

# A TRINITY OF MONARCHS



King Edward VII

**F**UTURE historians will have it to say that the opening years of the twentieth century were marked by the rise of three great kings—Edward the Seventh, Kaiser Wilhelm and Theodore Roosevelt. These are the monarchical trinity of graces and heaven alone knows which of the three is the greatest. In Germany—no doubt of this; in United States none; neither in England. All three are popular idols. None of them is to be candidate for beheading. The days of kingly heroism seem to have culminated in poor Charles the First.

However, to begin with the vanishing figure—exit Teddy, who has bequeathed to the world the Teddy bear and the big stick and a new President. The newspapers and magazines have cause to be grateful to him; he has furnished them with thousands of cartoons and photographs, besides endless copy. He is the first King of the United States to become a public figure in print. His predecessor was a quiet man—quite unknown to the Sundays and the yellows. But Mr. Roosevelt had regard for the publishers. He had passed a life that made good copy; had never been a quiet, meek one; always strenuous; began by a fight for health and got it. Since then he has got everything else he fought for—even Taft. He has been the irresistible. He has killed bob-cats and bears; now he will slay elephants—not having left the nation with a white one in shape of Taft, who is as large as a baby elephant. Mr. Roosevelt has demonstrated that a man does not have to wait till the hereafter to have more than one life. His biographer will have a hard time to show causes and effects, because mostly Theodore was *prima causa*; and the *ego* was very large. He had a large capacity for wanting. Also his brain was capable of adjusting itself to a large variety of conditions and problems. In this way he was mentally a democrat. Any hundred of the subjects upon which he has spoken or written would make a good nucleus for a new university library. One other was the manifest duty of the United States at one time to have owned and operated Canada. But for that we might have asked the ex-President to become Bishop of Montreal. In spite of it Canadians have adored Teddy. We have adopted his bears and read his messages to Congress—each of which is a test of patience.

Very truly this man has seen the measure of days; since ever he was Prefect of Police in Gotham, giving New York its first snasm of real government; assistant Secretary of the Navy; Governor of New York; head of the Rough Riders and alleged hero of Santiago; idol of cowboy camps; local preacher; lecturer; Vice-President and President; popular author of the word "strenuous"; always the subject of idolatry and of criticism—this king of a republic has stamped himself upon history as no other President has done in this century. The only man who ever stood up against him was President Eliot of Harvard—and he has since retired. More powerful than Premier Laurier, governing a larger people than the Kaiser and having more authority than King Edward, since the Emperor of all the Britains is not able to choose a minister of Cabinet—there was really no other kind of game left in the world that was large enough for him to hunt except elephants. When he gets back from Africa—where he will endeavour to locate the ancestors of Booker Washington—he will lecture at Oxford and lecture at the Sorbonne in Paris; afterwards he will become a plain editor. But he will again break out; he will erupt; such a man will smash a sanctum. Some say he will again be

President—the man who taught kingship to the United States.

The Kaiser—who some say has been model for Roosevelt—he is by all odds the strangest of the three. Emperor Wilhelm is the man who was able to refuse an interview to William T. Stead—probably noticing that the conjugation of two such tremendous Williams would have been too much shock for the nations. Lately the Kaiser has not been napping. Neither has the Reichstag—though that body has decided not to behead the monarch; contenting itself with a feeling of censure not definite enough for a vote. These interviews—they have made the Kaiser a terrible figure. The editor of the *Century* got one which he did not publish; had all the original copy, the proofs and the revises and the linotype metal and the stereotype plates all destroyed, so as to erase from the face of history the talk which a waiting world would have given millions to read. Such is heroism. But the brain of the compositor was able to recall that the Kaiser had said such and so; some hard things against the Pope—for which the *Orange Sentinel* would have deemed it the duty of the hour to pay large space rates. But it seemed he made no frontal attack upon England—which is by some considered strange; for it was only the other day that England took another convulsion in its process of Kaiserophobia, feeling sure that the nightmare of Europe had it in mind to cross the English Channel after the manner of the Flying Dutchman, not waiting for the aeroplane. Heaven knows how many warships the Kaiser has built for England. But the English people are paying for the same.

