

I, THE KING

By WAYLAND WELLS WILLIAMS.

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(Continued from Yesterday.)

They entered the great manaba, a splendid structure eight feet long and forty high, and called loudly for Ongong. He came, attended by most of the population. Kit stood before him and laid down the law. As a first measure he demanded the return of the outraged maidens. These were brought, but failed to show any enthusiasm at the sight of their deliverers. He then accused the Tenguans of broken promises, bad faith and general damnableness. He demanded reparation in kind and threatened extinction of the whole race if anything of the kind happened again. He fired his pistol into the air by way of giving point to his threats.

All were impressed; some of the Tenguans fled shrieking from the scene. Ongong, however, remained calm and dignified. His excuse was of course ignorance; he had not dreamed that the peace of a few days ago included Nativiti. The expedition had merely been intended to punish certain transgressions of theirs; a worthless and contemptible people, he said ingratiatingly. However, if Nuel wished to flatter them with his protection, so be it. Reparation? Certainly, he ordered mats and taro roots and other material in abundance. Kit added to the list some bunches of bananas, a fruit which grew in profusion in Tenguia.

Kit considered the expedition a triumph, but he was informed by Kakaiwia that there would be no peace till all the arm-bearing Tenguans, and more especially that dog Ongong, were under ground. But he was unable to suggest what more could righteously have been demanded of them. The unakana had taken no lives.

The next move was made by Ongong a day later. He came over once more, bearing presents. There was a great deal of conversation, the upshot of which was that there were two white men, and two islands. One of the white men was king over one island; why not make his companion king over the other?

Kit fairly snapped at the suggestion. It would be a great thing to have Masson of the island, more especially now that the arsenal was open; also he was anxious to give the man every possible chance. What he did not see was that the wily Ongong would never have suggested the arrangement unless he had intended to profit by it.

"Masson," Kit announced when he had found him, "they want you to be King of Tenguia. That fellow Ongong's over here now. How about it?"

"All right," said Masson. He was sitting under a palm tree on the

ocean beach, barefooted, chewing some twig that the natives chewed in default of smoking materials. He did not look like a king, nor did he even seem greatly pleased by the offer. "I'll take some guns with me," he added.

Kit did not see how he could do otherwise than assent, and reflected that now he would have had to open the arsenal as they parted, that favor Masson in conscience have sent Masson unarmed among a crowd of savages while he himself had a stack of guns at his back door. "All right, I'll give you ten guns and fifty cartridges and that pistol, and keep the same for myself."

"You give me half the whole bunch, see?"

"No, I shan't. But it amounts to the same thing. I'll engage not to take out any more without sending an equal amount to you, if you want them."

"I want my half," said Masson. "You'll have half of what we take out. Here, we'll make it sixteen guns, one pistol and a hundred rounds. Sixteen guns are enough to drill two squads with, if you want to have a Royal Guard."

Masson, with a pistol on his very hip, night at this juncture have insisted, but he did not. He was stupid, and doubtless he was mollified at the thought of being king over a bigger island than Kit. They counted out the rifles and cartridges, loaded them on the backs of willing natives and followed the squad with a favor Masson was going back with Ongong, to assume his exalted position as from that day.

Kit was on the whole in good spirits. This was the end of some things, and it was not clear what it might be the beginning of; but he did not see how he could have done differently under the circumstances. They shook hands as they parted, that favor Masson could hardly refuse now. "By the way, where's Sadie?" asked Kit, as the new monarch flung his leg over the gunwale. "Aren't you going to take her with you?"

"Naw," said Masson.

CHAPTER VIII.

He stood watching the triangular sail as it sped up the lagoon before the southeast trade, and all at once his heart misgave him. A black cloud fell over the world. The arsenal open; two hundred rounds loose in the islands, with Masson in command of half of them; Masson in a position of power and, more than all, with the advantage of Ongong's brains. And Ongong—he had never abdicated, or pretended to abdicate, for the sake of Masson's bright eyes. He sought out Kakaiwia. "Kak, I have a feeling we haven't seen the last of those people..." And Kak's eyes were like an echo of his own fears.

"Nuel, they are sharks, not men. They love to fight—not to protect themselves, or for good, but just for the pleasure of fighting. And that Ongong, Nuel, no king of Niarava or Tenguia has ever given his power to another of his own accord. And Ongong hasn't done it. He is still king in Tenguia. And he has as many guns as we."

Kit shrank from the man's accusing gaze. "It's a bad business. Yet I don't see how I could have done better, justly. I have the feeling that I've given Ongong everything he wanted, in spite of myself."

