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EVER EDWARD: English People Cheer Exiled Friend, Read About George's "Virtues"

(image added)

. . . Edward, who puts his hand in his pocket, looks sad for cameramen at Enzesfeld Castle, Austria

The head mistress of a famous English girls' school summoned all her pupils to the assembly-room one bitter day last month. Slipping over the romantic details of the story she felt obliged to tell, she concluded her little address:

"King Edward was of my generation. I do not know how your parents feel about him, but I think I am right in saying that those of my generation feel that King Edward—has—let—us—down! Now let us stand and pray silently for two minutes for King George and Mr. Baldwin."

The uniformed girls stood with bowed heads. Later, one youngster told her father: "I just couldn't bear to pray for that Mr. Baldwin, so I prayed for King George and Mrs. Simpson."

Conformity—The story is typical of scenes throughout Britain during the attempt to liquidate the former King. Most of the daily newspapers cooperated cheerfully in the Archbishop of Canterbury's plea to shroud Edward in a mantle of silence—a mantle which "Cosmo Cantuar" himself was the first to lift. Out of seventeen pictures taken of King Edward in Austria last week, the austere *Times* did not publish one.

On the whole, weeklies also swung immediately from their forty-two-year propaganda in favor of the Prince of Wales and King Edward, and started to build up King George. Even his weaknesses were dressed up as virtues, often, by innuendo, at his charming predecessor's expense. The impediment in his speech—once the source of many an English joke—seemed likely to become his greatest blessing.

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"His stammer," said a writer in *The Sphere*, "his ill-health, and his years of second sonship have permitted him to develop a formidable courage and a formidable personality. Slow to make pronouncements, he has none of the actor's tricks and has been fortunately prevented by his handicaps from mistaking limelight for achievement. . . . Prince Albert (now King George) never courted publicity."

Not Edward's Type—Contrasting him with his elder brother, long hailed as Prince Charming, "one who knows him" writes:

"Both as a boy and as an adult, the new King lacked *immediate* charm. . . . Those who say, and many do, that the King has no sense of humor do not know what they are talking about. The King has quite a normal sense of humor, a keen sense of the ridiculous, almost a passion for Walt Disney films (have not we all?), and an equally violent dislike for the Rabelaisian when it is not funny—and possibly even when it is funny. . . . In this respect he may be called a prude—and perhaps that is not altogether a bad thing for a King to be." He likes clubs, the writer continues, except fashionable night-clubs—which his brother frequented.

Pages and pages of pictures show him as infant, child of one, two, three, etc., naval officer, golfer, tennis player, Australian visitor, bridge-opener, polo player, admiring husband and beaming father. The propagandists' difficulty lies in the fact that none of them shows the human quality his predecessor—decently buried toward the back of the journals—evinced in almost every pose. A South African farmer clasps Edward familiarly by the arm; he dons workman's togs for a descent to a mine, or leans over on a public platform to play entranced with a stray kitten.

Apologies—Excuses for Britain's long silence over the ex-monarch's friendship for Mrs. Simpson continue to appear. The press, *The Sphere* explained, "proved up to the hilt its patriotism and integrity." The weeklies, however, printed facsimilies of early American stories on the case, including articles in the New York tabloids and THE LITERARY DIGEST—which they described as "a journal known for its dignity of presentation."

Of all the weeklies, only *The Saturday Review* came out whole-heartedly for King Edward, splashing its cover with a mourning band and a verse which ran: "Driven away by a law that's a lie, Great King and True Lover, for you we would die.".

Even the record of King Edward's last broadcast may not be sold in Britain. Yet his subjects have not forgotten. When a London cinema, in a newsreel review of the year, showed the ex-King leading the mourners at his father's funeral, spontaneous cheering swept the whole hall. Only scattered applause greeted his successor.

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