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Mrs. Astor, Who Regains All Her Wealth and Social Prestige by the Grim Turn of Fate Which Cost Her Divorced Husband His Life.

WHEN Colonel John Jacob Astor died heroically on the Titanic, that tragedy brought changes in the lives of the two Mrs. Astors wonderful as the transformations effected by an Arabian Nights magician.

Mrs. Astor No. 1 (Ava Willing) voluntarily accepted social obscurity when she divorced Colonel Astor three years ago. The tragedy gave her back everything she had lost, except the husband whom she did not want. It gave her, too, much of value besides.

Mrs. Astor No. 2 (Madelaine Force) stepped into the full glow of fortune's sunshine when she married Colonel Astor two years ago, after protracted efforts to find a minister. The tragedy thrust her back into the social obscurity she had enjoyed before the wedding, with doubtless a certain added asperity among those who strongly championed Mrs. Astor No. 1.

Strangest of all, Mrs. Astor No. 1 became once more, through death, the mother of her own son. While his father lived he was mostly in his society, and to that extent separated from his mother. Now he lives with his mother entirely, to whom he is naturally devoted.

Mrs. Astor No. 2 is leading her retired life in her lonely Fifth Avenue palace. It is the one conspicuous Astor possession she retains; but the severely restricted income she enjoys is scarcely proportionate to it. She has a son named John Jacob Astor, born after the Titanic disaster. He was a child of tragedy in many senses. Obviously, he will miss the many benefits that would have come to him as the dear little Benjamin of the family, had his father lived. Gossips even profess to see an ill omen in the fact that an automobile ran wild and leaped on the sidewalk of his mother's house on the day of his birth.

They predict that he will suffer from the attitude of the very powerful families such as the Vanderbilts, who have always championed Mrs. Astor No. 1, but that is probably attributing too much malevolence to social leaders. Then, too, the brave young mother, Mrs. Astor No. 2, has been greatly troubled by the fear that an attempt might be made to kidnap her young son.

Death gave back to Mrs. Astor No. 1 the virtual control of one of the greatest fortunes in the world. It took that control from Mrs. Astor No. 2.

As the beloved mother of Vincent Astor, the richest unmarried young man in America, Mrs. Astor No. 1 became the director of his palaces, his possessions and his expenditures. She regained possession of the great Astor yacht, the Noma; of the splendid Astor jewels, of the great Astor Hudson River estate, Ferncliffe, of the charming old Newport Astor villa Beechwood, of the motor cars, horses, carriages, plate and other treasures of the family.

By the same tragedy, Mrs. Astor No. 2 lost all these things.

Most strangely, too, Mrs. Astor No. 1 regained by death her title as the woman head of the family. After the Titanic tragedy it was announced that she would be called "Mrs. John Astor" and not "Mrs. Ava Willing Astor." On the other hand, Mrs. Astor No. 2 is always spoken of as "Mrs. Madelaine Force Astor" and not as "Mrs. John Jacob Astor."

Mrs. Astor No. 1 became by death most decorously a widow, whereas before that she had only been a divorced woman. Practically everybody in society now refers to her as the widow of Col. Astor, and avoids giving that title to Mrs. Astor No. 2.

In London, where Mrs. Astor No. 1 has kept a fine house, she enjoys the friendship of the King and Queen, the Duchess of Marlborough and all the greatest social magnates of the United Kingdom. They always speak of her as Colonel Astor's widow, and overlook the second widow. The British are very expert at overlooking little things like that.

In short, Mrs. Astor No. 1, the beautiful, stately, high-bred matron, has triumphed beyond the dreams of romance.

Mrs. Astor No. 2, the beautiful, long-limbed young

What Death Has Brought To The Two Mrs. Astors

To Mrs. Astor No. 1, Everything She Lost by Divorce, Even Social Leadership--and Not a Single Reminder of Her Late Husband

To Mrs. Astor No. 2, Social Ostracism in a Lonely Fifth Avenue Palace, Harassed by Fears for the Safety of Her Tragic Babe

Hebe, remains in tragic obscurity, a pathetic yet a dignified figure.

Society is about to witness a new demonstration of Mrs. John Astor's triumph.

