

CAROL, RUMANIA'S GLAMOUR KING

BY WILLI SCHLAMM

His life might have been written by Anthony Hope and directed for the screen by Ernst Lubitsch. It has heart-throb, excitement, and glamour. His looks would qualify him to play the lead in person, even by Hollywood standards. But he won't resort to Hollywood; after a few false starts he is doing nicely in the profession he was born into. And he has a genuine talent for making money. Carol II of Rumania has proved himself the best business man among European Kings since Leopold of the Belgians turned the Congo into a profitable private enterprise. It is just possible that he may turn one of the neatest tricks ever attempted: the trick of making money out of Hitler.

In the modern world royalty, where it survives, has been largely divorced from power. Not so with Carol. He is boss in Rumania, his own Duce—owner, manager, head salesman. Though born to the throne, he is a self-made king. Until recently his country had the most democratic constitution in

Europe, an almost verbatim copy of the American Constitution. Today any Rumanian naïve enough to take this document seriously would be promptly jailed, and perhaps "shot while trying to escape" soon thereafter. Probably no democratic Rumanian would commit such an indiscretion, because—ironically enough—King Carol at the moment represents the only hope of Rumanians who love liberty and would safeguard it from Nazi raids.

Carol, who is now 46, is descended on his father's side from the princely German house of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen; on his mother's he is a great-grandson of Queen Victoria. Rumanians are apt to shudder when they think of the German link. They are aware of Herr Hitler's far-fetched logic in enlarging his Third Reich; Balkan states under dynasties of German origin are exposed to that logic. But the British link gives them hope. Patriotic Rumanians are inclined to regard their sovereign's family connections with British royalty as a sort of insurance.

Carol's mother, who died last year, the fabulous Queen Marie, granddaughter of Queen Victoria, was born and educated in England. Her subjects were convinced that this fact not only saved their country during the World War but enabled it to come out as a real victor. When easy-going, helpless Ferdinand ascended the throne in 1914, the destinies of his nation came into the hands of his lovely and energetic wife. Marie hated Prussia, loved her native England, and had the diplomatic dexterity to make the Central Powers believe in the neutrality of Rumania until she could bring it into War at the most advantageous moment. The German army overran her country and dictated a brutal "peace." But in the fall of 1918 Queen Marie returned triumphantly to Bucharest from her hideout at Jassy, and within a few weeks the remnants of her defeated army had occupied enough Hungarian, Austrian, Bulgarian, and Russian territory to double the size of Rumania.

The Rumanians are a simple folk, and their philosophy of history is somewhat romantic. They really believe that the British Government helped the Rumanian cause out of chivalrous devotion to a beautiful English princess. Now they fancy that the British, for

sentimental reasons, will also help her handsome son. They do not care to know that, then as now, oil and not chivalry was the reason. King Carol is practical enough to remind London rather more of his oil than of his mother. Just recently he appears to have frightened the British Government — by a new Rumanian-German trade-agreement — to the point where Britain seems ready to guarantee effective military protection to the Rumanian Kingdom.

II

Carol has the reputation of being the most unsentimental of European statesmen. His realism knows no scruple, his energy has hardened into brutality, his business sense has turned to cynicism. He is, so to speak, his own Hitler, Goebels, and Goering. No doubt this is why it was the consensus among the foreign correspondents in Paris recently that he is Hitler's most dangerous adversary. Yet the youth of this man was like a sentimental novel. The modern psychologist might explain this paradox on the theory that, precisely because the young man found ample outlets for his romantic impulses, the mature man is no longer bedeviled by them.

Just out of his 'teens, Prince Carol shocked the royal court of Bucharest with the announcement that he had become a socialist and regarded the monarchic form of government as antiquated. Even if Carol I, then King, had not been a former Prussian cavalry officer, this heresy was bound to enrage him. He was already infuriated because his wife, Queen Elizabeth, was putting crazy notions into Rumanian skulls with her eccentric modern ideas about culture. She had gathered around her all the bohemians, literati, and parlor socialists of Rumania; and she manufactured a lot of inferior literature herself under the name of "Carmen Sylva." Thanks to her, Prince Carol had been sent, to prepare for his future profession, not into the army but to a university. And the university had made him a socialist! His great-uncle, quite understandably, lost his temper at last. He ordered the royal rebel to abandon his dangerous studies immediately and enter the army as an ordinary cadet.

But even greater domestic misfortune followed. Carol proceeded to fall in love with a little bourgeois girl, Zizi Lambrino. His mother, now Queen, could, of course, prevent the marriage, but already Carol possessed the talent

for profiting personally by catastrophe. When the Rumanian army was driven from the country by the Germans in the spring of 1918, he fled with it to Southern Russia. There, in Odessa, where his family was powerless to stop him, Carol married his Zizi. It was love, but it was also a political demonstration. "My studies and my experiences have made me a socialist, an anti-militarist, and a republican," he said to his friends. "I never want to hear anything about the army or politics—least of all about the crown." He was determined to enter some private profession.

