

BAFETTE of LOUISIANA

BY MARY DEVEREUX

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY DON C. WILSON
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CHAPTER VIII.

Captain Stanley, who had returned to the ballroom, wended his way amongst the dancers, his progress impeded by some fair lady who greeted him graciously—often eagerly, and forced him to pause for an interchange of rapid nothings. He then visited all the apartments open to guests, until he was convinced that the count had kept his daughter at home, for better protection against further intercourse with the handsome suitor he had rejected so scornfully that same afternoon.

But English love, like other love, laughs at the barriers a stubborn parent may seek to interpose; and Count de Cazeneuve's decision was not calculated to discourage so strong-willed a man as Captain Edward Stanley.

He had acceded to his sweetheart's wishes by going, in proper form, to her father; and the matter having culminated as the lovers had feared, nothing was left but an elopement, for which, in view of the count's probable refusal, all the plans had been arranged.

It was shortly after midnight when a tall man, enveloped in a long cloak, and followed closely by a stalwart negro, who bore a sizable bundle upon his shoulders, looked toward the brilliantly lighted windows of Count de Cazeneuve's house, whose inmates were evidently celebrating, after the customary fashion, the New Year's advent. He paused a moment in front of the rambling, low-built dwelling, and then passed on, muttering words which were scarcely a benediction upon its owner.

After a walk of some twenty minutes, the man and his silent follower climbed the low wall that bounded the count's domain, and, with the night wind rustling the denuded cotton stalks about them, struck off across the broad fields until they reached

officer's service; and this was of greater importance than the presence of Zency herself.

A rustling made Captain Stanley turn quickly, and a new light came to his face as his eyes fell upon a shrouded girlish figure standing in the doorway, with a taller woman's form behind her.

Down upon the river, hidden away under the overhanging bank, amid the sedges and other water growth, was a commodious boat that had been stored with all things needful for the flight. The elopers and their servants were soon aboard, and only the stars saw the craft pulled cautiously upstream by the strong arms of Tate, the faithful slave, with the maid, Barbe, on the seat behind him, while in its farthest end were the two who for love's sake, had cast aside all former life and broken all ties.

For Roselle, these were the ties of Stanley those of honor; for he had filial love and duty, and for Captain Stanley those of a lover, for which he had deserted his command and was flying to the wilderness farther north, to— for the time at least—hide, with his new-found dream, amongst the friendly Choctaw Indians, where he could count upon reasonable security from pursuit.

And the woman, trusting him implicitly, faced an unknown world—faced it fearlessly and undoubtingly, seeing naught but the dawn of a perfect and fulfilled love, that yielded to this man its uttermost depths of passion.

As for him, the loved one, this was by no means his first experience of the sort; but he was honest, at least, in believing himself to be in earnest.

And so he held her close, as they sat side by side his cloak about them both, and her head pillowed over his heart, while the slave's oars pulled the boat swiftly, their rhythmic dip, or the occasional cry of a loon, being



He held her close, as they sat side by side.

the edge of some woods that rose, a dark boundary line, at one side of the lonely plantation.

Here they paused, and looked to where, quite a distance away, the flames of two huge bonfires showed many fantastic figures—those of the slaves, who were, like irresponsible children, celebrating after the manner of their race, the brief respite from labor accorded them by their exacting master.

The baying of a hound from the slave-quarters was heard, faint, but clear, and the suggestive notes appeared to bring disquiet to the man's dusky follower, for he began to move restlessly, and glance about with manifest apprehension, while he drew closer to his master, who now, wheeling about pushed on into the wood.

He went forward with a confidence showing that he was on not unfamiliar ground; and a few steps brought the two to a small clearing, where the semi-darkness was made a little more cheerful by a flickering of red light, coming through the chinks of the closed door, as well as from the uncurtained window, of a small cabin.

A fire lit the interior, which was deserted, save for a small, raggedly clad urchin of ten, whose black arms and legs seemed to have outgrown their scanty clothing.

"Where is Zency?" inquired the officer, after glancing about the cabin. The boy stared with fright at his questioner, looming so far above him in the frelight, which struck gleamings from the breast of the uniform, where a slight parting of the cloak folds revealed scarlet and gold.

