Coronation Day— June 26— will be fresh in the mind of every Englishman, but there is no need to apologise for a few words on such a subject. The whole world was thrilled at the news which, on the morning of June 24, 1903, engirdled it in "forty minutes."

That he who for so long had done the nation's work should at the last be debarred from the possession of the chiefest honour which that nation could bestow, seemed a possible irony of fate, cruel beyond believing.

Intensified a thousand-fold in 1903 were the patriotic feelings of 1872, when of the then Prince of Wales the world waited breathlessly for tidings from Sandringham, and a whole nation was seen kneeling in agonised petition to the Almighty for the life of their future Sovereign.

On each occasion all that is best in Englishmen awoke to a realisation of loyalty and religion, and a unanimity of interest and sympathy gave renewed strength to imperial claims which had seemed but just before to be threatened. This distressed anxiety thus twice displayed in his welfare cannot fail to have deepened an honourable sense of responsibility, and a personal longing in our King to deserve and to retain the love of his subjects.

"Will my people ever forgive me?" were his first words on recovering consciousness, and in them

we can see the almost pathetic unselfishness and insight of the man's nature. Realising to the full their disappointment, they were still "my people"— the nation for which he had been content, during many weary days before that terrible June 24, to suffer uncomplainingly,— for the sake of whose pleasure he would willingly have postponed, had it been possible, the operation upon which his life depended.

"Methinks
There's something lonely in the state of Kings,"

says Barry Cornwall, and Tennyson spoke even to Queen Victoria as being "so alone on that terrible height"; but if ever any ruler enjoyed immunity from "royal loneliness," it is assuredly our Edward VII.

As Harold Begbie says, "It is the personality and the simplicity of the King's mind which have proved mightier than all the more notable weapons in the armoury of governmental diplomacy. Tact may have won him this victory, but only the tact of an intensely human soul, genuine in its love of peace and fellowship, could have made that victory so complete and so enduring."

The 'Lives of the Seven Bishops' next engaged the attention of the sisters, and of these Agnes wrote the five dealing with Sancroft the Primate, Turner of Ely, Lake of Chichester, Ken of Bath

and Wells, and White of Peterborough; while Elizabeth only contributed the lives of Lloyd of S. Asaph and Trelawney of Bristol.

On the 8th of June 1688 these holy men of old were committed to the Tower on the charge of having written and published a seditious libel, but on the 30th day of the same month they were set at liberty, to the great mortification of James II. and the exceeding great joy of the English people, who were getting tired of Jacobite squabbles and the despotism of Rome.

Paradoxical as it may appear, the Stricklands, although staunch Jacobites, were equally staunch Anglicans, and Sancroft was an object of especial hero-worship to Agnes. The writing of this book, therefore, was a real pleasure; but literary work had at last to give way before the dominating presence of death. Her aged mother, now in her ninety-second year, was drawing to the end of her long life, and in September 1864 she passed away, with the hands of her daughters, Agnes and Jane, still clasped in hers. This event broke up for ever the old home at Reydon, and these two younger sisters lived henceforth in houses adjoining each other in the pretty little seaside village of Southwold in Suffolk, while Elizabeth had an altogether separate establishment at Bayswater and subsequently at Tilford.

At this time Agnes Strickland was sixty-eight

years of age, and might very reasonably have shrunk from any fresh undertaking. But no consideration of that kind affected her, and in 1869 we find her starting off for Holland, on literary business bound. 'The Lives of the Stuart Princesses' was to be the top-stone of the historic cairn which it had been her life-work to erect. Without this she did not feel that it would be properly completed, and as the documentary information requisite for her life of Mary, Princess of Orange, the eldest daughter of Charles I., was not obtainable in England, she determined to visit The Hague. Here she was treated with every courtesy, and gained much valuable knowledge. She had the honour of presentation to the Queen of the Netherlands, who showed her much kindness, and advised her to examine the 'Annals of the House of Orange.' She was agreeably surprised with the characteristics of the Dutch, but the "flatness" of the language and of the country cannot have failed to strike her unpleasantly. The language is indeed a mixture of various tongues, but, unlike English, of which the same might, not unjustly, be said, they are each spoiled in the mixing, and the result is unspeakably hideous.

The learned librarian at Lambeth—Mr Weyland Kirshaw--- gave her much help with the life of Henrietta, the youngest daughter of Charles I., by deciphering the badly written letters of that Prin-