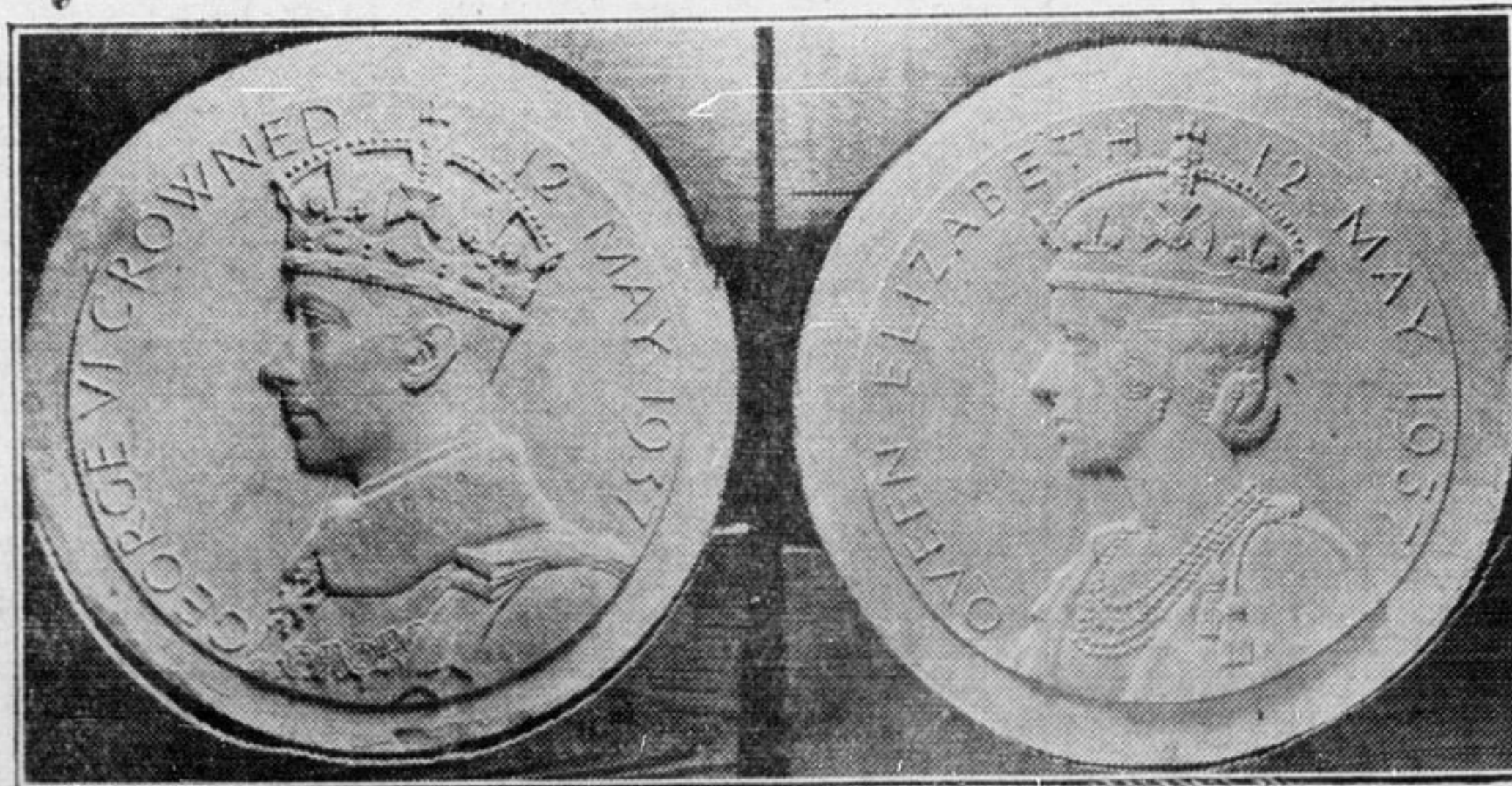
(Continued on Page Five)



### Gentlemen THE KING

The Toast of the BRITISH EMPIRE

Compliments of  
**St. Catharines Wine**  
Company of Canada Limited  
25 Fourth Ave. Timmins Phone 1280



Official Coronation Commemoration Medals

## Special Announcement

Evening Prices

Will Prevail at Matinee Performances at Both Theatres

## Coronation Day

Wednesday, May 12th

Palace and Goldfields Theatres