



King Tommy

BY GEORGE A. BIRMINGHAM

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"SIMPLY ROTTEN"

SYNOPSIS.—In London the teller of the story of the adventures of "King Tommy," and known hereafter as "Uncle Bill," is informed by Lord Norheys, son of an old friend, that Lord Troyte, head of the British foreign office, Norheys' uncle, has a scheme to make him (Norheys) king of Lystria, in central Europe, through marriage to Calypso, daughter of King Wladislaw, deposed monarch of that country. A financier, Procopius Cable, knows there is oil in profusion in Lystria, and with an English king on the throne the output could be secured for England. Norheys, in love with a stage dancer, Viola Temple, is not enthusiastic over the proposition. The patriarch, Menelaus, highest ecclesiastical dignitary in Lystria, is heartily in favor of the restoration of the monarchy, and Cable has generously financed the sentiment. Calypso is making a living dancing in the "Mascothe," Berlin cabaret. Norheys refuses to entertain the idea of giving up Viola Temple, to whom he is secretly engaged. "Uncle Bill's" sister Emily urges him to secure a passport from Lord Troyte for a certain Janet Church, strong-minded female who wants to visit Lystria in the interests of a society for world peace.

CHAPTER IV

I found a letter from my sister Emily waiting for me when I got home. "I want you," she wrote "to use your influence with Edmund Troyte to get a passport to Megalia for Janet Church. You remember Janet, I'm sure."

I remembered Janet Church perfectly well. She is a bony lowland Scot, and when I met her at Emily's house she was touring Ireland on behalf of a temperance society. I remember her saying at dinner that she would rather put a red-hot poker into her mouth than a glass of wine. That, I am sure, was not true. However much she might dislike wine she could always spit it out again. She could not spit out a red-hot poker.

"Janet Church," Emily went on, "is going to Megalia as the representative of the Society for the Establishment of World Peace through the influence of the Union Christian churches. There seems to be a wonderful opening in Lystria, which is now part of the Republic of Megalia. The present patriarch—"

According to Emily, the present patriarch is a man of singularly plastic mind, willing to unite his church with any other in the interests of world peace.

I put Emily's letter into a nice, flat varnished basket which stands on my writing table and is meant to contain unanswered letters. Emily gave me that basket last year as a Christmas present. I was glad to be able to use it for a letter of hers. I had of course no intention whatever of asking Troyte to get a passport for Janet Church.

But I did not get rid of the business so easily as that. Next day Janet Church called on me. In appearance she was just as I remembered her, in determination rather worse. The passport to Megalia had been refused. She attributed that to the hatred which the Foreign office felt to the idea of a world peace and to Lord Edmund Troyte's dread of the influence of a union of the Christian churches.

I dare say she was right in blaming Troyte. Knowing what he did about the condition of Lystria, he cannot possibly have wanted to add to the confusion of the coming revolution by letting loose an earnest Scotchwoman in the country. Also he probably thought that the Patriarch Menelaus would be too much occupied preparing for a royal marriage and coronation to have any time to spare for planning a world union of Christian churches.

"With the peace of Europe hanging in the balance," Janet said, "and the prospect of another war within ten years, it is of vital importance that the influence of the Christian churches, of all of them—"

"All," I murmured sympathetically, "all, all."

"Should be brought to bear on our statesmen. And how is that to be done?"

"Only," I said, "by means of a union of Christian churches."

"Especially the Church of Lystria," said Janet.

I could not see why the Lystrian church, which must be quite a small body, should be so very important. But Janet Church evidently thought it was. So, dare say, did Emily.

"Couldn't you," I said, "write to the patriarch instead of going to see him?" His name is Menelaus. A letter addressed to His Beatitude

the Patriarch Menelaus, Lystria, would be sure to find him.

"A personal interview is indispensable."

If the patriarch is the least like Troyte in character, or like me, Janet Church may have one personal interview with him but will certainly not have another. I suppose she realized that she was not likely to get into my flat again, for she refused to leave until I had promised to do what I could with Troyte about the passport. I kept the promise and made an appeal to Troyte.

"I know all about that woman," he said. "She makes trouble wherever she goes. I can't have letters coming to me by every courier from all the legations in Europe asking me to keep that woman at home."

