

## ❖❖ CROWNS AND THEIR WEARERS. ❖❖

ON the day on which this paper reaches the public, the young Dutch Queen is to be crowned—or rather enthroned—and it is curious to note just now, considering how well known are the features of the principal rulers of the world, that, even to this day, artists seem to know just as little as the general public of the crowns of their respective Majesties.

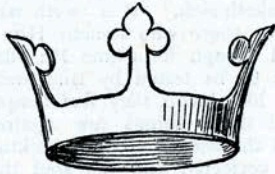
At the time of the Jubilee this was pretty well shown, for even our own Sovereign was depicted by various artists in nearly every possible shape of circlet, coronet, and crown, including even the classic mural crown of ancient Rome. As a matter



THE QUEEN'S CORONATION CROWN.

of fact a simple circlet is all that Her Majesty now wears on State occasions. The genuine article used at the Coronation service is massive enough to make the head of the wearer distinctly uneasy. It is said the crown was found to fit Queen Victoria with singular accuracy, but it has never been worn since 1837.

"What am I to do with it," Her Majesty plaintively asked during the Coronation in the Abbey. It is made up almost entirely of gems, and weighs just over three pounds and a quarter (troy). Its jewels include one large ruby, an enormous broad sapphire and 16 smaller sapphires, eleven emeralds, over 275 pearls of perfect shape and colour, and over 2,500 diamonds, while its lining is of

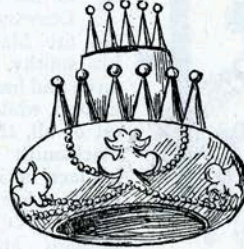


WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR'S CROWN.

violet velvet. It is the handsomest crown ever worn in this country, and a curious contrast to the plain circlet with four spikes which adorned the head of William of Normandy. Ever since that monarch's days the crown has been getting more elaborate, and the Stuart crown cost £1,110, and weighed seven pounds and a half.

Foreign crowns vary a good deal, but nearly all are more elaborate than our own. Abdul Hamid, the Great Assassin whose iniquities

have filled us all with horror, wears a tiara smothered with jewels enough to pay all the arrears due to the Turkish army, and round it



THE CROWN OF THE "GREAT ASSASSIN."

are two little rows of spires, each tipped with one huge gem. Naturally, the Shah has gone to the extreme in the crown line, and wears a sort of flowerpot on his head, out of which grow silken plumes covered with hundreds of superb little stones. The Chinese crown is of plain gold, engraved with the names of distinguished wearers, and the Mikado wears something like a great



THE SHAH'S CROWN.

gold bell, studded with big jewels. In Europe, the King of Portugal has one of the costliest crowns, though rumour whispers that the ownership is now vested in a syndicate of money-lenders, who are practically its mortgagees. Anyhow, the crown is worth nearly £2,000,000 in hard cash, and contains nearly three pounds' weight of superb gems. The Czar, too, has a



THE PORTUGUESE CROWN.

fine crown of semi-ecclesiastical cut, bought out of a tax which was specially levied on the luckless Russian peasants.

## The Home

The Pope's crown is an almost priceless arrangement of a mitre (uncleft) encircled by three coronets, and is the highest bit of head-gear in



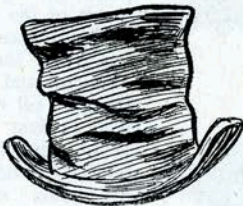
THE CZAR'S CROWN.

Europe; while King Humbert has the famous iron crown of the Lombards—really a gold crown with a thin band of iron inside, made, it is claimed, from one of the nails used at the Crucifixion. It dates back to A.D. 591, and, besides being used by nearly forty Lombard Kings, was also worn by Charles V. of Germany and Spain, by Napoleon in 1805, and by Ferdinand of Austria in 1838. In 1859, the Austrians captured it from the Italians, but returned it in 1866.



IRON CROWN OF LOMBARDY.

The Austrian crown is like a soldier's helmet, smothered with gems, and the Kaiser has a big one which he is rather fond of sporting. King Oscar of Sweden—oddly enough, for he is the most democratic sovereign in Europe—is the monarch who most often wears his crown in public. And in contrast with all this splendour, one may cite the two royal crowns used in Imperriland, West Africa. One is an official crown worn at Cabinet Councils, made of human bones, wicker-work, and ostrich feathers; the other is



KING OF IMPERRI'S CROWN.

worn at the coronation only, and guarded ever thereafter by six wives. It was made in London, and consists of a battered old silk hat.