"He wanted the guns," said Kak mournfully. "He knew that Matangi wouldn't come without them. And some time he'll try to get the rest."

"We won't let him."

"Take them out, then, Nuel. Take them out before he comes, and hide them!"

"But we've no place to put them. Besides, if we know they're after the arsenal it'll be easier to defend it. Oh, we won't let them have them. Kak, we aren't beaten yet."

A military note came into the life; Kit was reminded of the "preparedness" talk at home in '15 and '16. He immediately started organizing his Royal Guard; this body was not a diversion and a gesture, but a stark necessity. He picked sixteen youths from the cream of the island and drilled them in two squads for an hour early every morning. The work made them use heavy guns played havoc with their bare shoulders, but they enjoyed the game and had implicit confidence in their commander. It was pathetic to see them smile whenever he caught their eyes. And their South Sea sense of rhythm enabled them in a short time to drill beautifully, far more precisely than any U. S. Navy troops Kit had seen.

After he had taught them the elements of close and open order drill he realized that he must go on. There was no use in troops who could not shoot. These boys had never fired a gun in their lives, and would no doubt

be ridiculously gun-shy. He rigged up a target on an unfrequented beach, taught them the trigger-squeeze and told them a thousand times that a rifle was dangerous, but only at one end. In two fairly satisfactory mornings of practice he used up nearly all his hundred rounds. He then wrote to Masson:

"I have used most of my cartridges in target practice and am taking out 50 more. I'll send you the same number if you want them. Reply by bear-er. How are things going? Good luck—Nuel."

It was dangerous, it was bad; but then he had promised. He sent over pencils and paper, which he had neglected to provide Masson with at first, and the answer, an ungainly scrawl, promptly arrived: "Send me 100, and be quick about it.—Masson."

Kit sent 50. Two days later came another message: "I used all them up in target practice. Send me 100 more." This made Kit bite his nails for a

whole afternoon, as he invariably did when worrying. Kakaiwia was sure that Masson was lying. "Wait," he advised. "They can't have fired shots without being heard all over the island. I can find out if he spoke the truth."

He could, having quite as efficient a spy system as Ongong. In due time

he reported that only one shot had been fired on Tenguia since Masson arrived, and that had been directed by the king at a certain young lady's husband and had wounded him severely in the leg.

Kit smiled, but Kak did not. "It means that he has more shots to fire

than we have," he pointed out. "Nuel, don't send him any more!"

(To Be Continued Tomorrow.)

"Riches have wings," said Uncle Eben. "Anybody dat uses 'em foh flyin' high wants to be a fus' class financial aviator." — Washington Star.