It is a good thing for such Kaisers that there is such a matter as politics, since no other game would have been large enough. Still it seems ironically cruel that the Kaiser must be circumscribed by mere boundaries. He would rule the sea

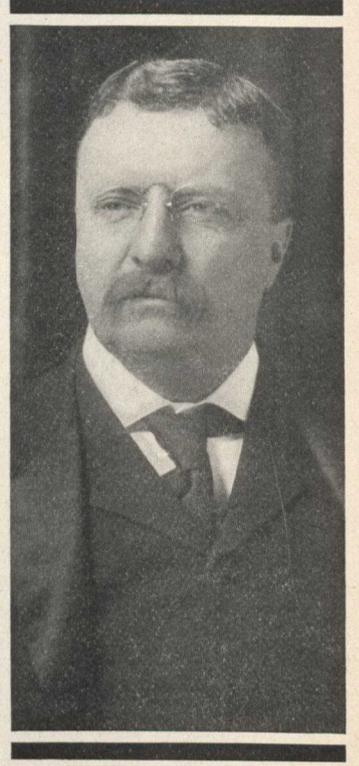


The Kaiser, Wilhelm II

and the lands over the seas as well as the Fatherland. Barred from that, the Kaiser would show his people and other peoples as well, that he knows how to precipitate crises at home. He is the Father of his people; and is it not the right of a father to pry into the affairs of his family? Hence the Kaiser becomes an authority on all matters affecting the nation; not troubling himself with remote problems like race suicide, he composes and conducts operas, imprisons obnoxious editors and dismisses directors of art galleries. Watching the manoeuvres at Kiel, he is able to see through a spy-glass that some officer has made a tactical blunder which repeated in the real game of war might have lost thousands of men to the Army; wherefore he dismisses the officer—being himself expert on the arts of war and of peace. Desiring fun—for he has theatrical spells when he becomes hilarious with the peasant and the soldier—he orders a young officer to ride a horse up a flight of stairs and to jump him over a table, breaking the horse's knees but pleasing the Kaiser, who otherwise would have dismissed the officer.

So all Europe has been a playground for this monarch whose like was never in the world before. In Germany they say he is eccentric and does strange things; but they assure the foreigner that his works are all for the good of the Fatherland, hence he is beloved. Some say he is possessed of a dual brain; and that one brain does things unknown to the

other. But there is no doctor able to say this to the Kaiser's face. Neither is there any statesman able to tell him that he is a maker of mischief and that he ought not so to be. He appoints all ministers—who are not responsible to the Reichstag but only to the Kaiser. He is irrepressible, just as President Roosevelt is irresistible. For there are some Socialistic folk in Germany who think mere resistance to the Kaiser too mild a matter. At the same time, while he churns up the war clouds that float across the North Sea and scare England, he is in a strange way able to elicit affection from millions of people who when they drink to the health of the Emperor sing: "Hoch der Kaiser!"



President Roosevelt.

Again, there is King Edward—the greatest constitutional monarch in the world. The King has just had a birthday. He is sixty-seven years old—having been seven years a king and sixty years a prince; and most of this time he has been the first gentleman of Europe. King Edward is the wisest man in the world. He has no particular convictions; he does not need such; has no theories about art and does not compose music—although his father was a composer. But King Edward is perhaps the greatest composer in the world to-day; beside whom Elgar and Strauss are only makers of minuets; for the greatest Emperor in the world is able to keep the peace of the world in spite of the caprices of his wayward nephew, the Kaiser, who speaks peace but thinks war. To compose Europe is a bigger task than to make a grand opera. King Edward is a great peace monarch. To him the Empire is a marvellous organism that thrives upon the plough-share and hates the sword. His empire has work in the world to do; not merely ideas to convey—for the great principles of statehood were enunciated by the British people long before King Edward was born.

The King—he is the prince of statesmen, who does not need to unbend to endear himself to the common man; does not need to go into vaudeville in order to show his people that he understands them in the commonest ways of life. For he is a homely man, is the King; he is a very human man; was at one time a very hilarious prince who found the tedium of princehood very tiresome and who went in for having as good a time as possible. But he has studied kingcraft. He understands that to be king is not to be a tyrant; knows very well what disposition England has made of tyrants before now; would not be an autocrat if he could. He is the constitution; more of a democrat than President Roosevelt. His reign, which is just about coextensive with that of Roosevelt, has furnished but little copy to the newspapers. He has been very significantly the power behind. Personal intrusion of King Edward into the affairs of the nation would be an anomaly; for he is the head of a democratic monarchy whose ministers of state are directly responsible to Parliament. As to theories about art, King Edward has too much art not to recognize that the artists themselves are best able to look after such matters. Besides, he has not time for dilettantism. He is a practical, hard-working monarch whose rule is the embodiment of common sense and tactful diplomacy. While he may have little directly to do with shaping the affairs of the Empire, the King has much to do in studying the Empire of which he is the greatest citizen. So that with more sincerity than rhetoric the subjects of the Emperor over the seven seas sing—not perhaps so much convivial "Hochs," but fervently from the heart—"God Save the King!"