

I, THE KING

By WAYLAND WELLS WILLIAMS.

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(Continued from Yesterday.)

Occasionally in traveling between New York and Narragansett the Newells stopped off to visit Uncle Jeff and Aunt Ella, who lived in the town of Dimechur on the Thames, above New London. Uncle Jeff was red and clean-shaven, and wore a heavy gold watch chain across his ample paunch. In his early years Kit thought he were to keep his stomach in place. Aunt Ella was vague and thin, with prematurely white hair. Else, their only child, was at this time what Dickens immortally calls a mature young lady, with a good deal of light hair under imperfect control. They all lived in a large yellow house with a two-story Ionic portico in front. You could see the green white pillars from in front of the drug store on the central green.

Kit for the most part liked these visits. He liked sleeping in a messy mahogany four-post bed, he liked washing in a little cubby-hole called a dressing room; he liked the mellow old smells of the house. But the visits had their inconvenient aspects.

"And what's the young man going to be when he grows up?" asked Uncle Jeff one night. They had dinner in the middle of the day and supper at night.

Kit had been telling Frauline, sotto voce, about some young Greeks he had been meeting that afternoon. "Ach, Frauline, die kleinen Taubchen, die niedlichen—" "Ach, taunk! Der Onkel!" whispered Frauline nearby. Kit turned to catch his uncle's question and in so doing did not pay sufficient attention to a plate of bread he was passing. He put it down too soon, and it crashed into a gimcrack little dish holding candy and broke it.

"Mama, Kit, my dear, what have you done?" Ella said. "Papa, what has the gross carelessness?" Frauline "Ungeschick! Willst du nie achten lernen?" simultaneously.

At home that would have been about all. But the three Newell relatives began talking and went on talking about the defunct dish with a cloying regret that was a Marjorie times worse than a George. "It doesn't matter at all, Marjorie, never mind. It was Wedgewood, I think—or was it Crown Derby? Look on the bottom, Elise." "Worcester, Mama. It was a wedding present of Grandmother Frobisher, wasn't it?" "No, indeed, it was never my moth-

er's. It may have been Mother Newell's—" "No, Ella, I think it was my Aunt Carrie's. She left most of her things to Mother. It was a pretty little thing." "Yes, that lovely urn shape—" "Yes, Aunt Carrie Benson. I wonder if she bought it when she went over in 'forty-three? Such a dear little shape, you don't see it any more. Never mind, Kit, it's all right."

In the obsequies Uncle Jeff's original question was entirely forgotten. "I hate their old things," said Kit that night to his mother. "What's the use in bothering about just things?"

"They have a great many old family things, and think a great deal of them, dear. Some people are that way. You must just be as careful as you can." "I don't care," said Kit. "I don't care."

Uncle Jeff was owner, president, king or something of the prodigious affair known as the Works, a huge sprawling red brick building down by the river. One day his father took Kit down there, and Uncle Jeff showed them all over the place. There were long, huge rooms full of machines that revolved and rolled and went up and down and back and forth at a high rate of speed and made such a noise you couldn't hear unless you shouted. (The phrase is Kit's own.) In their company they were fascinating, these machines. Men in overalls worked them, or women, pale and pasty-looking, in dirty white aprons. One of the overalls persons at the templed showed Kit how one of the machines worked. Kit couldn't hear much of it, but he saw the metal held up a little flat shapeless piece of metal for him to see and then put it into the machine's mouth. The machine chewed it, stamped on it, it in the face, stamped it in the back and lo! the fragment emerged below as the safety part of a safety pin. Other things were done, at another machine. At another machine the pin parts were bent, at another they were joined to the safety parts. And so on, with nails, hooks, eyes, curtain rings and many other things. One of the men gave Kit a necklace made of safety pins of different sizes all pinned together, and he wore it the rest of the day.

"And how did the young man like the Works?" inquired Uncle Jeff when they were back in his office. "Think you'd like to come and work in them?" "I think they're fine, Uncle Jeff. I wouldn't like to stay in them."

"And why not?" "Too much noise." "You get used to that. The noise deafens you at first, but after a while you get so you can hear a whisper through it."

"Really?" "Really," said Kit. "Can you hear the still, small voice through it?" asked Kit's father, smiling behind his mustache.