The next scene of her life will be laid in Newport, where for the first time in her life she will rule at Beechwood as mistress. In the early years of her marriage she spent every Summer there, but always as a daughter-in-law, never as head of the house. After the death of Mrs. Astor, senior, when she might have reigned there, she refused, and shortly afterward she began suit for divorce. Therefore Beechwood, the old-fashioned mansion where royalties have been entertained and where magnificent dinners and balls were given year after year, will be the pivot around which Mrs. Astor's future career will revolve. Could woman ask more of Fortune?

Last Winter Mrs. Astor returned to New York and occupied the Fifth Avenue house, leased for her by her son. She also went to Ferncliffe, where numerous house parties were entertained. She occupied the Astor box at the opera, the Astor tiara shone on her head and the Astor pearls encircled her shapely neck. None of these things would she have had had the Colonel lived. The second Mrs. Astor would have sat in that box wearing those pearls and that tiara. The second bride would have been hostess at Ferncliffe; would have dispensed hospitality in the famous town house.

But the Titanic and Dame Fortune gave all these things back to the woman who had thrown them into the discard, to the woman who never expected to have them again. Mrs. Astor was content in her life in England. She lived more simply than she had ever lived in this country, but she claimed that she did not regret having given these things up; that she would ever again sit in her old opera box never entered her head.

But the greatest of all these changes is the one that brings her to Newport as the head of Newport's most important family. She will not have to make any effort to establish herself as social leader, she will simply assume the reins of leadership and hold them as she pleases.

But Mrs. Astor returns to Newport not without a struggle, not without demanding some changes. Her

those being made in the gardens. Colonel Astor was very fond of American beauty roses. He had numerous hothouses filled with them, and the gardens were filled with roses of every description. All these have been taken away. The American beauties have been sent to Ferncliffe and the gardens are now planted with old-fashioned flowers of various kinds, and there are plans now under way to make a formal garden overlooking the cliffs, something that no other member of the family has ever cared to have done.

When Mrs. Astor arrives in Newport next month

the wedding, which took place in the ball room of Beechwood, part of the honeymoon was spent cruising on the Noma.

And now the first Mrs. Astor returns to this yacht! Returns to play hostess on board the yacht that her husband bought to replace the yacht which she had lived on.

Naturally enough, Mrs. Astor would like to see the Noma sold, but steam yachts are not easily disposed of, and so the vessel will be kept and will be one of the features of Newport Harbor this season. The color scheme of the interior has all been changed and the owner's cabin has been made into two guest rooms. On the day that the Astor Cup Race is run off shore, in August, Mrs. Astor and her son will take a large party to follow the course, and it will be just like old times, only death will have removed the man who loomed so large in the life of both only a few years ago.

Could anything be stranger, more seemingly impossible in our prosaic American life, more like the bizarre imagination of a surpassingly ingenious novelist in such a romance as "Buried Alive," or "Vice Versa," or "The Masqueraders," or "Called Back"?



Beechwood, the Magnificent Newport Estate, Which Mrs. Astor is Stripping of Every Memory of Her Divorced Husband



Mrs. Madelaine Force Astor, the Beautiful Tragic Young Widow Who Lost All the Astor Possessions by Death Except the Lonely Fifth Avenue Palace.

son Vincent, who is the most notable young man in the public eye at this moment, urged her to come so that there would be a house to his household, and, if the truth be told, so that he might be relieved from the attentions of many of the fond mothers in the colony, mothers whose daughters are of marriageable age.

Before saying yes, Mrs. Astor demanded that certain changes be made in Beechwood. She felt that she could not live in the house as it had been arranged for the new ménage. She wanted every vestige of her late husband's presence removed from it, and more than all, the ball room in which the marriage of Madelaine Force and Mr. Astor took place must be changed entirely.

This ballroom is a very stately room overlooking the gardens and ocean. There were golden walls and golden furniture and an air of elegance about the apartment. Here took place the wonderful Astor balls when ladies wore their most gorgeous gowns and most sumptuous jewels. Here also took place the pathetic marriage that made many enemies for the late Colonel Astor. This room to-day bears no resemblance to the apartment of old. Gone are the golden walls. In their place are lovely rose-tinted panels and soft gray carvings. Gone also are the golden furnishings. Everything here is now rose and gray and not one thing remains to remind Mrs. Astor of the past.