"If you set any value on your own peace and mine," I said, "you'll give her a passport to Lystria and then keep her there."

"I wish," said Troyte, "that all religious women were in Heaven."

"If you let her go to Lystria," I said, "she probably will be in Heaven soon. I don't know the patriarch personally, but he'll execute her before she's been a week there if he's half as savage as Norheys says."

Troyte asked what Norheys had been saying about the patriarch, and I could only reply that I was mistaken



"If I Get as Far as Germany," She Said, "I'll Manage to Go on Somehow."

In saying that he thought about the patriarch at all. The person he called savage was the princess.

"He seems quite sure," I said, "that she's black."

"He knows perfectly well that she's nothing of the sort," said Troyte. That's merely an excuse to get out of marrying her."

"I suppose you know," I said, "that he's formally engaged to Miss Temple and means to marry her."

"We must get him out of the entanglement," said Troyte. "And the best way of doing it is to push on the marriage with the Princess Calypso."

"Until you've convinced him that she isn't black—"

"Don't talk nonsense," said Troyte. "She's an extremely good looking and attractive girl, far too good for him. I've given him her photograph."

"Photos are often faked," I said. "Couldn't you get a colored portrait so that he could see for himself that she isn't black. If you had her painted in an evening dress it would go some way to relieve his mind about the tattooing. He'd know that her arms and neck were clear, anyhow."

"I wish you wouldn't be flippant," said Troyte. "This is rather a serious business. There's the question of oil—a matter of imperial interest, and Cable says he's pushed things on so far that Lystria is on the verge of a revolution. I really don't know what would happen if the patriarch and Count Casimir were to bring off their coup d'etat and there was no king to put on the throne."

"I wonder," I said, "if anything in the way of a morganatic marriage could be arranged?"

"Certainly not."

"It's sometimes done," I said. "I'm sure I've heard of cases."

"Certainly not. The last king, Wladislaw, was far too fond of that sort of thing. His life was a scandal, and the patriarch was on the verge of excommunicating him several times. The patriarch holds very strong views on the sanctity of marriage and—and—all cognate subjects."

"If the patriarch is the sort of a man who would tackle a king," I said, "he'll probably be able to deal with Janet Church. Why not give her a

passport? Look here, Troyte, let's compromise. I'll say no more about Miss Temple and the morganatic marriage if you'll let Janet Church go to Lystria. She'll worry the life out of me if you don't."

"I'll tell you what I'll do," said Troyte. "I'll let her have a passport to Germany, but not an inch farther. She can go to Berlin if she likes and stay there."

"That's something," I replied. "She'll be out of London anyhow."

"I'm sorry for the Germans," said Troyte.

"Oh, they deserve it. After all, what's the use of our having won the war if we can't do anything afterward to make them feel uncomfortable?"

I called on Janet Church in her hotel and told her my news. I was afraid she would be furious with Troyte for limiting her wanderings. To my surprise she took it very well.

"If I get as far as Germany," she said, "I'll manage to go on somehow."

"Well," I said, "good-by and good luck. If you find yourself languishing in a Siberian dungeon, send a line to the nearest British consul."

"I'm not going anywhere near Siberia," said Janet.

"You may not mean to," I said, "but you never know where you'll fetch up when you start traveling in the Near East."

CHAPTER V

Janet Church left London next day and I congratulated myself that I had escaped one worry. I actually enjoyed several peaceful days. Then Norheys came to me again.

"Did you tell Uncle Ned," he said, "that I'm going to marry Viola and no one else?"

"No, I didn't," I said. "I told him exactly what you said I was to tell him; that you were determined to marry Miss Temple, but were quite ready to marry anybody else as well."

Norheys grinned.

"How did he take that?" he asked.

"He said just what I expected him to say, that he'd never agree to your committing bigamy."

"If that's so," said Norheys, "it puts the lid on the whole black princess scheme. What I always say is this: a fellow ought to knuckle under his family—uncles and aunts and all that lot—so long as they're asking him to do the things which don't annoy him much; but as soon as they begin chipping in in really offensive ways then he oughtn't to. That's my idea of a fellow's duty, anyhow. I don't know if it's yours."

