

# The King's English

Condensed from Printers' Ink

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OVER THE AIR, I heard an English King explain to his people his renunciation of the British throne.

With his closing words still ringing in my ears, I read his message as it appeared in print. And in order to share my appreciation of it with others I decided to present in parallel columns the King's English as he wrote it and as he might have written it:

At long last I am able to say a few words of my own. I never wanted to withhold anything, but until now it has not been constitutionally possible for me to speak.

A few hours ago I discharged my last duty as King and Emperor, and now that I have been succeeded by my brother, the Duke of York, my

The moment seems ultimately to have arrived when the undersigned, on his own initiative, may issue a statement. At no time have I been inclined to secretiveness, but until now I have been constrained by the Constitution from expressing myself before the forum of public opinion.

A few hours ago I fulfilled my final obligation as King and Emperor — that is to say, *as such* — and now that it has been called to my at-

first words must be to declare my allegiance to him. This I do with all my heart.

You all know the reasons which have impelled me to renounce the throne. But I want you to understand that in making up my mind, I did not forget the country or the Empire which, as Prince of Wales and lately as King, I have for 25 years tried to serve.

But you must believe me when I

intention that the throne has become associated, so to speak, with my brother, the Duke of York, my primary consideration is to make articulate my allegiance to him. The same I do with all the fervor of which I am capable.

You are all apprised of the factors that have prompted me to abjure the highest honor within the gift of the British people. But I desire that there shall be impressed upon you the fact that, in arriving at a decision, I was not unmindful, as it were, of the country or the Empire to which, as Prince of Wales and subsequently as King, I have bent my best efforts to give service.

But you must accord me cre-

US MAR '37

tell you that I have found it impossible to carry the heavy burden of responsibility and to discharge my duties as King as I would wish to do, without the help and support of the woman I love. And I want you to know that the decision I have made has been mine, and mine alone.

dence when I state to you that I have found it impossible to endure the heavy burden of responsibility and to consummate the fulfillment of my stewardship as King without the assistance and co-operation of the lady upon whom I have bestowed my affection. And I desire you to be assured that the decision I have arrived at has been reached exclusively by myself, personally and individually.

Right there I quit translating. Eloquence speaks for itself. Eloquence is simple because eloquence is sincere.

Hypocrisy, whether of the spirit

or of the intellect, beats about the bush. It hems and haws and coughs behind its hand. It covers itself with qualifiers. It kicks up dust while merely marking time.

Eloquence drives straight ahead. Eloquence moves men to high endeavor and women to tears because it comes, not from an excess of *fervor*, but, as this man said, from the *heart*.

His closing words were: "And now we all have a new King. I wish him and you, his people, happiness and prosperity with all my heart.

"God bless you all!" he said, and "God save the King!"

And, in a world gone awry with equivocation, God save to civilization such shining exceptions as this English King who, having laid his kingship aside, talked to his people in language that they could not fail to feel and could not fail to understand.

### Smoking Out the Truth

"No, no, no," exclaimed Giovanni Martinelli, the opera star. "The pipe, the cigar, the cigarettes!"

Reporters who had come to interview the famous singer hastily extinguished the three evils, when he explained that the smoke made his throat sore.

"But didn't you endorse a cigarette once?" asked a reporter.

"Si, si," admitted the smiling tenor. "But remember what I said. I said: 'These cigarettes never make my throat sore.' And that is true. They never do."

"Because," a reporter suggested, "you never smoke them?"

"Si, si," laughed Martinelli. "I never smoke them. I never smoked anything in my life."—Quoted in *Cleveland Plain Dealer*

# The Empire and Mrs. Simpson

Condensed from the New York World-Telegram

*Elsbeth Huxley*

TO AMERICANS the famous friendship between the King and Mrs. Simpson is just a great romance. To the British Empire it might be dynamite. Or perhaps acid — something that eats away under cover. The loosely-knit Empire's strongest support is loyalty to the Crown and respect for the man who wears it. The King could not marry Mrs. Simpson without weakening these feelings and, with them, the Empire's solidarity.

For the King to marry an American would not, perhaps, in itself cause resentment. Most English people would certainly prefer a queen from the United States, which Britons rarely regard as a strictly foreign nation, to one picked from that hothouse of comic-opera intrigue, the discarded royal families of Europe. One of the most popular things the King could do would be to marry some young American girl of good family who would strengthen the links between the two English-speaking nations.

But there *would* be resentment if he shared his throne with a woman who had had two previous husbands, a woman generally (albeit wrongly) visualized against

the slick background of night clubs rather than that of chandeliers, gold plate and palaces.

The key to the British attitude is given by the British press. While New York newspapers were printing column after column describing Mrs. Simpson's life and looks, not one person in a hundred in England had even heard her name. The British press laced itself into a strait-jacket, not because pressure had been brought to bear — the King himself wants the papers to print what they like — but because the hard-boiled business men who control the press believed they would lose circulation if they played up the story.

