

So the Much-Censored Beauty Sued Her Broad-Minded Hubby

How Marcelle's Movie Ambitions Inspired Her to Ditch Rich Capt. Cohn, Even Though He Gave Her That \$300,000 Necklace



"HOLLYWOOD, HERE I COME!"

An Exquisite Close-Up of Marcelle Favrel-Chantal (Mrs. Jefferson Cohn), French Songstress and Cinema Star, Sparkling with Animation Over the Thought of Possible Screen Triumphs in the U. S. A.

WATCHFUL WAITING
Amiable Caricature of Capt. Jefferson Davis Cohn, Millionaire Turfman, Shown Here Gazing at the Lovely Face of His Wife and Perhaps Wondering What the Outcome of Her Divorce Suit Will Be.

By C. DE VIDAL HUNT.

PARIS.

SUREFIRE recipe for a modernistic divorce suit: take a much-censored and luxury-loving and undeniably beautiful Parisian society wife who has turned actress; mix with one very rich and broad-minded husband; stir briskly in the French courts, and serve—on the front pages—piping hot.

Something like this has happened in the surprising legal action of lovely Marcelle Favrel-Chantal, singer and cinema star, against Captain Jefferson Davis Cohn, millionaire turfman and namesake of the President of the Confederate States of America.

"If Marcelle goes on with it," remarked Captain Cohn to me on a note of sadness, "it will mean the end of thirteen years of friendship, companionship and married life." But—Marcelle, beaming, thrust a packet into my hands. "Oh, never mind my husband," she exclaimed. "Just take these photographs and tell Hollywood I'm on my way!"

The scene, I should explain, was the Cohns' magnificent suburban estate at Autoull, a princely establishment thickly populated with liveried flunkies and so ornate that it might be mistaken for a movie set. And, inasmuch as the movies form a sort of theme song for the Cohns' domestic jangle, let me sum up Marcelle's connection with them.

In the first place, when I referred to her as "much-censored," I was indulging in no social or artistic disparagement. Her status among members of the aesthetic and patrician sets of Paris is secure. But followers of the news may recollect that about a year ago,

ways graced the acts of Jefferson Cohn. A case in point was his statement to the press when he and his first wife parted. She was a daughter of Horatio Bottomley, the London financier, who later came to great grief through his financial manipulations.

"I can see no valid reason why divorce should cause hard feeling between husband and wife," said Captain Cohn. Then, "My wife and I have been happy together. Now, just because we are going to separate, what earthly reason is there why we should cherish animosity toward each other?" It was this rather remarkable credo that won for Captain Cohn the nickname of "The Broad-Minded Hubby."

It is not only mentally that the Captain merits the expansive adjective; in all his relations with his friends, and wives, he has manifested a prodigious generosity. A couple of years ago, the noted sportsman had made a phenomenal killing at the race track. He was elated. That evening he said to Marcelle: "Dear, I've had a lot of luck with the ponies lately. I'd like to give you a really good birthday gift. Now what would you like? Some diamonds? Half a dozen motor cars? A racing stable of your own? Or a chateau?"

Mrs. Cohn thought this over a little. Then she said: "Jefferson, I'd like to own the Maria Theresa string of pearls." Now even to a doting husband worth millions this was rather a tall request, for the necklace Mrs. Cohn referred to is a string of 136 pink stones. Each is as big as the average oxheart cherry and weighs six carats. For more than three centuries the pearls have been the pride of the House of Hapsburg.

Two yards long and of incredible beauty, the necklace was valued at \$300,000. Expert lapidaries have declared it to be second only to that owned by Mme. Jacques Balsan (Consuelo Vanderbilt), once the possession of Catherine the Great of Russia.

The Maria Theresa jewels, in addition to their rich historical background and perfect matching, have another, more melancholy interest. In

NOT FOR THE BRITISH
The Much-Discussed Flogging Scene from the Photoplay, "The Queen's Necklace," Financed by Capt. Cohn, with His Wife Starred. She Shows in the Character of Countess de la Motte, Scourged and Branded During the Days of "The Terror," in France. Exhibition of the Picture in London was Banned by the Censor.

1921, when the outcast Emperor Charles of Austria-Hungary wanted to buy an airplane to execute the coup d'état of re-seizing the throne, he laid in the safe of a Paris jeweler.

It is instructive to note at this point that Marcelle Cohn may have had another reason than mere pride of ownership in getting the gems. Successful on the concert stage, she had long and secretly cherished that dream of so many a young matron—she desired to become a movie star of the first magnitude. Especially she wished to film the life of the Countess Jeanne de la Motte, one of "The Terror's" tragic heroines. She knew that "The Queen's Necklace" would make splendid screen material with the "fattest" of parts for herself. And friends had suggested that she herself resembled Gloria Swanson. What could be more appropriate to the story than a really regal necklace?

