



# King Tommy

By GEORGE A. BIRMINGHAM

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### AN UNKNOWN VISITOR

**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 Wladlaw, 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 "Mascotte," 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. 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?" Casimir introduces himself, and Janet Church, vainly seeking from the British consulate a passport to Lystria, becomes acquainted with the two men in the Adion hotel.

### CHAPTER VII—Continued

That seemed a small result of so much conversation, and gave Tommy very little fresh information. The Casimir and the Istvan he had read on the visiting card, though in reversed order. Graf he took to be the German for count.

"Tell him," he said, "that there's a mistake. He can't possibly want to see me. Ask him who he does want, and then get him to go down again and find the number of his friend's room."

Janet started again. So did Casimir. This time they talked for a quarter of an hour, fast and emphatically. There is nothing in the world so irritating as hearing two people talk to each other in an unknown language when you know they are talking about your affairs. Tommy is the best tempered of men, but even he began to feel impatient.

"He says," said Janet, turning to Tommy at last, "that he's sure your name is Norheys."

"Is that all he said?"

"That's all," said Janet.

"Well, then, all I can say is that I don't wonder the Germans lost the war. If it takes them half an hour to say 'What's your name?' they can't expect to get on at war or anything else. It must be an utterly rotten language."

Janet, who hated all Germans with a passionate intensity during the war, has been developing a strong affection for them since the peace was signed. She cannot bear, now, to hear a word said against them and has transferred her dislike to the French. When Tommy insulted the German language she turned away and stalked down the corridor toward the bath.

Casimir has an amazing facility in quotation.

"And the Imperial vortress passed on," he said, "in maiden meditation, fancy free." Please?

Casimir's English accent was by no means perfect. Tommy, though he ought to have recognized Shakespeare's compliment to Queen Elizabeth, seemed to have thought that the count was still talking German. He darted into his room and picked up his phrase book. He distinctly remembered that he had somewhere seen the sentence "Please go away." That was as I have said, a very good phrase book. "Please go away" is a thing which the traveler in a foreign land constantly wants to say to beggars, extortionate cabmen, guides, touts, and officials who want to look at passports. Tommy grabbed the book, turned over the pages quickly, and came to the sentence he wanted. Unfortunately, the next sentence in the book was "Please sit down." Tommy, running his eyes hurriedly from the English to the German column, picked up the wrong phrase.

"Bitte setzen sie sich," he said. Casimir could not very well sit

down on the carpet in the corridor. So took Tommy's words to be an invitation to enter the bedroom. Tommy stood exactly in the middle of the doorway. Casimir, bowing very politely, tried to pass him. Tommy suddenly recollected that all his money, his piles of German marks, lay on the table in the middle of the room. A horrible explanation of Casimir's presence suggested itself. The man had made no mistake. He had not been sent to the wrong room by the clerk in the hotel office. He was a hotel thief. Tommy had heard of such people. They are immensely daring, immensely clever, and they adopt all sorts of ruses. They are often well dressed. They are always plausible.

Tommy winked knowingly at Casimir to show that he understood the situation and cherished no ill-feelings. Then he firmly shut the door in his visitor's face.

### CHAPTER VIII

An hour later Tommy stepped from the elevator into the great central hall of the hotel. He had discarded his clerical stock. He wore a light blue tie instead. He was still a young man, only a little more than twenty-six, not long enough in Holy Orders to have his profession recognizably written on his face. A bystander, interested in his appearance, might have guessed him to be a young barrister, or perhaps a clerk in one of the higher branches of the civil service. But no one appeared to be the least interested in Tommy's appearance, or to care what he was or what he did.

The large hall was full of people. Hotel porters in red jackets wheeled barrows of luggage in and out. Pageboys, as thickly decorated with buttons as any of their kind anywhere in the world, went to and fro waiting the numbers of the rooms of the guests whom they sought—guests whom visitors had come to see or for whom telephone calls had been made. Fussy travelers, newly arrived and filled with a sense of their own importance, crowded round the desk of the reception clerk and demanded rooms. Self-possessed elderly men, mostly fat and often Jewish, lounged in deep chairs with cigars in their mouths and surveyed the scene through half-closed eyes. American tourists eddied round the newspaper stalls in the corner of the hall and clamored for the New York Herald. It was in their eyes a sign of the well high inconceivable stupidity and incompetence of all European peoples that the supply of New York Herald's was insufficient to meet their demands. The desk of a harassed woman who sold concert and theater tickets was besieged by ladies who did not know exactly what they wanted but hoped to secure seats at some agreeable entertainment by asking questions in bad German. A boy, rather older than the pages, stood at the swinging glass door and drove it round on its pivot with vigorous pushes. He drove it faster and faster as more and more people passed in and out. His hope was that some time in the course of the morning he would succeed in hitting a slowly moving passer with the following wing of the door. Those who entered and left the hotel approached the whirling door very much in the spirit of medieval sportsmen who rode at the quintain.

