

Beautiful Queen DIDN'T Live Happily Ever After



She threw herself, heart and soul, into the struggle of her people, nursing the wounded soldiers, organizing the women, rich and poor alike, for war work.

She Lived in Golden Chamber in Wonderful Castle, Was Much Loved, Had Wealth and Pretty Children, but Now She is a Fugitive From Her Fairyland

BY MARGARET C. GETCHELL.

ONCE upon a time there was a beautiful queen, who lived in a luxurious palace, ruling with her husband over their small kingdom. She was generally acknowledged to be the most beautiful queen in the whole world. Everywhere she went she charmed the people she met by her personality, and her court, although in a small country, was visited by distinguished persons from all corners of the globe.

Nor was she beloved only by persons of rank, but by the poorest people in her kingdom. Coming from another much larger and more important nation, she first learned the language of the country which was to be hers and adopted its religion. She visited the huts of humble peasants and often would stop over-night in some out-of-the-way cottage, where she would have the opportunity to make real friends of her subjects.

She was as brilliant in mind as in person. Although social advancement of her kingdom interested her, she wanted also to further culture in the form of literature, music and art. She wrote poetry and books which were of real merit. She brought about a revival of the art which had once existed in the country and attracted the attention of the world to its achievements.

Her castle was beautiful and luxurious as one could wish for a queen, and she had one room which was known as the golden chamber, where everything was wrought in exquisite gilt.

But this luxury does not mean that she oppressed the people nor wrung from them the money which they needed for luxuries, as certain other queens have done. No; she brought with her great wealth from the two large countries of her father and mother and she spent this money freely in her little adopted kingdom.

She was not, however, so absorbed in the public duties of her position that she forgot her personal duties as a mother. To her six children she gave her love, her time and all the thoughtful care which her more humble subjects might devote to their children, that they might grow up to be fine men and women. She supervised with great care the education of each one and taught them the spirit of love and service to their people. That they might know the value of work and industry, and that they might have understanding of the life and problem of the workman, she had each one taught a trade.

Then came a great war, when the very existence of the little nation was threatened. The queen threw herself heart and soul into the struggle of her people. She nursed the wounded soldiers, she organized the women, rich and poor alike, for war work. She wrote appealing articles to be sent to other countries, which brought help to the suffering people, who were fighting against overwhelming odds. At last they were forced to surrender, but they were not vanquished, and when their mighty enemy was finally downed by the little country's allies war was again declared.

The story has all the earmarks of a wonderful fairy tale, which would delight any small girl and many a grown-up girl as well, for whom the glamour of a queen's life and power still holds a fascination.

But the much used and oft abused phrase that "truth is stranger than fiction" here pokes in its appearance and announces that the logical end does not follow. The logical end, as one need not tell any one who has ever delved into the delights of fairy book land, is that the queen and her family "lived happily ever after" and that the realm is blessed under her sweet, guiding hand.

But this is not fiction, it is fact. Though she may win the love and admiration of her people and the world in general, she can never live down one black fact which forever rises to stare her in the face: Do what she may, she is still a queen, and the blood of royalty runs in her veins, although she may embrace all the democratic theories in the world.

Queen Marie of Rumania has fled from her kingdom! Poor queen! The taint of royalty is upon her!

Time was when to be queen or princess was synonymous to fairyland itself in the heart of a woman who was fascinated by the idea of regal splendor and of the attending power. Nor was the feeling absent in the hearts of the bolder sex? How many a pipe dream has unfolded itself in the clouds of smoke which have started with that one delightful little supposition: "If I were king!" Poor queen!



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place as the dominant power in the kingdom.

But the girl of 16 fell in love with her young husband, and did all in her power to win his affection. That she failed at first to do so is tribute to her dark-eyed rival. Hailed as the most beautiful princess in Europe, she was a dashing, athletic, head-strong girl. Her youth, her delicacy of feature, her clear complexion, her big blue eyes and golden hair would have charmed any man who was not held by the fascinating spell of the "vampire," Helene Vascarese.