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THE NEBBS



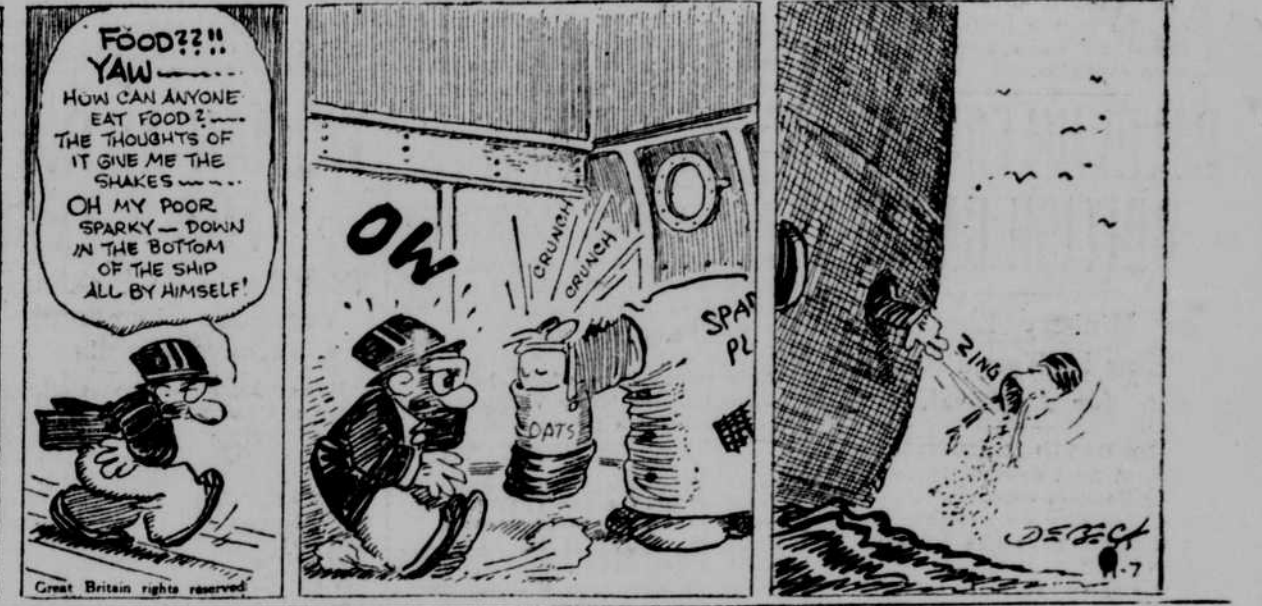
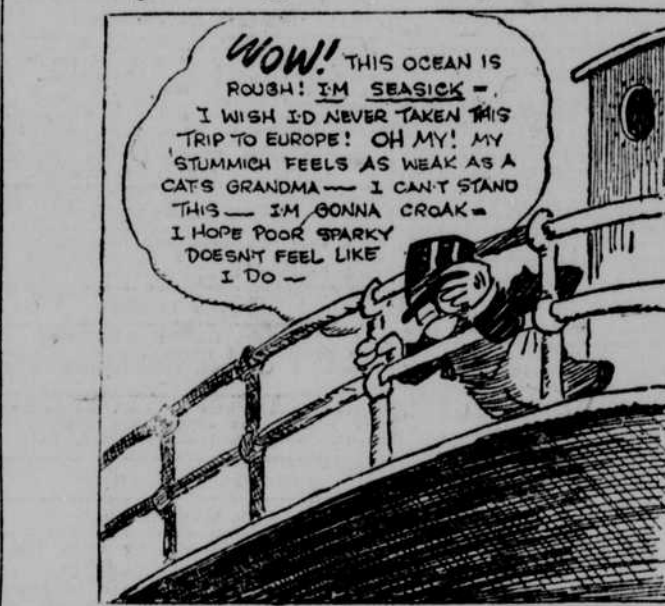
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Barney Google and Spark Plug

For Once in His Life Eats Mean Nothing to Barney.

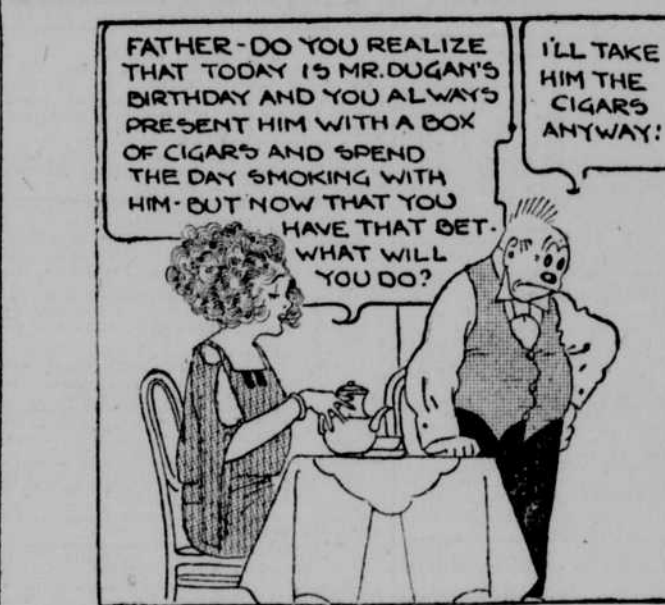
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BRINGING UP FATHER

Registered U. S. Patent Office SEE JIGS AND MAGGIE IN FULL PAGE OF COLORS IN THE SUNDAY BEE.

