

# Who Made That Horrid Bouquet?

**Mlle. Renouardt, the Famous French Beauty Accuses Mlle. Tambour, Her Rival Beauty, of Inspiring an Attack Too Unpleasant for Words to Describe**



"As the charming actress approached the theatre entrance, the hired desperado hurled the bouquet in her face."

**Mlle. Jane Renouardt, One of the Most Noted Parisian Beauties, Who Accuses Her Enemies of Plotting to Send the Horrid Bouquet.**

PARIS, March 2, 1920. DELIGHTFULLY amusing, yet desperately serious battle between two of the leading beauties of Paris has been diverting the laughter-loving people of this city for some weeks—and the end is not yet.

The two chief opponents are Mlle. Jane Renouardt, who is famed not only for her beauty, but for her extreme elegance, and Mlle. Clara Tambour, who has lately acquired a reputation as the daintiest actress on the Parisian stage. Her qualities are summed up in the French word "mignonne."

Mlle. Renouardt, it is said, felt that the "mignonne" Tambour was progressing too rapidly in the affections of the public and, perhaps, of a certain individual, and made an effort to suppress her.

Then the "mignonne" Tambour made deep laid plans to secure a cruel revenge, according to a story that has been laid before the judicial authorities of Paris. Mlle. Tambour plotted, it is said, to have the most evil smelling bouquet ever known, handed to the exquisite Renouardt in such a manner as to make her eternally ridiculous. Did you ever hear of such a villainous scheme?

By an exercise of almost superhuman wit and resourcefulness Mlle. Renouardt escaped the worst consequences of the plot, and then she boldly accused her rival of being in the plot.

Now the contest is still on and everybody is wondering from which side the next deadly blow will come.

In order to appreciate the full flavor of the bouquet episode, it is necessary first to know some of the recent history of these two beautiful and enterprising ladies.

Jane Renouardt gave proof of her vigorous character when she walloped the clever music hall singer, St. Granier, over the head with her diamond-encrusted parasol at the Longchamps racecourse in front of President Wilson and other notabilities. She attacked St. Granier because he had made a too intimate and personal allusion to her private life in a song he sang at his theatre, the Potiniere.

After that episode Renouardt appeared with great success in that entertaining play, "Le Bonheur de ma femme" (The Happiness of My Wife). Clara Tambour, who had been rapidly rising in popu-

larity, was invited to play Renouardt's part in this production when the latter was starred in a new play, "Souris d'hotel." The creatures referred to in this title are women who sneak into hotel rooms to steal valuables or commit any wickedness that is most convenient.

Renouardt almost shocked the Parisian audiences by appearing as a hotel rat in a complete suit of gray silk tights.

While Renouardt was acting in her new play Clara Tambour went to Brussels with the old one. There she came in contact with M. Jacques Wittouck, an important capitalist, who is interested in the various theatres that are controlled by M. Quinson, the well-known theatrical director of Paris and manager of Renouardt. M. Wittouck is one of the wealthiest men in Belgium and is known as the "sugar king" there. He is also an esteemed friend of Mlle. Jane Renouardt.

While the dainty Mlle. Tambour was in Brussels the wealthy M. Wittouck, as a liberal patron of all forms of the drama, felt it his duty to pay some attention to this promising young actress. He gave banquets and other entertainments in her honor; he presented her with magnificent bouquets, and even more substantial tokens of his esteem.

When the elegant Jane Renouardt heard of these attentions she became furious with rage, according to her associates. Dainty slippers kicked against exquisite pieces of furniture. The usually so perfect costume, the "coiffure" so exquisitely "soignée" became sadly disarranged.

To use an old-fashioned expression, it is said that the atmosphere of the exquisite artist's boudoir became tinged with blue fire and sulphur. Then she sat down to plan revenge with her accustomed energy. Very soon the dainty Clara Tambour re-



**Prince Ghika, of Roumania, an Expert on the Duel, Who Was Called Upon to Decide a Very Delicate Point of Honor.**

**Mlle. Clara Tambour, the Other Attractive Parisienne Involved in This Peculiarly Parisian Plot.**

turned to Paris and was engaged to sing in a new and entertaining operetta entitled "Phi-Phi." She made a tremendous hit in this and drew crowded houses for three nights.

Then the blow fell. Jane Renouardt, it is said, by exercising her influence and her temper on the manager, M. Quinson, and his partner, M. Wittouck, induced them to throw Mlle. Tambour ignominiously out of the cast and put another star in her place. Some defect in the contract, it is believed, enabled them to do it legally. It was not perhaps that they admired the talent of Mlle. Tambour any less, but that they feared the tongue, the temper and the parasol of Mlle. Renouardt the more.

There sat little Mlle. Tambour suddenly thrown out of the cast in which she had won such success. Oh, yes! She knew well who dealt her that blow! But not for long does a witty little Parisienne sit helpless and humiliated under the assaults of her rival.

The awful revenge which Mlle. Tambour planned has been related by Mlle. Renouardt in a statement before Judge Warain, a Parisian "juge d'instruction" or magistrate. Naturally Mlle. Tambour denied such parts of this story as charged her with anything illegal.

According to Mlle. Renouardt's story, her enemy hired a "camelot," one of those disreputable and frequently entertaining persons who sell all kinds of odds and ends along the sidewalks of Paris, to do the dreadful deed.

This camelot was hired to await the arrival of Mlle. Renouardt at the Theatre des Capucines, where she was playing, and

throw a bouquet of flowers at her face. A rather hasty presentation of a bouquet of flowers to a popular actress might attract attention.

