

MARION'S BRIGADE

By MAJOR J. H. ROBINSON

CHAPTER IX.—(Continued.)

Kate had averted her face, and the colonel had not yet obtained a full view of her features, although he had been admiring her figure from the first.

"Excuse me," said Kate, "I have but an indifferent face."

"Swords and pistols, what a silvery voice!" exclaimed the gallant colonel.

"Come, no fuss, cap'n!" cried Joe, warningly, riding nearer to Kate.

"Be a little careful," retorted Cunningham.

Miss Martin turned her face toward the Tory leader, and the bright moon shining upon it rendered its fair features perfectly visible.

"What loveliness!" exclaimed the colonel, impulsively, and at the same time laid his hand on the bridle rein of Victor.

"Hands off, cap'n," said Joe.

"Back, fellow!" thundered Cunningham, in a passion.

"I shall protect her with my life," said Joe.

"Be quiet, or I'll fire!" exclaimed the colonel, leveling his pistol at Sawyer's breast.

"I see you are an officer," said Kate, firmly; "and I trust you are a gallant gentleman. Let us pass on without further words."

"If I had not seen that exquisite face, pretty maiden, you might have gone on as fast and as far as you pleased; but the sight of so much beauty has made me a little giddy."

Joe spurred his horse, and he reared and pressed hard against the colonel, which greatly enraged him, and he discharged his pistol at Kate's defender. The ball took effect in his right side, and inflicting a slight wound, glanced off without doing any serious injury. Joe instantly drew a heavy horse pistol from the breast pocket of his coat, and bending forward, gave Cunningham a stunning blow upon the head, which knocked him senseless.

"Spur on, Queen Kate!" cried Joe.

Victor, feeling himself at liberty once more, sprang over the body of the colonel and swept onward at his best speed.

"It's no time to let the grass grow under our feet. Cunningham will be up and after us with his fellows," added Sawyer.

They had galloped forward for ten or fifteen minutes, when Joe stopped and said he believed they had taken the wrong road. He examined the locality as well as he could, and was still in doubt in regard to the matter. This circumstance perplexed Kate greatly, for she felt that every moment was precious.

"Decide quickly," she exclaimed, "for this delay makes me exceedingly nervous."

"I'll obey you, Queen Kate, as soon as possible. It strikes me that it would be better to stay where we are than to go in the wrong direction."

Joe now dismounted, and requesting Kate to hold his horse, surveyed the locality more minutely. In a short time he returned and informed her that they had left the main and direct road, but that the one they were now in would lead them into it again. They proceeded with less speed and some uncertainty; and the latter feeling became so strong in the minds of both that they were induced to halt for the second time. While Joe sat irresolute about going forward, an ominous sound reached his ears, and not his only, but Kate's.

"The tramp of many horses!" exclaimed the latter, in a suppressed tone of voice.

"Cunningham's cutthroats," said Sawyer.

"What is to be done?" asked Kate, promptly. "Think fast, Joe."

"Remain where we are and trust to luck. Perhaps they'll take the other road, and in that case we shall stand a pretty fair chance of getting clear of them."

"And if we should not elude them, what then?" asked Kate, earnestly.

"The case is very plain, so far as I am concerned. I shall be shot down on the spot, because I struck the villain, Cunningham."

Kate for the first time felt something analogous to fear. She heard the clatter of hoofs, and felt but too keenly that her enterprise was in peril. But she was far too unselfish to forget poor Joe Sawyer; his genuine gratitude and rough kindness had already had the effect to make her regard him with feelings of friendship.

"I'm thinking of you, Joe," said Kate, gently.

"Bliss you, Miss Martin, don't trouble yourself to think of me; I couldn't die in a better cause. I've got some pretty little instruments about me, which perhaps you'd better take. Here they are. You perceive they are a brace of small and beautifully finished pocket pistols; and they are so neat and diminutive withal, they seem to be made on purpose for a lady. It's very evident to me that here's considerable real spirit and courage about you, notwithstanding your sex; and if worst should come to worst, what could hinder you from using one of those cunning little fellows?"

