

MRS. WALLIS WARFIELD SIMPSON

"Right" Baldwin?



"By ancient customs and usages of the realm"

the archbishop of Canterbury was scheduled
to crown King Edward with this "visible
emblem of royalty."

So transcendent in the universal affairs of men is the romance of the late Edward VIII of Britain and Mrs. Simpson that it outstrips all other reading and admits of any number of postscripts. The one we would add is a dry one, however, on the constitutional point involved. This little matter cost Charles I his royal head, having meanwhile precipitated England's civil war. When England's American colonies began taking on a dignity and resourcefulness of their own, it drew down upon George III the wrath of Jefferson in the Declaration; though it was George who was innocent, though guilty enough in other things unrelated to the colonies, and it was the cabinet and the privy council who were guilty.

Franklin representing Pennsylvania tried more than a decade to reach the king of England; if memory serves he began with George II, and George III came into the picture later. Franklin had a practical plan of autonomous colonies, with direct appeal to the king; he could no more get this by the British cabinet than he could fly his famous kite to the moon, and finally he had to dodge out of England quickly and by French



THE DUKE OF WINDSOR

A man he'd rather be called than King.

leave to avoid being tried for treason, or something worse, before the privy council. (He took along with him to Dover a thermometer, and amused himself dabbling it in the sea and noting its reckonings as he sailed on toward safety and his beloved Philadelphia, and so discovered the current that modifies the climate of western Europe and affords Baldwin pleasant places of sojourn when worn with the cares of state. America was then ahead of Europe in science, and Franklin woke the French up to it later, when he lived in Paris and represented the colonies during their rebellion, which the French helped materially to crown with success).

No, sir—no confabs with the king for a suave printer from Philadelphia. No, sir, again—no bending to the king in 1936 when he wishes to marry in his own way, a way displeasing to Mr. Baldwin, as well as Mrs. Baldwin, and hence displeasing to the British cabinet. A similar fracas over the constitution was avoided under Queen Victoria, Strachey and others show us, by the early demise of her consort Albert. Albert had great concern for the country, as Edward had,

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Hon. Ricardo Nepomuceno

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will not singe off their wool.

The Commissioner hails from Marinduque. He is a Tagalo; you would suppose the folk of Marinduque to be either Bikols or Bisayans, but they are Tagalos and may have migrated from Batangas—they speak with the rising inflexion of Batangueños. (In Marinduque, Mineral Resources is developing a lead-zinc property under the skillful guidance of Victor Lednicky)

Commissioner Nepomuceno is a little past forty. He is married. Mrs. Nepomuceno is also from Marinduque, and they have five children, all attending the public schools, three girls and two boys. The Commissioner graduated in law at the University of the Philippines. He tends to be laconic, which may be a natural trait heightened by his long experience at the Supreme Court as a law clerk. During seven years at the court he was Associate Justice Thomas A. Street's private secretary; better training, in the Philippines, no aspiring student of the law could have than seven years' association with the late Justice Street—who was wont to remark the sound character and ability of Nepomuceno.

Leaving the court, the young barrister repaired to politics and between 1922 and 1931 without a break was elected and reelected Marinduque's representative in the lower house of the old Philippine legislature. Then he lost, but in 1934 came back as a member of the constitutional Convention and took a leading part in the counsels and debates that led to the drafting of the Constitution of the Commonwealth—to be carried on after 1946 as that of the independent Philippines.

President Quezon first appointed Commissioner Nepomuceno a judge of first instance, in Nueva Ecija—it being a cardinal rule of Quezon's never to name a judge to his home province. This position was held less than six months, when Quezon, announcing to a large press conference one Friday afternoon, "I have decided who the Commissioner will be, but won't tell you now because the appointment isn't signed and I don't want a lot of disappointed friends down on meal I will say is that when you know who he is you will approve his selection—" the next day, or possibly the next Monday morning, came through with the name, Ricardo Nepomuceno.

The Commissioner's former colleagues in the law-making branch of the government share the unstinted confidence President Quezon has in him as a law administrator.

The Philippines' Case . . .

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legislation gives the Islands.

Let the wisemen of politics east and west meet as they may, and arrange as they will, a stout American demand for Philippine surplus products must remain the basic factor in the Islands' economics and those who take most advantage of this fact will prosper best. President Quezon, whose particular delight is to speak with his tongue in his cheek, probably knows as well as any man that even during the British period in the Islands after the decline of American maritime facilities in the Civil War period and the opening of the Suez canal hardly a decade later, America was really buying large quantities of Philippine products—just as she has since, just as she will until chemists, should it ever be possible, obviate her necessity for them. Only, during the British period, the trade was round about instead of being direct; cargoes were loaded at Manila for London and Liverpool whose real and final destination was New York or Baltimore, Boston or Philadelphia.

Earlier, American ships hauled the cargoes themselves and had the major part of the business. As to American imports, just let Juan de la Cruz have a peso to spend instead of fifty centavos or a peseta, and generally you will see him buying something of an American brand. The Philippines have sufficient sound trade to offer America to keep her interest in this market as alert as her general indifference to overseas commerce for manufactures permits. But this interest will grow, rather than diminish, under any set of circumstances fate

determines.

