

The Abbey Service

"THERE is nothing which so vividly illustrates the continuity of our national history, the continuity of its Christian profession, the continuity of the Church of England and its faith: there is nothing which so deeply illustrates the union between Sovereign and people and between both and God as this sacred, solemn, splendid ceremony of the Queen's Coronation."

—The Archbishop of Canterbury

THE Coronation Service in Westminster Abbey is a ceremony of great beauty and impressive drama. It emphasises the supreme religious significance of the Crowning, for as the Archbishop of Canterbury says at the moment of enthroning, the Queen ascends the throne "in the Name and by the Authority of Almighty God."

The Service opens with the Litany, which is sung as the Dean, Prebendaries and choir of Westminster proceed from the altar to the West Door of the Church to await the Queen's arrival. The Archbishops, Bishops, and dignitaries of State being assembled, the procession is formed outside the West Door. On the approach of Her Majesty the procession enters the Church.

As soon as the Queen enters the West Door the choir sing the anthem, "I Was Glad When They Said Unto Me," from Psalm 122 (Hubert Parry). The Queen stands by King Edward's Chair while the Archbishop of Canterbury, with the Lord Chancellor, Lord Great Chamberlain, Lord High Constable, and Earl Marshal (Garter King of Arms preceding them) goes first to the east, and then to the other three sides of the Theatre and says: "Sirs, I here present unto you Queen Elizabeth, your undoubted Queen. . . ." The people respond with shouts of "God Save Queen Elizabeth."

The Oath

The Archbishop administers the Oath saying, "Will you solemnly promise and swear to govern the Peoples of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, and Northern Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Union of South Africa, Pakistan and Ceylon, and of your Possessions and the other Territories to any of them belonging or pertaining, according to their respective laws and customs?"

The Queen goes to the altar, lays her right hand upon the Bible, and says, "The things which I have here before promised, I will perform and keep. So help me God." The Queen kisses the Book and signs the oath on the Coronation Roll.

The Bible is brought from the altar by the Dean of Westminster and handed to the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Archbishop, saying, "Our Gracious Queen: to keep Your Majesty ever mindful of the Law and the Gospel of God as the Rule for the whole life and government of Christian Princes, we



HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II AND THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH

Royal Command portrait by Baron

present you with this Book, the most valuable thing that this world affords." The Moderator continues: "Here is Wisdom: this is the royal Law; these are the lively Oracles of God."

The choir sing the Introit, "Behold, O God, Our Defender" (Herbert Howells). The appointed Epistle and Gospel from the Holy Bible are read, the singing of "Let My Prayer Come Up Into Thy Presence" (William H. Harris) intervening. This is followed by the Creed (setting by Vaughan Williams).

The Anointing

The choir sing the ancient hymn "Come Holy Ghost" (arranged by Ernest Bullock), followed by the anthem

"Zadok the Priest" (Handel). The Queen goes to King Edward's Chair; four Knights of the Garter hold over her a pall of cloth of gold; the Dean brings the Ampulla containing consecrated oil and the Spoon, and hands the Spoon to the Archbishop.

The Archbishop anoints the Queen, ending with these words: ". . . so be thou anointed, blessed, and consecrated Queen over the Peoples whom the Lord your God hath given thee to rule and govern, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

The Spurs are brought from the altar by the Dean, who hands them to the

Lord Great Chamberlain. Kneeling down he presents them to the Queen, who forthwith sends them back to the altar. The Sword of State is brought by the Lord Chamberlain and handed to the Archbishop who gives it to Her Majesty, saying, "With this Sword do justice." The Queen carries the Sword and offers it at the altar.

After the Queen has been invested with the Coronation bracelets of gold and the Royal robes, the Orb with the Cross is brought and put into the Queen's hands with the words: "Receive this Orb set under the Cross, and remember that the whole world is subject