The "vampire," who was brought up in Paris, is described as "Roman with French improvements." She had abundant black hair and deep, lustrous eyes. Her charms were ripe, and her dark skin,

full lips and fine neck and arms had thrown a strong spell around the blond German prince.

It was the princess' mother who first took Helen to Bucharest, having met her in Paris, where she had been brought into the limelight by Victor Hugo, whose protegee she was. The young French poetess became the queen's favorite maid of honor, and soon had the prince among her train of admirers. The queen encouraged the marriage and even wrote poems on the attachment as representing true love. When the council of ministers protested, forced the abandonment of the proposed marriage by threats of a change of dynasty and exiled the fascinating Helen, the result was an estrangement which lasted for some years between the

old queen and her husband, who was not in sympathy with her matchmaking.

Such were the incidents preceding the marriage of the present king and queen of Rumania. At the time, Marie was deeply in love with her husband, but she soon learned of her rival. All her passionate tenderness and remarkable beauty were insufficient to win his affection, and even her children did not change the situation.

In desperation she left Bucharest, flitted from court to court and frequented the gayest spas and casinos. She took delight in amorous conquests. Whether she had a purpose in pursuing this course will never be known. Be that as it may, Ferdinand eventually woke up to the fact that his wife was attracting attention



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from men everywhere, and his indifference changed to a most intense and jealous love. One moment, it is said, he was raging and storming and the next he was on his knees pleading with her.

But her ardent love for him had long been cooling, and he could not coax it back, so that the marriage was never blessed with complete happiness.

The queen is devoted to her children, and one of the great tragedies of her life is the death of a son, just before the first retreat from Rumania of the royal family. She has had each one taught a trade, and her oldest and favorite son, Carlo, is an amateur printer of some repute. On his press he prints some of his mother's literary productions, among which are several books written for her children.

Besides writing, Queen Marie is an accomplished musician, both as pianist and violinist. To her linguistic talents she adds the charm of being a most entertaining conversationalist, and in the affairs of everyday life she shows a keen brain, a strong will and great organizing ability. It has been said that to the most fascinating attainments of a professional beauty she adds the executive ability of a corporation lawyer. This undoubtedly has been of greatest importance to the war work of Rumania, in which she has been a leader.

One of her greatest contributions to her adopted country was her interest in the revival of Byzantine art, which marked the closing days of the last century. From her Russian grandparents she had inherited a fondness for Byzantine luxury, as well as the wherewithal for satisfying her taste.

Her love of beauty and her artistic, although extravagant personality, was expressed in her Rumanian castles. The famous golden chamber in one of them has walls of gilt. A golden throne under a golden canopy is her own special seat and is placed under the dome ceiling facing the deep-set painted windows. There is a gold table covered with precious boxes and richly bound books and frames of chased gold. In the corner stands a spinning wheel, inlaid with gold and set with precious stones, and over the grand piano is thrown a heavy cover of cloth of gold, embroidered with ascension lilies, her favorite flower.

She loves to dress in the gorgeous Byzantine costume of the olden days and has endeared herself to the Rumanians by often appearing in public in their national dress. When she is at her mountain home she sometimes wears the ordinary peasant dress and has had a whole room furnished with native pine wood, inlaid with strips of silver, the handiwork of the Rumanian craftsmen.

Many are the pretty tales they tell of her acquaintance with the peasants. She has always loved to go among them, to become acquainted and to help them when she can. While one might wonder if her pleasure were in "playing lady bountiful," the kindly observer will give her the benefit of the doubt.

Be that as it may, it is certain that the queen has been a sincere and devoted worker for and with her people during the war. Whatever there may have been of superficiality in her relations has dissolved before the demands of war that all should work together with one heart and with one purpose. Like many a woman in various countries who, before the war, was merely a society leader and used up boundless energy in keeping up with the social whirl, she has thrown herself wholeheartedly into the work of the last four years. It has been said that, of the Parisian women who were madly dancing tango and one-step when the call to arms came in August, 1914, those who had tan goled best nursed hardest.