"Are you deaf, you black monkey? Where is Zency, I say?" Captain Stanley repeated impatiently.

"Granny? She's done gone t' keep New Year's," stammered the little negro, rising cautiously to his naked feet and backing away from the officer's stern eyes.

The later now understood how Zency, having—although reluctantly—given, through the late afternoon, such aid as was in her power to the carrying out of her young mistress' plans for an elopement, had then betaken herself to the bonfires, where, appearing to join in the festivities of her fellow slaves, she would be less likely to fall under her master's suspicions when his daughter's flight should be discovered. But her cabin was at the

only sounds besides the rippling water to break the silence.

On New Year's day Laro left New Orleans for France; and when, seven months later, he sailed away from Toulon, bound for the coast of Barbary, with him were Jean and Pierre Lafitte.

The purposes of this story require but a general reference to Jean Lafitte's life during the fifteen years which ensued after he left the country of his birth, and linked his fortunes into those of Laro.

He was then a lad of fifteen. And, until he arose above the consequences his heedless youth had imposed upon his better self, his life was passed ashore and afloat, as best served the immediate interests at stake; at times taken up by the cares and responsibilities of legitimate business, at times passed amid scenes of wildest adventure and deadly peril. He, while growing to manhood, alternated between the counting-room and the quarter-deck, associating now with men of probity and position, and again with desperadoes and cut-throats.

During this period, Laro—known in New Orleans as Don Morales de Castro—was in connection with Count de Cazeneuve and other more or less prominent men, engaged in various speculative schemes, some of them being within the law, and others outside of it. The former included ventures in trading, mining and timber-cutting, whilst among the latter were smuggling and slave-trading. These operations involved the ownership of many vessels, together with the employment of many men, and, taken as a whole, they were very successful.

Smuggling and slave-trading had always been within the line of Laro's occupations, and they were matters to which he gave his personal attention, making many voyages to and from the French and African coasts.

Then latterly, in addition to his other nefarious pursuits, and under cover of letters of marque issued by one or another of the newly formed South American republics, he preyed lawlessly upon whatever commerce came within his reach.

His own brigantine, the "Black Petrel," was of remarkable speed, heavily armed (ostensibly for its own protection), and carried a crew containing outcasts from all nations, but

skillful sailors and brave fighters. If they captured a ship flying the flag of a hostile country, the prize was, according to circumstances, taken into port for condemnation or destroyed at once. But, whatever might be the nationality of a richly laden vessel encountered by the "Black Petrel," the colors it flew had but little effect in deciding its fate, or that of its crew.

In all these various schemes Lafitte was an interested party; and, in earlier years, he had been an actual participant in prosecuting some of them, his ability and skill being such that, while still under twenty, he became Laro's trusted lieutenant, upon whom devolved all duties to which the former was unable or inadequate to give his personal attention.

The tall, handsome lad of Languedoc, Paris and Toulon had developed into a man possessing rare gifts of person and mind, together with a store of energy and resource which would have won success in any avenue of life. Himself a stranger to personal fear, he was quick to recognize bravery in another, and his chivalrous nature was never unresponsive to appeals from his less fortunate fellows.

Such was Jean Lafitte at thirty, and such, in brief, had been his life during this period—one so filled with events and adventures as to make his earlier years, and the actors in them, more or less dim, according as they had fixed themselves upon the receptive element of his nature.

Even Laro, the bluff and picturesque sailor who had exerted so strong an influence upon the lad when they met at Le Chien Heureux, was hardly recognizable in the crafty and unscrupulous adventurer with whom later years had made him so familiar, and with whom he was now forced to be in such close contact.

As for Bonaparte, he had become Napoleon, the monarch to whom crowns were baubles, and thrones were playthings; who had recast the continent of Europe, and opened a new chapter in the history of France.

Jean had received no word from him after the letter delivered by the hands of Pere Huot; and grievous had been the boy's disappointment as the months passed without bringing any sign of remembrance from the man who was the one greatest love of his life.

