Captain Molly

—The Heroine of Monmouth—

BY JOHN R. MUSICK

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CHAPTER XI.—(Continued.)

"Molly," he whispered, "go 'round and enter at the front door; we'll surround 'em. Get between 'em and their swords and pistols. And I'll bust in on 'em like a batterin' ram."

Molly nodded, smiled and glided around the house. In a few moments she was at the door. She softly pushed it open, and with a cocked pistol in each hand, glided inside to the spot where the arms of the Tories lay in a corner.

A loud crash at the rear door startled all within. Before the Tories could rise from the table, the door burst open and the giant form of a man leaped into the apartment, holding a gleaming sword in one hand, and a cocked pistol in the other, while in a voice of thunder he shouted:

"Surrender, or you are dead men!"

So sudden and unexpected was the appearance of the giant trooper that the six Tories were completely petrified. The thunder of his stentorian tones had scarce died on the air, when a finer voice, but none the less firm, from an opposite direction echoed:

"Surrender!"

A glance in that direction revealed the terrible Molly Pitcher with a cocked pistol in each hand, the muzzles so pointed that each man was sure that he was the target for her aim.

Meanwhile Sam Moulton, who seemed to tower like a mountain before his enemies, was talking all the while as if in command of a regiment.

"Surround 'em, boys! Keep a close lookout for 'em, and shoot the first man dead in his tracks who tries to escape, of lifts a hand toward a wepin!" Then, addressing the captives, he resumed: "By jing! 'f ye don't act as quiet and mild as wee bits of lambs, I'll order my lads t' open fire on ye. If one o' ye so much as screeches, or crooks a finger, down the hull gang go. What d'ye say; will ye surrender?"

The Tory chief, assuming a sort of dignity which he supposed an officer should, began:

"Well—ahem! before we surrender, we should like to know to whom we are surrendering!"

"Me, by jing!" roared Sam.

"Well, who are you?"

"I am Lieutenant Sam Moulton, of the Continental Light Horse, and in the name o' George Washington, I command you to surrender. If that ain't enough to convince ye, we'll let fly a whirlwind o' leaden balls. What are ye goin' t' do? Quick! One, two, three"——

"We surrender."

"That's sensible. Now, farmer, haven't ye got some good, strong cord in the house? Bring it quick, for my boys outside are gittin' mighty impatient to be at some kind o' business."

The farmer soon brought good, strong cords, and the giant in the doorway set him to tying the prisoners. When escape was made utterly impossible, Molly and Sam held a short conference, which resulted in the captor ordering the horses of the captives to be brought out and saddled.

The disgust of the Tories can be better imagined than described at discovering that their captors were only two in number, and one of them a woman. It was humiliation so deep that some gave vent to curses and groans.

It was high noon before the Valley was reached and the captives turned over to the proper officers, and the dispatches given to General Washington.

CHAPTER XII.

A month has elapsed, and we invite the reader to the bedchamber of Sir John Harcourt, in the Darrah house. As was his habit, Sir John was breakfasting in bed. His chocolate and toast stood upon a little table at his elbow; books and newspapers lay ready at his hand upon the coverlet. The newspapers of the day were inferior to the press of the present, yet there were items of interest in those stirring times. One item which particularly caught the languid attention of the knight was:

"Colonel Roland Chester, late of the India service, but now in America, has been transferred from New York to Philadelphia."

"Why didn't he stay in New York or India? This compels me to more discretion," muttered Sir John. "But here is more cheerful news. My friend of Whig persuasion has been caught at last and his fate is certain. I am not surprised. And his mysterious friend in petticoats, the notorious Moll Pitcher. I am not surprised; and the giant rebel horseman, whom tradition says has split open a hundred skulls with his sabre—it is all very well. They will be hanged in due course of events. It is all the fortunes of war. It's the very best thing that could possibly happen to them."

There was a knock at the door and someone called out that he had urgent business with Sir John Harcourt, which admitted of no delay.