There is a large section of the British public, the middle-class "backbone of the country," who would strongly resent the printing of the story as disloyal and in bad taste. So long as the King and Mrs. Simpson remain friends and there isn't too much publicity, it's all right. But there is a feeling that the King's private life should be left alone by the press. A marriage, on the other hand, would not be his own affair; it would become his Empire's.

And the marriage itself would

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US JAN '37

be difficult. The Church of England refuses to remarry divorced persons, even the so-called injured parties; and in this attitude it still has the support of that considerable section of the public who believe that the marriage bond can never be broken. As "Defender of the Faith," titular head of the Church of England, the King could no doubt command his own bishops to marry him; but it would be hard for his subjects who take their religion seriously to reverence a queen they could not regard as truly married in the eyes of God.

Mrs. Simpson's own position has been little considered. Perhaps she senses the situation. The younger generation — in England — might understand the King's modern outlook and accept her. But not the Empire overseas.

Since the Statute of Westminster was passed, five years ago, the British Empire has been a legal fiction. Each Dominion has absolute independence and a status fully equal, one to the other. The King could, if he wanted, move to Toronto and send a Governor-General to London. Dominions can secede if they like. There is only one constitutional bond — the King. His function is to link the scattered parts of the Empire into one entity, to keep the good will of the 20 million people of the Dominions and the 400 million of India and the colonies. If he fails

in that, he fails in his great task.

The Crown is a symbol of the British heritage of tradition, of unity, of greatness. To this, citizens of the Dominions, be they only uncouth lumberjacks hauling timber in Canadian forests or tough "jackaroos" driving cattle over the deserts of Central Australia, feel themselves heirs. And people expect a symbol to follow a fixed pattern of behavior. It must be haloed in dignity, set above the ordinary foibles of human nature.

The Dominions are proud to be partners in a greater brotherhood. Canadians, for instance, even though they are overshadowed by their larger neighbor, feel a little inward cockiness because they are subjects of the King. "We've got something that they don't have across the border, for all their dollars." That's a fair sample of the attitude.

When a memorial to Canadians killed in the war was unveiled recently at Vimy Ridge it was the King who dedicated it; no one else could have sufficed. It was for the King, for the traditions which he embodies, that Canadians fought and died in distant France in a quarrel not their own. And it is here, in this pride and reverence for the Crown, that the people of the Dominions are likely to get hurt.

Ceremony and correct behavior count for more in Sydney, in

Montreal, in Capetown than they do today in London. Because inhabitants of these younger cities live so close to the frontier, they attach all the more importance to the trimmings of civilization.

Some years ago Stanley Baldwin, the present British Prime Minister, during a visit to Canada, was invited to a formal luncheon in a small prairie town by a group of business men and farmers. It was a hot day and Mr. Baldwin, thinking to put his hosts at ease by setting an example of informality, took off his coat and made a speech in his shirt sleeves. It was one of his few unforgiven blunders. Those men believed Mr. Baldwin had insulted them by behaving as if they were a bunch of hicks who knew no better than to attend a formal luncheon dressed for digging ditches.

That is the feeling that would jeopardize the Empire's unity if the King married a woman, however charming, who has divorced two husbands. People in the Dominions would feel that their standards had been let down. It would be as if the King attended a formal party in his shirt sleeves.

They don't want shirt sleeves — they have plenty of those in real life. They want a King in ermine robes and glittering uniforms, someone they can look up to as better than the ordinary mortal.

It is ironical to expect such behavior of the King because it was his very characteristics of humanity, of putting on no airs, of refusing to set himself up as any better than the next man, that won him such popularity as Prince of Wales. But logic goes for very little in human affairs. Even the British Empire is illogical. It is united by a myth and preserved by an emotion — dangerous and fickle pillars on which to span a great political system. Myths can be so easily exploded, and emotions turn somersaults overnight.

Most people in England think the King has too strict a code of duty to risk inflicting damage on the Crown's prestige. If Mrs. Simpson remains just the King's good friend it may well be that the shadows of the Canadian lumberjack and the Australian jackaroo have fallen between her and the throne.

*It is wonderful how much news there is when people write every other day; if they wait for a month, there is nothing that seems worth telling.*

— O. Douglas, "Penny Plain"

## KING EDWARD VIII

**I**N 1897 Queen Victoria, who had ruled England for 60 years, was a little old woman nearing death. When she ascended the throne the land had been a fair agricultural country. Now factory chimneys rose on the edges of the fields and deep-laden steamers moved down the once placid rivers. The world was quickening but she was old and tired. When the red despatch boxes arrived from Whitehall she had to fortify her sight with belladonna. Her secretary used special broad nibs to write his reports which were dried in a little oven so that the ink was thick and black. How remote the tranquil evenings with Prince Albert must have seemed to her in 1897 as she dozed over her papers. Little had she realized three years before, when she had driven over to White Lodge to see her first English great-grandchild, Prince David, later to ascend the throne as Edward VIII, that a new age was beginning.