True it is that Queen Marie has been tireless in her efforts to alleviate the suffering of her people and to keep up the morale of the little nation, which was fighting against great odds.

Just before Rumania was driven to a separate peace with Germany the queen took a trip of 300 miles along the battlefront for the purpose of encouraging and inspiring her beloved soldiers and war-worn people of her little kingdom. With her was an Associated Press correspondent, who said of her work:

"During these three days she passed through scores of little villages, all devastated by artillery fire and aerial bombardment, many of them bearing indelible marks of German vandalism. Famine stalked everywhere; children went bare-

footed through the snow-covered streets; every one was gaunt and emaciated. The food supply in the army was fairly good and the dugouts were warm and comfortable, even on the coldest days.

"The soldiers everywhere greeted the queen with the utmost enthusiasm and affection. There could be no doubt that she was idolized by the rank and file of the whole army, and her intense interest in their welfare was shown on every mile of the three days' journey. Every Rumanian officer carried a photograph of the queen and many of these bore her personal signature. Thousands of the private soldiers also carried her picture in the same pocket with their sacred icons and crucifix.

"The queen carried with her on her journey a large quantity of supplies of various kinds, given her by the American Red Cross for distribution. These included garments for the women and children in the villages, condensed milk and food for the sick, and cigars or small comforts for the soldiers. She insisted on personally presenting every article, and she had a word of cheer and encouragement to go with each gift.

"In the villages the queen showed entire disregard for the dangers of infection. Houses where typhus victims lay ill she entered without hesitation, despite the protests and expostulations of the local prefect and of her own physician, who accompanied her. Often she insisted on sitting down by the bedside of a stricken peasant woman or child and ministering personally to the patient.

"It was wonderful to see how she eluded and overcame the careful arrangements of the local prefects for shepherding her through their districts. It was natural that each prefect should be anxious to persuade the queen that conditions were better than the average, and with this end in view he had usually arranged for calls at six or seven of the best houses in the village. But the queen would waive this program aside and, pointing to some miserable hovel, would say, 'It looks to me as if the people in that house needed help. Let us go there.'

Another act in the life of this brilliant and fascinating woman, who "is every inch a queen," is closed. As the curtain rings down we see her fleeing with her daughter from the kingdom where she loved and was loved. Sounds of riot and disorder come from beyond the footlights. Are they pursuing her beyond the confines of the border? Will they welcome her back to them? Or have they forever washed their hands of the royal family who ruled over them in those faraway days before the world war?

Back to Abraham's Old Home Town

THE British, on their advance in Mesopotamia, passed over or at least near the ancient city of Ur—a most interesting town, to be sure, inasmuch as it was there that Abraham was born and grew up, and thence that he departed with his family and relations on a journey to Palestine that was destined to be so productive of important events for the Hebrews.

We are accustomed to think of the days of the early Pharaohs as almost lost in antiquity, but Ur was prehistoric. Eight or nine thousand years ago that great Chaldean city was a seaport on the shore (or near it) of the Persian gulf. It traded with India and all the then known parts of the world.

Today Ur (or what remains of it) is 120 miles as the crow flies from the head of the Persian gulf. Surely it has not moved, but the alluvial deposits, carried down by rivers, have built out the land, so that the head of the gulf is no longer where it used to be. The pushing southward of the shore line is known to have averaged about a certain distance yearly since the time of Alexander the Great, so that the period when Ur was a seaport can be re-created with fair accuracy.

Out of one huge mound has been dug the ruins of a pyramidal tower, which is regarded by Assyriologists as the most perfect specimen of Babylonian architecture known. It is built in a series of stages, like the Tower of Babel, with a continuous flight of broad steps running up the outside. It originally supported a temple—the great Temple of the Mo-