

CAMILLA

BY BEATRICE MAREAN.

Author of "The Tragedies of Oakhurst," "Won At Last," "Her Shadowed Life," "The Fireman's Heart," "When A Woman Loves," Etc., Etc.

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Respectfully Dedicated to
CAPT. AUGUSTUS OSWALD MACDONELL, SENIOR,
of Jacksonville, Fla.
By
THE AUTHOR.

CHAPTER I. BEAUMONT.

In the most charmingly picturesque portion of the sunny peninsula, known as the state of Florida, is situated Tallahassee, her capital.

Crowning the summit of one of the purple hills which surround this old aristocratic town is an historic mansion, which will serve the pages as a theater, within the walls of which the characters of this story will briefly play their parts.

The house had been built, and the large estate surrounding it, founded many years ago by a Frenchman, who migrated to the American colonies at the beginning of the revolutionary war. Upon arriving here, he immediately espoused the cause of his adopted country, and threw himself soul and body into the conflict.

Enlisting as a private in the ranks, his true worth and bravery soon won distinction, and led to his early promotion as captain of the company. Nobly sustaining the high standard he had set, other promotions quickly followed. When peace was declared and the ensign of liberty floated over our proud fair land, General Murriatte as he was called by the public, again sailed across the sea. His mission was to claim the fulfillment of a promise made him by one of the bright-eyed daughters of his native land, to become his bride.

In three months he returned with his wife to his beloved, adopted country, built the beautiful home known as "Beaumont," erected his household altars and there began a life of domestic felicity.

Beaumont descended from father to son through many generations and within its lofty walls, had lived many of the descendants of General Murriatte, not endowed by great wealth, but sufficient of this world's goods to secure their peace and happiness.

At the beginning of the war of the rebellion, Beaumont was occupied by Percival, a great grandson of General Murriatte. His family consisted of himself, wife and two sons, Claude and Newell. When the notes of war were sounded, Newell, the youngest son, who was then in his twentieth year, was absent from home attending the university of Virginia.

A few weeks later upon his return home, he found that both his father and brother had marched away with the brave men, who had rallied to the defense of the southern principles, dear to the hearts of the descendants of General Murriatte.

Wildly his mother clung to him as her only comfort during these terrible days of warfare, begging him for her sake not to enlist in the army.

"Have I not given enough," she cried through her fast falling tears, "Your father and your brother have gone in defense of our rights. Your place, my dear boy, is with the mother who bore you and whose feeble health renders her incapable of taking care of herself."

Reluctantly the boy yielded to her entreaties, but the sequel proved that he had acted wisely, for before three months had flown his mother's eyes were closed in death and he was free to go where he chose.

If Newell Murriatte had any desire to place himself with the southern army, as his father and brother had done, that desire deserted him upon the death of his mother, as he immediately closed the house and disappeared from his native town, going no one knew where.

Percival Murriatte, and son, Claude, never returned to their ancestral home. The patriotic blood of these brave men, crimsoned the soil of the battlefield of "Bull Run," and their brave bodies "slept the sleep that knows no waking," in lonely unmarked graves far from the sunny land of their birth.

For seven years after Newell's dis-

appearance, Beaumont, remained deserted. Dark, silent and grim it stood upon its lofty elevation, overlooking the stricken city of which it had once formed a beautiful part. Many of the inhabitants of the city were homeless, penniless and stunned by the many calamities brought about by the greatest curse that ever afflicted a nation.

Many a pale face lifted toward the blue sky, while their owners called upon the God of their fathers to rescue and shelter them in the hour of need and tribulation, did the old mansion witness in those dire and never to be forgotten days of 1861-65. Strange to say, this house, as is guarded by the spirits of its former owners, had escaped unharmed during the siege and new stood an almost solitary landmark of the happy and prosperous days which are now receding down the misty isles of the past.

One bright May morning seven years after Beaumont had been deserted, Newell Murriatte suddenly reappeared in Tallahassee, not one of the inhabitants of which had heard a word from him since his disappearance immediately after his mother's funeral. He was accompanied by a beautiful young woman whom he introduced as his wife, and the long closed mansion was thrown open again to the light of day. He said nothing regarding his whereabouts or doings during the period of his long exile, and his dignified bearing towards his old acquaintances prevented the questioning of the curiously inclined.

