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**Asking the Impossible**  
Betty and Petey had been playing hard all day and were worn out when evening came. They were nearly at "swords' points" when Betty said a few cross words that "broke the camel's back."

"Betty," said Petey, very much put out. "Can't you be a lil' gentleman?"

Betty stopped, put her finger into her mouth and from then on played by herself.


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# King Tommy

By **GEORGE A. BIRMINGHAM**

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"SOME MISTAKE!"

**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 Troyle, 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 "Masquerade," 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 Troyle for a certain Janet Church, strong-minded female who wants to visit Lystria in the interests of a society for world peace. Janet Church leaves for Berlin. "Uncle Bill" is again appealed to by his sister to find a certain curate (name not given) who has left his parish in Ireland for a visit to Berlin, and cannot be found. Lord Norheys and Viola Temple disappear from London. Procopius Cable receives information that Norheys, with the princess, has left there on his way to Lystria, but Norheys appears with the former Viola Temple, now his wife. The question is, "Who is the man who has gone to Lystria with the Princess Calypso?"

**Part II.—Berlin**  
**CHAPTER VII**

It is easy to understand how the mistake was made. Count Istvan Casimir does not know English very well. He has never been in England and at that time had never talked to any Englishman except the tutor who educated him as a boy and taught him to read Shakespeare. The tutor must have been a Shakespearean enthusiast, for Casimir has more quotations ready for use than most of us. Unfortunately, his knowledge of Shakespeare did not help much in his correspondence with Procopius Cable. The English which Cable uses is of a modern and commercial kind. I can fancy his writing to Casimir: "Yours of even date"; or "of the 12th ult. to hand"; or "re Lystrian monarchy, we regret—" Shakespeare did not write in that style and I do not suppose that Casimir understood half Cable wrote. Nor did Cable quite understand Casimir. He was inclined to skip the quotations of the count's letters, not realizing that they conveyed the most important kinds of information. Casimir, for instance, might write: "Now is the winter of our discontent made glorious summer." Cable would take that for mere ornament, the exuberance of a man not trained to business. He would fail to realize that Casimir meant that the restoration of the monarchy was a gloriously accomplished fact, or would be gloriously accomplished as soon as the monarch put in an appearance.

Of course the similarity of the two names deceived Casimir. He was in Berlin waiting and watching for the arrival of Lord Norheys. It was natural enough that he should think his man had come when he saw Norheys in the register of the Adlon hotel. There is only the difference of one letter between the two names. He was further misled by the "Reverend" Tommy, in those days, was most particular about his "Reverend" and set himself down as Reverend T. A. Norheys. Casimir was not familiar with the title. It was not, apparently, accorded to the clergy in Shakespearean days. The parson in "As You Like It" was styled "Sir"—"Sir Oliver," as if he had been a knight. On the other hand, "Reverend" was used of Venetian seigneurs and such people. Casimir took it for an English version of "Hoch Wohl-geborene." It left him in no doubt that Tommy was the man he wanted.

Tommy, of course, had never heard of Count Casimir. I do not suppose he had ever heard of Lord Norheys either, or of Procopius Cable, or indeed of Lystria. He had not the slightest intention of going farther east than Berlin. Indeed, he did not mean to leave Berlin during his holidays, unless perhaps for a little trip to Potsdam.

Tommy has explained to me exactly why he went to Berlin and what he meant to do there. A year or so earlier he had bought a number of German marks on the advice of a friend who professed to be a financial expert. At that time he got three hundred and forty marks for a pound and they seemed cheap enough. Tommy's friend said that very soon they would stand at twenty-five or

thirty to a pound. Tommy believed him and invested every penny he possessed in German marks. I do not know how many he actually bought, but the number was considerable, and the sum he stood to gain would have been a nice little fortune. An investment which promises to multiply your capital by eleven or twelve is very attractive, even if it pays no interest for a while.

As everybody knows, the financial experts, Tommy's friend among them, were disastrously wrong, even more hopelessly wrong than experts usually are. The marks depreciated rapidly and in the spring of 1922 it took one thousand four hundred of them to buy a pound. Tommy realized he was the victim, one of many victims, of a gigantic swindle. But being a man of cheerful and buoyant disposition, he did not wring his hands or curse fate. He thought that though marks were of little use in England, they probably had some value in their native land; that is to say, that he would be able to buy a good many dinners, bottles of wine, theater tickets and such things with his marks in Germany. He asked for a holiday, packed his entire store of marks in a dispatch box and went to Berlin. He meant to stay there as long as the marks lasted and to have as good a time as he could. Tommy was a fool to buy the marks originally. He was wise in his plan for getting rid of them. Things of the sort he wanted really were very cheap in Berlin in the early part of 1922.