"Come in," said Sir John, who recognized his early visitor's voice.

"Sir John," said Captain Sanford, who had acknowledged with a bow the invitation to be seated, "I have just come from the prison."

"And may I ask if it is true as reported that three certain rebels who have made themselves notorious are confined there?"

"They are."

"You saw them?"

"With my own eyes."

"And what will be their fate?"

"Having been captured within our lines, unless strong appeals should be made to Gen. Howe, they will suffer the fate of common spies."

Playfully toying with the teaspoon, his placid, unruffled face smoothed by a smile of enjoyment, Sir John asked.

"And who, pray, will interfere in their favor?"

The cautious officer gave the room a sweeping glance to be assured they were alone, and then took up the paper which Sir John had been reading. He looked up the news item concerning the transfer of Col. Roland Chester's regiment from New York to Philadelphia, and asked:

"Have you read that?"

"I have read it, but what can he have to do with the three rebel prisoners?" asked Sir John.

"This is what I have asked myself."

"Does he know them?" There was evinced the slightest degree of astonishment in the manner of the speaker.

"Yes, and how he became acquainted with them I don't know."

"Well, well, it is a matter of indifference to us, captain. They will be hung—there can be no question of that."

"Zounds! I am not too sure of that, Sir John. The colonel has great influence with Lord Howe."

"Admitting that he has, why should he exercise it in the interest of this singular party who are inimical of his King?"

"That is a part of the mystery I cannot fathom. Some strange circumstance or freak of fortune has thrown them together. There is mystery about it which I cannot solve. He seems more especially interested in the woman, Molly Pitcher, and Captain Fitzgerald. I have heard an unauthenticated rumor which states that Fitzgerald's father was an Irish gentleman and served in the English army in India. That when Colonel Chaster was very young in the service they were friends, and he has ever since been interested in the family. But, Sir John, there is another party in jail of whom I have not told you—one who may add more to the mystery. He is an East Indian who is charged with an attempt to poison some of the officers. Have you ever heard of Obejah Sahib, the Hindoo snake charmer?"

There was for an instant a perceptible pallor on the face of Sir John; then, after mature deliberation, he remarked that the name had a familiar sound on his ear.

"Obejah Sahib is in Philadelphia—in prison, and, as if to add to the mystery, Obejah Sahib and the three spies are, for some reason, warm friends."

The thin, white lips of the listener were compressed, and, for a single instant, an unpleasant expression ruffled his face.

"What has all that to do wit hme, captain?" he asked.

"I don't know. I have given you some mysterious facts, and it is for you to know whether they will have any influence on you or not. I have come this morning to insist on an early marriage with your niece. It seems to me that such a marriage is absolutely necessary to the safety and welfare of both of us. We have a hold on her that will force her consent."

"May I ask what this hold is?"

"The Yankee spy will be condemned to death. We may have to intercede for him in order to secure her consent."

Amelia Harcourt was sitting in her apartment, her tearful face turned toward the east window through which the morning sun was streaming. She had scarcely slept or ate since she had learned of the capture of Maurice, big Sam Moulton and Molly Pitcher. There came a light tap at her door, and she rose and opened it.

"Good morning, Miss Harcourt; I hope you are well! Pardon me this early visit, for I am quite sure that my excuse for it will be sufficient to secure your forgiveness for the rude intrusion." Captain Sanford's face bore a smile which he intended to be interesting. "I came to you to discuss a matter of a private nature, which wholly concerns you and I. Pray, be seated and I will proceed."

Mechanically she obeyed his request, and he proceeded to tell her how much he had been interested in her since first they had met, and that his was an old and respectable family. He assured her he was perfectly acceptable to her uncle, and, after an assurance he would not be happy without her, he fell upon his knees and made a passionate appeal for her to become his wife.

She listened to him without the slightest sign of emotion, and said:

"Captain Sanford, I hope you will never mention this subject again. Politically we cannot be friends; socially, you are not agreeable to me, and I will not listen to your proposal of marriage."

