

Lord Beaverbrook had money. He has never lacked energy, and he threw himself into the task of creating a newspaper anew, and soon the public began to realize that a fresh and vivid personality was at work.

If there was one man in England who might have been expected to stand by the Coalition government it was the man who had virtually brought it into being. Yet when the Conservative party, growing restless under the coalition leadership of Mr. Lloyd George, was wavering as to its future, Lord Beaverbrook threw all the power of his personality and his paper into the movement for breaking up the coalition and helped his party—in yet another of his sensational efforts—to restore itself in that independence which put it into the commanding position it has since held.

He was still supporting the Conservative party when Mr. Baldwin came to America to seek the basis of a settlement of the war debt. It was Lord Beaverbrook who had first recommended Mr. Baldwin to Mr. Bonar Law for public office in his government, but he turned against Mr. Baldwin for his settlement of the debt, and his was the one newspaper in England to attack immediately the terms Mr. Baldwin made. This independence of his own party—a readiness to criticize his friends as well as his foes—has made him many enemies, but it has made him into a man who is listened to. He is always interesting even when he is wrong, and because his paper expresses his own views it is read by many to whom party politics are no longer as interesting as they were before the war.

As if to symbolize his aloofness from traditional methods, his office is situated just off Fleet Street itself. The note-paper on which he invites you to see him is headed "Lord Beaverbrook's Office," as if to intimate that if this is a peer, he is a working peer. At the top of his newspaper offices a whole floor is devoted to his personal use. An enormous room with windows on three sides looks toward Fleet Street and the Thames, St. Paul's and the roofs of his competitors. It is a room completely paneled in light oak. Sunshine color curtains brighten the London light as it filters through, and four electric heaters around his desk make the room seem flooded with sunlight and warmth even on a foggy day.

There is no sign that this is an office except for the telephone on the floor at his side. In the alcove behind his chair stands a grand piano, blue-covered lounge chairs occupy other alcoves, and in one of them stands a huge divan. The books on the shelves have nothing to do with newspaper work. They are old leather-backed editions of classic volumes.

Every night of his life Lord Beaverbrook dines here like a workman lunching on the job. Other newspaper owners have kept in touch with affairs by assiduous dining out. Lord Beaverbrook reverses the process and lets the mountain come to Mahomet by dining at home.

Many old newspaper men lifted up by fortune have still found the roar of the presses irresistible. Rich men have bought newspapers and then wondered where their spirit had flown, but few rich amateurs have done as Lord Beaverbrook has done and given their days and nights in a steady application to the work of shaping a newspaper to meet their own ideas.

He rejoices in taking well known writers and making them better known. Arnold Bennett heads his literary page. Dean Inge turned to popular journalism for him. H. G. Wells, at his behest, turns out his latest series of weekly articles, and when he "lambasts" the United States with all the fury of a pamphleteer, Lord Beaverbrook chuckles and grins again. He thinks, indeed, that the United States has heard far too little plain, straightforward speech. The American people, he suggested to me, are a matter-of-fact people, to whom



Lord Beaverbrook

Drawn for the Herald Tribune by S. Werner

candor and frankness are likely to make more appeal than a facile friendliness.

Lord Beaverbrook's policies have more than once puzzled those who have insisted on regarding him as a regular in Britain's political warfare. When I asked him about the basis of his policy recently, he smiled his disarming smile.

"The point about my policies," he said, "is that they are mine. I decide things for myself, and some of the things I have advocated were wrong. I made mistakes, but I constantly make mistakes. You see, I rely on myself. I do not have a staff of colleagues making up my mind for me. I am here alone, and my whole aim is to develop and maintain a consistent personal policy. But human nature breaks out. My own impulses get the better of me, I admit it, and once again I have to learn by experience. It is the only school for the job I have undertaken."

He makes up his mind on the facts as he sees them, and he usually knows more facts than he gets credit for. One

of his most striking reversals of opinion was over Ireland. He had been a constant antagonist of Home Rule for Ireland, yet he was one of the strongest supporters of the settlement with Sinn Fein to which Mr. Lloyd George, backed by Lord Birkenhead and Mr. Churchill, agreed in the famous treaty.

Again Lord Beaverbrook had been in the place of importance, and, through Mr. Tim Healy, had, as a matter of fact, been consulted by the Sinn Feiners. They thought he understood English public opinion and the mind of the government, so they asked him how to put their case. The government had formed its own ideas as to its reply and at dinner with Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Birkenhead and Mr. Churchill, it was suggested that there could be no harm in showing the draft statement of their position to Lord Beaverbrook. "No," he said, "and I can tell you what the other people will reply and the terms in which they will do it."

For his policies, Lord Beaverbrook searches at home, but for new methods

of conducting his newspapers he comes to America. "The Daily Express" and "The Sunday Express" have constant tried out new ideas imported from America. Lord Beaverbrook once told me that he always considered it worth while to spend a few days in a New York hotel simply absorbing the contents of American papers and studying their methods and their new ideas.

Since Lord Northcliffe died his place has been vacant. The present policy of his brother, Lord Rothermere, is largely one of consolidating a daily circulation of about two million copies. It is secret that Lord Beaverbrook would like to claim the mantle of a man he always greatly admired. He is preparing plans for rapid development of his own series of brilliant personal leadership. Fleet Street watches with interest the possibility of a great struggle and asks: "What will Lord Beaverbrook do as Lord Northcliffe did thirty years ago and with a few terminated strokes become the unchallenged King of the Street of Ink?"