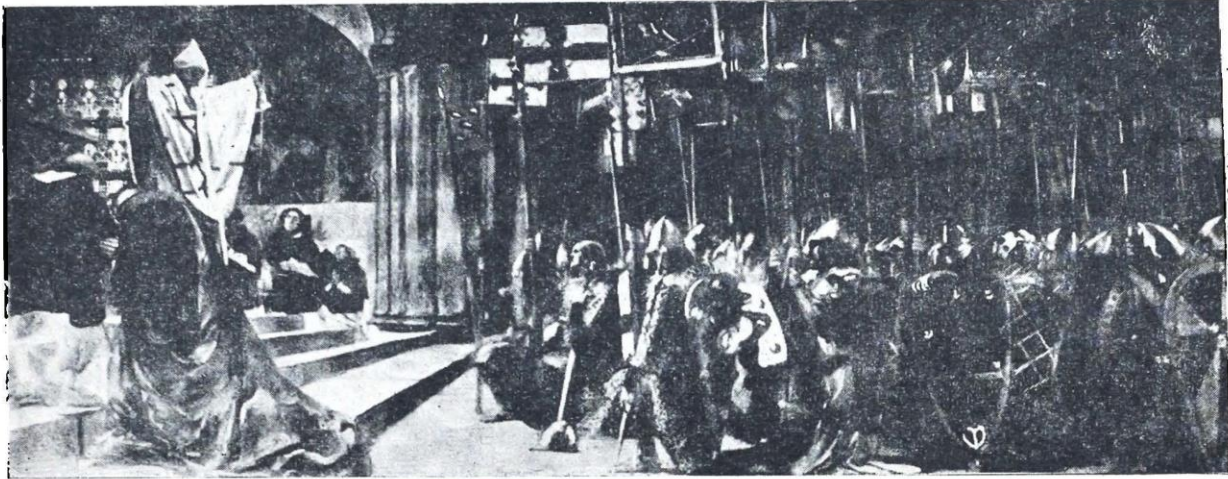


## KING ARTHUR OF ENGLAND



*King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table*

KING ARTHUR was a prince of the ancient Britons of England who had all the ideal virtues of knighthood. Of all names in history there is none which is better known than the name of King Arthur. An account of his fame and deeds has been handed down through century after century.

Doubtless many of the things told about him are legendary. Nevertheless the story of Arthur is supposed to have some foundation in fact. The real Arthur seems to have lived in the 6th century.

He established a famous organization known as the Knights of the Round Table, and was surrounded by a splendid court. For some years he reigned in peace, but later he had to fight in battles. He gained fame as a leader of his people in the days when the Romans, after ruling the island of Britain with the capital at London for three centuries, abandoned the land to the rising power of the barbarians. According to tradition it was

King Arthur who held up the attack, and won a great victory probably in the south. (See the map on page 28.) But he was finally defeated.

The conquered Britons, who fled to the mountains of Wales and to Brittany in France, began to tell wonderful tales of Arthur's valor and goodness. Later, the knights and poets of chivalry, because Arthur had been a Christian fighting against heathen, fancied him a knight like themselves, and so there appeared many stories around his name.

Some of these stories tell of King Arthur as a cultured hero, and a slayer of monsters and giants. His riches and generosity were the admiration of all. When you read English history and literature you will find some of the tales of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table.

One of these stories tells how King Arthur won his crown. According to this legend, Arthur was the goodliest youth in all Britain. Handsome, brave,

true-hearted, and gentle-mannered, he had grown up in the old gray castle of a knight whom he thought was his father.

One day Arthur started to ride to London, because the archbishop had commanded the nobles to meet in the great church in London and choose a new ruler, as the king had died a long time previous.

On the way Arthur stopped at the churchyard and drew forth a splendid sword that he saw fixed upright in an iron anvil in the midst of a great stone. When he presented this word to the nobles and told where he had found it, he was hailed as the son of the king who had died.

It seems that when Arthur was a child he had been hidden from his enemies who would have killed him. The boy grew to manhood, not knowing that he was the son of the king.

A magician, according to the story, had so fixed the royal sword in an anvil that only the king's son could draw it forth.

The greatest nobles and knights in the land had been unable to move the word when it was in the anvil, due to the magic spell, but when Arthur touched the golden jeweled hit, the blade came free.

So Arthur was crowned king.

#### ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS

1. Where did King Arthur live? When?
2. Why has King Arthur become famous?
3. Why did people think King Arthur was a knight?
4. What were the knights of King Arthur called?
5. Tell the story of Arthur's crowning.
6. How is King Arthur characterized

in the stories told about him?

7. Do we find references to King Arthur in English literature and history?

8. What is the capital city of England?

9. Was King Arthur ever in London?

10. What is now occurring in London?

11. Have any places of great historical interest been destroyed?

12. What great

nation of ancient times once ruled the island of Britain?

13. Why did they abandon the land?

14. What is King Arthur said to have done?

15. Can you tell about the knights of King Arthur's time?

16. What virtues did they possess?

17. Does anything pertaining to knight-hood remain in England?

18. What caused knight-hood to disappear?



