

property of the lady most concerned but of the Church, and is lent for the occasion. In some places the crown is a plain silver-gilt ornament, gaily decorated with flowers, lengths of ribbon, and lace; in other towns and villages it may be resplendent with precious stones.

Nowadays it is no longer the fashion for brides or bridesmaids to wear elaborate costumes. Daintiness is regarded as far more worthy of so important an occasion than mere display. This was not always the case, however, as the following description of a wedding in Venice in the 18th century will suffice to prove: "All the ladies except the bride," we are told, "were dressed in their black gowns with large hoops; the gowns were straight-bodied with very long trains, the trains tucked up on one side of the hoop with a large tassel of diamonds. Their sleeves were covered up to their shoulders with falls of the finest Brussels lace, a drawn tucker of the same round the bosom, adorned with rows of the finest pearls, each the size of a gooseberry, till the rows descended below the top of the stomacher; then two rows of pearls, which came from the back of the neck, were caught up at the left side of the stomacher, and finished in two fine tassels.

"Their heads," the chronicler adds, "were dressed very high, in a vast number of buckles and two long drop-curls in the neck. A great number of diamond pins and strings of pearl adorned their heads, with large

sultanas or feathers on one side, and magnificent ear-rings. The bride was dressed in cloth of silver made in the same fashion, and decorated in the same manner, but her brow was kept quite bare, and she had an enormous bouquet."

Perhaps the most gorgeous costume of all is worn by the King of England at his coronation. It really consists of a number of garments, each of which has a very definite meaning. Indeed, we get the term "vested rights" from the

vestments, termed the *colobium sindonis* and the *supertunica*, which the sovereign wears immediately he has been anointed. The former is made of white linen edged with lace, and the latter is a short cloak of cloth of gold. Both these vestments originated with the Church, as did the armill or stole, which is worn by

clergymen during divine service. At each end of the stole used by King George V was the cross of St. George in red, and above that an eagle to represent Imperial sovereignty; the rose, the shamrock, the thistle, the Welsh dragon, and symbols representing India, the various overseas dominions, and the Union of South Africa. The Imperial Mantle, or Pall of Cloth of Gold, represents Elijah's mantle.

After the monarch is crowned and the actual ceremony is at an end, the Imperial Mantle is exchanged for a robe of purple velvet. This is the third important change of costume, for on the king's arrival at Westminster Abbey he wears a kirtle or surcoat of crimson velvet, with mantle and hood, and resplendent with ermine and gold lace.

The girdle to support the sword of state in its purple velvet scabbard is fastened over the *supertunica*, a plain cloth of gold belt about two inches wide, and fastened with a buckle of solid gold.

Although a monarch has his coronation vestments specially made, these various garments, each with its own particular "story to tell," and of deep religious and civic meaning, have not varied for many centuries, and the service has altered but little from the far-off times of Richard the Lion-hearted. It will be readily understood that the weaving of coronation robes, involving the use of very costly fabric, is necessarily a very slow process, and that only the best metal is used. In 1911 the pall worn by George V was found to be in as perfect a state of preservation as when it had left the hands of the Spitalfields weavers ninety years before. (See Hats and Caps; Boots and Shoes.)



French sweethearts of 1760.



When our great-grandparents went walking, about the time of the Crimean War, the hoop skirt for women, and tight trousers and tall hats for men, were all the rage.