**T**HE little Prince began his London life in York House in St. James's Palace, surrounded by the activity of state affairs. He peered around corners at the am-

bassadors who came to see his father. He heard the click of soldiers' heels in the courtyard and the metallic thud of rifle butts upon the flagstones. Of the many stories told about him as a little boy, two are significant. One shows how early in life he felt the stern oppression of duty. He and his brother, now King George VI, had to listen to a long story, told them by an old man. Prince Albert yawned shamelessly and David nudged him and whispered, "Smile." The other story shows the compassion which became one of the guiding forces of his life. One day when talking to Lord Roberts he said that when he became King he would "pass a law against cutting puppy dogs' tails" and prevent "them" from using bearing reins on horses. "These are very cruel," he said.

When he was 13, Prince David went to the Naval college at Osborne. Any other boy might have felt that he was embarking on an adventure as he steamed over Southampton Water, among the ships that smelled of Colombo, Hong Kong and the Indies. But there was a tutor at the Prince's elbow to remind him of his purpose.

His princely responsibilities meant nothing to the other cadets. They nicknamed him "Sardine" and his slightest offense against their ethics was punished by guillotining him in the dormitory window, as a cruel and boylike reminder of what had happened to Charles I. It was a tradition that when senior cadets entered a room the despised juniors must retire. One day the Prince revolted against this. A senior grabbed him and said: "You are the Prince, are you? Well, learn to respect your seniors." A bottle of red ink was poured down his neck and he left the room.

His life at Osborne was not very hilarious; he was prone to self-analysis and carried his responsibilities seriously. At every point he was reminded of his inheritance, and the incessant voice which whispered in his ear was of duty.

In 1910 King Edward died. Three months later the 16-year-old Prince, now heir to the throne, sailed on the *Hindustan* as a midshipman. It was his first holiday and he was supremely happy. "Not the smallest discrimination has been made in his favor," wrote the naval authorities after the two months' cruise, "and he has worked hard at the most onerous duties. Everybody on the *Hindustan* will be sorry to lose so good a comrade."

After the tour, Oxford was before him; he had to adjust himself

to new friends and circumstances. It was the inevitable fault of his training that his background was forever changing. People crowded in on him and then departed, making him feel that life is a whirl in which no person nor scene is stable. This must always be remembered in the young King's favor. The lessons in loyalty to a central purpose which he would have learned through lasting friendships and a settled life seemed to pass him by.

King George's interests had an important influence upon his son. The King did not mind the long hours of labor over his desk but he shunned ceremonies and the pomp of kingship. When the glory of his Coronation had passed it was his son who took on the glamour. At his Investiture as Prince of Wales, when he walked across the greensward of Carnarvon Castle, with its great ruined walls casting shadows where the Romans had encamped a thousand years ago, the Prince seemed a legendary figure from the dark centuries, bringing his Herald and Arch-Druids at his heels. Dressed in velvet surcoat and white breeches, he was "presented before the King who putteth a cap of crimson velvet, indented with ermine, on his head, as a token of Principality, and into his hand a verge of gold, the emblem of government, and a ring of gold on his middle finger, to intimate that he

must be a husband to his country."

The Prince of Wales went to Oxford less manacled by rules than any other royal undergraduate had been. King Edward VII had not been allowed to live in college; he was allowed to "wear nothing extravagant or slang," and he was to avoid "foolish and worthless persons." Prince Edward lived as an ordinary undergraduate. Oxford accepted him without fuss. For a fortnight there were photographers and a tendency for sightseers to collect at likely places for him to pass. But his fellow-undergraduates quickly discouraged this. Members of Balliol College signified their opinion of one inquisitive crowd by pouring water from the upper windows on their heads.

The Prince took the initiative in making friendships. One night he called at a friend's room and found in the company there a rampant Socialist who had commenced work in a nail factory at the age of eight, educating himself and coming to Oxford at the age of 33. A test for the Prince's charm had come. He picked up a glass of beer and said, "Here's luck, everybody," and then played a tune on the banjo. When the Prince left, the nail maker raised his glass and said to those who remained: "The Prince of Wales, God bless him!"

In scholarship Prince Edward

was not brilliant. He seemed to be devoted to the present and the future and to lack veneration for the past. He turned to human nature rather than to books, and did not accept the views of his elders with blind obedience. He knew when to be stubborn, and when his time at Oxford came to an end he had enough will power to cope with the thick-skinned and pompous. Servants and little people were safe with him, but humbugs were likely to suffer at his hands.

SHORTLY AFTER the Prince of Wales came down from Oxford war was declared. He tried to return to the Navy but the Admiralty refused the responsibility of turning any warship into such a glorious target. Lord Kitchener was equally adamant about his going to the front.

"What does it matter if I am shot? I have four brothers," asked the Prince.

Kitchener answered: "If I were certain that you *would* be shot, I do not know if I should be right to restrain you. What I cannot permit is the chance of the enemy securing you as a prisoner."

Under further pressure Kitchener promised to send him over as soon as there was a settled line, and after the first battle of Ypres the Prince went to France.