If this were a scenario, it would be considered improbable. But being history the further career of the headstrong Carol must be told. It took a special law for King Ferdinand to annul Carol's marriage, on the grounds that it had been contracted without the consent of the head of the family. But a wise mother knows that the best way to help a young man to forget one woman is quickly to provide him with another. Wherefore Marie arranged for her son to meet the most beautiful of all the princesses available. Her name was Helen, and she was a sister of the king of Greece. The meeting took place in Switzerland, where Helen

was sharing the exile of her father, the deposed King Constantine. Helen didn't fall madly in love with the handsome prince — either because Carol had not sufficiently recovered from the Zizi affair to be a very ardent suitor, or because she herself had not quite recovered from a previous attachment to the bravest, handsomest, and stupidest officer of the Greek army. Still, life in Switzerland was dull, and to become Crown Princess of Rumania was at least an escape. The glamorous marriage took place in Athens on March 10, 1921. In due course came the birth of a son. And — for Carol — boredom.

His boredom had already become unbearable when Crown Prince Carol made the acquaintance of a smart young woman with light red hair and lovely white skin. She was the daughter of a Bucharest financier named Woolf — Magdalena Woolf, destined to achieve worldwide notoriety as Madame Lupescu. Legend has done Magda Woolf gross injustice. Countless newspaper stories have turned her into a seductive Circe, or a modern Pompadour. Nothing is farther from the facts. Miss Woolf was certainly beautiful and charming. But she had much more than sex appeal. All who have known her describe her as a woman of ex-

traordinary intelligence, more than average culture, and a rare political acumen. She would have become an important personage even without Carol. On the other hand, there is justifiable doubt as to whether Carol would have become quite the King he is without Miss Woolf.

At first the affair proceeded in exact conformity with the traditional rules for extra-marital love affairs of crown princes. When the country was seething with gossip about the forthcoming blessed event in Miss Woolf's household, she was hurriedly married to an officer of the prince's guard who was eager to be of service. And so Carol's third son acquired an official father. (Besides his child by Princess Helen he had a first son by Zizi.) For awhile Mother Marie breathed again, for Madame Lupescu now lived in splendid exile in the exclusive hotels of Vienna, Paris, and Nice; she seemed to have been removed forever from proximity to Prince Carol. Then one day Carol disappeared from Bucharest. For the second time he had decided to renounce Rumania and the crown. He met Magdalena in Italy and went with her to France, then to England. Queen Marie could not even starve him out. When checks from Bucharest

failed to arrive, Carol, with the assistance of the commercially talented Magdalena, learned the art of earning money. The financiers who took him on because of his valuable connections were pleasantly surprised when they discovered his business efficiency.

During the first few years Carol's exile was voluntary. Twice he made brief visits to Bucharest, and twice he returned to his life-partner. Already he had become too much of a European and much too modern to be able to breathe the stuffy air of Bucharest court life. Besides, he developed more and more pronounced opposition to the internal policies of Rumania. His profitable deals with Western European banking houses extinguished the socialism of his student days, and convinced him also that the half-oriental Rumania was in need of modernization. In 1925 Carol voluntarily renounced the throne. Some weeks later, the Rumanian parliament passed a law excluding him from the succession. Carol, in Nice at the time, was much amused. He wanted nothing better than to enjoy an interesting private life. And his private life became very interesting indeed. Madame Lupescu and he had money, independence, and amusing friends. They did not

choose their friends from the sterile European nobility, but from its artists, scientists, and politicians.

III

In 1927, Carol's father died and Carol's son, Michael, at the age of 6, became King. From this moment Carol knew no peace. He had renounced the throne because Bucharest court life and internal politics were repulsive to him. But now, when his son had so soon and so unexpectedly become King, he felt a strong urge to return. Vanity and ambition were reawakened, and he began to feel just a little ridiculous. Further, those court-circles whose stupidity had caused him to flee Bucharest had now, as members of the Council of Regents, all power in their hands and were endangering the future of the country. For awhile he just looked on. Then, suddenly, he interfered — in his usual adventurous and romantic manner.

One day in 1930, to the complete surprise of Rumania and the rest of the world, Carol stepped from an airplane in Bucharest, and a few days later had himself crowned King. The energy of this *putsch* was so staggering that Carol's enemies in Bucharest simply did not have time to start a counter-action.

They found themselves confronted with a man who, from the very first moment, knew exactly what he wanted.

And what did he want? If one thinks of politics as the rigid application of certain ideological formulas, then it may well be doubted that Carol has any political line at all. But if politics means the art of skilfully using conditions to one's own advantage, then Carol may be counted among the ablest politicians in Europe. His program is simple: Rumania is one of the few real victors of the World War, and this victory must not be wiped out. Carol is completely indifferent about the means by which Rumania's possessions shall be defended.