But his was a strong and healthful nature—buoyant and vibrant; and, as the time went by, the acute edge of his grief had been worn away, to be succeeded by a feeling akin to apathy. He had been forsaken by him whom he loved; and, accepting this as a fact, he had relinquished every hope of a future reunion.

All this had its natural effect; and, coupled as it was with a vague but unchanging determination to follow the career of adventure which had been his boyish purpose in life, the personality of Bonaparte became less and less real, until all that remained was a love which was in itself largely an abstraction.

Margot was still a reality to him because of her representing so much of motherly care, and by reason of her ever manifested love, of which he had found much to remind him in the unobtrusive loyalty and devotion of Pierre.

The latter was now the only tangible tie connecting Jean Lafitte with his boyhood—big-hearted, brave Pierre, sluggish in thought, but sound of judgment and clear of purpose; strong of arm and mighty in action, who now, as ever, stood at the side of his foster-brother. He had, some two years before, abandoned his sea-faring life, and, in partnership with Jean, established a large smithy at New Orleans, where the firm of Lafitte Brothers had become well and favorably known through the work turned out by their skilled slaves.

(To be continued.)

FAULT OF THE DIALECT.

Colored Man Good Oarsman, Though He Couldn't "Ro."

While on a trip through the sparsely settled districts of Georgia a Northerner hired a colored native to guide him across country to his destination. Reaching the banks of a swift-flowing, unbridged stream, the Northern man spotted a boat moored at the edge, and asked the negro if he could row.

"Ro," boss? No, suh, Ah kahn't ro, nohow."

"Well, how can I get across, then? There isn't any bridge."

"W'y, boss, Ah'll take yo' across in no time in that 'ere punt," answered the negro.

"But I thought you said you couldn't row?"

"No, suh, Ah kahn't ro," answered Sambo, rolling his eyes in ludicrous astonishment; "but Ah kin git yo' across de ribber all right, suh."

The Northerner with some trepidation and considerable curiosity stepped into the boat, and the negro rowed him swiftly and surely over the turbulent stream to the other side, proving himself an experienced oarsman.

"Why, Sambo, what did you mean by lying to me?" asked the perplexed traveler. "I thought you said you couldn't row a boat?"

Sambo opened his mouth in a grin so wide that he appeared to whisper in his own ear as he replied: "W'y, boss, Ah suh thought you meant ro—ro like a lion!"—N. T. Tribune.

Tame Hen Good Layer.

One of the sights at the University of Maine these days is Prof. Gowell's pet hen. The bird is not admired because of her looks, but because of her laying proclivities, she being credited with the authorship of exactly 251 eggs during the past twelve months. The bird is of the Plymouth Rock family, and Prof. Gowell is now busy tracing the ins and outs of her blue-blooded ancestry.

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CHAPTER IX.

It was late in a sultry, almost breezeless evening in September, 1811, that the ship "Condor," belonging to Laro and his associates, dropped anchor in the harbor of Fort Royal, Martinique.

She had but a single passenger, if such he could be termed; for it was Jean Lafitte, returned recently from a mission which will be referred to more particularly later on, and who had come from New Orleans for the purpose of meeting Laro, whom he expected to find waiting at Fort Royal.

His search proved unavailing, although he ascertained that Laro had been seen in the town; and after visiting several of the places where he was liable to be found, Lafitte went to an inn not far from the wharves, and ordered supper.

Here he sat enjoying the coolness, while he sipped and smoked, when there came to his ears the sound of a voice whose mellow resonance thrilled him strangely, sending his thoughts whirling into the past.

The air was yet vibrating with the hearty tones as the speaker came through the door; and a lamp hanging from the ceiling of the balcony flashed its rays into the face of Greloire.

The recognition was not mutual; for Greloire, after a careless glance at the younger man, crossed the balcony and seated himself near the rail.