The Prince threw himself into the war with an energy that



caused anxiety to those responsible for his safety. In a letter home, a private wrote of him: "The Prince is always in the thick of it. Only last night he passed me when the German shells were coming over." Sir Charles Monro tells of a morning when the Prince was missing, having left for the front trenches with his company of Grenadiers without orders. The General jumped into his car and when he came abreast of the company he beckoned to the Prince, who mumbled as he approached the General. "I heard what you said, Prince," said Sir Charles — "Here is that damned old General after me again!" His revolt against the discretion of the old was significant. He belonged to the new generation which was to stand strangely alone when the war was over — independent and resenting all fetters.

In 1916 the Prince went to Egypt to draw up a report on the Suez Canal defenses. There he first met Australian and New Zealand soldiers. He greatly enjoyed their vitality and frankness. After bathing with them in the Canal, eating with them and sharing their jokes, he was a Little Englander no longer. A new interest came into his life — the wish to understand the new countries of the Empire — which was to grow in strength until he became his father's greatest ambassador in the Dominions.

From Egypt he went to the Italian front and then back to France where he fought in the battle of the Somme. His experiences made him wiser but they also bereaved him. Friends were killed and during the battle of Loos he came grimly near death himself. He had left his chauffeur in the car while he went up to the lines. When he returned the car was smashed and the driver dead. Of these experiences he was later able to say: "In those four years I mixed with men; I found my own manhood."

The Prince came back to England facing all the strange changes born of peace. Fathers who belonged to the old generation and sons who had been through the unsettling experience of France lived in different worlds. The Prince resented the old order; he chose an independent way, far from the traditions of his father's Court, and found pleasure in a small coterie of friends, selected for their amusing qualities rather than for their position and intellectual gifts. But if the Prince disappointed his father and that society which expected him to be its leader, there was a field in which he performed unique service.

ON THE EVE of the war there were gaps between the life and thoughts of Britain and her Dominions. The early settlers in the colonies had been bound tightly

to England. The books on their shelves had been English; they understood the jokes in *Punch*; letters to brothers and sisters back home kept old loyalties alive. But when a new generation tilled the colonial earth, they were merely cousins of relatives in England, and letters were no longer exchanged. They created their own humor out of life about them. They had their own songs; they evolved their own slang. These apparently superficial changes were important; they meant that England and the new countries no longer spoke the same language.

The war came in time to recapture and strengthen the loyalty of the Dominions; the new countries gave unstintingly of their wealth and blood. But with peace, England turned again to the old gods of insularity and made little effort to hold the love of her colonial sons. Stories of the gauche-rie of Australian soldiers in London drawing rooms were told more often than stories of their valor in the trenches. But Prince Edward remembered the part played by the soldiers of Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. He was among the first of the country's leaders to see that the Empire could be bound together as an economic unity, independent of the rest of the world.

While it was being arranged for him to visit the countries of the Empire, the Prince slowly im-

posed his identity upon the English people. Up to 1914 King George and Queen Mary had guarded their heir from too much limelight, lest he be spoiled by adulation. But when the war ended he became a public hero, a romantic figure like a prince of old. When he paused to help an old soldier, to be kind to the sick, he satisfied the public craving for peaceful chivalry, to take the place of the emotional altar of the war. Every day he moved among cheering crowds; his photograph was in every house. The newspapers called him Galahad and printed his slimmest platitude in big letters. It is little wonder that his modesty was slowly shaken, that he began to lose his capacity to judge between wild popularity and calm esteem.

In August, 1919, the Prince visited Canada. In little more than two months he traveled 10,000 miles, attending hundreds of receptions. He took part in Indian powwows, cowboy stampedes and dances. He won the hearts of everybody in Saskatoon when he jumped on a bronco's back and remained there, in fierce conflict, for several minutes. When the tour was over his right hand was so sore from handshaking that he could barely touch anything with it. Perhaps he thought of this first unending labor of Canada when a stupid man in London once muttered, "Idle Rich!" as the Prince's

car stopped near him. The Prince turned around and snapped: "Rich, maybe, but not so very idle."

News of the Prince who reduced people to smiles or tears, as he willed, traveled south and he was prevailed upon to visit the United States. Only on Armistice Day had there been such a demonstration in New York as on the morning of the Prince's arrival. They "showered down upon the bewildered, delighted boy a veritable rain of confetti until the streets were a gay carpet beneath his motorcar." The tumult kept up for days. Anglo-American friendship became one of his enthusiasms after this overwhelming taste of American kindness.

The success of the Prince's trip pleased the Government and early the next year he left again, for Barbados, Fiji, New Zealand and Australia. Everywhere the crowds went mad with delight. Girls patted his pillow when they were shown through the royal train and little boys stole toothpicks from his table as souvenirs. Farmers stopped their plows and waved as the train passed; women ran out on verandas and waved bed-sheets. In the towns, beds were carried out of hospitals so the patients could see him pass; even the prisoners in jails were allowed to sit on top of the walls and cheer him.

The Australians liked the Prince most of all for the way he behaved

after his train was overturned through a carriage leaping from the rails. As the horrified officials hurried toward the royal carriage, members of the Prince's staff, some of them injured, crawled one by one out of the windows. The Prince was the last to appear. He had stayed behind, he said, to gather his papers together. His genius for managing awkward moments was now in full flower. He thanked the officials for at last arranging something which was not on the official program.