"Now, how do you hear, George?" said Uncle Jeff, a trifle tartly.

"The hardest part was in the bus that took them to the school, amid a crowd of boys who shouted and embraced and thumped each other, while Kit had a sit, grinning and out of it, beside his father.

They got out and went into the yawning entrance of a great clean school building. Followed in official five minutes in the headmaster's study, and the first breathless visit to the schoolroom and the assigned children. Kit was almost at ease now, and avid with interest. And then his father had to go.

Pains racked his throat as he kissed his father good-by. His father's face looked thin and lined; his finger joints were swollen. It was horrible to see his father, his last link with the known world, depart looking so ill and miserable.

In twenty-four hours that was entirely forgotten, and the first awful strangeness had gone for all time. Kit stucco building, rickety in official five minutes in the headmaster's study, and the first breathless visit to the schoolroom and the assigned children. Kit was almost at ease now, and avid with interest. And then his father had to go.

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spiring efforts on the football field, he dared others to step into dead-cold showers, he discovered that Gaul was divided into three parts. He made friends and enemies in his own form, as good little boys are expected to do. And then, just as he reached his first confidence, he began to feel also a curious impatience, a small but genuine stirring of social impulse.

In his baker's dozen years of life he had developed, spontaneously and quite unconsciously, a taste for and interest in several odd little subjects. One was Roman coins. He had silver denarii of all the emperors from Augustus to Constantine, and one of the rare gold Antoninus pieces that had cost him a whole birthday present check. In his trip abroad he had picked up a smattering of Gothic cathedral lore; he talked of Early English and Perpendicular and Apsses and Piscina. In a less degree he was interested in butterflies, and had a modest collection. He had supposed, in his innocence, that all the boys in his form had interests or hobbies of a similar nature. In this he found himself wrong, quite, quite wrong.

There was a little literary club in the first form which met every fortnight under the supervision of a master. Before this in his first October Kit had a paper on English, catfish, and Piscina. He had worked it up with considerable love and care, and had sent home for picture postcards by way of illustration. The master responded sympathetically to this effort, but the boys, so entirely friendly elsewhere, greeted it with cold and silent dislike. Frankly, they were bored, and hated Kit for boring them. Moreover, they considered his obvious interest a breach of good form; these meetings were compulsory and hated affairs; the papers were dug out of the Encyclopedia Britannica in haste and loathing. For the first time in his life Kit found himself sharply at variance with his community.

He swallowed down his wrath till the next time he read a paper before that gathering, which was in April of the same year. He made his lecture short and personal. He told his hearers, in approximate terms, that they were an aggregation of intellectual flat tires. Sport they liked, study they had to devote some attention to, but sooner or later they would all have to develop an interest in at least one of them, and that therefore some looking round might be of good avail. He also suggested that if they were incapable of looking themselves they might at least spare their scorn for those who did care to look.

He had acquired, among other tastes, one for Dickens, and this gave him a suggestion for his final shaft. "It seems to me"—and how his voice would tremble as he read—"that some people go through life with their minds half paralyzed. They're like that woman in 'Little Dorrit,' by Dickens, who would never think of anything that wasn't perfectly proper, placid and pleasant. Her idea of things that answered to that description was Papa, Potatoes, Poultry, Prunes and Prisms. I wonder how much better those of us are who never think of anything but athletics, automobiles, guns and musical shows?"

The meeting drew a long silent breath, and then broke loose. "Well, of all the nerve!" "Of all the conceited speeches!" "Who told you you had a mind, Newell?" "Yes, what did you get on your last report, Newell?" "You ought not to go round with a bunch of dubs like us!" "Old Doctor Newell!"

Kit sat weathering the storm, with a grin on his face and despair in his heart. He regretted his boldness now—and yet he would not regret it. The master dismissed the meeting with a kindly word about its being an interesting paper, and Kit, in order to postpone the moment when he would have to meet them again, lingered behind. "Well, I've done for myself this time," he said. "I don't really think so," said the

master. "Boys like courage. If they'd really resented what you said—I'm not sure that you understand this—they wouldn't have come back at you the way they did. They'd have let you alone, then and forever after."

