

LITERARY DIGEST

December 5, 1936

INNUENDO ON EDWARD:

British Press Silence on
Monarch Friendly With
Mrs. Simpson

Innuendo about King Edward's friend Mrs. Wallis Simpson, previously barred from London newspapers, crept in last week and even colored the august columns of the *London Times*.

In an editorial unprecedented in its implications, the ultra-Conservative daily presumed to apprise the ruler of his place in a constitutional monarchy. The article hinged on the appointment—nominally by the King but actually by the Cabinet—of a professional politician as Governor-General of South Africa. "It is a position—the position of the King's Deputy no less than that of the King himself—" the paper moralized, "that must be kept high above public reproach or ridicule and that is incomparably more important than the individual who fills it."

"The King's Deputy, like the King himself, should be invested with a certain detachment and dignity, which need not at all preclude his contact with all sorts and conditions of people, but which are not so easily put on as a change of clothes."

Press War—The King's well-known sympathy for all sorts of people, as dramatized by his recent visit to Welsh miners, set off another press war. "He went to see for himself," the sensational and popular *Daily Mail* stated succinctly. "The contrast to the way in which national questions are customarily approached can escape nobody. . . . How often does a Minister go boldly forth to see for himself and measure a problem by independent judgment, following this with immediate action?"

The *Daily Telegraph*, nearly as Tory as the *Times*, published a heated warning that "those who would make a whip to beat the Ministers out of the kind and human feelings that the King has shown are not helping the special areas, but are doing a great disservice to His Majesty." Angrier than ever, the *Times* blared:

"The King's constitutional position is above and apart from party politics, and those who cherish the institution of monarchy will always strive to keep it so."

The trip so increased his popularity with the masses—and many believed this was Edward's intention—that every glimpse of him aroused loud cheers in cinemas. David

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Kirkwood, Glasgow Laborite, violated the rule that the monarch's name may not be mentioned in the House of Commons, suggesting that he had advocated abolition of the hated means test. "We can not bring the King's name into debate," the Speaker ruled, amid shouts of "Order!"

The outspoken *Week* found the editorials an index of the "lengths to which the Old Guard at the palace is prepared to go in its intransigent last ditch fight."

Portent—To the weekly *Cavalcade*, the flurry portended worse storms to come: "*The Times*, which represents a *clique* of Conservatives, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, has for weeks been preparing, in case of need, a pontifical leading article on the constitutional power of the King, including his power with Parliament, his power to disband the Army and sell the Navy, or to marry a commoner and raise her to royal status."

Meanwhile the usual gossips chronicled the latest on the King's and Wallis Warfield Simpson's affairs. The monarch, it was said, heard further protests from Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin, who thereupon called a special Cabinet meeting to discuss the friendship. The King will drop her, it was also said, or he will name her Duchess of Lancaster on his Coronation and marry her soon thereafter.

Mrs. Simpson's mail has reputedly leaped to 300 letters a day—largely denunciatory. According to rumor, one threatened to bomb her, and an extra police officer got a job at Cumberland Terrace, inspecting all packages and even the emptied garbage-cans.

One touching story had the forty-two-year-old King protesting to his advisers, "I am now happy for the first time in my life and I wish you would leave me alone." It recalled a story they tell in Virginia about Alice Montague, whose aristocratic family objected when she wanted to marry poor, tubercular Wallis Warfield. "I love him," she protested, "and I'll marry him if we have to live in the gutter." She did. Within a year their daughter Wallis was born, and Warfield dead.