Every day glowing cables of their son's success were sent to the King and Queen. On the surface they had every reason for being proud. But they wondered many times over the wisdom of this suitcase existence. Forever meeting new people, he was gathering a superficial view of human nature. He was never still long enough to experience the difficulty of making a friend, of knowing the hearts of men. But the acclamation was too loud; the King and Queen were forced to dismiss their doubts.

TWO YEARS had passed during the Prince's journeys to Canada and the Antipodes, and when he returned to London he was almost a stranger. His brothers were creating their own interests and his former friends were caught up in their own affairs. He was already paying the penalty of his

unique position. His interests and viewpoint were wandering from the English path, and the gap between the Prince and his family was widening. As he made his own way and his own friends, he became attached to two problems. The Prince realized the wide gulf between British business men and the trade of the new countries. In his every speech he touched on the sleepiness of England, the need for understanding with the Dominions, and the possibilities of Empire Economic Unity. Older people were almost shocked by his businesslike air and hinted that his dignity was risked when he made so many practical efforts to stimulate business.

Another problem went deeper with the Prince — anxiety for the returned soldiers. When the war passed he had been one of the few English leaders who did not turn from its ugliness. One day at a hospital where he was shown only the more presentable patients, he was asked not to go into a certain room where there was a man misshapen beyond recognition. The Prince insisted. He found a man, horribly torn, lying upon the bed. He leaned over and touched the soldier's cheek with his lips.

Naturally affectionate and gentle and lacking personal experiences which would satisfy this side of his nature, the Prince now threw himself into the cause of the wounded and unemployed ex-

soldiers to the exclusion of his rest and pleasures. He was unique in the way he guided public thought from pure veneration of the dead to practical help for the maimed and workless. In one Armistice Day speech he said: "The whole nation pays a solemn tribute to the glorious dead. This tribute, however, must not end there. . . . Some 20,000 officers, 20,000 disabled and 250,000 fit men are seeking work. . . . It is up to us." He was not content to dispense pity from his place near the throne. He became like a young father to many suffering people.

The Prince was thus beginning to use his energies with fixed purposes when the Government suggested that he be sent across the world once more, this time to attempt the conquest of India. Queen Mary protested, but Government policy could not wait upon the subtleties of a growing character, and again all the fixed principles upon which his nature might have grown were shaken. For most British people the estrangement of King Edward came suddenly, but for his mother it began 10 years before, when a shortsighted Government exploited her son's charm and talents to the full, sending him hurrying abroad, making him live at a speed which was to affect all his life and judgment. This theme bears reiteration, for it is like a mournful chorus in a Greek tragedy, warning us of the de-

struction with which the story ends.

IN OCTOBER, 1921, the Prince sailed for India. Gandhi was trying to boycott him there. Bombay was plastered with posters telling the people to stay within their houses and give the city an air of gloom. But wherever the Prince went there were converts. He was so unlike the officials of the British Raj. Here was no striding or high-minded talk of Britain's responsibility toward the dark races. The Prince on landing had said, "I want you to know me and I want to know you," and this naïve wish colored almost every scene of his visit.

On his last night in Bombay the Prince's car drove four miles to the station unguarded save for the pilot police car. Behind the police cordon that lined the streets pressed the common people in their uncounted thousands. When he reached the station the Prince said, "Drop those barriers and let the people in," and like the sweep of a river in flood the interminable multitudes rolled in and shouted and adored and laughed and wept, and when the train started, ran alongside the royal carriage till they could run no more.

The fabulous native states gilded themselves and all that they touched in honor of the Prince. At Baroda the elephants were

painted with gold, the carriages were made of silver. The nobles who salaamed before him moved over a golden carpet; they wore apple green dappled with gold and their robes were laden with jewels and orders. Around the lawns and marble terraces were six miniature theaters in which were acrobats in pink tights, little parrots riding bicycles and firing guns, and nautch girls singing and dancing. At Udaipur the Prince was carried to the banquet hall in a golden chair, lighted by torchbearers. Crossing the desert, he met Tibetan monks who had left their monastery five months before, in donkey carts, so they could come and dance for him. There was danger behind the old beauty, and as the train moved on, he saw men upon their camels, perhaps 200 yards apart, with their backs toward him. They were camel patrols guarding him, and thus did not turn as he passed.

At Lucknow, thanks to Gandhi, the shops were shut and the gharri drivers refused to work. Even loyal Indians had no way of traveling in from the outlying country. British humor eased the situation. Army lorries paraded the streets bearing signs, "Come and see the Prince and have a free ride." The lorries were soon crowded.

The newspapers used grand phrases to describe the results of the tour. The *Englishman* stated that the Prince "did more to es-

tablish cordial relations between the masses of India and the Crown in four months than edicts could have done in a generation." It is significant that where King Edward VII had referred to the British people as his *subjects* and King George spoke of his *people*, King Edward VIII addressed them as his *fellow men*.