He had never been abroad before and he did not know a word of German. He started with a return ticket, a Baedeker's Guide to Berlin and a German-English phrase book, which professed to give him, spelled phonetically, all that a traveler could possibly want to say.

It must have been a good phrase book, much better than most of its kind. Tommy, on the morning after his arrival, was able to ask a chambermaid for hot water, a waiter for breakfast and another man to clean his boots. Most phrase books are no use for that sort of thing. They only tell you how to say "Good morning, honored sir. Will you give me the pleasure of dining at my house today, bringing your gracious lady with you?" and things like that which the tourist seldom wants.

While he drank his coffee and ate the wretched little roll which the German hotel-keepers give to guests



At This Moment Janet Church Came Along the Corridor, Wearing a Pink Dressing Gown, a Pair of Blue Slippers and a Very Ribbon Cap.

who breakfast in their bedrooms, he opened his dispatch box and counted his money.

"It was the first time in my life," he told her, "that I'd been a millionaire, and I liked the feeling. In fact, I gloated."

I do not wonder. The German notes are most opulent looking and impressive things, far superior in size and texture to the flimsy little scraps of paper which England has to be contented with. There are large gray notes, as big as half sheets of note paper, worth a thousand marks each. There are beautiful thick notes for one hundred marks. Even the little "fun" markers are impressive. All Tommy's notes were perfectly new and spotlessly clean. Nobody could have helped fingering them lovingly and reverently. It was a delight to count them.

But it is poor fun feeling that you are a millionaire all by yourself in a hotel bedroom. Tommy realized that he ought to be out-of-doors enjoying himself and getting some solid good for his money. He finished his coffee, swallowed the last morsel of bread, and began to shave.

Then came a knock at the door. Tommy said "Herein." His face was covered with thick lather of soap, and he did not care for opening his mouth very wide; but he spoke quite distinctly. And he was sure that "Herein" was the German for "come

in." He had said it six times already, twice for each of the three servants, and it had been understood. This time the man outside simply went on knocking. Tommy went to the door and opened it.

He saw Count Casimir, beautifully dressed, smiling and bowing politely. Casimir is always beautifully and appropriately dressed. I have seen him at the start of a bear hunt in Lystria with a tall red feather sticking up in the front of his cap and boots that would have suited one of Prince Rupert's cavalier troopers. I have seen him in evening clothes, and nothing more perfect could be found in a drawing room comedy on the London stage. I did not see him that morning in the Adlon hotel. But Janet Church has given me a description of his clothes. He wore a pale gray suit with a faint blue line in it, and creases in all the right places, a mauve tie harmonized with the blue line, a waistcoat—I must leave a blank here and get Janet to tell me about the waistcoat again. Tommy was in crumpled gray pajamas and his face was soapy.

Count Casimir presented his card. Tommy read the name on it—Casimir Istvan Graf—but was not much enlightened. He would if he could have read what was printed under the name. It was a large card, much larger than the visiting cards used by ladies in England, and there were four lines of small print on it, no doubt a description of Count Casimir's position in society. Unfortunately, these were in a language which Tommy had never seen before. It seemed a very queer language. There were curious curly accents over the consonants. The letter X appeared with unusual frequency. There were several R's with their faces turned the wrong way, looking very much as if some one had lifted them up, turned them over and set them down the wrong way. The same thing had happened to a couple of N's and there was a B with a curious little horn attached to it. Tommy could read Greek. He had a nodding acquaintance with the Hebrew alphabet and could distinguish between German capital B's and V's. Count Casimir's language was none of these.

"I bid you welcome," said Count Casimir. "In the words of your great Shakespeare, I say, 'All's well that ends well.'"

"I'm afraid," said Tommy politely, "that there is some mistake."

At this moment Janet Church came along the corridor, wearing a pink dressing gown, a pair of blue quilted slippers and a very ribbon cap. She was on her way to a distant bath. She saw Casimir, erect and beautiful—he is a very good looking man—in front of Tommy's door. She also saw Tommy, with the lather beginning to dry on his face.