Murriatte bore evidence of having amassed a considerable wealth during his absence. The old mansion was thoroughly renovated, and refurnished; he made large purchases in real estate, and the old stables at Beaumont were filled with imported stock, while the family equipage, with its liveried coachman and footman, would have done credit to a prince of the royal blood.

Mrs. Murriatte was a queenly appearing woman, tall and dignified, but possessing a sweetness of manner which soon won her a place in the hearts of all who were fortunate enough to come in contact with her. She seemed to take kindly to life in Tallahassee, and threw open her house to the aristocratic families of anti-bellum days, notwithstanding the poverty which had fallen to the lot of the majority of them.

CHAPTER II.

FOR SWEET CHARITY'S SAKE.

The happiness of the inmates of Beaumont was ere long increased by the birth of a daughter. This beautiful and winsome babe was christened Imogen, but notwithstanding this new claimant for her love and attention, the mistress of Beaumont still reigned queen of the select set which formed the four-hundred of this old southern capital.

The south was beginning to recover from the effects of the war, and with characteristic energy had gathered up the fragments of its broken fortunes and was making the best of possible things.

Mrs. Murriatte never mentioned her past life before coming to Tallahassee. No one knew what state she claimed as her native one, or what her name had been before she became the wife of Newell Murriatte. Society, however, did not consider it necessary to inquire, as the lady was well bred and hospitable. Even had this not been the case her wealth was abundant, and this fact would have covered a multitude of shortcomings.

At this time William Cameron was governor of Florida, and a warm intimacy sprang up between Mrs. Murriatte and the governor's wife. Almost every day these two beautiful women could be seen walking or driving together. Devoted as they were to their own pleasures, and

to society, these two noblehearted women were thoughtful of and charitable to the poor and unfortunate. Many an unfortunate family had through their aid been given a chance to rise above want and at the same time preserve their self respect.

"It is not the charity of giving alms that such people need," Mrs. Murriatte had remarked to her friend one morning as the two drove leisurely along one of the forest roads, beautiful in its wealth of lights and shadows, creamy blossoms, and green boughs.

"You are quite right dear," answered Mrs. Cameron, "and this reminds me of something which I want to Beaumont today expressly to tell you, but finding Senator Johnson and his daughter there when I arrived, caused me to forget my errand so I will tell you now before I forget again."

"Yesterday morning," continued Mrs. Cameron, "a young widow called upon me to solicit employment, she brought samples of her needle work, and it was the most beautiful I have ever beheld. I ordered half dozen pocket handkerchiefs at once and she is going to do them in the most exquisite patterns. I told her I was sure that you would give her an order and she seemed so thankful for the interest I took in her work."

"Who is she, and where did she come from?" asked Mrs. Murriatte, interested in whatever interested her charming friend.

"She said her name was Mrs. Bennett, and that she came from New York. She is evidently a woman of refinement and education, and Alva, (Mrs. Cameron), and Mrs. Murriatte's friendship had long since reached the stage where friends address each other by their baptismal names) she has the most exquisite face I ever beheld; such eyes, such golden hair, and Madonna-like features."

"Oh spare me!" cried Mrs. Murriatte, laughing at her friend's enthusiasm. "I know your weakness, Mable; I have heard you rave over faces before which to me appeared to be hardly removed from commonplace."

"This is because you have not the keen appreciation for the beautiful, with which I am blest or afflicted."

"Oh, yes, I have, for I am lost in admiration, of this lovely forest road, these beautiful green hills, this exquisite weather, and my lovely little friend, the governor's wife," laughed Mrs. Murriatte.

"Flatterer! you know how to put one in a good humor with one's self, don't you? But let me finish my story about the pretty widow. She is a slender little creature, dressed in deepest mourning, and the picture she made as she spread her samples out for my inspection has lingered in my mind ever since. Her hands were very small and white, and she wore a wedding ring, with a small diamond guard ring."