But this bouquet was to be loaded with a frightfully smelling liquid, something like asafetida. As it was thrown it would scatter its evil perfume on the person of Mlle. Renouardt.

As she was accustomed to arrive a few minutes before her appearance on the stage it would place her in a terrible predicament. She would have to be undressed, bathed, scrubbed, disinfected, and even then perhaps some of the evil odor would cling to her. She, who had always been noted for the exquisite daintiness of her dress and person, would henceforth be associated in the theatrical world with a bad smell. It was likely to be the ruin of her.

But somehow Mlle. Renouardt got wind of what was coming to her. A mutual friend of Mlle. Tambour and herself learned that the camelot had been hired to do the deed. Mlle. Renouardt located the camelot and tried to find out about the plot. He would not make any damaging admissions, but he displayed that wit and intelligence which are so common even among Parisians of the lowest class.

When Mlle. Renouardt waved several hundred-franc bills at him he grew more communicative. An ingenious scheme occurred to him by which he could collect as much from one side as the other and avoid any unpleasantness with the law.

He proposed to accept the horribly perfumed bouquet from his first employer, but he would change it for an innocent one of similar appearance and this he threw in the face of Mlle. Renouardt.

She agreed to this proposal, but Mlle. Renouardt made some improvements of her own. She persuaded her friend, Mlle. Marcelle Marion, a girl of very similar figure, to wear her costume and wraps and arrive at the theatre before her, so that she would be mistaken for Mlle. Renouardt. Then the latter, coming along in disguise just behind her, could survey

the whole scene and take the necessary action.

Marcelle Marion acted as directed. Jane Renouardt took up her position in a quiet closed automobile standin by the sidewalk, so that she could see everything that was going on. She saw the camelot walking up and down on the sidewalk, conspicuously displaying the evil-smelling bouquet, while he kept the other concealed under his coat.

She saw a fashionably dressed man come up and cast an eye over the camelot to see that he was attending to his duty properly. The fashionable one assured himself by means of his nose that the camelot was carrying the bouquet prepared for his use.

A little farther along, by the sidewalk on the boulevard, Clara Tambour in another automobile, watching the scene, with her friend, Monsieur Degoulet.

"Clara could not miss such a good premiere as that which she had prepared for me," remarked Mlle. Renouardt afterward.

Marcelle Marion stepped from her car and leisurely crossed the pavement toward the theatre. The camelot stepped forward and firmly slapped the innocent bouquet which had been provided to supplant the "perfumed" one on the face of the young actress. At the same time he said:

"Please accept this bouquet with the compliments of Madame Quinson."

At that very moment a policeman, who had been warned by Mlle. Renouardt, arrested the camelot "with the goods on him"—that is, with the ill-smelling bouquet on him. Mlle. Renouardt accompanied him to the magistrate's court, where she related the astonishing story of plots and counterplots, most of which have been mentioned here. The proceedings were private, according to custom, but most of the details have leaked out through the persons concerned.

In the course of his examination the camelot stated that he had been hired by an elegant gentleman to pass the malodorous bouquet. The judge sharply asked him to name the person, but the peddler fell back on "professional ethics," "professional secrecy," just like any doctor or lawyer asked to answer an embarrassing question.

"I am frequently engaged by gentlemen of position, by noblemen, to carry notes for them to artists," said the scoundrel. "If I should reveal their names my reputation would be lost. I should be ruined!"

The magistrate seemed to think the excuse was as good as when offered in many other cases and let the matter pass. He warned all the persons concerned that they must not allow the keenness of professional rivalry to interfere with public order.

The drama was not yet over. In the next act M. Degoulet, the latest champion of Clara Tambour, appointed seconds, who informed M. Wittouck that their principal had been offended by him and that he demanded satisfaction on the field of honor. M. Wittouck appointed his seconds and the customary discussions ensued.

The seconds who acted in this affair are said to have been Prince Ghika and the Duke de Vallombrosa for M. Degoulet, and Pierre Wolff, the dramatic author, and Jean Renaud, the artist, for M. Wittouck. Prince Ghika belongs to a former reigning family of Rumania, which is said to be the oldest princely family in Europe. The Duke de Vallombrosa is a young French nobleman of ancient family who is very prominent in artistic circles at the present time.

After a long and solemn discussion the seconds decided that there could be no duel because there had been no offense between the two principals. If the woman friend of one man charged that the woman friend of another man had plotted to inflict a bad smell on her it was not a proper cause for a duel between the two men. Courts of honor could not take cognizance of mere unpleasantness solely between the women friends of men.

If a duel should take place every time a man's wife made a cutting remark about another man's wife, what would be the consequence? Frenchmen would not have time enough to fight their duels and this ancient institution would fall into disrepute.

In order that everything might be in order the seconds went before a magistrate and filed a "proces verbal" or report of the matter.

Jane Renouardt's spirited encounter with St. Granier last year is still discussed. The singer is noted for the audacious manner in which he introduces personalities about the leading characters of the day into his songs. When he opened a new cabaret he invited Renouardt with other artists to the dress rehearsal. To her amazement she heard him reciting a lot of annoying if entertaining details about her private life. She left in anger.

The next day she happened to meet him at Longchamps, and with characteristic impulsiveness beat him over the head with her jeweled parasol till it was broken to pieces.

St. Granier, somewhat stunned, remarked when he had recovered, "You're not acting like a lady."

To this Jane replied, "Do you think you're acting like a gentleman? You had better have done your duty at the front and not stayed in Paris to insult its women."

Then St. Granier apologized and everybody cheered.

"And just look at my dear parasol!" exclaimed the beautiful Jane as she walked away.