

THE SEA GULLS.

Oh, the sweeping wing of the blue-gray wing
As they circle before the eye,
And the swerving dip of the breast adrip
Of the gulls that seaward fly!

A CONFIRMED BACHELOR

Edmond de Verneuil had thrown himself into an easy chair with his chibouk and, through the wreaths of smoke ascending from the fragrant weed, sat staring in astonishment at his friend, Louis Duvivier.

"And so you have really determined to throw yourself into the matrimonial sea. Poor, unfortunate man! I had hoped better things for you."

"My friend," said De Verneuil, placing his pipe on the inlaid taboret beside him, "I never play the hypocrite. It is a part I have always eschewed, and upon such a sorrowful announcement I can only offer my most sincere condolence."

"Mlle. Deschamps is wealthy and possesses a fortune in her own right," calmly observed Duvivier, without commenting on his friend's remarks.

"Then you will have that bete noire, a mother-in-law," growled De Verneuil. "Your rule is complete, old fellow, and I haven't the slightest hope for you."

"Decidedly!" exclaimed Duvivier, a little vexed. "You are still an antagonist to matrimony."

"I should prefer to send a bullet through my brain," promptly answered De Verneuil. "Expedient means are preferable to slow ones," he added emphatically.

"Fardon me," said De Verneuil, stopping to fill his pipe, "you should say independent bliss. From a wife, children and family may heaven preserve me! For a wife," he continued, waxing eloquent, "means loss of liberty and the obligation of following her caprices instead of your own. You must go out when you desire to remain in and remain in when you wish to go out. At table you must eat madame's dishes instead of those you prefer yourself, listen with an interested air to a lot of insipid gossip plentifully sprinkled with the latest hints in the fashions of bonnets and hats and meekly receive reproaches, recriminations and jealous suspicion. And children! Why, my dear Louis, the very sight of an infant brings on an attack of indigestion! And when they grow up, if they are boys, they devour your money by getting into all kinds of scrapes, and if they are girls they must be dowered before they can be got rid of. So, with Cyrano, I say, 'No, thank you.' And then that other delightful appendage of matrimony, a mother-in-law! Why, the very thought of her makes me shudder. Now you have in a nutshell, my dear boy, the wise reasons which prevent me from committing the folly of matrimony. And with a deliciously self-satisfied air the eager, crusty bachelor sank into the hollow of his easy chair and, puffing away at his pipe, waited to hear what his friend had to say.

But Duvivier remained silent, and the cheerful expression on his bright, handsome face clearly indicated that the sorrowful picture of matrimony painted by De Verneuil had failed to impress him. The latter noted the failure of his words and determined to make one more effort.

"Brother," said he, "the other day, while crossing the Pont Royal, I saw a man on the point of throwing himself into the Seine, when a policeman seized him by the lapel of his coat and pulled him back. I would do the same for you, Edmond," pleaded De Verneuil earnestly, "pull you back while there is yet time from the troubled waters of matrimony."

"Helene—a name of ill omen!" growled De Verneuil, with disgust. "Well, then, if you insist—go to the devil—or the hyemnal altar, which is one and the same thing."

Edmond de Verneuil was fast galloping out of his thirties, and the principles which he had just laid down were those which had governed his entire life and kept him a bachelor in spite of the tempting opportunities which had come in his way and which he had repulsed with horror.

"John Lutz, you have been very ably defended and have had a fair trial, but the jury has found you guilty. The sentence of the law is that you be taken from this court room to the county prison, and when the time fixed by the chief executive of this state for your execution shall have arrived, you, John Lutz, be taken to the jail yard and there hanged by the neck until you are dead. And may the Lord have mercy on your soul!"

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"At Nice!" exclaimed De Verneuil, amazed to find the pleasure which the coincidence gave him. "Why, I am going there myself," he said. Just then the train drew up in the Lyons depot. De Verneuil alighted and soon returned laden with picture books for his little chance acquaintance. Arthur was delighted with the colored prints and after looking at them for some time suddenly threw his books on the floor and, jumping on De Verneuil's lap, put his slender little arms around his neck and kissed him.

"Monsieur is good," he whispered, "and I love monsieur very much and want him to come and stay at the villa where we are going."

"But, my dear son," protested his mother, "you are making such a dreadful noise."

"Let him alone, my dear madame," interposed De Verneuil. "I love to hear him scream and laugh, for these are the privileges of childhood." But scarcely had the words escaped him

when he recalled his portrait of children to Duvivier—and possibly through shame and to efface the unpleasant remembrance he caught the boy up in his arms and kissed him passionately.

Arthur laid his pretty, dimpled face upon his shoulder, and his piping, childlike voice begged monsieur to remain always with his mamma and grandmother. De Verneuil, usually so self-possessed, felt the color mounting to his face as he cast a furtive glance at Mrs. Barrington, who suddenly appeared to be absorbed in her book.

That evening a quiet walk beneath the stars settled the entire affair to the satisfaction of all. The child had won, and for this reason Edmond de Verneuil returned to Paris, in the bright month of May, accompanied by a fiancée, a prospective son and a future mother-in-law. As an ardent lover he had few equals, and the young widow yielding to his pleadings, the marriage was fixed for an early date. Of course he did not attend Duvivier's wedding, for the very excellent reason that he had to be present at his own, but the next day he received from his friend the following note:

My Dear De Verneuil—My warmest congratulations for your masterly stroke; but, between ourselves, I am as jealous as a Moor, for it is not the good fortune of every man to receive on the same day a wife, a son and a mother-in-law. Always sincerely yours, Duvivier.

—Adapted From the French For Argonaut.

Lutz Sentenced to Death. Unless the higher courts or the Pardons Board intervenes, John Lutz, who so brutally murdered his wife at West Pittston two years ago, will expiate his crime upon the gallows.

Lutz stood erect as the fatal words fell from the lips of the court and his manner gave no signs of emotion. When the court had finished he went over to the prisoner's corner, where he remarked to his attorney: "It is not all over yet."

The crime for which Lutz may have to answer with his life was committed at West Pittston. Lutz had a quarrel with his wife early in the evening and about midnight returned to the house and, going to a room occupied by Mrs. Lutz, her baby and a young daughter, attacked the sleeping woman with an axe, inflicting wounds which resulted in her death the next day. After the attack on the woman Lutz attempted to take his own life by cutting his throat, but his courage evidently failed him.

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