"A diamond ring!" exclaimed Mrs. Murriatte, "then evidently she is not so poverty stricken as she would have the world believe."

"She did not speak of poverty," Mrs. Cameron answered, "but as she was anxious for work I inferred that this was the case, although she was well dressed, and very lady-like in appearance."

"Do you remember the small white cottage on Seventh street, not far from Mrs. Gilmore's?"

"The one which has such a beautiful climbing rose on the front gallery?" Mrs. Murriatte asked.

"Yes, she lives there and if you want her to do some work for you, we might call at the cottage as we drive back home," Mrs. Cameron answered.

"Very well, I think I will get her to embroidery some frocks for the baby, and I have also quite a curiosity to see your paragon of loveliness," said Mrs. Murriatte, as she touched the whip to the ponies, which had fallen into a lazy walk, and the two friends soon halted at the gate of Mrs. Bennett's cottage.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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A Matchmaking Party.

A perfectly delightful little party was the one given Saturday morning from ten to twelve o'clock by Mrs. Jack Camp for her sister and cousin, Miss Jessie Nurney and Miss Annie Nurney, of Suffolk, Va., who are her guests.

Only the unmarried set were entertained on this occasion. Mrs. Camp is one of Ocala's most popular young matrons and the Misses Nurney two of the most admired young ladies who visit in our city. They were assisted by Mrs. Clarence Camp and Mrs. Clifton Camp in entertaining their guests.

Those present were Misses Hattie Dye, Esther Weathers, Julia Hance, of New Jersey, Annie Land, of North Carolina, Marie Patrick, of New York, Helen Bush, of Boston, Janie Wood-Florie Crook, of Palatka, row, of Scotland, Sue Barco, Emily Ford, Meta Jewett, Margaret Taylor, Valeta Potter, Mary Anderson, Sara and Violet Harris, Johnnie Liddon, Louella Gary, Edith Platt, and Annie Davis.

A very novel contest was enjoyed during the morning. It was called a "matchmaking" contest. Figures of "Foxy Grandpa," "Happy Hooligan," the "Captain" and other noted tunny paper heroes and heroines had been cut out and dismembered. The different parts were then passed around and the young ladies allowed to draw three parts and were required to paste them together into the semblance of a man or woman as the case might be. Some of the results were most ludicrous, as they were not allowed to "swap" with their neighbors but one time, consequently the wrong heads were attached to the wrong bodies, and vice versa. Miss Dye and Miss Ford succeeded in making perfect figures, the former one of a little girl and the latter the figure of "Little Boy Blue." On cutting for the prize, a handsome gilt framed picture, Miss Dye won it and Miss Ford was consoled by a bouquet of bride roses. Miss Patrick was given the booby prize for the most ill-matched man. Her prize was a china ornament, a figure of the "captain."

A luncheon consisting of chicken salad, wafers, olives, charlotte russe and coffee was served buffet style after the contest and the morning was thoroughly enjoyed.

Dancing Party.

Miss Ahlum, who was one of Ocala's attractive visitors last winter, being the guest of Miss Violet Harris, entertained her friends with a dancing party Friday night. In speaking of same the Jacksonville Sun of Friday said:
"Pretty Miss Cornelia Ahlum will give a dancing party this evening at the Woman's club in honor of her charming guest, Miss Virginia Norwood, of Montgomery. The event is anticipated with much delight by the friends of the lovely hostess and her charming guest. Over eighty of the young society people will be present."

Notice.

Strayed or stolen, one small black mare, about six years old. Branded Z on shoulder. A liberal reward will be given anyone returning her, or giving any information as to her whereabouts. J. J. LEITNER, 1-10dw tf Geiger, Fla.

The next and last regular visit to Ocala of Dr. E. T. Allen, eye and ear surgeon, will be Thursday, February 23.

WE EAT MEAT
To grow strong. Unless we get zoo meat we may as well let it alone. There is no strength in tough meat—instead of giving it takes strength to digest it. It pays to be careful in buying meat—be sure to get the best—tender and choice. Pay a little more if need be and put something in your stomach which will put flesh on your bones and strong blood in your veins.
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