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The Death of His Majesty King George V

THE death of His Majesty King George V has brought an intimate sense of personal loss to the heart of each and every one of his subjects. In the twenty-five years of his reign, twenty-five years which have brought ruin and disruption to many Royal Houses, the position of the Imperial throne of Britain has been strengthened by his character and personal influence. He transcended "the divinity that doth hedge a king", to which our loyalty was freely given at the beginning of his rule, to become the beloved leader of his people, taking his full share of the joys and the trials of a democracy.

King George's reign began in a time of political stress, demanding an urgent and momentous decision, such as would have taxed the judgment of a ruler old in statecraft. Crisis followed crisis with an insistence and of a magnitude never equalled in so short a period in the world's history. Throughout the Great War and no less in the pangs of the period of reconstruction after the peace, the nation and the empire felt that their Sovereign was at one with them in their efforts to grasp and solve their problems. The wise and unobtrusive support of their ruler, setting an example to the members of the Royal Family which they were not slow to follow with ready self-sacrifice, afforded a rallying point and a stabilising influence in which the personal element came to count for even more than the constitutional position of the Crown.

British sovereigns have not invariably been in sympathy with the spirit of their times. As King George advanced in years, he was, his subjects could feel, in harmony with those elements of modern civilisation which seem, in such light as is given us, to make for progress, while he and his Consort held fast to a sense of discipline and to

those ideals of an older generation which a broad view of the history of mankind shows to lie at the root of a stable society. To this end he brought to bear two supreme qualities—he knew men and their lands and he had an appreciation of the applications of science, and more particularly of mechanical science, to the amelioration of the conditions of life. His interest in and knowledge of technical detail often surprised those with whom he came into contact on his visits to industrial and other undertakings. It is not always remembered that his rank in the Navy was more than a ceremonial compliment to a member of the Royal House. From his early years, when he toured the world with his elder brother in the *Bacchante*, he was devoted to the sea; and it was only the untimely death of the Duke of Clarence, which brought him at twenty-seven years of age directly into the line of succession, that put an end to a career of high promise, in which he had already won rapid promotion.

The knowledge of peoples and individuals of all classes and ranks which King George thus acquired, in the various quarters of the world in which he was stationed, was further extended when as Duke of York and Prince of Wales he visited colonies and dependencies which were to be part of his Empire. As he showed at the opening of the Round Table Conference which deliberated on the future constitution of India, his visit to that country after his accession had inspired him with an understanding of its native rulers, its peoples and its problems, even though his visit was one of ceremonial, that had never been forgotten.

Thus King George was peculiarly fitted by temperament, by training and by experience to give to his people and their governors such guidance in a time of intense difficulty as our constitution

allows—good fortune for which we as a nation can never be sufficiently grateful. Each age is to itself an age of transition; but to the reign of King George, if we may anticipate the verdict of history, it would seem that this description will apply with more than subjective validity. By the Great War, tradition was broken. A new generation had grown up which knew not the training and precept of its immediate elders; and with a vastly augmented electorate it found opportunity—if not free and untrammelled, at least such as a younger generation had never had before—to secure a hearing for new ideals, new methods, new points of view.

Yet if we would compare the early years of King George's rule with those of its close, the strongest contrast is to be seen in the place of scientific research and the application of its results to the common surroundings of daily life in these later days. Speed in transport, the use of wireless, the variety and independence of season of our perishable foodstuffs, to name a few only of the most notable items, are now of the commonplaces of existence. In so far as evil can bring forth good, the Great War has profited mankind to this extent, that it has taught us the advantages of organised effort and of the systematic application of scientific method and research to the solution of the problems of modern civilisation and the amelioration of the conditions of modern life. No doubt, if we believe in human perfectibility, there is still a long road to travel, but in the history of science the reign of King George will stand out as a landmark in progress towards the knowledge and understanding of fact, which is of the essence of science, whether it be regarded as pure knowledge or in relation to man and his environment, considered as a specific factor of his existence.

Something of this was outlined in the issue of *NATURE* which marked the occasion of the late King's Silver Jubilee; but there was little opportunity there to stress the advance in those sciences which contribute even more directly to the knowledge of man and the advancement of his well-being—the social and humanistic sciences. Here progress has been no less marked than in the physical sciences, though the results are in themselves less spectacular. Their influence, however, is to be seen in the measures of social reform and improvement, the care for those feeble in mind or body and the progress of educational reform, slow though it may be, measures which His

Majesty King George showed on many an occasion he had as nearly at heart as his subjects.

