



FREDERICK, son of George II, who hated him and ignored his existence

bourne, on whom the Queen had leaned before her marriage, told her that education might be able to do much, but not as much as expected. "It may mould and direct character, but it rarely alters it." The pressure went on. Edward was not allowed to mix at all freely with boys of his age. Until he was 17 he never talked with one, except under supervision. Everybody and everything was screened. When he went to Universities, he did not live as a student in college, but had his own establishment. Novel-reading, even Scott, was discouraged.

Yet there were good qualities. There is plenty of testimony to Edward's charm. The Dean of Christ Church found him "the nicest fellow possible." He was a youth when he visited Canada and the United States, but he captivated everybody. Edward liked and understood people, but did not care for books, and that was his attitude all his life. Noting that Edward had a "singularly sweet manner," but could not bear being bored, Disraeli added: "I can't myself." Gladstone said of Edward that he knew everything except what was in books. It was not from books that Edward drew the ability to charm the Anglophobe public of Paris and prepare the way for the Entente Cordiale.

Of course, the boiler did "blow off." at any rate, in the Queen's opinion. When he came of age Edward was given an establishment of his own, and married happily, though not for love in the conventional sense. A young man with an exceptional capacity for human companionship and a strong zest for life, found himself free for the first time, with money to spend, and regarded as the social leader of the nation. The world was a very wonderful place, and if he sampled its delights not wisely but too well at times, who should blame the released prisoner?

There remained, however, the question of adequate employment, and though he was middle-aged when he came to the throne, this was never provided for him as Prince. The Queen never got over her dislike and distrust of him. "Bertie" was light-minded and indiscreet. He could not be trusted with State papers, and before he was conceded this right, these were actually shown to one of his brothers. Edward wanted to do more than open exhibi-

tions and lay foundation stones, and politicians urged that something better to do be found.

The Queen turned down every suggestion. He was too young. It would be improper for the heir to fill such a post. The position would not really provide him with occupation. . . . Whether the proposal was that he should represent the Queen in Ireland—which had been visited by the Sovereign for only 22 days in 200 years—or learn the business of government by working as a sort of apprentice civil servant in different departments or serve on the Indian Council . . . or work on the Local Government Board, the Queen had a reason ready for saying No. The Irish idea, pushed by various Ministers year after year in the hope that the charming and genial Prince and Princess might work the miracle which defeated them of bringing peace to Ireland, was the only one which the Queen seems to have considered seriously. But serious consideration always resulted in rejection.

Edward did find some employment on commissions and committees, but his chief service was storing up experience of the world for use when he was King. Despite his strict insistence on etiquette he had a liberal mind. But he and his mother never came together.

"There is a greater distance between my mother and myself than there is between the Queen and her humblest subject." So he was reported. "I never in my life had a heart-to-heart talk with her" (he said on another occasion). "I never left the room and her presence without a sigh of relief." "It quite irritates me to see him in the room," the Queen said to a Minister.

Publicly, however, Edward was always loyal to his mother.

Edward and Alexandra brought up their two sons sensibly in an affectionate and easy family life. George, who became George V, was the second, and seems to have been the stronger character. Both boys became naval cadets, and to George the Navy became a profession. It suited his simple character; his son Edward was also a cadet, but the fact that he missed the rough and tumble of ordinary school life was a handicap, and it is advanced here as part of the tragedy of Edward VIII that whereas his father reached the responsibility of executive rank in the service, the son did not.

There was affection between King George and his son, but the refrain of his father's advice was: "You must remember who you are." Belonging to a new age, the young man was discouraged from taking part in some of its activities, such as flying. So he became to a large extent what his grandfather had been, an ornamental prince.

"THE rare, the rather awful visits of Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, to Windsor Castle" — Max Beerbohm's celebrated cartoon (from "The English Comic Album," edited by Leonard Russell and Nicolas Bentley; Michael Joseph)

He obstinately refused to accept the idea that, like other staff officers, it was his duty not to take risks (in the first war), and his obstinacy was symbolised by refusal to wear the ribbons of French and Russian war medals which had been given him. He could not bring himself to wear what he considered unearned medals when so many men who had done real fighting received none.

Of Edward's peace activities, this biographer says, there remained, as he has recorded in retrospect, "a sense of incompleteness and inner discontent." His intimate circle of friends, composed mostly of "lightweights" perhaps encouraged him to believe overmuch in the infallibility of his judgment and the power of his popularity.

Thanks to the wisdom of her parents and the conditions of the second war, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth was the most democratically educated of all heirs-apparent. She and her husband show an even deeper wisdom in the education of their son. The problem

for the future—to find occupation for him when he grows up—is extremely difficult. The nation and the Commonwealth expect the Sovereign to be regal, to maintain ceremony and pageantry, but at the same time ask the Royal Family to mix with the people and be democratically minded. The people or peoples must co-operate sympathetically and intelligently. There should be an end to such folly as crowds rushing to the scene the moment it is announced that Prince Charles is going to a certain preparatory school. The heaviest responsibility rests with the Press, sections of which are avid to exploit royalty and frequently disregard its right to privacy. We have seen Lord Altrincham's criticism distorted in condensation. The public has a game to play according to rules, as well as the Royalty it watches.

—A.M.