I said that a great deal depended on his definition of the word offensive, and that so far as I could see, Calypso was anything but that.

"Anyhow," said Norheys, "whether you agree with me or not, you can tell Uncle Ned what I say."

I did; and Troyte told Procopius Cable. Norheys was back with me two days later and this time he was in a really bad temper.

"Look here, Uncle Bill," he said, "I'm getting a bit fed up with this sort of thing. I don't say it's your fault, but there it is, and I'm d—d if I stand any more of it."

"What's happened to you now?"

"This way of going on is simply rotten," said Norheys. "As long as it was merely a matter of Uncle Ned persecuting me day and night and pelting me with oil paintings of Indian squaws, I didn't mind. But this is a bit too thick when he sets on a slimy Jewish money-lender to try bribing Viola to give me up. I didn't think Uncle Ned would have played it as low as that."

"I'm perfectly certain," I said, "that he never did any such thing."

Lord Edmund was extremely anxious to rescue the head of his family from an undesirable entanglement and he wanted to see Norheys established as a European sovereign. But he would not hire a Jew to offer bribes to Miss Temple.

"Anyhow," said Norheys, "the brute came, a fat flabby animal, and tried to persuade Viola to take a check for ten thousand pounds. If Uncle Ned didn't send him, who did?"

"Did you hear his name?"

"Yes, I did. He sent in his card to Viola and she kept it. Here it is."

He handed me a visiting card. I half expected the name I saw on it—Procopius Cable.

"That's the same swine," said Norheys, "who's doing the deal with Uncle Ned about the oil."

"Exactly. But I'm sure your uncle didn't send him to bribe Miss Temple."

Procopius Cable, eager to get at the Lystrian oil, had tired of Troyte's cautious diplomacy and begun to act for himself. He had made a mess of it, a far worse mess than I knew or guessed then.

It does look as if Procopius Cable had made a mess of things. And the result?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Queen Lover of Cherries

The rich and ruddy cherries for which England is famous, were introduced into that country from Flanders in the year 1540. The establishment of their popularity was due in no small measure to Queen Elizabeth who had a great liking for cherries ripe. Whereby hangs the tale of Sir Francis Carew, who delayed the ripening of his cherry tree until a month after the end of the season in order that the cherries might attain maturity when her majesty stayed with him. This he accomplished by erecting a tent over the tree, and on the queen's arrival the fruit was at perfection.

MY FAVORITE STORIES

By IRVIN S. COBB

A Lover of Statistics

There was a seance on—a regular seance, with a trance medium and a black cheesecloth cabinet and a mysterious table rapper and a ghostly guitar picker and a smell of frying cabbage floating in from the back of the house and everything orthodox, like that. The medium was a stout lady in black, who was raising a brown mustache and whose controls took those liberties with the English language which seemingly is permitted in a realm where there is neither space nor time—nor grammar. She came from Brooklyn, where so many of those who take in spiritualism for a living do come from, but at the time of which I speak she was playing the provinces, as the troupers say. The audience was of fairish size. Amid the throng sat a half-grown youth from about three miles out on R. F. D. No. 3. He was attending his first spiritualistic seance. And he was being suitably impressed. As manifestation succeeded manifestation, his eyes popped and his ears twitched. If he had had gills, beyond doubt they would have opened and closed.

Presently the medium's husband, who acted, so to speak, as ringmaster, desired to know whether there was yet another present desirous of having speech with some dear departed one. If so madame would undertake to establish liaison.

This was the cue for the yokel. He mustered courage to stutter an embarrassed plea. He wished to have speech with the shade of his late father.

After a proper wait there were sounds in the cabinet and through the darkness there spoke the tones of one of seeming hoary age.

"Is that you, my son?" asked the voice.

"Yes, paw, this here is me," answered the youth.

"Was there any questions you wished to ask me concernin' my present state?" continued the accommodating voice.

The boy thought a moment. Then: "Where air you, paw?" he inquired with simple directness.

"Heaven, my son."

"Air you an angel, paw?"

"Oh, yes, my son."

"An angel with wings and a harp and everything?"

The answer was somewhat muffled but seemingly in the affirmative. The son considered a moment. Then he had an inspiration.

"I say, paw," he demanded sagely, "whut do you measure from tip to tip?"

