

KEEN-EYED RUMANIAN PRINCE FINDS AMERICA THE REALITY OF ALL ARABIAN NIGHTS DREAMS

Bibesco, Minister to United States, Views Country With Eye of an Artist

LAND OF WONDERS, SAYS ENVOY-WRITER

Condemns "Main Street" and Loves Bebe Daniels, Marvel of the Films

AMERICA is like an Arabian Nights tale come true! In that one sentence Prince Antoine Bibesco, Rumanian Minister to the United States, sums up the complexity of impressions he has received here in the last two years.

All the gossamer threads of fancy in those old wonder stories, the Prince believes, are in the shuttle of life here and are weaving a pattern of civilization that outdistances imagination.

The Prince is not only a diplomat with a background of life in many European capitals, particularly London and Paris, but he is a creative artist as well. And it is with the eyes of a playwright and litterateur that he likes best to envision America.

"Europe has so many things to learn from America," said the Prince during a flying visit to Philadelphia, his first since his appointment to Washington in the summer of 1920. "America is like an Arabian Nights tale come true, a land of perpetual wonders. Europeans are able to appreciate this country even better than the Americans themselves, for they bring with them a freshness of view."

"I strongly admire the part played in American civilization by American women. I don't think there is a country in the world where woman plays her part with greater perfection. In artistic achievement, in music, in general culture, she is comparing more than favorably with her sisters of the Old World."

Playwright of Note, Praises American Stage

The Prince's compliment is all the stronger because his career has brought him into intimate contact with the elite of Europe and has made him a familiar in the salons of Paris, Vienna and pre-war Petrograd and the drawing rooms of London.

Prince Bibesco devotes some of his leisure to playwriting and some of his comedies have achieved celebrity in France. One of his plays which had a long run at the French capital is "Les Jaloux."

It was quite natural, therefore, for the Prince to talk about the American stage.

"There has been a tremendous development of the American stage," he remarked. "But in spite of that development I do not believe that American talent is encouraged enough. As soon as a play is produced in London or Paris it is sought for this country."

"I might describe myself as a free trader in things intellectual. One of the very best things for the world, one of the most powerful means toward international understanding, is an interchange of literature and music and art. But the fact remains that producers should do more to encourage the talent they have right here in this country."

The Prince grew introspective for a few moments. Then his gaze became direct again and he smiled as though trying to temper the dictum.

Comments on Writers; Commends Women Authors

"Art, you know, is not a thing from the outside. It isn't a thing that can be grafted on you. There are plenty of young writers here who really have things to say."

Edith Wharton, the Prince believes, has a wonderful personality and he is a great admirer of her works. He noted that another woman novelist, Gertrude Atherton, rather caustically criticized Mrs. Wharton's "Glimpses of the Moon."

"But I would rather have a second-rate work from a first-rate person than the opposite," he went on. He made it clear he was not criticizing Mrs. Atherton's own works by implication.

"All the paintings of Rembrandt are not masterpieces; neither are all the compositions of Beethoven. The greatest thing in art is personality."

The Prince also spoke warmly of Edna Ferber and Dorothy Canfield and later told of the enjoyment he derives from the works of Waldo Frank and Rachel Lindsay.

"Main Street" Rouses Ire of Diplomat-Writer

The Minister's long slender fingers snapped impatiently at a mention of Sinclair Lewis.

"I think he has libeled America in his 'Main Street' and 'Babbitt.' It is true that each country has its Main Street, its provincial interests, its narrow-minded prejudices. But the influences and the ideals working against that condition in this country are so great that the shortcomings discussed by Mr. Lewis will disappear of themselves."

The Prince confessed that while he



Prince Antoine Bibesco, Rumanian Minister to the United States



The Prince and Princess, photographed upon their arrival in Washington two years ago



Princess Bibesco, who was Elizabeth, daughter of former Premier Herbert Asquith of Great Britain

Royal Diplomat Declares Rumania Will Never Join in Possible Slavic Outbreak Against Civilization and That Constantinople Some Day Will Be Christian

age on the Black Sea. Under the new order, its neighbor is the so-called independent republic of the Ukraine which many regard as under the thumb of Soviet Russia.

While the Prince was visiting his estates this summer, his native country was beginning to redraft her constitution in order to co-ordinate the laws and legal systems of old Rumania and the new provinces. A strong effort is being made for the State to acquire subsoil rights which would include oil and mineral rights.

Oil is the talisman nowadays in the art of high politics and Rumania has some rich oil fields of her own. But of that Bibesco did not speak.

As for the Turks, the Rumanian Minister has a great sorrow because they were permitted to return to Europe. "I grudge them their victory," he said. Then he ventured a prophecy, without daring to state when its fulfillment will come.

"Constantinople will yet become a Christian city," he declared. "Peter the Great wrote in his testament: 'The kingdom of the world belongs to the person who holds Constantinople.'"

Churchill, the younger son of the Duchess of Marlborough, formerly Consul Vanderbilt, of New York.

The christening was held in the Greek Church of St. Sophia, Bayswater, and the baby was named Priscilla.

The little princess is now two years old, a rosy, chubby youngster who prefers to be called "Billie," a preference the Prince ascribes laughingly to American influence.

The Prince's fellow-countrymen have settled in this country in fairly large numbers. There are approximately 105,000 here, the majority being residents of New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio.

The latest census placed the Rumanian-born population of New York at 40,116, that of Ohio at 13,068, of Pennsylvania at 11,230, of Michigan at 6,331, and of Illinois at 6,238.