The Captain No Mind-Reader

Probably Captain Cohn, not being a mind-reader, did not sense the histrionic hook-up in his wife's thoughts between the pearls and her ambitions. Good-naturedly he told her he would buy them for her. He was as good as his word. It's true that, at one period of his career as a sportsman, he sold the jewels. But, following a most successful session at the race track, he promptly bought them back. Then he placed them around Marcelle's white throat.

Captain Cohn wasn't awfully pleased when his wife confided to him her desire to become the Nancy Carroll of France, Anglo-Saxons of the upper class don't usually relish the thought of their women folk strutting up and down before a camera. But the Captain's wish to

see Marcelle pleased finally overpowered his sense of the reticences. He gave in. But, he warned, "I hope, Dear, this will be your only movie. It's all right to make one just for fun. But you don't want to keep on doing it, now do you?"

Whatever mental reservations Marcelle may have cherished, you may be sure she jumped at the chance to do "The Queen's Necklace." At great expense it was filmed, and created a sensation in France. The government "blessed" it as a worthy historical document. President Doumergue chose it for exhibition before a New Year party for school children, and for months it filled a Boulevard theatre. Then came the little brush with the British censor already described.

Perhaps because of, or in spite of, this incident Mrs. Cohn's cinematic ambitions seemed to swell instead of subsiding. She made another feature, a French all-talkie, "Toute Sa Vie" ("All Her Life"), in which she was supported by Fernand Fabre, well-known leading man. It, too, was successful. Doubtless by this time she was firmly convinced that the silverscreen needed her. And I dare say that her conviction began to get on the Captain's nerves.

Strange irony, that "The Queen's Necklace" and Marcelle's own should have pointed the path toward her talkie success—and in the direction of possible domestic disaster! At any rate—

"I would give up wealth, social prestige, almost any material advantage for a place in the movie sun," Marcelle told me. (This was just after she had captured the stellar role in "The Queen's Necklace." Pola Negri had originally been considered for the part, but temperamental differences between her and the director had caused her to leave the cast.)

Later when I presented myself at the Cohn chateau, Mrs. Cohn and myself dropped into shop talk. For screen purposes she had adopted the



DUBIOUS GAZE
This Photo of Capt. Cohn Reveals the Sad Expression That Flitted Across His Face When His Wife, Marcelle, Announced that She Preferred Her Art—and Divorce—to Domestically Uneventful Bliss.

pseudonym of Chantal—"It sounds better than Cohn." Nervously the Captain paced up and down, obviously bored and worried. "All right, all right," he exclaimed suddenly. "Chatter all you like about Hollywood. But not a sou of mine will ever go again into a cinema venture." Marcelle smiled in a pacific manner. Soon I left.

Realistic Love Scenes Impress

Critics agree that, while she may not be the extremely ingenu type most in favor with directors, Marcelle Favrel-Chantal is a real beauty and a most skilful actress. Particularly impressive to the French amusement-loving public were her scenes of impassioned love, portrayed with a handsome, young leading man of almost ethereal good looks. (A "still" from the general giving an excellent idea of his appearance is reproduced below.)

Studio employes and visitors who watched the filming of the scenario, and even listened in on rehearsals, declare that Marcelle gave a performance, playing opposite this youth, that would be the despair of a Duse, so exceedingly realistic was it. Inspired by her art, the hero also surpassed himself in portraying the raptures and despairs of the Great Emotion.

Captain Cohn, who, despite his fine physical trim and military bearing, is close to sixty, is torn between fuming and genuine sorrow at Marcelle's ambitions. "I reasoned with her," he told me. "I pointed out that her health is not too good. All in vain. Dear me! It's most sad."

But to Marcelle, as she leaps from peak to peak in her new-found career, it's not as bad as all that. "Tell Hollywood I'm on my way," is her decisive, exultant summary.



SO VERY TENDER
"The Countess and Her Sweetheart," Scene from the Film Breathing the Spirit of Deathless Love—Marcelle and Her Very Handsome Leading Man. She Had Such a Lovely Time Making This Film That She Wants to Make More—and More—Even if It Means Giving Up Society, and a Millionaire Husband.



POWDERED CURLS
At Right: Exquisite Camera-Study, from Marcelle Cohn's Own Album, a Personal Gift to Mr. Hunt, of Herself as the Countess in "The Queen's Necklace."



"The Countess in Prison," a Telling Shot from "The Queen's Necklace," Showing Marcelle Behind Bars.