Starting from his knees, the captain said:

"Hold! Miss Harcourt, do not reject my suit too hastily. Why should you?"

"I have told you I do not love you, Captain Sanford."

"Very well, you love another! Take it for granted. He is the rebel spy now in prison. He will be tried and hanged in three days, unless"—he paused and gazed at her white, startled face, to note the effect of his words—"unless you consent to become my wife."

She turned her hard, frozen features from him. Never had her beauty seemed so overmastering as when he saw it like marble from fear. His awful threat overpowered her, and she sank into a chair, buried her face in her hands and groaned.

CHAPTER XIII.

After Captain Sanford had taken his departure Amelia sobbed for a moment, then, taking from her pocket a bit of paper, she read:

"Don't fail to be at the old stone house on the hill to-night; watch for the signal."

She brushed the tears from her eyes and heaved a hopeful sigh. For hours that day she watched the old stone house as if it was the only hope left. It stood on the hill nearly a quarter of a mile away, and had been deserted since the commencement of the war. Frequently British outposts halted there on their way to and from the picket line. A light seen there never excited suspicion, and when the light gleamed from one of the windows for a few moments that night, no one save Amelia dreamed it was a signal.

Hurriedly donning her wraps, she left for the house unseen, and rapidly made her way up the hill on which the deserted building stood.

With wildly beating heart she tapped on the door.

There came the sound of footsteps moving within, and the next moment the door was opened by a man about fifty years of age, in the uniform of a colonel in the English army.

"Come in, dear child, and do not look so frightened. You will not be harmed."

"I have no fears for myself," she answered, fixing her eyes on the kind face which beamed upon her with a look akin to affection. The man had large blue eyes, a plain, open, honest countenance, which indicated a certain nobility of character.

"I assure you, my dear girl, you have no need of fear, for I will see that no harm befalls you."

"It was not for myself I came," she gasped, as soon as the door was closed. "I have no fears for myself, but for him—for all three of those persons arrested as spies."

"Yes, yes, my child; you came to me to talk of them, did you not?"

"I did, colonel; you said you would prove yourself my friend, and now I want you to do so."

"My child, will you let me talk confidentially with you?"

"Yes—yes, sir; will it save poor Maurice?"

"I do not know. Can you keep a secret?"

"Yes."

"Did you see a Hindoo, my servant, when at Gen. Howe's headquarters?"

"I did; a great, dark fellow with long black beard and a turban."

"The rascal is a conjurer, whose ledgerdemain has never had an equal. He was arrested yesterday on my own complaint and thrown in prison. Well, the chances are that he will have about him means of breaking out of jail. He can carry some very fine tools in a very small space, and is a skillful knave in handling them. The chances are ten to one he will be a free man in three days."

(To be continued.)

"YOU LOVE ANOTHER. HE IS THE REBEL SPY."

Boys in a Bookstore.

A true story is told in the family of a certain Boston bookseller which has to do with the holiday time. Just before Christmas the little boys of the household were told that, as a treat, they might go down to their father's place of business and look over the books. It was a treat, indeed, in anticipation, for reading was their chiefest joy.

The day came, and joyfully did the little lads take their way down-town. They were turned loose in the big establishment among books big and little. There were children's books and delightfully illustrated ones for happy older folks. There they were left to their own devices, and presently forgotten.

When the time for lunch came round, their father remembered with a start that two little guests were with him.

He looked about; they were nowhere to be seen. He made his way round the crowded shop, and finally came upon them in an unoccupied corner, industriously reading. One had "Swiss Family Robinson" and the other "Robinson Crusoe."

"Did you get tired of looking round?" he asked.

One boy glanced up shyly. Evidently he felt that he had not been quite equal to the situation, but he must tell the truth.

"We found these 'most the first thing," he said, "so we sat down and began to read."

"But you have those at home!"

"Yes, papa, but we like them best."

Queer little souls, so very like grown-up humanity! They had been bewildered by the riches about them, and so had returned to the familiar and dear.

