

PRINCESS MARGARET, 21

To the King's younger daughter now playing such a lovely and prominent part in our national life, a tribute on her 21st birthday. By the wisdom of her Royal parents, Princess Margaret has grown amongst us almost as one of us. Now that duty falls on her young shoulders more and more each day we see the fruit of their wisdom in the easy grace she brings to each occasion.

Twenty-one years ago (with Princess Elizabeth a toddler of four) Margaret was born into disappointment. The nation had prayed for a Prince ... but as the little princess grew up we took her to our hearts as we had done her sister. Ahead for them was a quiet, unimportant life, it seemed and then, suddenly, fate called their father to the throne. Her sister became Heiress Presumptive and Princess Margaret next in succession. Now she was important, but the wise upbringing was not changed.

At 16 she made her first public appearance and from then on we were to see more of her, as she grew up, a young girl coping with the restraint of her high station. Between the Princess and her grandmother there is a close link, surely a sufficient answer to the few who sometimes criticise her youthfulness. Born into a world of changing values, Princess Margaret takes daily a greater share of the burdens we load on the Royal Family, and knits thrones and people closer by the charm she brings to them.