Beechwood is not a large mansion; there are few guest rooms. The rooms on the second floor have always been used by members of the family. There was one sitting room facing the gardens. This was furnished in ebony. It was very sombre and oppressive. This room had been gone over in old rose and gold for the new wife. The room next that had been the bed room of Mrs. William Astor, senior, had been transformed into a bower of beauty for the bride, and the other rooms on the same floor had gone through similar changes.

These rooms had to be completely transformed before Mrs. John Astor would return. The work is just now being completed.

The rose and gold room will soon be a green and blue one. The bower fitted up for the bride is being made into a charmingly girlish blue and white room for Marjorie. Colonel Astor's room, with its servicable walnut furniture, his neat, but not gaudy, rugs, and plain gray walls has been changed to look like a typical college room. Vincent has had all the furnishings brought from his rooms on the Harvard Gold Coast and installed in this room that once belonged to his father. Every article of the old furnishings has been removed, even the gymnastic apparatus that was attached to the door and which the late Colonel Astor used every morning.

These changes within doors are no greater than

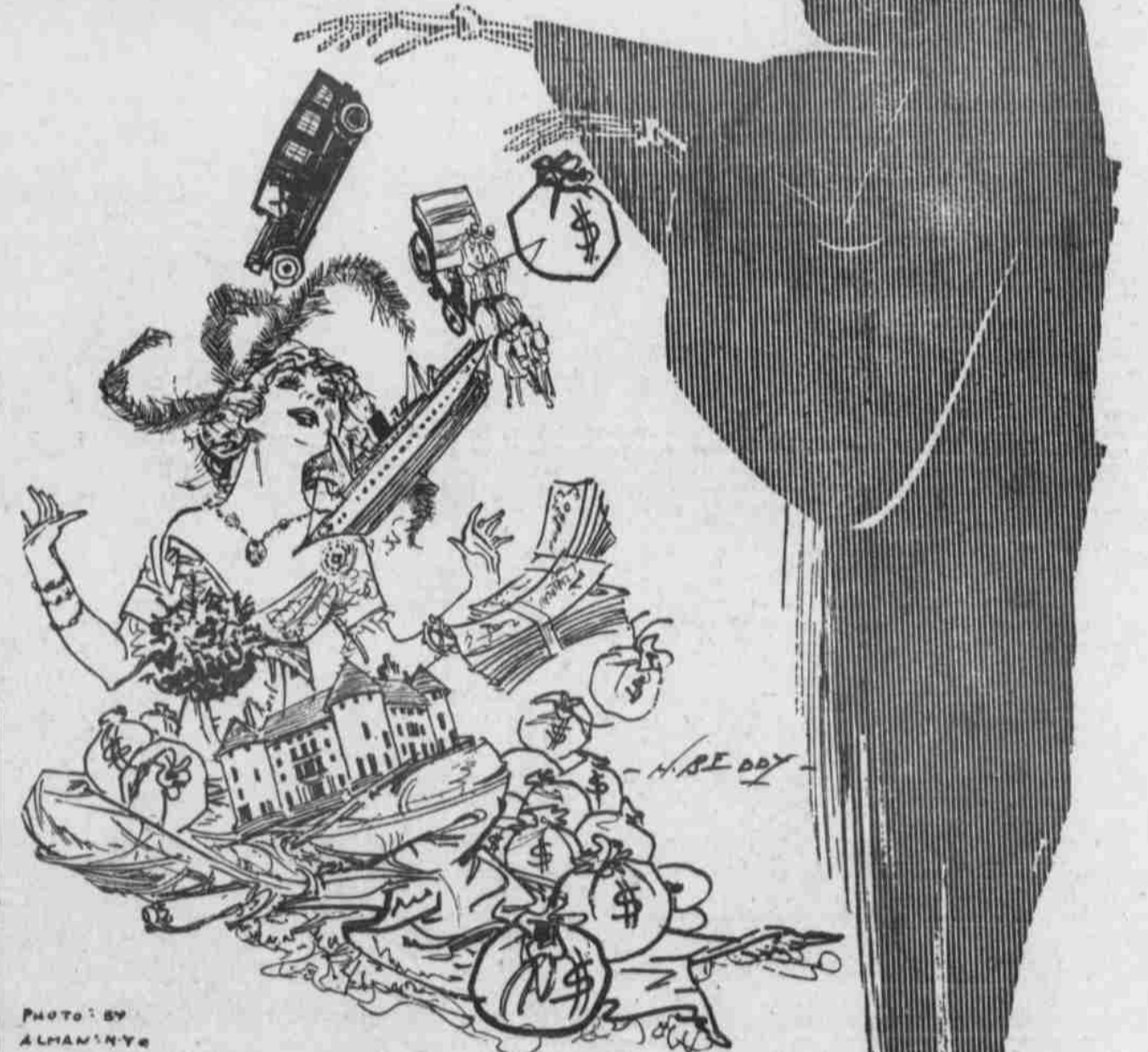


PHOTO BY ALMAN N.Y.

she will find no real evidences of her former husband's occupancy in his former home, and absolutely nothing to remind her of the fact that Beechwood had been transformed only eighteen months ago for the new wife. There is not a picture of the late owner or his second wife in all the house.

This is all very strange, but there is something still more strange, something that shows Dame Fortune's sardonic humor to the last degree.

When Mrs. Astor divorced her husband she also divorced his yacht, the splendid Nourmahal, the pride of the New York Yacht Club. On this yacht the Colonel and his first wife had made many cruises. They had in the first years of their married life spent some happy hours on board. There were memories in it for both of them. The Colonel could not keep the craft after the divorce. He sold it and bought the Noma, an equally expensive and handsome vessel, but naturally it had no memories.

On this yacht as time passed the Colonel entertained the girl he afterward married. His courtship was carried on on board and for a time it looked as though he would have to be married on board. After

"The first Mrs. Astor gained all worldly things through marriage, lost them willingly through divorce and now has regained them all through Colonel Astor's death."

Truth stranger than fiction? Who can now deny this? Here is the story of a woman who got all worldly things through marriage, lost them through divorce, but lost them willingly, and now gets them all back through no effort of her own, but through death. Death turning the wheel of fortune throws every thing in her lap, but, by the same turn, takes from another woman all the rich gifts she had gained by marriage.