He was really quite willing to play the game of democratic foreign policy in the "Little Entente," along with Dr. Beneš. When he saw that Czechoslovakia paid for this game with her life, Carol was willing to co-operate voluntarily with Hitler, before he should be made to do so by force. When the test case of post-Munich Czechoslovakia showed that Hitler did not want co-operation but occupation, Carol let it be known in London that he would participate in a genuine military alliance against the Third Reich. And if it should become apparent that Eng-

land, once again, is frightened by her own audacity, then Carol will certainly not need twenty-four hours to make up his mind to join the Berlin-Rome axis. He has no principles, no scruples, but only the determined will to remain in power.

Carol is totally devoid of that cultured sense of responsibility which prevented Dr. Beneš from giving the order to shoot at the decisive moment. That there is nothing of Hamlet in his nature was proved when he "liquidated" Codreanu, the late leader of Rumania's fascist "Iron Guard." In November 1938, after a dazzling visit to London, Carol had an audience with Hitler. The Führer wanted to get the King's confidence, and divulged the secret that he was not overmuch interested in Codreanu, whom the whole world took to be a Nazi agent. Immediately after this conversation, Carol telephoned to Bucharest. Two days later, Codreanu was "shot while trying to escape."

There can be no doubt that Carol is willing to join an anti-Hitler bloc which means business. Naturally he is not disturbed about Hitler's brutal tyranny over the German people; on the contrary, he shows a deep understanding of tyrants. What bothers him is that Hitler's Germany has developed a

violent appetite for Rumanian territory. And, unlike Mr. Chamberlain, Carol cannot convince himself that Germany's imperialistic dreams are nothing but dreams. Twenty-one years ago, Rumania had an overdose of what Germany is capable of doing to a country which falls under its heel. It is an achievement of German propaganda that, of all the peace treaties resulting from the War, the world in general remembers only that of Versailles.

But Rumanians have not forgotten the peace pact which, in May 1918, Germany dictated at Bucharest — a pact which for sheer bestiality makes the treaty of Versailles look like a regulation of the Salvation Army. They know what would confront them should they ever happen to come under a German "protectorate." They know how greedily the Third Reich is working toward the realization of such a protectorate. Rumania exports 2,000,000 tons of grain, 1,500,000 cubic meters of lumber, 7,000,000 tons of oil — in other words, the equivalent of Germany's whole deficit in grain, a third of its present deficit in lumber, and almost the whole of its deficit in oil. Rumania is at the top of the Nazi menu; Carol has no illusions about that.

He has, of course, learned something from Madame Lupescu: you can make a profitable deal only if the other party knows that he must compete for what you have to offer. Before Carol started to negotiate with London, he first discussed with Germany a trade agreement which would mean the peaceful delivery of Rumania — if it should ever become really effective. Should Chamberlain give military guarantees and grant British loans, the Rumanian trade agreement with Germany would remain just a scrap of paper. But the military guarantees would have to be 100 per cent genuine, and the loans would have to be fat ones, because you cannot cheat King Carol. He may have had a more romantic youth than a Birmingham merchant but he understands business matters just as well as Mr. Chamberlain.

The glamour prince, the romantic *homme à femmes*, has become a key figure of European history. In Austria and Czechoslovakia, Hitler faced opponents who were the cultured children of an enfeebled Nineteenth Century civilization. In Rumania he faces a man with a flair for adventure and an unlimited appetite for power. A man who, no less than Hitler himself, loves to live dangerously.

YANKEES ARE HUMAN

BY DAVID L. GRAHAM

THE national illusion that every Yankee is a puritan and a sourpuss is as unyielding as New England's stern and rockbound coast. My wife and I settled in Maine simply because we craved an old house and a farm by the sea, and despite the fact that our neighbors, by common repute, were a tight-fisted, puritanical crew who would sell us down the river, if we let them, to a passel of sanctimonious, psalm-singing bluenoses.

What astonished and delighted us, therefore, was not so much the friendly welcome (cordiality being two-thirds curiosity) but something far more precious — tolerance! This in spite of the fact that we have made no secret of our liberalism, winebibbing, and free verse — in the state that produced Prohibition and regards the Republican Party as the bulwark of civilization. We are considered a little queer; but in an individualistic community like ours that goes for nearly everybody — except the summer people, who are considered mad.

After sweltering in the puritanical atmosphere of the South and West, we have found a new life in the serenity of Yankee tolerance. Of course, there are retreats like Sante Fe and Greenwich Village where some moral *laissez-faire* survives, but such communities cater to "artistic" groups. For ordinary all-around native tolerance, without frills and self-consciousness, there is only New England. We've found plenty of conservatism, but no puritanism in the derogatory popular sense.

The Yankee we know is a small farmer, fisherman, or craftsman of some sort. He has a constant quiet twinkle in his eye, and although he talks easily enough if he thinks you're worth it, he never loses the air of knowing more than he chooses to tell. He somehow makes you feel that his ancestors had the opportunity of sailing on the *Mayflower* but passed it up because of the vulgar notoriety it would bring their descendants. As much as anybody, the Yankee is a product of his environment. It is profitless to re-