He Didn't Believe in Signs

A fireman on duty behind the scenes of one of the big New York theaters and charged with the responsibility of seeing to it that the regulations were strictly obeyed back-stage, suffered a profound shock as he came around from behind a stack of scenery, just before the evening performance. Standing in the opposite wings was a salesman for an East side cloak and suit concern, who had procured entrance via the stage door for the purpose of soliciting orders for his wares among the young ladies of the chorus. This person was vehemently puffing on a large, long, black, malignant-looking cigar.

In three jumps the scandalized fireman had the violator by the arm.

"Say," he demanded, "what the h—l do you mean, comin' in here with that torch burnin' in your face? Don't you see that sign right up over your head?"

The trespasser's eyes turned where the fireman's finger pointed.

"Sure, mister," he said, "I see it."

"Well, can't you read?" demanded the fireman.

"Sure I can read," admitted the other calmly.

"Then read what it says there. Don't you see what it says in big letters? It says—'No Smoking.'"

"Yes," agreed the East Sider with a winning smile, "but it don't say 'Positively.'"

Ladies First Always

The man who told me this one, as we stood together on the rim of the Grand Canyon, swore it was true. I believed him, for he had the reputation all over the Southwest of never telling an unnecessary lie.

He said a typical "mover," shiftless, restless and sockless, was spending a short time at an Arizona cow camp preparatory to moving on into the desert on a so-called prospecting tour. His chief earthly possessions consisted of a pair of slab-sided mules, a rickety prairie schooner, a wife, four children and six bound dogs.

The wife, who was a tired-out, faded-out creature, complained to some of the ranch hands of the hardness of her lot; and the foreman took it upon himself to remonstrate with the husband for his indifference to his wife's welfare.

"The old woman ain't got no kick comin'!" said the husband when he had heard the foreman's remarks. "She ain't got no kick at all. She's plum' pampered—only she don't appreciate it none. Why, when we is fixin' to camp of a night many a time I've driv' the team half a mile out of the way so's wood and water would be handy for the old woman to fetch!"

AFTER HER BABY CAME

Mrs. Hollister Unable To Do Her Work for Six Months

Tells How Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound Restored Her Health



MRS. HENRY HOLLISTER
WYANDOTTE, MICHIGAN

Wyandotte, Michigan.—"After my baby was born I did not do my own work for six months and could hardly take care of my own baby. I always had a pain in my right side and it was so bad I was getting round shoulders. I would feel well one day and then feel so bad for three or four days that I would be in bed. One Sunday my mother came to see how I was, and she said a friend told her to tell me to try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. So the next day I got a bottle and before it was half taken I

got relief. After I was well again I went to the doctor and he asked me how I was getting along. I told him I was taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and he said it did not hurt any one to take it. I am always recommending the Vegetable Compound to others and I always have a bottle of it on hand."—Mrs. HENRY HOLLISTER, R. F. D. No. 1, Box 7, Wyandotte, Michigan.

Another Woman's Case

St. Paul, Minnesota.—"I have a little girl three years old and ever since her birth I have suffered with my back as if it were breaking in two, and bearing-down pains all the time. I also had dizzy spells. I had read several letters of women in the newspapers, and the druggist recommended Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound to my husband for me. As a result of taking it my back has stopped aching and the awful bearing-down feeling is gone. I feel stronger and do all of my housework and tend to my little girl. I have also taken Lydia E. Pinkham's Liver Pills for constipation. I have recommended these medicines to some of my friends and you may use this letter as a testimonial if you wish. I will be pleased to answer letters of other women if I can help them by telling them what this medicine has done for me."—Mrs. PRICE, 147 West Summit Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota.

A vast majority can't understand how money is made in speculation; else they'd speculate.

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And double your razor efficiency as well as promote skin purity, skin comfort and skin health. No mug, no slimy soap, no germs, no waste, no irritation even when shaved twice daily. One soap for all uses—shaving, bathing and shampooing.—Advertisement.

A misplaced switch used to wreck a woman's train of thought.

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A new instrument based on the interference of light waves has been designed at the United States bureau of standards to accurately measure the chambers used for counting blood corpuscles.—Science Service.

On the Street Car

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