To Make the French Duel More Serious

A VERY serious movement has been started among the fashionable clubs of Paris to make the French duel more serious than it has hitherto been.

"A gentleman does not fight under the eye of the moving picture machine," is a great principle which was laid down by the Chevalier Andre de Fouquieres in his interesting articles on Parisian subjects for this newspaper.

"A duel is with one exception the most glorious occasion of a man's life," was another expression of the same high authority.

These are the two principal rules which will guide the social leaders of Paris in their efforts to reform the duel. They declare that neither reporters nor photographers must be invited to attend a duel or permitted to be present under any pretext. Furthermore, the combatants must behave with gravity and dignity, not indulging in violent imprecations, unseemly mirth or wild gesticulations.

The practice of holding a banquet after the combat, attended by the combatants and all their seconds and assistants must be abolished. It has frequently happened that after a duel had passed off quite harmlessly, the antagonists have had a serious quarrel at the banquet as a result of the free consumption of generous wines and liquors.

The fashionable club known as the "Cercle Hoche" took the lead in this movement and was followed by those other smart organizations, the "Cercle Litteraire et Artistique," of the rue Voivine; the Jockey Club and the "Union Artistique."

In commenting upon the movement, the secretary of the Jockey Club said: "It is unhappily certain that we too frequently convert the duel into an affair of publicity instead of an affair of honor."

"A duel should always be an event of an exceptionally grave character and this fact should impose on all who take part in it a solemn duty of silence and discretion."

"It is not necessary that a duel should have fatal or dangerous consequences. The unfortunate thing is that two men should meet with deadly weapons and behave as if they were performing an act of vaudeville. This gives occasion for much mirth among foreigners and the vulgar of our own country. Frenchmen who cherish the glorious traditions of the duel of pre-revolutionary days are cruelly hurt by these references. If the duel took place in absolute secrecy and the result only was reported in the most formal language, there would be no opportunity for the comic writer and artist."

"We must, by our correct behavior restore to the duel the gravity and the prestige it has lost in recent years. Let us remember that the duel is one of the most memorable occasions of a man's life, as M. de Fouquieres has so well said."

"Those who persist in conducting duels with publicity will be persuaded to resign from this and other clubs."