Lafitte was, for the moment, undecided as to what to do,—whether to reveal his identity, and risk hearing whatever comments Greloire might make upon a name and career which already had become known in two continents, or to remain silent, and thus forego this unlooked-for opportunity for knowing something definite in regard to the man who was still dear to him—he who was now Emperor of France.

by the enemies of France, who thus rendered me unfit for hard service against them, and I am now Monsieur Felix Greloire, attache of the emperor's household. As such I go upon various missions; and my business here relates to the settlement of some matters connected with certain property belonging to her Majesty the empress, who, as you know, is a native of this fair island. A fine place it is, both as to climate and people; but Louisiana is far more to my taste."

Lafitte appeared to observe the irrelevancy of this last remark, for, with a keen look at Greloire, he said, "Louisiana? What do you know of Louisiana?"

"Much—that is, of New Orleans, for I was there several months, in the autumn of 1803."

"I was then absent from Louisiana," said the young man.

"So I learned, when I made inquiries for you. But I heard something of you, and still more in regard to that Spanish rascal who took you away from Toulon, not long before I went there to get you myself."

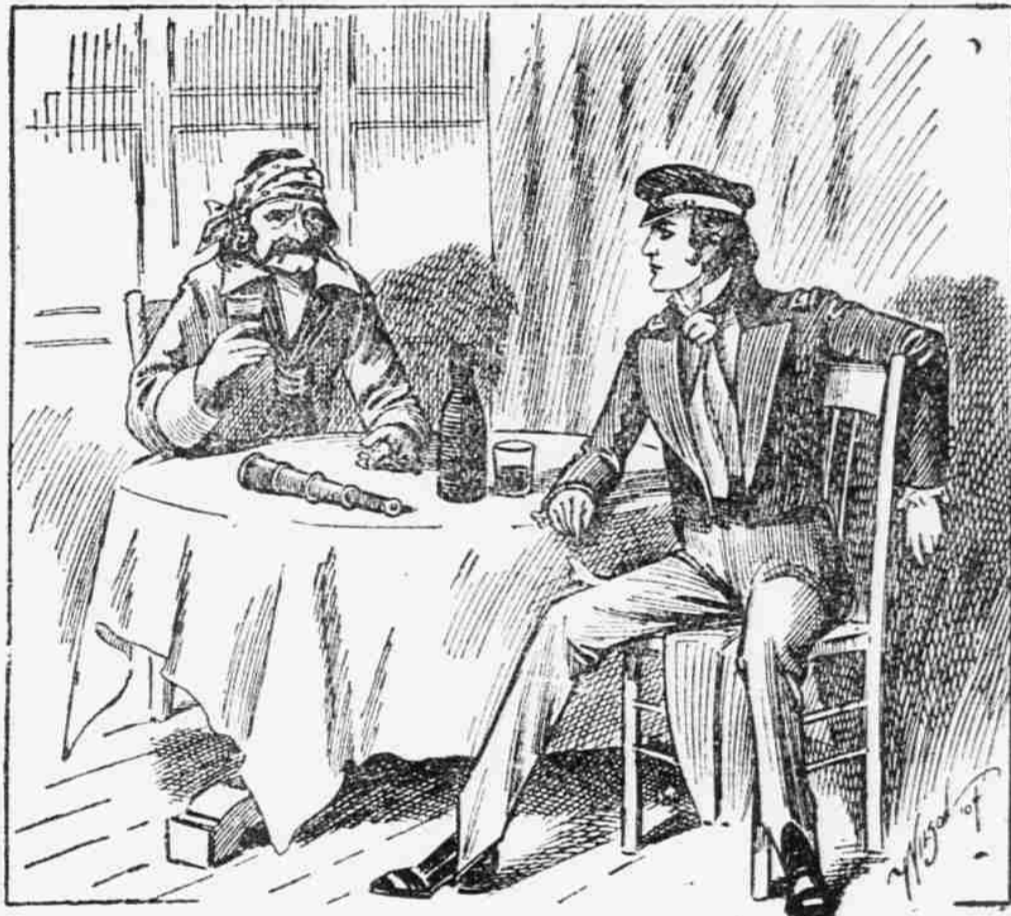
"What mean you by that?" Lafitte demanded, almost as if resenting an affront.

"This, mon ami," was the slowly and distinctly uttered reply. "That when Gen. Bonaparte, late in October of 1795, sent me to Toulon, in order to bring you to him at Paris, I found that you and Pierre had already gone with Laro, bound for Louisiana."