"Right" Baldwin?

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and he had strong notions of how to implement this concern and make it effective. He more and more insisted upon his wife's prerogatives; instead of taking every suggestion from the cabinet, he had suggestions of his own for that august power to take from him, therefore from the crown. But he died, so there was no final rumpus; Victoria was left disconsolate to the alternate hammering righteousness of Gladstone and the velvet diplomacy of Disraeli, and no monarch ever in London knew better than she where to find the dotted line and fill it out with the royal signature.

Albert had already looked to the empire, and staged a great empire fair; thereafter Britain had Albert Hall, until fire consumed it a few weeks ago, and Queen-Mother Mary went and visited the ruins to distract her mind from worries provoked by a forward son forty-two years old—a young and liberal king in step with his times but out of harmony with that nebulous entity too delicate even to boast a shadow, the tough and tender British constitution.

There is little more to this British constitution save that what is done is right; but of course what is done must be done by the cabinet or under its aegis: sometimes it likes Canterbury to do it, and His Grace obliges; as in Edward's case, it was no question that he was king and even would be king should he marry Mrs. Simpson, or perhaps her maid, and

would be no more king, and no less, after the coronation; but an ancient sanction was invoked, behind which the cabinet could take shelter, the sanction of the wedding at Canterbury, which the bishop there was got to say could not be solemnized if Mrs. Simpson were the other party at the altar. This dubiety turned out to be the British constitution; in other words, the will of the British cabinet, Mr. Baldwin's si-señor men.

The extremist action the British cabinet has taken in preservation of what is known in history as British liberty, since it forfeited the American colonies, and stocked Canada, just then won from the French, with refugee monarchists, at great expense to the exchequer, rather than yield the crown a thimbleful of real authority over the empire. As much was said at the time, often, in the fiery debates, and of course, as much came to-pass. Cromwell-but who is he who follows Baldwin, who does not deprecate that commoner Cromwell?—had not ridden and had not fought in vain. It is merely an aside that the Church of England was founded by Henry VIII to sanction royal divorce—it gave it to him from Catherine of Aragon because all her babies from Henry died in infancy and Henry felt there was a hex on the house. That was the British constitution then, and the church's part in it, but state and church have other views of the proprieties nowadays: Catherine was from Spain and England wanted no tie-up with Philip; and besides, the plunder from the church in England, where feudalism had built up its vast and pleasant estates, was rich.

What then persists in the British constitution, what is persistent in it? Just this: the crown and the monarch whose head it is on are symbols, nothing more, of traditions the British like to maintain for old times' sake, and grandeur of present times they take just pride in. During the whole period introductory of Edward's abdication, the cabinet consorted with the press to the end that Edward should not reach the people through their newspapers and reviews: he could no more do this than Charles I could have a fair trial. And it was all quite right, as well as right in the political sense. The British cabinet is Britain's government. Edward had a case of his own, but as king he could not enforce it after the cabinet took a stand against it: for Baldwin to have wavered then would have implied that the cabinet yielded in authority to the crown, something the cabinet never does and never dare do.

Some blame British liberals for not aligning themselves with Edward and forcing the government to seek sanction in a general election. These critics not only do not know how religious Britains are, even sanctimoniously religious, but they do not see that no liberal victory could be based substantially on an understanding raising the royal authority above that of the cabinet and the Commons which would mean a change of the constitution. Crowns go on from monarch to monarch, Edward had but to doff his for George to make it his own—by cabinet choice, bear in mind—but cabinets go only so long as the people endorse them: they eminently, though sometimes lugubriously, represent the will of Britain.

So Baldwin was right, except it may be questioned seriously whether he should have ever raised the issue. That seems to have crowned his bumbling as a premier. If the British people think it has cost them too much, out he will go in an early election. Meantime, all there is to it is that the British crown has received another lesson as to its real place in British law.

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Contrary

Let's be contrary. Let's put our back against the wall and face the political wise men of the world, as we make this daring statement:

There is a good chance that the frightful World War which the experts claim is inevitable may not happen after all.

To make a remark like that is indeed, as the graphic phrase of the day has it, going "out on a

limb." For all the high-brows and the broadbrows and—may we coin one?—all the scarebrows of the international scene disagree on only one item of the sure-as-fate death grapple, and that is just when it will start.

And yet there are definite, dramatic and powerful factors at work to prevent this certain world horror. Some of these agencies are subtle, some even under-cover and difficult to pin down; still, with a little peering and pulling, they can be hauled out into the light of day.

In the first place, this coming World War is a war for which every one is prepared, and—to reverse the logic—a war for which all contestants are ready is a war that doesn't happen. That is because no nation will attack another unless it believes it possesses an advantage over the opponent. Which means it thinks itself better prepared.

Note this: the psychology of an attacking nation is the same as that of an individual bully. (Please turn to page 41)

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