SOON AFTER his return to England he was once more on a battle cruiser, which he described as his "second home," bound for Africa. At Nigeria, chieftains shaded by gay umbrellas greeted him with jesters and dancers. Their approach was heralded by trumpets 12 feet long. Their 20,000 horsemen stretched from horizon to horizon. The pageant of strange countries had begun once more: the speechmaking, the long hours of travel, the cruel demands upon temper and strength.

At Capetown the Prince had to talk with Dutchmen who had fought against England — clever men who were still inclined toward secession and who had already woven the design for their own separate South African flag. His first speech won their applause: "I come to you as the King's eldest son, as heir to a throne under which the members of that Commonwealth are free to develop each on its own lines but all to work together as one. . . ." At the end he ventured into their

own language, Afrikaans, which he had bothered to learn while in India. When the dinner was over the old Dutchmen gathered about him and one said it would be nice if he could remain in Africa to be their first President. After making a triumphal tour throughout South Africa the Prince crossed the Atlantic and repeated his successes in Uruguay, the Argentine and Chile.

WHEN he returned from his 35,000-mile trip, the Prince was more than ever a stranger to England, and it was not easy for him to change the tempo of his life. It was observed that there were hours of contemplation, touching on moroseness, when he was not facing a cheering crowd. The manacles of his father's Court were unwelcome to him. Rumor said that his wish for freedom was so fierce that he threatened to renounce his rights and settle in one of the Dominions if he was not allowed to follow his own way. The tragedy of his isolation had already begun. His stubbornness was alleviated by his great charm, his keen mind, and his desire to do what was right — but he discounted his powers by turning from advice and playing a lone hand.

Despite these private misfortunes, which were naturally hidden from the public, the Prince made a unique place for himself

among the great mass of people. The pain and humiliation of his exile must always be remembered as the tragic end of a great mission among the poor of his father's kingdom. Lacking a focus for his natural affections he had developed what might be called an obsession about those in want. He did not consider them in relation to other classes, which was necessary from the point of view of State. He could not tread quietly nor work cautiously. His interest now centered upon the discontented unemployed.

The first real sympathy between the Prince and the people of the distressed areas began in 1923 when he had gone to a town in which there was awful poverty. There, at a soup kitchen, he saw 100 men who lived in shadows he had never known before. The first time he spoke, in the surprised way he did when he was shocked, he pointed to a young man and said, "That man has no shirt under his coat." The Prince went from this dismal scene to a gay party, but his depression stayed with him. In a little adjoining room he walked up and down, pressing his hands together and saying, "What can I do? What can be done?" From that time on all other interests took second place for him. He hammered on every door for help and as patron of the Lord Mayor's fund for distressed miners he asked that he

might go to the mining areas to see how the money was being used. The *New York Tribune* in reporting his pilgrimage tells this typical story:

". . . In one village the Prince's party came to a row of terrible little houses. They picked one by chance and knocked. Could he come in, the Prince asked the miner who opened the door. The man said dubiously, 'Ay, ye can, Sir. But my wife's sick.' In a dreadful bare room the wife lay in the pangs of childbirth. For a moment the Prince looked at the twitching figure under the rough bedding. Then the miner said, 'If ye wouldn't mind holding her hand just for a minute, she'd never forget it.' The Prince put down his hand and the mother's sought it and clutched it."

The Prince tramped through mud and cold for four days, making a penetrating search into the life of the miners. He asked for their pay sheets and asked the cost of their food. It is said that not one of the miners complained to him. They answered his questions, but they did not grumble. Seven months after his visit Sir Noel Curtis Bennett said: "I was in Northumberland and Durham last week; all the people put the improvement in the coal trade entirely to the Prince's visit. Almost all the public houses in the 'red' villages have hung a picture of H.R.H."

But all this charitable activity

did not bring the Prince repose of mind. When his duties were ended he often sought pleasure in a society which was unsuited to the needs of the heir to the throne. King George often criticized the Prince, sometimes bringing in the name of a prelate or statesman to support his opinion. These frequent chastenings made the Prince of Wales secretive, stubborn and more self-willed than ever. He came to look upon his father, the Archbishop and some of the older Ministers as critical and unsympathetic; and he increasingly sought the society of gay and casual people.

The newspapers rejoiced over the Prince's democratic habits. They all contributed to the theme of popularity. But popularity was not enough, and even in America, where life is more free, there was criticism of his habits on his second visit in 1924. The Americans were delighted because he learned to tap-dance and play the ukulele; because he was deliberately scornful of formality. But the delight was a different kind from the victory of five years before, when they were able to view his charm and his royal purpose as one. Although he performed his duties, the stories which were hurried back to England were of his winnings at the races and of his dancing until six in the morning. But the growing murmurs against him were drowned by his public suc-

cess. He was the hero of the masses, perhaps the most celebrated figure in the world. Serious people watched him with alarm and hoped his good gifts would guide him in the end, but the error went on. The *Spectator* suggested that the Prince would "rightly interpret the wishes of the nation if he made it impossible for people to have any excuse for saying that he exhausts himself in giving to amusements time which might be spent in preparation for work that is always and necessarily exacting and tiring."