POPULIST POLITICS

Great Trust's Dividends.

The great Standard Oil Company is an ever present object lesson of the power of concentration of capital and of the money saving as well as money making possibilities of corporations that have a monopoly of a necessity of life.

Almost all the shares in the company are held by eleven stockholders, to whom has just been disbursed in dividends the comfortable sum of $20,000,000. This represents the profits for the first three months of the current year, and it is more than probable that before the end of the twelve months $80,000,000 will have been taken by the stockholders for their onerous (?) duties as "captains of industry." In other words, for every $100 put into the corporation there will be taken out during the year $80. The stock is in the hands of a few who decline to sell even at the enormous price of $8 for $1 worth of shares.

John D. Rockefeller gets about one-third of the dividend, as he personally owns 310,000 out of the million shares of the company of the par value of $100. His original holdings of $1,100,000 is now worth more than $250,000,000. If the dividends continue to accumulate in the future as they have in the past, there is no telling to what figure Mr. Rockefeller's wealth may amount. The billionaire is surely coming.

In the past seven years Mr. Rockefeller has received $80,000,000 in dividends from Standard Oil. Were he obliged to receive his quarterly "earnings" in gold he would have to use several trucks to take it away.

Some Strange Truths. (?)

In his inaugural address the President cautions against extravagance in public expenditures. Is this not something like locking the stable door after the horses are all stolen?

He says also that we are at peace with all the world. This is news, indeed. We thought that final peace was not to be made with China until a few more judicial murders were committed and many millions were paid for indemnity.

If we are at peace with all the world why do we need a standing army of 100,000 men, and also one of the most expensive navies in the world? If there is no war in the Philippines, why do we keep 60,000 soldiers in that unfortunate country? If there is no war in the Philippines, why do we follow up the people there with fire and sword, capture their cities, destroy their crops and imprison their most patriotic men?

Would Aguinaldo agree with the President that the United States is at peace with all the world? Would the mourning family of the Filipino that was murdered yesterday by our soldiers agree that this government is at peace with all the world?

If there is no war in the Orient, why do we suppress newspapers for stating facts and banish patriotic editors for telling the truth?

It looks to us as if the President is mistaken, and that instead of being at peace with all the world we are conducting one of the meanest wars of conquest ever chronicled in human history.—Nonconformist.

Wild Cat Banks Again.

The only redeeming feature about the national banks is, that their notes are always good, no matter what happens to the banks. The notes are good, because they are secured by United States bonds. But it seems that this arrangement is not to continue. The watering of stocks by the various corporations has been an instructive object lesson to the banks, and they are seized with a desire to adopt the same method and to water their issues. The House committee on banking and currency have agreed to recommend favorably what is known as the "Lovering bill" which allows the banks to issue notes 10 per cent in excess of their assets, other than United States bonds. Injected into the body of this wildcat scheme is the usual rot which defines the bill to be one, "to make the currency responsive to the varying needs of business at all seasons and in all sections."—Exchange.

By Consent of the Governed.

Local self-government, good or bad, is necessarily the American kind of government of cities. It cannot be otherwise without striking at the root of American self-helpfulness and encouraging a lazy, weak and demoralizing habit of depending upon outsiders to do for a community what it ought to do for itself. Evil as the government of a typical city is in the United States, it is just what the people deserve. It is either what most of them want, or else it is all that their feeble indolence permits them to get.—Cleveland Leader.

Food for Powder Growing Scarce.

Within the last two months, according to War Department records, only 5,250 enlisted men have been secured by the Federal recruiting offices. At this rate a twelvemonth will have elapsed before the 35,000 new troops required shall be enrolled. The physical standard of the service is high, and the men who can measure up to it may easily find more useful and profitable employment than is offered in the army rank and file.—Philadelphia Record.

Something Wrong in Porto Rico.