Kit went back to his cubicle chewing over this comforting thought. The dormitory was still buzzing over him. Shafts flew at him, which he either ignored or parried lightly. He went to bed; the buzzing still went on. He was aware of it; he was no longer alarmed at it, but he was curious, immensely curious and deeply, incomprehensibly anxious.

"Oh, Newell's all right," he heard one voice emerge from the chatter to announce, "only he's so—" The rest was lost. Kit lay wondering. What had that boy said? He was all right at bottom; he got on. Only he was so—something. He felt it, he agreed entirely. Only what was it? "What kind of a guy am I?" he asked the dark. "Oh, if I only knew, if I only knew! Why can't I know? Why haven't I got a right to know?"

VI. One of Kit's best friends in his form was a certain Leonard Thomson, a big, athletic, fair-haired boy. He had no particular brains himself, but he had a vast tolerance for everybody who had, as indeed for almost everybody. This good nature, together with his physical abilities, made him universally popular.

One vacation Leonard asked Kit to visit him at his home, which was in a suburb of Boston. Kit accepted with eagerness, and found himself in a new world. The house was small, dinky and full of children. There was only one servant; she was a Swede and cooked things in the kitchen that smelt genially all over the house and were passed at table by members of the family. The furniture was all old and not very slightly. The bed on which Kit slept, a cot put up in Leonard's room, was hard and lumpy. The truth was, as Leonard told him with complete absence of bad feeling, that the Thomsons were desperately poor. "I'd never have gone to Hilton, you know, except for that scholarship. I was lucky to get it—I'm such a bonehead. It would have been high school for me if I hadn't got it. The poor old governor's having an awful time getting us educated. He has nothing but his salary, and that's only five thousand a year."

"Well," said Kit rapidly, "I don't see that it matters much. You've got all you need, and you're going to the best school in the country. And nothing ever seems to worry any of you."

"It does, though," said Leonard, frowning. "Mother worries a lot, though she doesn't show it. So does Dad. It's hell to be poor, Kit." Kit was inclined to agree. He hated kitchen smells and lumpy beds and holes in the carpet and thin cream at breakfast. He had never lived among these things, had barely

known what they were. His own family, he took it, were not poor; but neither were they rich. People like the Hoffingtons were rich, they lived in marble palaces on Fifth avenue with ballrooms and Gainsboroughs and a great many footmen in the hall. Still, his people must have a good deal more than the Thomsons. At least twice as much, perhaps three times.

VII. One morning in his second year at Hilton Kit was called out of class into the headmaster's study. "Your father's ill, Christopher, and you're to go home at once. Pack your bag and be ready to take the two-twelve."

Kit had known that his father had been worse during the past months. "Is he going to die, sir?" he asked, stammering.

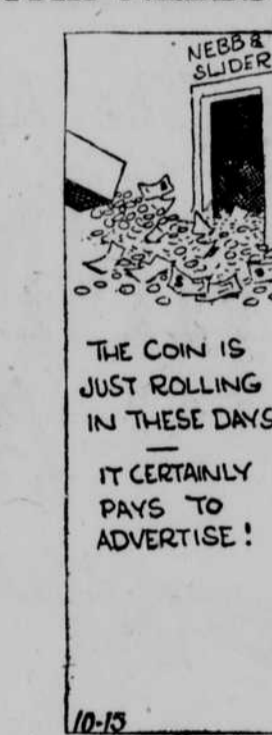
"I don't know. I hope not. The telegram doesn't say. He pushed a yellow paper toward Kit, who read: 'Mr. Newell very ill. Please send Kit at once. Marjorie Newell.'"

It was easier, having seen that telegram. All the way to New York Kit was glad that he had seen it. It was terrible not to know more. But it was something to know all that could be known.

(To Be Continued Tomorrow.)

Separate coats of Bengaline, of satin and of flat velours are more or less fanciful in design, having necks or flare treatment or circular jabots at the side-front closing.