Incessant voices reminded him that his life was more precious than his neighbor's. When he had wished to be a soldier during the war he had been discouraged, just as he had been disappointed by the interruption of his career as a sailor. When he rode horseback his recklessness brought protests from Parliament. He had learned to fly, against the opposition of his father and his father's Ministers. It was the Prince's wish to become a qualified pilot, to earn his wings — which he already wore by virtue of his honorary rank. This was not allowed. It was in 1932 that he showed the first signs of moping and secretiveness which so sadly tortured him in the end. Perhaps it was that the refusal to allow him to enjoy aviation to the full completed the long theme of frustration. He seldom referred to his disappointment, but when



he did so it was with extreme bitterness.

MEANWHILE Europe was in a turmoil; dictatorships were springing up, freedom was being crushed. While these fierce changes shook the Continent, England turned more and more to its Royal Family for consolation, for there lay its example in citizenship and its font of moral courage. The bright popularity of the Prince was as a rocket compared with the emotions which his father stirred. All the quiet laws of character were represented in the King; all the old-fashioned virtues, the king-becoming graces flowered in him and impressed themselves upon a troubled, cynical world. Londoners, going home past Buckingham Palace, would look at the simple stone façade and feel more safe for the life which went on inside. Where King George had slowly amassed a great bulwark of respect about him because of his character, his son gathered the gayer rewards of popularity which were enough to sustain him while heir to the throne, but not enough to sustain him when he became King.

During the last year of his life, private grief made King George an unhappy, disappointed man. He saw his son retreating into a wilderness in which he could not help him. Edward was without friends, because he had lost, or

never seemed to have, the capacity for making solid friendships. This lack of friends was sadly felt when he came to the throne. Both his grandfather and his father had succeeded with a circle of tried friends from whom they had been able to form their Courts. King Edward VIII had no such company when his turn came, and even his old staff had been almost depleted.

Uncertain of values in living and bitterly resenting all interference and even affectionate advice, the Prince built up the usual defenses of a lonely man who is not certain of his own strength. He became increasingly stubborn and conceited over his popularity. Every incident of 15 years of his life contributed to his self-centeredness. His natural graces, his kindness, the compassionate note which used to come to his voice when he spoke to suffering people, all seemed to turn sour within him.

One of the first signs of this change was his treatment of servants. As a youth he had always shown the utmost kindness for those who served him. When traveling, his deference for his tutors had been almost embarrassing. The best beds were for them because they were older; the comfortable chairs and the least draughty corners. It was terrible to find this instinct withering, so that he broke down the

affection of his household by his lack of consideration.

THE PRINCE'S troubled spirit found its focus some time before his father's Jubilee, when he was introduced to an American lady, married to a business man living in England. Mrs. Simpson always appeared in public with her husband and there was no indication of want of happiness in their relationship. Nevertheless the friendship between the Prince and herself developed rapidly. The English press was silent about this, but the secret assumed the proportions of a scandal among certain classes of society.

On January 20, 1936, all the world was grieved by the death of King George. Edward's long, exacting apprenticeship was over; the long wandering through experience and doubt; the frustration and the striving. The power in his hands was terrible, and the Government and those who knew him were keenly afraid. But the mass of people were ignorant of his growing tragedy and to them his accession meant that he would fulfill the many promises he had made.

Two days afterwards King Edward followed his father's coffin to Westminster Hall for the lying in state. During the slow, agonizing march the new Sovereign's face was gray and drawn. He looked as though he could never

smile again. During the mournful days before King George was buried King Edward's grief must have been bitterly mixed with personal conflict. He apparently suffered no self-reproach in staying at Fort Belvedere, away from his mother, in the hours when his place was beside her. The unfortunate friendship was not allowed to suffer in deference to sorrow. The King's conscience seemed able to reconcile his unusual life with his promises to the State. He wrote to the Commons: "My father devoted his life to the service of his people. He was ever actuated by his profound sense of duty. I am resolved to follow in the way he has set before me." People hoped and wondered then. Were the words an empty formality or did the gray face tell of a struggle toward kingly greatness?

King George was buried in St. George's Chapel on January 28. The bell in the Curfew Tower gave warning as the procession began its march up the hill which the Norman Conqueror had climbed almost 900 years before. Within the chapel, where kings were buried long before Columbus dreamed the world was round, 500 chosen subjects waited for the body of their dead King. The form of the coffin darkened the doorway, and George the Good was brought into the home of his fathers.

As the Bishop of Winchester read the Lesson: "I saw a new

heaven and a new earth . . ." most eyes turned toward King Edward. No man in the world had ever had so much to decide and yet been so alone and beyond help in his perplexity. Along both ways open to him lay renunciation. The one way offered loneliness: the loneliness which made Queen Victoria cry, at the beginning of her widowhood, "There is nobody to call me Victoria now." Along this way was the compensation of great honor and the deeper strength of courage. Along the other way lay private happiness, but also the ghost of failure.