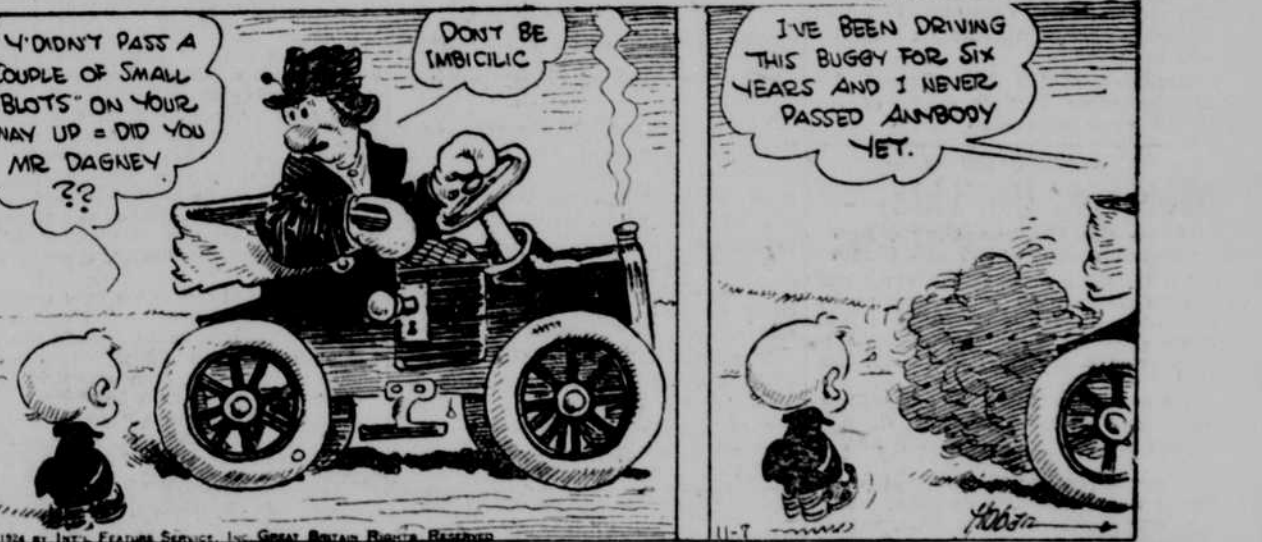
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JERRY ON THE JOB

A FINE STATE OF AFFAIRS.

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Ain't It a Grand and Glorious Feeling

By Briggs ABIE THE AGENT

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Quick Thinking, We'll Say.



New York --Day by Day--

By G. O. McINTYRE

New York, Nov. 6.—Thoughts while strolling around New York: The serpentine trail of the Sixth Avenue elevated. And Impressionistic painting of life. Chrome yellow here. And a drab of bright red there. Always the little potted geranium in tenement windows.

Passengers nod unmindful of the clatter and shriek of rail against rail. A wigged woman holding tightly to the hand of her white-whiskered husband. Ruddy checked butchers smelling of blood. Squallid rooms where the sun never penetrates.

Rector street. And the turmoil of Fulton. Horse-drawn drays. Seamen with rolling gait. Noonday picnic parties lunching on Trinity graves. There's Ralph Pulitzer, of the world. Marble banks. Next door shoe shine stands and stool lunch counters.

A few steps away, Washington street. New York's little Syria. Brick houses with cobblestoned courts. Windows displaying amber tipped marshmallows. Dried fruit. Rooters. And mandolins. Coffee houses that sell mud thick coffee served by dark brown men in fezes.

Syrian women from the desert—big hipped and placid. Rings in ears. Peddlers whose backs are piled high with rugs and laces. Signs in Arabic script. "Al Hoda"—the Syrian newspaper. And not so far away the view of the Statue of Liberty.

Old men, parched as a mummy, sewing in the dim lit windows. And young girls hammering tunes. First stages of Americanization — the jazz parlor. Coffee being ground in brass mortars. And sold to the click of cash registers.

The wharves of West street. Old frame hotels with projecting porches. The odor of fish, cinnamon, lemons. Two liners being unleashed for a voyage across. Cheers and fluttering handkerchiefs.

Tommy Lyman sings in a cheap little cafe in Sullivan street. He is known as "The Tubercular Tenor" and is a throw back to the singers of tear-jerking ballads of the saloon back rooms. Tommy is pale and pasty faced. His eyes are dreamy and his voice just a bit husky—but when he sings men and women listen. He weighs about 100 pounds and his voice is not robust. He must sing for just a table of patrons. There is something plaintive and appealing about such tawdry tunes as "Melancholy Baby" and "Dreamy Chinatown." A few years ago Tommy was in Paris at the New York bar just off the Rue de la Paix. This was the most popular of all haunts for Americans. He prospered but he wanted to come back—to the dimly lit Sullivan street cafe. "They understand there," he says.

The elemental in song is always appealing. Few have this gift. It was what lifted Gilda Gray from honky-tonk mediocrity to fame. Gilda brought with her the atmosphere of the honky-tonk without the brothel ribaldry. She has no voice but when she sings people listen.

My favorite singer—if anyone cares—is John Steel. Aside from a pleasing voice he does not mumble his words. You know what he is singing. That is more than you can say for many Metropolitan stars.

And despite the fact Main street is my love, my favorite tune is "The Sidewalks of New York." It perhaps isn't much of a tune but it seems to me to describe the East Side better than any other song does anything else. It smacks of the days that are gone—when New York was New York.

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