"Who told you this?" inquired Lafitte.

"A dozen people—Thiel amongst them. I went first to Pere Huot's house, and there ascertained that the good priest was dead. I then visited Le Chien Heureux, and learned what I have told you."

Lafitte turned again from Greloire, and settled down into his chair; and the latter saw the quick rising and



"You will deliver him a message from me!"

But all his indecision was soon routed by the realization of what was represented by the face and form so close to him, and come to life, as it were, from the dead. The living present seemed to animate the dead past; the reality of Greloire gave actual life to the ideal Napoleon.

"Pardon, monsieur," he said bowing slightly as Greloire looked up; "but I think I had the pleasure of meeting monsieur many years ago, in France."

"Ah," said Greloire, as he turned to the speaker. "May I ask when?"

"Long ago in Languedoc, and Toulon," replied Lafitte, fixing his black eyes upon Greloire's face. "We met at Le Chien Heureux, in Toulon; and the last time I saw you was at the Convent of St. Salpice, where you were recovering from wounds in the final assault upon the city."

"Mon Dieu!" exclaimed Greloire.

"What means all this, monsieur? Can it be possible that you are Jean Lafitte—Lafitte, the pi—"

The word was cut short by a flash from the young man's eyes as a sabre-stroke might lop off the hand raised for a blow.

"The first is the name by which I was known in Toulon, and my friends still use it. The second is a title given to me by my enemies, and which I do not recognize as appropriate."

He spoke with stern composure, and with a dignity well becoming his tall, straight figure and refined face, while Greloire stared at him in silent astonishment.

"Which of the two, monsieur, do you prefer to use?" Lafitte added, now taking a step backward, but not removing his eyes from Greloire.

"To call you Jean, as I did years ago," Greloire exclaimed impetuously, extending both hands, which were welcomed by the firm grip of the younger man's sinewy fingers.

"Bien," the latter said. "Let it be so. And you—what shall I call you—marquis, duke, or marshal of France?" Tell me of yourself, and of—Napoleon."

"The first will take but a short time," Greloire replied laughingly; "for I am not a nobleman, nor yet an officer. Indeed I left the army six years ago, on account of sundry attentions paid to my body and limbs

falling of the young man's breast as he folded his arms across it.

Presently Jean, without lifting his eyes, asked, in a stubborn, dogged tone, as though expecting an answer he did not wish to hear, "Do you mean to have me understand that he—Gen. Bonaparte—sent you to Toulon after me?"

"Most assuredly. He, as I have already told you, sent me in the autumn of '95. He supposed you were still under the charge of Pere Huot, being fitted for the career he—our general—had planned for you—one that would keep you close to him, and insure your future."

Lafitte had now recovered—apparently, at least—from the effect wrought upon him by Greloire's surprising intelligence.

"You will deliver him a message from me?"

"With pleasure."

"Give him my homage for his own greatness, and for the splendor he has brought upon France. Convey to him all my heart's gratitude for his kindness and protection when I was a boy, and for what he would have tried to make me as a man. Tell him that I love him, and will ever love him, and that no sacrifice he may wish or accept will be too great for me to make in his behalf. Can you remember this?"

"Every word; and I will repeat it faithfully."

"Adieu, then, old comrade," said Jean, grasping Greloire's hand. "This may be our last meeting, but it will not end our regard for each other."

"Indeed no, nor our thoughts of one another," was the hearty response, accompanied by a tighter clasp of Lafitte's slender fingers; "and I trust it may not be the last, by many, of our meetings."

"Adieu, old comrade."

"Adieu, mon ami."

One final hand-clasp, and Lafitte turned away. But, after taking a few steps, he faced about and went back to Greloire, who stood as he had left him.

"One thing more," said Lafitte hesitatingly; "one more question, which you may answer or not, as you choose."

"I will answer whatever question

you may ask," declared Greloire; "and I will answer it upon my honor."