Possibly certain steadfast friends of the re-elected administration may imagine that in all those movements for the emigration of hard-working Porto Ricans by the thousand they detect the working of the hand of "Providence." There are others, however, who find that in the existing state of affairs in Porto Rico something which the great nation which liberated the island from the clutch of medieval Spain should remedy—an evil which the authorities of this assimilating nation are bound to abolish as far as possible, and that, too, without driving thousands of poor islanders to choose between starvation and exile from their native shores.—Boston Globe.

Blackest Chapter in History.

As for the butchery, the slaughter and the still darker infamies with which the history of the allied occupation reeks, who will dream of questioning, still less contradicting, the unutterable catalogue? Waldersee's last expedition showed a result of 250 Chinese killed and one German wounded! But that is only a drop in the bucket of the horrors that civilization has perpetrated on the pagans. No chapter taken from the darkest of the dark ages of the past—no exploit of brutal savagery in any period of human ignorance and degradation—is more appalling than the notorious facts in this frightful case.—Washington Post.

Wealth Has Its Own Penalties.

The escapades of this scion of French nobility must be extremely humiliating to members of the Gould family in this country, for they are disposed to be quiet, orderly citizens. They are, however, one of the penalties of great riches. Had not a portion of the Gould millions gone into the hands of this aristocratic yound cad, along with the hand of a pretty American girl, he could not have made the display of himself that has so disgusted the public. When the American girl takes up with the titled foreign husband there is always trouble.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

Good Out of Evil.

Midas, Croesus and the other rich fellows of antiquity look small in comparison with the new steel consolidation, with its capital of over a billion. The "dreams of avarice" will have to be expanded to take in the vast amount of capital now brought under one manager's control in a single line of business. If large businesses can confer on an industry and its workers, together with consumers, the large benefits that some persons have predicted, this monster steel trust ought to prove it very quickly. One benefit it will almost certainly bring at an early date—tariff reform.—Baltimore Sun.

Another Turn of the Screw.

An advance of 2 per cent on the price of window glass is announced. This aded to previous advances makes the price from 50 to 60 per cent higher than it was a year ago. It is a practical example of the power of trusts to tax the people upon articles of prime necessity. By the consolidation of the manufactories the expense of management is decreased and should result in a decrease in prices. But a monopoly is created and the price advanced at pleasure.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Repelling the Sister Republics.

Under our exclusive laws of trade we have abdicated whatever rights we possessed by reason of our geographical position to the commerce of our sister republics. So complete has become the commercial estrangement that the Stars and Stripes is seldom seen in a South American harbor, and the language of the United States is there a foreign tongue.—St. Paul Globe.

High Pay for Poor Service.

It is probable that, at a safe calculation, the departments at Washington could be conducted, just as well as they are now, by two-thirds of the number of employes on their pay rolls. No doubt some of them earn all the money they get, but most of them are paid much more than they could earn outside of the government service.—Savannah (Ga.) News.

May Set Uncle Sam Thinking.

England's deficit of $270,000,000 resulting from the war in South Africa goes ahead of anything we have recently been able to show on this side of the Atlantic. But if the policy of imperialism and "expansion" goes forward we shall get something like it before the end of another four years.—Hartford, Conn., Times.

Morgan an Expensive Luxury.

J. P. Morgan proposes to lessen the expenses of coal mining and handling to the amount, in round numbers, of $20,000,000. Of this $11,000,000 is to go to Mr. Morgan and $9,000,000 to the people in a reduction of prices. Mr. Morgan comes high. The question is whether we must have him.—New York World.

The People in the Dark.

The truth of the matter is, no one knows the truth about the situation in the Philippines save those interested in exploiting the islands and making the taxpayers of this country foot the bills. The people who pay the expenses are kept in ignorance by working on their partisan prejudices.—Omaha World-Herald.

Wasted It.

"He is accused of using money in his political campaign."

"Nonsense," answered Senator Sorghum, scornfully. "He didn't use money—he just wasted it."—Philadelphia Star.

SLEEP WALKING A DISEASE.

How the Phenomena Are Explained on Scientific Basis.

