

Citing a Few of the Reasons

WHY KING GEORGE'S CORONATION will be the 'GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH'



By Milton Bronner

LONDON.

A WORLD city made brilliant by day with the fluttering of millions of banners and flags and with nodding flowers in window boxes, made gorgeous by night with the flash of illuminated arches and flood-lit public buildings, a city where millions of holidaying people will see kings and queens and princes by the half dozen, troops from all over the British Empire mingling in an ever-changing kaleidoscope—these are some of the elements which will make London in the coronation week of King George VI the greatest show on earth.

P. T. Barnum of ever-fragrant circus memory used to call his the greatest show on earth. And what helped make it so for the folks was the big free circus parade in which there were gilded coaches and people dressed up in fancy military and other gorgeous uniforms. But they were imitations.

The coronation week visitor to London will see the real thing. If he sees men dressed up as kings they will actually be kings. If he sees a man in a general's uniform, his chest laden with medals, he will really be a general. If he is keen-eyed, he will see many of the celebrities of the world. In fact more than he could see together at any other time or place.

The reason is plain. The British kingdom is the greatest going monarchical concern left on earth, now that Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia are no longer in existence as king-ruled empires. And the British Empire, now as before the war, is the greatest the earth has ever seen.

The English king may be only a symbol, but when the British have him anointed in church and place the crown on his head, they make of it an event that draws people from the far ends of the earth.

King Christian of Denmark, King George of Greece, King Haakon of Norway and King Boris of Bulgaria will be among the monarchs who will come to see their fellow member of the Kings' union crowned in Westminster Abbey. Present, too, will be the heir to the Dutch throne, Princess Juliana, and her consort, Prince Bernhard. From Italy will come Crown Prince Umberto; from Sweden, Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf, and still other princes will represent Belgium, Rumania, Yugoslavia and Monaco. Each of the republics will send distinguished men. Nazi Germany is sending the commanders of its army, its navy and its air force as personal representatives of Reichsfuehrer Adolf Hitler.

TWELVE THOUSAND police will keep order. Sixty thousand troops will take part in the ceremonies, some lining the routes, others taking part in the ceremonial parade to and from Westminster Abbey.

Khaki will be at a discount in coronation week. The famous regiments will wear their celebrated red coats, embellished with gold buttons, and their heads will be topped with the heavy but impressive bearskin busbies.

The military show will probably not only be British, but Empire. All of the self-governing Dominions and many of the colonies will send representatives of their forces.

Among the most gorgeous and strangest to western eyes will be the picked troops from India. Each of the 175 units of the Indian army will be represented.

resented. Quarters have already been prepared at Hampton Court for some 700 Indian troopers. The tall Sikhs and Rajputs and the small stocky Mongol-appearing Gurkhas, all made famous in the short stories of Rudyard Kipling, will be in the royal procession.

The streets of London are expected to be gay even than they were during the silver jubilee of the late King George V. Elaborate preparations have been made by each of the many boroughs, into which Greater London is divided, for decorations. The borough councils themselves have erected flagpoles all over the principal streets and business houses are vying with each other in decorative schemes.

By night all the public buildings will be flood-lit and some of the bigger department stores are arranging elaborate electrical displays. In fact, it is said that flood-lighting and electrical illuminations will be carried out in Great Britain on a scale never before touched. It is estimated that 2,000,000,000 candlepower will be released.

This figure, of course, does not apply to London only, but to all Britain. Many of the historic towns of the little island will be well worth a pilgrimage.

THE Scotch capital, Edinburgh, will outdo itself. By its topography it is a city that especially lends itself to flood-lighting.

With the mountains as a background, Holyrood Palace, once home of Scotch kings, at one end of town and the lofty citadel at the other, will be a glory of white light every night until midnight.

Then there is the historic city of York, with its ancient walls and its magnificent cathedral. At night all the high spots of the ancient city will be flood-lit in a way never before attempted there.

Old Father Thames, the stream that has been called liquid history, will also be part of the show. Fireboats will pour forth streams of water which will be flood-lit with colored lights, so that they will rival some of the celebrated fountains shown at various expositions.

But the river will be a show place especially for the might of the British navy. Off Southend, at the mouth of the river, will be six battleships, including the two biggest in the world, the Nelson and the Rodney. Between Gravesend and the Pool of London

there will be cruisers, destroyers, submarines, and near London Bridge itself there will be some of the smaller naval vessels.

The London County Council, controlled by the Socialists, is going to see to it that the plain people have a share in the general fun. They have arranged for concerts in all the parks. Special food and entertainments will be given to the patients in the County Council hospitals. Extra money will be given those receiving poor relief.

School children will have a holiday for the entire coronation week. About 40,000, picked from all the schools, will be escorted to a special place on the Victoria Embankment from which they will see the coronation procession. Souvenir beaters will be given to each regular pupil. All in all, the London County Council is going to spend over \$200,000.

The national government, for its part, is spending about \$3,000,000. This includes not only the cost of flood-lighting buildings, but also preparing Westminster Abbey for the coronation and erecting stands to seat nearly 100,000 people. In the Abbey itself stands are being erected, which will seat 8000 people—the most privileged in the world on coronation day, for they alone, of all the throng in London, will see the entire service.

ALL the famous tombs in the celebrated old church have been boarded over and will be decorated with draperies of crimson and gold during the coronation services. The single exception is the tomb of the Unknown Soldier, which will remain uncovered. A hole is being cut in the carpet which will cover the King's processional way, so that the tomb may show through it.

The British king may be only a symbol, but when the British place the crown on his head they make of it an event that draws people from the far ends of the earth.

