

however, I do not state as a fact known with certainty."

According to Brayley and other historians, the earliest of the Saxon monarchs recorded to have been crowned here is Edward the Elder, son of Alfred the Great, A.D. 900; but the town must have obtained its present designation even previously to that, for in 838, before Egbert's death, a council was held here, at which that prince, his son and successor Æthelwulf, and many prelates, abbots, and nobles, were present, including Ceolnoth Archbishop of Canterbury, who presided. In the acts of that council it is stated to have been held "in loco famoso vocato *Kyningestun*." If the records of this council be authentic, it is evident, therefore, that Kingston must have been so called before the middle of the ninth century, and that its name could not have been imposed on account of coronations there of the Saxon kings after the termination of the Heptarchy. If so, then Kingston must mean the King's Town, not the King's Stone.

The following list of sovereigns crowned here is given by Lysons, on the authority of William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon, Roger Hoveden the Saxon chronicler, Holinshed, &c.:—"Edward the Elder, crowned A.D. 900; his son Athelstan, in 925; Edmund, in 940; Eldred, or Edred (said to have assumed the title of King of Great Britain), in 946; Edwy, or Edwin, in 955; Edward the Martyr, in 975; and Ethelred, in 978. Edgar, who succeeded to the throne in 959, is said to have been crowned either at Kingston or at Bath."

In an elaborate paper read before the annual meeting of the Surrey Archæological Society, held in Kingston, June 30th, 1854, Dr. W. Bell, dwelling at considerable length on the significance and early use of this and corresponding memorials in various and widely-distant countries, remarks that as stones must necessarily, in the earliest ages of society, have served as seats, so some of a particular form or in a peculiar situation were gradually elected from the mass as the royal throne of princes and kings, whence, when the pontiff and kingly power were united, they were deemed holy, and afterwards shed the halo of their sanctity on everything around or in contact with them, thus tracing the natural and gradual march of the human intellect from things common to select—from select to sacred and divine. In the East, for instance, the two ideas of stones and worship, or divinity, became almost identical, the terms being frequently synonymous, particularly with the Hebrews, whom we find giving the name of stone or rock to kings and princes—even to God Himself, as the Rock of Israel, where the stone metaphor was

intended to convey as much of sanctity as of security or endurance.

By a comparison of numerous Druidical stone circles in various parts of Europe, Dr. Bell assumes the probability that the above stone formed one of a smaller circle of thirteen, the latter, however, having all vanished before the requirements of an increasing population and the improvements in the construction of dwellings. But a reverence deeply seated in the minds of the people must have kept the principal and kingly stone from profanation or destruction.

The present Town Hall was built in the year 1840, at the expense of the Corporation, and at the cost of nearly £4,000. It is built of light-coloured brick with stone dressings, in the Italian style. At each angle, rising above the side pediments, is an ornamental turret; and over an embowered balcony in the south front is affixed a leaden statue of Queen Anne. It stands on the site of a much older building of the same kind, which, in its turn, no doubt, succeeded a still more ancient "Moot," or Town Hall. The venerable brick building, with its oak posts and frames, which gave place to the modern structure, was of Elizabethan style and date, although repaired and enlarged in the reign of Queen Anne. The arms of the maiden queen are still preserved in the Justices' Room; they were originally affixed to the eastern wall of the old building.

The hall also possesses a unique heraldic window, in which the arms and insignia of Roman emperors, heathen Britons, Christian Britons, Saxon, Danish, and Norman kings, Kings of Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, are exhibited with the more modern emblems of the Prince of Wales and the royal arms of England, as borne by Charles II. and James I. The lower and open portion of the building is devoted to the purposes of the markets, which are held here on Thursdays and Saturdays.

The corporation of Kingston is one of the oldest in England, its first charter having been dated by King John. The most valuable records of the town, from an antiquarian point of view, are still in existence in the Corporation muniment room. The civic regalia consist of a handsome silver-gilt mace of some antiquity; and also an elaborate SS collar, chain, and badge, worn by the mayor, which were presented to the Corporation by the senior member for the county, Sir Henry W. Peck, Bart.

It was in the market-place here, "when both parties were preparing for an appeal to the sword," that in January, 1641-42, the first attempt to assemble an armed force in the time of the Civil War