The feat of the young Illinois student who walked twenty miles while asleep is certainly a remarkable one of its kind. Usually somnambulists make short trips and, unlike the subject in question, awake to find themselves in curious and ofttimes alarming positions. The weirdness of the exploit and the unnaturalness of its accomplishment give that becoming air of mystery which naturally appeals to the ignorant and the superstitious.

In reality, however, the phenomena are very satisfactorily explained on the assumption that certain areas of the brain are for the time being awake, while the other portions are asleep.

Thus, the speaking center may be active and the dreamer may carry on a connected conversation with a listener and be perfectly oblivious to any other impressions. Very often, under such circumstances, a secret most carefully guarded during waking hours may be disclosed to an alert and inquisitive roommate. Not infrequently, also, poems have been thus composed and mathematical problems solved when the respective cerebral lobes involved are on extra sentinel duty.

The same can be said for somnambulism in many of its forms, the muscular sense pertaining to walking being in a curious condition of exalted activity. Strange to say, the victims of this distressing malady have no recollection of their adventures, although it is maintained that they appear to see obstacles and avoid them and their various movements indicate intelligence and reason. In many respects the condition represents some of the varieties of hypnotism, differing from them only in the matter of absolute auto-suggestion, as against the domination of an outside party.

The causes of the trouble are quite obscure—at least no definite ones are given by medical authorities. It is reasonable to infer, however, that in the aggravated cases the disorder has a cerebral origin akin to some of the varieties of epilepsy and requires the usual treatment applied to the latter affection.—New York Herald.

The Dying Cadet.

A youth, a would-be soldier, lay wounded at West Point,
His chin was badly shattered, his nose was out of joint;
His breath came hard and jerky, at times bunched into sighs,
And darksome was the color that hung about his eyes.
A kneeling comrade asked him what message he should take
Unto his distant kinsfolk, and thus the victim spake:
"Go break it to them gently that when he died their Bob
Was thinking of old Podunk, old Podunk on the Wab.

"Tell them in tender manner I died a soldier's death,
The fumes of hot tobasco entangled with my breath,
My nose c lear off its bearings, my eyes as big as moons,
My hair shampooed with mustard, my stomach stuffed with prunes.
They fed me on hot olives served in cold axle grease,
And when I made wry faces they hissed like horrid geese,
And during the proceedings they laughed to hear me sob,
And wish myself in Podunk, in Podunk on the Wab.

"They fed me plaster paris, I think almost a peck,
Then made me drink hot water till full up to the neck,
And my digestive organs, though always prompt and pat,
Were not prepared to handle a contract such as that,
And then, they said, to teach me to bear the ills of war,
They forced between my pale lips a Christmas-time cigar;
Then well I knew the sequel—I'd jump my earthly job,
And find a grave at Podunk, at Podunk on the Wab.

"I laughed at their approaches with scorn when they began
To make of me an officer and army gentleman,
I polished up the rifles, swept out the stumps and quids
And blacked the army brogans of Uncle Sammy's kids;
But when I reached the hardships of war I had to squeal,
My body was not armored with Carnegie's famed steel,
And, comrade, please express me, when my heart has ceased to throb,
With military honors to Podunk on the Wab."

—Denver Evening Post.

Profitable.

Although the cultivation of mushrooms is on the increase, the prices are still well maintained, as their use also is increasing. A Long Island grower says there is profit in them, even when the wholesale price is twenty-five cents a pound or less, and some have gone into the business in pits or caves made for the purpose, and others in cellars under barns and even in the house cellar. Experts claim that a bed fifteen feet long can be made for ten dollars and should yield about seventy dollars worth of mushrooms in three months. We should want those figures verified before going into the business, but it is said that many women have engaged in it, the work being light, suitable to their strength, and if she takes them to market in a basket on her arm she would receive about as much as her husband would for a horse load of heavy produce.

A Bachelor's Idea.

During the first six months after a man gets married his wife expects him to tell all her friends that he knows he can never be worthy of such happiness.—New York Press.