Janet had been three days in Berlin, worrying the consul and the secretaries in the embassy for permission to go on to Megalia. She had not received my letter about Emily's lost curate. Indeed, she never did receive it. It reached Berlin after she had gone away and was finally returned to me.

Some women would have hurried on, turning their heads the other way. Tommy was in his pajamas. She herself was most imperfectly clothed. But Janet does not suffer from modesty and she loves interfering in other people's business. She calls this being helpful, and believes it to be virtuous.

"Can I," she said, "be of any assistance to you? I speak German fluently."

Casimir turned, put his heels together and bowed to her. Then he kissed her hand. Janet, in a red dressing gown and boudoir cap, must have been a surprising and rather a disgusting sight. But Casimir's manners are as perfect as his clothes. He would have bowed as politely and kissed her hand with the same elegant devotion if she had stepped straight out of her bath to be helpful.

"Thanks," said Tommy. "Just tell this gentleman, will you, that there's some mistake. Most likely they've sent him up to the wrong room. I'm not the man he wants to see."

Janet made a long speech in German. Casimir answered her with a still longer speech. Janet replied to that, and Casimir, with an immense flow of language, answered her. Tommy declares that they talked to each other for ten minutes. Then Janet turned to him.

"He says his name is Count Istvan Casimir."


Tommy is the victim of a mistake which appears to have immense possibilities. Are they pleasant?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

**Reaching for the Mirage**  
The cloud's silver lining, however, is apparent only to those who stand a great way off.—Duluth Herald.

Life is a long lesson in humility.

When Better Automobiles Are Built **BUICK** Will Build Them



**Monetary Pledge of Centuries Ago**

An archeological expedition sent out by the University of Pennsylvania dug up a clay tablet in the ruins of the ancient city of Nippur, Babylon, with an inscription upon it which, translated, reads as follows:

"Thirty bushels of dates are due to Bel Nadin Shun, son of Marashu, by Bel Bullitsu and Sha Nabu Shu, sons of Kirebiti, and their tenants. In the month of Tashri (harvest month) of the thirty-fourth year of King Artaxerxes I, they shall pay the dates, thirty bushels, according to the measure of Bel Nadin Shun, in the town of Bit Balatsu. Their field, cultivated and uncultivated, their fief estate, is held as a pledge for the dates, namely, thirty bushels, by Bel Nadin Shun. Another creditor shall not have power over it."

This tablet was dated 430 B. C., or nearly 2,400 years ago. It may not be the oldest record extant of a mortgage, but it illustrates very clearly that the mortgage was an accepted form of investment some 2,000 years ago.—Donald Rea Hanson in Forum.

**Dutch Cows Given All the Comforts of Home**

The bovines are the only type of animal that furnishes man with food through infancy and maturity and consequently are treated with consideration by every nation for sentimental as well as economic reasons, receiving greater care than humans in some countries. Cows in Holland are treated with as much consideration as human beings. They have the best of food. Their sheds are furnished. They even have overcoats when they go out. There are lace curtains in the windows of many Dutch cowsheds. And the floors are laid with shining white tiles, kept spotlessly clean. Lest her tail should drag in the dirt, the Dutch cow has it held up by a neat chain from the roof. Her horns are scrubbed and polished.

She is carefully groomed. She spends eight months of the year indoors. To lighten the darkness of winter the cowshed is provided with electric lights. There is also some kind of heating system.

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**Novelty, to Be Sure**  
Helen has spent the morning in the dentist's chair. Doctor Dentist had kept her mouth open for so long that when the child tried to relax her facial muscles she found it extremely difficult.

"Doctor," said Helen, "my mouth feels so stretched I feel like I could whisper in my own ear."


**British Labor M. P. a Poet**  
One of the Labor whips of the British parliament is James Welsh, who started composing poetry when he was eleven years old and is now a novelist of note.

**Thousands of Sightless**  
The latest figures of the number of blind persons in the United States give a total of 52,567 of whom 30,160 were males and 22,407 females; 45,737 were white; 6,302 negroes, 488 Indians, and 49 Chinese or Japanese. These figures are for the enumerated blind, but the census bureau estimates the actual number at about from 74,600 to 76,000.

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