

## Playing The NICKEL Monday

"GEORGE! GEORGE, WHERE ARE YOU?—I'm hungry and I want some ham and beans!"—That was all Connie could think of saying when, introduced as the most beautiful woman in the United States, she went to make a speech over the radio. It wasn't the speech she had prepared as winner of the beauty prize. It was a cry from the heart of a girl, who was terribly hungry and terribly lonesome amid her fame. — And then the judges discovered that she was not the Fifth Avenue heiress they thought was, and—SEE—



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PICTURES

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THURSDAY—The Big British Super-Special "REVELLE" personally endorsed by H.R.H. The Prince of Wales.

### A Searching Close-up of the Ex-Kaiser

The one physical defect with which William of Germany was born, and which is said to have influenced his whole life more than anything else, was a dislocation and tearing of the muscles of the left shoulder at birth, which left the arm paralyzed and almost useless. He was always galled by this injury, it appears from a new German book on this character, always rebelled against it, and his pride suffered a never-healing wound from a defect that made it a matter of shame and weakness and difficulty for him to be the great and masterful personality he craved to be. So writes the Berlin correspondent of the Manchester Guardian about Prof. Emil Ludwig's study of "William the Second," which some call the German best-seller of the holiday season. His physical weakness was accompanied by an intellectual weakness, which made him love the gesture, the outward manner of strength, and of dictatorial power, according to this correspondent, who further relates:

"He feared and hated his strong-willed English mother. This fear and hatred were later on transferred from her to her country. But he also loved and admired England. It was these cross-currents in his soul that dominated his English policy. This would not have mattered so much had they not, by virtue of the German monarchic system, profoundly influenced Germany's policy toward England as well.

"His relations with Bismarck were of a like nature. Bismarck was a giant of a man with huge physical strength. His strength of mind and character was even greater. The Kaiser was a pigmy by comparison. And that alone was sufficient to goad him into rancorous hostility toward Bismarck and into unrelenting efforts to show that he himself was master in Germany. He never succeeded, for in every trial of strength and with the 'Iron Chancellor' always scored. Bismarck also saw what was coming. He sensed the danger. His foresight was sometimes uncanny. When Bismarck demanded a bigger German fleet to defend Germany against aggression, Bismarck said: 'I would like to know who the aggressor is they have in mind. Let us hope it is not a certain Power that might become the aggressor. It is a craving for prestige unworthy of us Germans, and hurried naval preparations that might be interpreted as a sign of hostility, should drive this Power into a coalition against us.' The war might never have come, according to this informant, if William had listened to Bismarck, who was, after all, 'one of the world's greatest statesmen, whose devotion to his country and the monarchy was above a doubt.' The Kaiser ignored Bismarck's warning, it is charged, because he feared he might appear submissive, and the weaker of the two. After a long estrangement, during which they never spoke to each other, it is recalled that a reconciliation was patched up and they met again, and for the last time, shortly before Bismarck's death. Even then, it is said, Bismarck tried to impress upon the young monarch the dangers that lay ahead, but the Kaiser 'would not listen,' was in 'a gay mood,' and changed the subject abruptly every time Bismarck spoke of politics. Von Moltke, the veteran of 1870, had fears similar to those of Bismarck about the future, and we are told that several of the more intelligent men who surrounded the Kaiser were also apprehensive and have said so in their memoirs. But—

"They never had the courage to speak out. One of the most terrible things shown by Emil Ludwig is the relationship between the weak, vacillating, impressionable monarch and his fawning, servile courtiers, who, in spite of better knowledge, hardly ever moved a finger to save him from himself and so save Germany from him.

"Not that he was without good qualities. He had an almost effeminate sensibility. His mind moved rapidly. He could talk on almost all subjects. He sometimes showed great personal charm. Those who saw him for the first time often thought him wonderful. But his good qualities were mainly negative. He could never concentrate or do any real work; indeed, was fundamentally lazy, and his life was passed in a kind of nervous haste and idle flitting. At times he became so impossible that his abdication was seriously considered, not by Socialists and Democrats, but by leading Conservatives—a fact not generally known."

When the war drew near, the Kaiser, as usual, the Guardian's correspondent goes on to say, but he did not really want war and made several sincere attempts to avert it. We read then:

"When war came he found himself at the head of the most powerful army ever known. No one ever had such an opportunity to be a 'great man.' But he was wholly unequal to it. The legend of him as a 'War Lord' who willed, plotted, and waged the world-war is one of the most stupid falsehoods in history."

According to the Berlin correspondent of the London Observer, Prof. Ludwig made the key to the

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Kaiser's character not in his relationship to his father, but to his mother, and he adds:

"The Hohenzollern tragedy begins for him in the bedroom where an eighteen-year-old mother lies unconscious to the efforts of her attendants to slap and pinch a feeble infant into life, whose arm, writhing from the socket by the unskilful obstetricians of the time, was injured beyond all hope of use. This delicate boy is depicted at six years of age, tortured till then by electrical appliances to galvanize the ruined muscles into life, and then told that as nothing can make his arm like that of other boys he must pretend to use it. So the future Kaiser pretended, and succeeded, and was never so proud as when he first managed to gallop up to his father on his pony just as though the left hand were holding the reins wound round it. The uttermost severity, it is recorded, was necessary to force the child into acting a part—a child so little inclined to adapt himself to anybody else's will. He did not do it out of tenderness to his parents, for he was given to understand his mother's preference for his brother Henry at a very early age.

"This partiality, Professor Ludwig insists, was due to the cold pride of his mother's temperament. Instead of pity she rebelled at the fact that her first-born was not all she had desired him to be. Later on Wilhelm's own self-will was responsible for the ever-widening breach between himself and his mother, but the loveless training of those early days, with his whole ambition and energy concentrated on conquering his natural disabilities was his undoing. . . . The game of pretending merged into playacting; that became second nature, and the very real moral victory gained over the intense difficulties of the beginning led to a constant glossing over of realities, and the complete collapse of the whole unstable foundation at the end."

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