

## **Olivette**

[Comic opera, in three acts; text by Chivat and Duru. First produced at the Bouffes Parisiens, Paris, November 13, 1879; first American production, New York, January 7, 1881.]

### PERSONAGES.

Captain de Mérimac, of the Man of War "Cormorant." Valentine, his nephew, officer of the Rousillon Guards. Duc des Ifs, cousin of the Countess. Coquelicot, his foster brother. Marvejol, Seneschal to the Countess. Olivette, daughter of the Seneschal. Bathilde, Countess of Rousillon. Veloutine, the Seneschal's housekeeper. Moustique, Captain's boy on board the "Cormorant."

[Nobles of the Court of Rousillon, the watch of Perpignan, citizens, gossips, wedding-guests, sailors, etc.]

The scene is laid at Perpignan on the Mediterranean Sea; time of Louis the Fourteenth.

Following the English version of the opera, at the opening of the first act the villagers of Perpignan are greatly excited over the approaching marriage of Olivette, the Seneschal's daughter, and De Mérimac, an old sea-captain. Olivette, however, just out of a convent, is in love with Valentine, a young officer and the Captain's nephew. In the mean time the Countess of Rousillon is also in love with Valentine and has come to Perpignan to see him. She is at the house of the Seneschal, and is surprised there by Valentine, who has climbed her balcony expecting to find Olivette. The old Captain, who is making slow progress with his suit, writes to the Countess demanding Olivette's hand. Valentine seizes his opportunity, passes himself off as the Captain, and marries Olivette at the request of the Countess herself.

The second act opens with a ball which the Countess gives in honor of the wedding, at which Valentine is forced to personate both himself and the Captain. The latter appears upon the scene, and is heartily congratulated as the bridegroom. When Valentine also appears as the old man, De Mérimac resolves he will have the bride whom Valentine has secured by the use of his name. By a little craft Olivette rids herself of her elderly suitor only to encounter fresh trouble, for the Countess declares she will marry the soldier. A plot is formed, the result of which is an order sending the Countess out of the kingdom.

The opening of the last act shows that the plot is partially successful. The Countess is a prisoner on board De Mérimac's vessel, and Olivette and Valentine, who are disguised as sailors, seek a vessel to take them away; but Valentine is recognized and seized, Olivette contrives to free the Countess, and passes herself off for her, Olivette's maid, Veloutine, pretending to be her mistress. This introduces a new complication, for the near-sighted Duke des Ifs courts the maid, supposing her to be Olivette, and boasts of it to Valentine in the hearing of De Mérimac. Both uncle and nephew then renounce Olivette until the Countess returns and an explanation is made. In the dénouement Valentine is united to Olivette and the Countess to the Duke, while the old Captain is advised to follow the example of the Venetian Doges and "marry the sea," which he promptly hastens to do, and follows his bride ever after.

The music of "Olivette" is light and sprightly throughout, the most taking numbers being the marine madrigal, a song with chorus, "The Yacht and the Brig"; the pretty waltz song, "O Heart, wherefore so light," sung by the Countess; Olivette's tyrolienne song, "The Convent slept"; Valentine's serenade, "In Quaint and in Mystic Word," and Olivette's characteristic sob song, "Oh! my Father," in the first act: Olivette's serio-comic song, "The Matron of an Hour"; the Countess' song, "When Lovers around Woman throng"; another humorous song for Olivette, "I do think Fate, upon my Life"; a charming duet for Olivette and the Countess, "Like Carrier Dove, I'll swift be flying,"

with the refrain, "I love my Love so well," and the jolly farandole, "The Vintage over, then Maid and Lover," sung and danced by Olivette, Countess, and chorus, in the second act: the romanza "Nearest and dearest," an effective number for the Countess, and three delicious bits of nonsense,--"Give Milk to Babes, to Peasants Beer," styled in the score a Grog-orian chant, the ridiculous legend "The Torpedo and the Whale," and the dashing bolero, "Where Balmy Garlic scents the Air," in the last act.