Lafitte appeared irresolute, as if the question were of such grave import that he dreaded an unfavorable reply. Then, laying a hand on Greloire's shoulder, he asked, "What said he—Bonaparte, when you told him that I had departed from Toulon?"

"Nothing."

"You have told me all I wished to know, and I thank you," said Lafitte, again holding out a hand, which Greloire clasped firmly.

"Adieu, and bon voyage."

"Adieu, and bonne fortune."

With this they parted; and Lafitte, returning directly to the wharf, ordered the boat's crew to row him back to the "Condor."

Jean had, up to this moment, considered himself deeply aggrieved by Bonaparte's apparent neglect; and, looking at the matter from the standpoint of youth, his ardent, impulsive nature, and his unstinted love for the young officer, his feelings were not without warrant.

But, in the light of Greloire's explanation, the man of thirty could well see how unreasonable and hasty had been the boy of fifteen; how unthinking and rash; how utterly lacking in a proper appreciation of Bonaparte's regard, and of how the manifestations of this was subject to conditions and influences beyond the latter's power to always control.

He thought of Margot, and her words returned to him—when, upon that last evening of her life, she had said that Bonaparte was his good angel, and Laro his evil one.

Truly had her words been proven; for now he knew the former as he was, and would have been, while the passing years had either increased, or made more apparent Laro's coarseness and cruelty.

It was only to the boy Jean that he had ever been otherwise; but latterly something of a change had taken place in this respect toward the man, especially after he had refused to acquiesce in the adventurer's cherished scheme, that he, Jean Lafitte, should take as his wife, Lazalle, the former's niece.

But the young man had, all through his wild life, held within the innermost depths of his soul a sacred shrine, kept closed and pure, where never the love for woman had entered. Over its altar, faded and indistinct, yet his life, lingered the teachings of his foster-mother, and the remembrance of a sunny-faced, blue-eyed girl, who had promised the boy to pray that he might be that which he had so woefully failed to be, or had even sought to attain.

The past rolled in upon him like a smothering flood, until, in a wild tumult of despair, he left his cabin and went on deck. There he heard one of the watch whistling to himself; and presently the man broke softly into the words of the air:

"C'est l'amour, l'amour, l'amour, Qui fait la moule a la rousse!"

The song brought to mind again the blue-eyed girl's face, and also that of her daughter, the little "Island Rose," whom, late the previous May, he had piloted through the woods, and down the rivers, from her dead mother's home among the Choctaws.

The long, rough journey had given him rare opportunities for sounding the depths of the childish soul so close to nature that it seemed to worship the mother's God through nature, and nature through God.

He was known as "Captain Jean," a friend of her grandfather—as "Captain Jean," whom she found such a charming companion, and whom his escort of white men and Indians respected and loved. She trusted him fully, and their intercourse was free from restraint.

Recalling her now, while he paced the deck, with the troubled water of his soul casting ashore such woeful wreckage for his contemplation, the thought of her white purity, her silvery voice, her childish confidence, brought to him a blessed peace.

(To be continued.)

A DROP IN VALUES.

Changed Conditions Affected Worth of Love Letters.

Henry Clews, the banker, was talking about a stock that had dropped in value.

"Great was its fall," he said. "It was pathetic. It made me think of an incident that happened the other day in an express office."

"To this office a burly, kind looking young man came with a package under his arm.

"I want to express this package," he said.

"The clerk, as usual, asked him:

"What is the nature of the contents of the package?"

"It is," said the simple-minded youth in a sad tone, "a bundle of letters from a young lady. I am returning them to her."

"Their value?" said the clerk.

"The young man swallowed.

"I don't know what their value is now," he said huskily, "but a week ago I thought they were worth about half a million dollars."

Ex-Governor's Family Aided.

Andrew Carnegie has sent a check for \$5,000 to the committee controlling the fund which is to be used for the support of the late ex-Gov. Robert E. Pattison's widow. This brings the fund up to \$13,437. Ex-Gov. Pattison was the only man who ever carried Pennsylvania twice for the governorship. As he was a democrat, this fact is all the more remarkable. When William Singler was elected our financially Pattison, whose friend he was, was wiped out also. When he died he left his family getting out mortgages on his home.