If the formation of the League of Nations, with its committees dealing with specific problems, be regarded as the salient fact since the War in the world at large affecting the development of the social sciences, changes within the Empire are of no less moment, and indeed, as the event has proved, have afforded a stimulus to the advancement of science as a whole. When King George came to the throne he received from his father, King Edward, an Empire which was a loose and somewhat indeterminate federation of dependencies and colonies, in which the chief bond was loyalty to the Crown and love for the Mother Country. This Empire passes to his successor as a Commonwealth of Nations having an assured statutory basis. The pride of nationality, however much we may deprecate some of its manifestations in certain quarters, it has to be admitted, has stimulated interest in educational and scientific institutions in all the Dominions, while in India notably, in Australia and in South Africa it has stimulated inquiry into the past history of the country and its races. In particular, the interest which is now beginning to be taken by the natives of India in the racial elements which constitute her peoples and in the story of the origin and growth of her culture, is not without its effect in the approach to the solution of the grave problems awaiting the application of the new organisation of government.

Mention of the races of the dependencies must serve to remind us of what perhaps has been the most fundamental movement of the last twenty-five years in Imperial relations. This is the change of attitude in the administration of the affairs of that large body of the Empire's members who conventionally are known as 'the backward peoples'. Not long after the late King's accession, Sir Richard Temple at the Birmingham meeting of the British Association in 1913, attacking once more on what the anthropologist had come to regard as almost a forlorn hope, urged upon the Government of the day the necessity for a training in anthropology as a necessary part of the equipment of the administrator. He advanced the argument, which now would be regarded as a commonplace, that a sympathetic understanding of native custom is a necessary condition of the successful control of those who follow that custom. It is unnecessary to follow the later history of the movement then set on foot, which indeed came

nearer success than any of those which had preceded it. But it is interesting to contrast the official attitude, which Sir Richard Temple was then attempting to overcome, with the spirit which now inspires, it may be said, the majority of the officers whose duty lies with 'native' races, and is accepted by authority as the first principle of administration.

The changed attitude towards native peoples and the administration of their territory is perhaps best manifested in the theory which underlies the mandated territories entrusted to the British Empire and other Powers under the League of Nations. Here the benefit of the natives is the first duty of the administering power. But the principle has also come to be recognised where it has no statutory foundation. In the last twenty-five years we have turned from exploitation to a sense of trusteeship.

King Edward VIII takes up the sceptre of Empire at a time of stress no less grave, if in some respects less acute, than that in which King George received it. In the developments which are clearly at hand, science will be

called upon to play a part of no less moment than it has in the past. King Edward has personal knowledge of men and conditions in the Empire overseas, and he has emphasised more than once the importance of the co-ordination of research. In 1926 he presided over the meeting at Oxford of the British Association, and delivered a noteworthy address in the course of which he expressed the view that the future of civilisation "lies along a road the foundations of which have been laid by scientific thought and research". Incidentally, it may be remarked that this was the first occasion on which a member of the Royal Family has filled this office since 1859, when the Prince Consort was president, though King George himself, when Prince of Wales, would have accepted the presidency for the meeting in South Africa in 1905, if State duties had not called him to India at that time. By training and by precept our new ruler is clearly no less well-equipped than his father to meet the strain of a rapidly changing world; and the sincere prayers of his subjects will ever be directed to the end that he may long be spared to give them his guidance.

Applied Psychology in Childhood

(1) Testing Children's Development from Birth to School Age

By Prof. Charlotte Buehler and Prof. Hildegard Hetzer. Translated from the first German edition by Prof. Henry Beaumont. Pp. 191+16 plates. (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1935.) 12s. 6d. net.

(2) A Study of Imagination in Early Childhood and its Function in Mental Development

By Dr. Ruth Griffiths. Pp. xiv+367. (London: Kegan Paul and Co., Ltd., 1935.) 12s. 6d. net.

(3) Play in Childhood

By Margaret Lowenfeld. Pp. 345. (London: Victor Gollancz, Ltd., 1935.) 8s. 6d. net.

THE past seventy years has seen intensive study of the child from both physical and mental aspects, in health, abnormality and disease, and these years have witnessed not only the development of a national system of education but also a gradual tabulation of groups of children with an educational object in view, but largely on medical lines. In the Mental Deficiency Act,

1927, there is also defined the case of 'moral defective'. Social adaptability is the basal criterion of mental efficiency, and for certification as morally defective a child must be mentally defective. A morally defective child, if he exists, is very rare, and usually best classed as feeble-minded; but there are many children with a social or anti-social tendencies who are not mentally defective. There are also many children who exhibit or suffer from a wide variety of 'nervous' symptoms, and, particularly since the War, the 'nervous child' has been a theme of interest and study for pedagogues, paediatrists and psychologists.

The rapidly developing science of psychology has sought, and is gaining, a new insight into child character, child temperament and personality, and is laying down the foundations of a new knowledge of children which bids fair to permit us to peer over the "wall around the town of Boyville"

(1) In their book on "Testing Children's Development from Birth to School Age", the authors have published a detailed series of tests which aim at disclosing the child's personality in all its fundamental dimensions. The tests are in six