All this delighted Tommy. He had hitherto led a quiet and uneventful life, seldom disturbed by anything more exciting than a Sunday school treat. He watched the moving figures, gazed at the strange faces, listened to a babel of different languages, and felt that this was exactly what he had come to Berlin to enjoy. For some time he was content simply to stand watching and listening. Then he began to wonder what he had better do next. He had the whole day before him. His breast pocket was stuffed with money. He had a great city to explore.

Before leaving home he had read up Baedeker's Guide to Berlin, an old copy borrowed from his sister Emily. He knew that there was a street called Unter den Linden which he ought to see, a park called the Tier Garten, an avenue called the Sieges Allee, several churches and museums. There were theaters, picture galleries and restaurants, all duly named and the nature indicated by the worthy Baedeker. At the moment he felt more attracted toward a restaurant. His breakfast had been very light, and though it was only ten o'clock, he felt hungry. He wondered whether it would be possible to demand luncheon in a Berlin restaurant at that hour without exciting the derision of the waiters.

He felt a light touch on his arm and looked round. Count Casimir stood beside him.

"Just you clear off, like a good man," said Tommy. "I've had enough of you for one morning."

His mind was still full of his hotel theory, and he was quite determined not to be robbed by any plausible stranger. He turned away and walked across the hall toward the row of telephone boxes. He had no intention of telephoning to any one. Indeed, he knew no one in Berlin to whom he could telephone, nor could he have given a number in German. He merely wished to escape from Casimir.

But Casimir was not an easy man to shake off. He followed Tommy.

"You wish to go to the Mascotte tonight," he said. "Please?"

The word "Please" was evidently in constant use in Casimir's language. His repetition of it in English gave a curious effect of extreme politeness to his conversation.

Tommy had heard of the Mascotte. My nephew, Emily's eldest boy, was in Berlin for some time as a subordinate member of the inter-allied mission of control. He knew all there was to know about the night life of the city. It is a supper place, "d-d expensive," but the dancing was "top hole." It was not the sort of dancing which the censors of the London county council would approve, but it was "top hole" and "not too, you know, only rather more so than you'd see at home."

"Please, you will visit the Mascotte."

Casimir nodded and smiled in a very confidential manner, as if he and Tommy shared a secret which no one else in the world knew anything about. Tommy revised his opinion of the man. He was not a hotel thief. He was a tout, engaged in securing customers for the Mascotte supper room. Tommy had heard of such people. He had no intention of putting himself into the hands of one of them.

"She will be there, naturally," said Casimir, "and"—another quotation, this time disagreeably suggestive to Tommy's mind—

"Journeys end in lovers meeting. Every wise man's son doth know."

This was going too far. Tommy meant to enjoy himself on his holiday. He had discarded his clerical collar in order to do so more freely, but he had no wish to pursue unknown ladies into night clubs. In order to get rid of Casimir finally he stepped into the nearest telephone box.

It was already occupied, and, since a telephone box is always a very small thing, he bumped into a lady who held the receiver to her ear. She was so intent on what she was doing that she took no notice of Tommy. He most unwillingly heard what she was saying.

"Then let me tell you, young man, that there'll be trouble. Lord Edmund Troyte distinctly promised that my passport would be ready for me. Yes? What's that? I've been to the consulate three times and I'm going again. The consul is totally incompetent and his clerks are rude. It's your business. What? Yes. I say it's your business. You're the third secretary, you say. That makes no difference. It's your business to see about that passport."

"What on earth are you doing there and who are you?"

Janet Church turned at last to Tommy, who had bumped into her again. She was fully dressed this time and the light in the telephone box was dim. But he recognized her at once as the lady who had stood talking German in the corridor. He also realized that she was in an exceedingly bad temper. Casimir, with his suggestion of strange lady-loves at the Mascotte, was bad enough. Janet Church, thirsting for the blood of the third secretary, was worse. Tommy left the telephone box hurriedly.