THE NEBBS



MISS NOLAN, TAKE THIS AD—WANTED— EXPERIENCED SECRETARY, COLLEGE GRADUATE TO ATTEND TO THE PRIVATE AND BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE FOR A VERY SUCCESSFUL MERCHANT. SALARY NO OBJECT TO THE RIGHT PERSON

SO YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE A SECRETARY NOW! AND ONE OF THEM SMART COLLEGE FELLOWS— IF HE WROTE A LETTER YOU COULDN'T EVEN READ IT

I'LL PRETEND I'M READING IT AND THE MORE BIG WORDS HE PUTS IN THAT I CAN'T UNDERSTAND THE BETTER I'LL LIKE IT

THAT'S THE WAY PEOPLE ACT THAT AIN'T USED TO MONEY— Specially ignorant ones

I DON'T CARE— I'M GOING TO HAVE TWO SECRETARIES— ONE WHO CAN WRITE WORDS SO BIG THAT I CAN CHOP THEM INTO SIX PARTS AND I CAN'T UNDERSTAND ANY PART— I'LL JUST USE HIM TO WRITE THE BIG WORDS AND THEN I'LL GET A CHEAPER SECRETARY TO PUT THE LITTLE ONES IN LIKE 'IF' AND 'BUT' 'HOW' ETC

PAGE A SMART GUY.

Directed for The Omaha Bee by Sol Hess

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Barney Google and Spark Plug

Barney Hasn't Tried a Prairie Schooner Yet.

Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Billy DeBeck

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BRINGING UP FATHER

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

Drawn for The Omaha Bee by McManus

(Copyright 1924)



There's at Least One in Every Office

ABIE THE AGENT

Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hershfield

No Stopping Same People.



New York --Day by Day--

By O. O. McINTYRE

New York, Oct. 14.—Swift are the changes of the Luminous lane. Up Broadway from Forty-seventh street where the Palais Royal is dark, shuttered and padlocked, a row of minia- ture Rue de Rivoli shops have bloomed like mushrooms over night.

They are all-night places and not one is more than four feet wide or five foot deep. But they glitter and sparkle with the dazzle that begins when the theaters open. The rentals are in excess of \$10,000 a year and how they exist is a mystery.

There is a furge shop with a background of silver curtains. Also a Cinderella boot shop with tiny oval windows. A Paris perfume shop with a fountain arrangement at the door spraying the delicate order of a special blend that passersby cannot escape.

In the brilliantly lighted window are perfume sprayers, lip sticks, vanity boxes, rouge and adjustable eyes lashes. A tall queue woman with silver hair presides. She has a distinct Parisian accent and seems aloof to trade.

Next door the Maison Rose hat shop where chorus girls often lead hesitant admirers adroitly after the lion parlor. The Band Box Hat shop displaying only the cloche hat in striding and vivid colors.

A beauty parlor with a window filled with testimonials from near stars and vaudeville artists. Right next door the Peter Pan Boy Bob parlor flooded by indirect light and in charge of a comic supplement. Frenchman with waxed mustache and coat wispash at the waist.

Just around the corner on the Seventh avenue side a miniature of London's Cheshire Cheese where only Welsh rarebit and a near bear are served struggles for existence. It has just five small tables, but has held on for several months.

Broadway also has many new electric signs. One three flight up tailoring establishment heralds in letters five feet high. "I'm here to stay." The wreathe kids on top of the Putnam building have been removed. The building is to come down, but in the interim a sign just as big has been erected. This time the figures the Eskimos running through the snows and they are ballyhooing a brand of table water. Across the street below the Palace theater a razor sign displays five huge clocks set in a circle. Strangers may instantly learn the exact time in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, London and Yokohama by gazing at them.

Another innovation for Broadway is known as "Service Station for men and women." It is down in the basement a few steps below the old Claridge. A three-piece orchestra discourses and the place remains open all day and all night. There are telephone booths and lockers that may be rented by the month or year. There are pay wash rooms and self shaving booths. Laundry may be left and received there. A feature is the "message exchange." For a dollar a month the high roller may receive his clandestine mail. Messenger service and valet service are also provided. Other features are parcel checking station, a haberdashery with a room for changing the shirt, collar, socks or underwear. Men and women may have their shoes shined and repaired while waiting. A theatrical ticket agency is another feature. The slogan of the service station is "A Home Miles from Home."

On my way home, however, I found the real bright spot of the evening. Blind George in his newspaper hutch at the Bryant Park corner has a radio attachment and was seated in his chair listening to speeches and concert in all parts of the country.

(Copyright, 1924.)