During the first weeks of King Edward's short reign it seemed that he was trying to gather up the fragments of his life and fulfill his early promises. The newspapers gave a constructive record of his busy days, of his continued anxiety over the poor. When he went to see the great ship *Queen Mary*, and then visited the Glasgow slums, he asked, "How do you reconcile the world that has produced this mighty ship with the slums we have just visited?" This was the Edward whom England loved so well. Hope became high again. Mr. George Lansbury, the once fanatical Labor leader, had said of him: "We do what we can, but he goes into the houses. We don't." Every pleasant sign was treasured by those who watched him, watched him as if he were a patient in a fever. It seemed rea-

sonable to hope that he would make the decision which the country required of him.

THEN on May 27 the names of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Simpson appeared on the Court Circular. They had dined at St. James's Palace and the King had added an incongruous note to his defiance by inviting Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Baldwin. Soon the name of Mrs. Simpson appeared again in the Court Circular, this time without her husband. Now widespread gossip and extracts from the foreign press percolated throughout England and by the end of the summer a sense of insecurity spread over the country.

Had King Edward come to the throne during a war or national crisis he might have risen to magnificence. But he assumed his crown when the country was complacent and sleepy. He was surrounded by old men: a Prime Minister who stood for the safety and apathy which he could not endure, an Archbishop to whom he was hostile. King Edward would not realize that the unconventional ways of a popular Prince of Wales did not suit a monarch's stride. He might have imposed them upon his Government over a period of years, but he bustled and failed.

His devotion to the poor might have helped divert the King from his selfish way. It was well known

that one of the chief objects of his reign would have been to lift the unemployed and wretched from their darkness. But many members of the Government resented his campaigns among the poor. His eagerness exposed their work in the distressed areas as slow and blighted by caution. As Prince of Wales he had been discouraged in his charity. It was clear to him that he would be similarly frustrated now that he was Sovereign.

In the summer of 1936 the King chartered a yacht for a cruise in the Adriatic. Mr. Simpson now withdrew and a party of nine embarked on a sunny holiday. The pity of it was that the photographs showed a happy King: here was a King who, having involved his country in a great and painful anxiety, was joyfully amusing himself as his will and fancy guided. Everywhere Mrs. Simpson was beside him, and if the society which gathered about them was sometimes of the kind that sparkles but does not endure, there was no denying that the King was supremely happy.

The modesty of the newspaper reports of Mrs. Simpson's second divorce did not save the story of her life from becoming a widespread scandal. The talk which had never gone far beyond the ruling classes now became the subject of after-dinner quips; old limericks were remodeled and puns invented to suit the occa-

sion. But while the story piled itself up toward the inevitable end, there was true greatness in the reaction of the mass of people. Disappointed, they were patient; they seemed to respect the King's problem as a war for his own character.

Early in the crisis the King had sent for Mr. Baldwin and said, "I am going to marry Mrs. Simpson and I am prepared to go." He had made up his mind in favor of love against duty. He knew then that the traditions of British respectability could never withstand the union he proposed.

Many still erroneously imagine that the Government pressed the King into abdication. But when the documents are available to future historians, justice will doubtless be done to both the King and his Ministers. King Edward was a distraught, unreasonable man and negotiations with the Cabinet would have been impossible. Mr. Baldwin and his colleagues carried the country through the greatest drama concerning the authority of the monarch since the time of James II, saving it from violent disruption. The King, had he acted wildly, might constitutionally have dismissed his Ministers. Instead, he acted unselfishly toward the country; he withdrew, and wore his defeat with dignity.

King George began his reign at 1:52 p.m. on December 11. That

evening Edward made his farewell address to the Empire. As millions waited for the hour when he would speak, their chief feeling was disappointment. At 10 o'clock a voice announced over the air, "This is Windsor Castle. His Royal Highness Prince Edward." Then came another voice, thick and tired, and one was aware of the Prince's will summoning its strength, trying, along the way of sorrow and self-pity, to explain his intimate tragedy to the world. He pleaded, "You must believe me when I tell you that I have found it impossible to carry the heavy burden of responsibility and discharge my duties as King as I would wish to do without the help and support of the woman I love."

THE FINAL battle of his life as King was between his heart and his judgment — and it was his judgment that failed. Historians of the future will not write upon the romantic theme of a King who gave up his throne for love, so much as upon the theme of a man of promise who came to

disaster through the perpetual frustrations which he suffered. King Edward's renunciation of his crown must be considered in the light of the years when he lived a restless, uncertain life: a life which gave him little chance of developing those serene qualities of mind which might have guided him into higher spheres of moral conquest when his hour of temptation came. His courage was not at fault. He was fiercely loyal to his ideal, and if the scope of his conflict seemed unworthy, there was no doubt of his sincerity. In his own words of farewell:

"I now quit altogether public affairs, and I lay down my burden. It may be some time before I return to my native land, but I shall always follow the fortunes of the Empire . . . and if I can be found of service to His Majesty in a private station I shall not fail.

"And now we all have a new King. I wish him and you, his people, happiness and prosperity with all my heart. God bless you all. GOD SAVE THE KING!"

*As a convenience to readers who do not have easy access to a bookstore, orders for "King Edward VIII" (\$3.00), or any book quoted or mentioned in The Reader's Digest, may be sent (with remittance) direct to The Reader's Digest Book Service, Pleasantville, N. Y.*

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