Rumania is a hereditary constitutional monarchy. The Legislature is composed of a Senate and Chamber of Deputies, the former with 120 members elected for eight years. The heir apparent, eight Bishops and two representatives chosen by the Universities of Bucharest and Jassy, are members of

George Bibesco, who, in 1843, at the age of forty, was elected by the people of Wallachia and Moldavia as their Hospodar or Prince. The election was confirmed by the Sublime Porte, which, in those days, exercised suzerainty over all the southeastern European states except Greece.

Prince's Ancestry From Long Line of Royalty

Prince George Bibesco is credited with abolishing slavery, transforming Bucharest into a Western and civilized city and endowing his entire country with a system of roads and highways. In fact he transformed it from an Oriental into a European State on Occidental lines. Eventually overthrown by political intrigues, he took up his residence in Paris, where he died in 1873.

The old Hospodar or Prince married Zoe Mavrocordato, the adopted daughter and sole heiress of the last Prince of Brancovan, of the house of Brancovan. The Brancovans were one of the historic families of Southeastern Europe.

Their dynasty was founded by Black Rudolph of Bassaraba, who established himself as ruler of Wallachia in 1290, his descendants furnishing no less than seventeen sovereigns to that country. Toward the end of the sixteenth century the Bassarabas acquired the domain of Brancovan, and in 1688 were created Counts of Brancovan, in the peerage of Hungary, being advanced five years later by Emperor Leopold to the dignity of Princes of the Holy Roman Empire.

The Bibescos received recognition of their Wallachian title of Prince by the Austrian crown prior to the formation of the Rumanian monarchy. The Rumanian envoy is a first cousin of the present head of the family.

In the early part of the eighteenth century the family figured conspicuously in the wars against the Turks. When Bucharest fell before a Turkish attack, Prince Constantine, then ruler of Wallachia, and four of his five sons were carried off to Constantinople. When they refused to abjure Christianity they were strangled.

On the strength of his marriage to the adopted daughter of the last of the Bassaraba princes of Brancovan, the Hospodar, George Bibesco, assumed the name of Brancovan and Bassaraba. In 1800 the Austrian Crown gave formal recognition of his Wallachian title of Prince.

The Rumanian envoy is a first cousin of the present head of the family. Con-



Princess Bibesco and her little daughter, whom the father calls "Billie"

One of the things that upholds Turkey's hands, he remarked further, is her ability through the Moslem religion to influence the Moslems of Morocco, Egypt, Southern Russia and India. Even in China the Moslem religion is developing, he said.

Finally, the Prince's nimble mind skipped back from the international chessboard to the personally interesting question of women.

"It might be somewhat humorous to mention," he laughed, "that I am strongly feminist, while my wife is just as strongly anti-feminist."

Which is easily understandable, for the Princess Bibesco was Miss Elizabeth Asquith, daughter of the former Prime Minister of England, whom the suffragists of England tried to stampede into giving votes to women.

Prince Bibesco was attached to the Rumanian Legation at Paris when he was presented to King Edward VII. His charm of manner, and his sophistication in the best sense of that word won him the friendly interest of the King, who contrived to have him transferred to London as secretary of legation there.

Prince Won Hand of Asquith's Daughter

Bibesco's name invariably was included in the list of guests at dinners and house parties arranged for the King. It was while in London that the Prince met and wooed Miss Asquith.

They were married April 30, 1919, at St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, following a ceremony at the Orthodox Greek Church in London. The Queen Mother Alexandra and Princess Victoria were among the many distinguished guests. King George and Queen Mary sent gifts of jewelry and many other gifts were received from the royal house and from the diplomatic corps.

When the infant daughter of the Prince and Princess was christened in July, 1920, Queen Alexandra, the chief Duchess of Portland and sent a diamond pendant to the baby princess. The other sponsors were the Marchioness of Granby, the Countess Benckendorf, Lord Robert Cecil and Lord Ivor



The Prince, from a photograph taken on the occasion of his visit to Philadelphia this week

he reported to be watching for the move France threatens to make into the Ruhr basin by January 15 if the Germans again postpone the reparations payments.

Expects a Settlement on German Reparations

But Prince Bibesco does not believe France will again draw the sword and throw her legions into that territory as a tour de force. He expects to see some adjustment reached, some rapprochement between England and France that will make Germany hesitate about further goading France.

Then there is the Russian problem, the scheming of Moscow to drag other countries into the red welter of bolshevism.

And right there Prince Bibesco wanted to set right those who assume that Rumania is a slav nation and that it is susceptible to the tainted bludge from the Red capital.

New Problems Arose With "Greater Rumania"

As a part of the old empire of the Czars Bessarabia was one of the richest agricultural provinces in the South of Russia. It was occupied by the Rumanian army soon after the Bolshevik revolution. It has a considerable front-

Rumania's area was about doubled as a result of the war and the peace settlement. She gained the provinces of Transylvania, Bukovina and Bessarabia.

the Senate. The Code Napoleon is the basis of the legal system.

Prince Bibesco is the son of the late Alexander Bibesco, who, unlike his three brothers, Gregory, George and Nicholas, was a litterateur rather than a soldier, although he fought for France in the Franco-German War of 1870.

The grandfather of the Prince was

stantine, who bears the title of Prince of Brancovan. He is an officer of the Rumanian cavalry and was married in 1900 to the daughter of Antoniadis, the colossal rich merchant of Alexandria, whose magnificent gardens in the outskirts of that city, along the Mahmoudich, enjoy wide celebrity.