Casimir was waiting for him outside.

"Please," he said, "I have engaged a table for you at the Mascotte. It is catalogued—no, registered, no. I remember, you say booked, for the Graf von Norheys, please."

"I don't exactly know what a Graf is," said Tommy, "but whatever it is, I'm not one."

"Please?" said Casimir. "Ah, I see. If it were possible—in France, yes. M. le Marquis. There is no difficulty. But here, Excellenz perhaps, or Prinz. Otherwise there is only Graf. It will not be understood if I catalogue the table for Herr Marquis. As your poet Shakespeare says, 'As you like it.'"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### And He Never Came Back

Poor and sad, a tired-looking individual entered the shanty where the workmen were eating their dinners. He was carrying a red tin can.

"Hey, comrades," he sighed, holding out a hand by way of salutation. "Look at this tin of powder I picked up this morning. I guess I'll blow myself up with it and so end my trouble here and now."

"Cut that sort of talk and clear out," ordered the foreman.

But the man addressed paid no attention. He cast one glance around the shanty, then walked deliberately to the stove, opened the door and thrust the can inside.

A shriek of dismay followed this action and a moment later the place was empty.

Ten minutes later, when the run-aways returned, they found the can reposing peacefully on the fire. The tired-looking individual had gone. So had their dinners and other of their possessions.

It is 150 years since the first bottle glass factory in America was established at Glassboro, N. J.

## MY FAVORITE STORIES

By IRVIN S. COBB

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### Where the Partnership Dissolved

One of the oldest stories in the known world—and in my humble judgment one of the best ones as well—deals with three actors—an aged negro, an itinerant conjurer and a twelve-pound snapping turtle.

The most popular version runs in this wise: It is a hot day in a Mississippi countryside. The conjurer, who is making his way across country afoot, is sitting alongside the dusty road, resting. There passes him an ancient negro returning from a fishing expedition. The undertaking has yielded no fish but the darkey is not going home empty-handed. He has captured a huge snapping turtle. He is holding it fast by its tail, which is stretched tautly over his right shoulder so that the flat undershell of the captive rests against his back. He has delectable visions dancing in his mind of turtle soup, turtle steaks and turtle stew. He bids the recumbent stranger a polite good-morning and trudges on. He has gone perhaps twenty feet further when an impish inspiration leaps full-grown into the magician's brain. In addition to his other gifts he is by way of being a fair ventriloquist.

He throws his voice into the turtle's mouth and speaking in a muffled, guttural tone such as would be suitable to a turtle if a turtle ever indulged in conversation, he says sharply:

"Look here, nigger, where are you taking me?"

The old man freezes in his tracks. He rolls his eyes rearward. There is the look of a vast, growing, startled bewilderment on his face.

"W-h-who—who dat speakin' to me?" he asks falteringly.

"It's me speakin' to you," the turtle seemingly says, "here on your back. I asked you where you were taking me."

"Huh, boss," cries the old man, "I ain't takin' you nowhere—I'se leavin' you right yere!"

### A Start From Humble Beginnings

Mr. Campbell, who was a lawyer, felt somewhat irritated on reaching his office at 8:30 in the morning to find the fire in the grate unkindled and the floor unswept and the place generally in a state of disorder. It was nearly nine o'clock before Ike, his black office servant, appeared.

"Good Lord, Ike," said Mr. Campbell petulantly. "What's detained you?"

"Mist' Campbell," apologized Ike, "you must please, suh, 'scuse me fur bein' late dis one time. I sort of overslept myself. De truth of the matter is dat I wuz kept up de best part of de night 'n' count of Jinin' a cullid lodge."

"I surely didn't take you all night to join a lodge, did it?"

"Naw suh, not perzacly. De fust part of de evenin' dey wuz 'nclatid' me into de membership an' de rest of de time dey wuz 'conductin' me into office."

"Isn't it rather unusual to confer an office on a member immediately after taking him in?"

"Naw suh, dat's de standin' rule in dat lodge—jes' soon ez you is 'nclatid' you gits a office."

"What office did they confer upon you?"

"Imperial Supreme King."

"What?"

"Dat's whut dey calls it—Imperial Supreme King of de Universe."

"Isn't that rather a high office for a brand new member?"

"Why, naw, suh, Mist' Campbell, dat's de lowes' office dey is in dat lodge. Wen I's been in a spell longer dey is goin' to give me somethin' really worth while."

### The Confusing Geography of Jersey

Years ago, when I earned my dally bread and occasional beer on Park row, one Andy Horn ran a cozy bar in the shadow of Brooklyn bridge. All sorts and conditions of men frequented the saloon—sailors, newspaper men, rich men, poor men, policemen off duty, artists and commuters from over the river.

A grubby person known as Smitty was a fixture at Andy's. He cut up food for the free lunch counter, did odd jobs and in rush hours helped to serve the trade. Smitty was to Manhattan what a cockney is to London.

He had been born on Cherry hill, right around the corner; he had been reared on the Bowery and he had never ranged further than Coney Island or Far Rockaway. Greater New York city was all the world he knew or cared to know.

His sister married a German market gardener over in New Jersey, and when his summertime vacation came Smitty went to visit her for two weeks. His new brother-in-law had bought a car and had promised to tour Smitty about over the state and show him the sights.

At the end of a week Smitty was back at work. One of the regular patrons hailed him:

"Hey, Smitty, I thought you were going to stay longer. Didn't you care for country life?"

"Nix on dat stuff fur me," said Smitty. "I'm offen it fur life. Say, dat Joisey sootiny is one funny place. Why, all dem towns over there is got different names!"

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### Live in Present, and Live Long

"I read the news to keep young," Chauncey Depew told the reporters who interviewed him on his ninety-first birthday.

And that, in the terminology of a flippant generation, was not "appleauce" for the young men of the press. Chauncey Depew not only reads the news, but continues to be a part of the news. He is active and alert at ninety-one because he always has lived in the present, the Minneapolis Journal says.

In youth Depew did not sit around dreaming of an impossible utopia and neglecting the opportunities of the present. In age Depew does not sit around mourning the passing of the good old days and scorning the opportunities of 1925.

When the threatening infirmities of advancing years demanded certain changes in the diet and habits of this remarkable man he made the changes without a murmur, nor did he let fear betray him into a state of near-invalism. He merely followed his life rule of accepting uncomplainingly whatever time might bring him.

### Thousands Have Kidney Trouble and Never Suspect It

Applicants for Insurance Often Rejected

Judging from reports from druggists who are constantly in direct touch with the public, there is one preparation that has been very successful in overcoming these conditions. The mild and healing influence of Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root is soon realized. It stands the highest for its remarkable record of success.

An examining physician for one of the prominent Life Insurance Companies, in an interview of the subject, made the astonishing statement that one reason why so many applicants for insurance are rejected is because kidney trouble is so common to the American people, and the large majority of those whose applications are declined do not even suspect that they have the disease. Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root is on sale at all drug stores in bottles of two sizes, medium and large. However, if you wish first to test this great preparation send ten cents to Dr. Kilmer & Co., Binghamton, N. Y., for a sample bottle. When writing be sure and mention this paper.

### Japs Learn English as Matter of Course

English is taught in the public schools all over Japan. Later, when I came to travel widely in the interior, I often found bright schoolboys fourteen or fifteen years old who would volunteer as interpreters. Theodore Geoffrey writes in the Saturday Evening Post.

In another generation English may be a second language for the Japanese, even as the Dutch today are competent linguists, because the world cannot be bothered to learn Dutch.

English, unless a Japanese has been educated abroad, becomes rather peculiar in Japanese mouths, for according to Japanese custom, every consonant must be followed by a vowel, and there is no "l" or "v" or "th." Thus "beer" becomes "bleru"; "glass," "gursau," and "hotel," "hoteru."

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**Luck**  
Ray Long, editor of the Hearst's International-Cosmopolitan Magazine, tells why he doesn't believe in luck. He thinks every man gets about what he deserves. In proof he tells a story in which Sam Harris, theatrical producer, points the moral:  
"Luck may be 5 per cent of life, but the other 95 per cent—which is what's in the man—always decides the outcome. I've met thousands of people everywhere, in every walk of life, and I never knew one who got much more or less than he deserved. When a chap knows medicine and Europe and five languages, and still is a waiter, something's wrong!"

The wise man doesn't wait for fortune to knock at his door; he goes out to meet it.

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