"I thank you very much!" exclaimed Kate, taking the pistols eagerly. "Don't fear—I know how to use them as well as you do. I'm not such a poor helpless creature as those of my sex are generally supposed to be."

"Hear the blackguards! They shake the ground with their hard riding."

"Have they taken the other road, do you think?" inquired Kate, in a whisper.

"I believe they have. How lucky! Hear them thunder along."

"What if they should divide, and some

of them come this way?" asked Kate, hurriedly.

"They have!" exclaimed Joe. "This way, Kate—this way, quickly—quickly, behind yonder clump of trees."

Sawyer caught hold of Kate's horse by the bridle and hurried him from the road toward a small growth of wood. They had scarcely made this change, when some of the horsemen came in sight, urging their steeds by a free application of the spur.

"Keep your horse quiet—hold him firmly—the least noise will betray us!" whispered Sawyer. "There goes Cunningham."

"Dash on, men!" cried Cunningham. "Ten dollars to the man who takes her unhurt, and ten more to the man who shoots the rascal that is with her."

"Ay, ay, colonel!" shouted the men, and pressed on with redoubled zeal. In a few moments they had passed on, and Kate and Sawyer remained undiscovered.

"We'll give them the mitten this time, Queen Kate!" exclaimed Joe, joyfully.

"We'll retrace our steps a little and take another road, less direct to Marion's camp. Cunningham will waste horse flesh in vain; and woe to the Whigs that fall into his hands before he gets over his disappointment."

Without delay, Joe led the way in the direction indicated, followed closely by his fair companion. In a few minutes they reached the spot where the other road diverged to the right of those taken by Cunningham and his dragoons, and galloped away in better spirits, over a smoother portion of country.

"Now you can test the speed of that horse," said Sawyer.

"Hark, Joe! I can hear the clatter of hoofs again."

"Some of them are coming back to try this road, perhaps. They seem to be in earnest. That's it—put him to his best; now you do it in superb style. Go it, my queen!"

In ten minutes the tramp of Cunningham's dragoons had ceased to reach the ears of Kate Martin; and Joe Sawyer was in ecstasies on account of her splendid riding, and the remarkable progress they were making.

CHAPTER X.

The day was just breaking, and the "tarnal critters" were "straightened up."

"Don't they make a heavenly appearance?" said Captain Nick to Forstall.

"They look very well indeed," replied the latter.

"Hold up—eyes right!" said Hawes.

"All mounted at last," remarked Henderson.

"Yes, and it does my eyes good to look at 'em. Lieut. Anderson, odd and even 'em; and let the even numbers fall back six paces to the rear. John Smith, you look as if you was a settin' on a stone wall; let down your stirrups, straighten yourself—and try to look unspeakable."

"It's no use to put it off," said Ben Rowan to Frank, "I'm going to pulverize him."

"It wouldn't be right, Ben," returned Frank.

"But it's my duty, sir; and my tender conscience won't let me procrastinate no longer," rejoined Rowan. "He's settin' out yonder under a tree; and there'll be a good chance to pitch into him. If you want to see iniquity rewarded, just keep your eye on me."

"Jones, what's your horse tryin' to do?" asked Captain Hawes.

"He's a colt, cap'n, as has'n't been weaned long," replied Jones, grasping the animal's mane to keep himself steady.

"Well, stick to him for the sake of your country and humanity generally," added Captain Nick, encouragingly. Unfortunately, however, for "humanity" at that crisis the colt made an atry and highly original evolution not laid down in any military work then extant, and poor Jones was cast like an untimely fig.

"Up, and at him again," said Hawes. "He'll be a Bucephalus as soon as you're an Alexander. Rear rank—close up. Front, ditto; leave about twelve inches between you. Music by the band. Company—forward—march!"

While these exercises were transpiring Ben Rowan had walked to the spot where Job Dawson was sitting quietly beneath a tree. Wishing to see what the result of that movement might be, Frank Forstall and Henderson slowly followed him.

"Job Dawson," said Rowan, deliberately pulling off his coat. "I have come to do a duty which I owe to my country."

"What is it, good Benjamin?" asked Dawson.

"Don't 'good Benjamin' me! I've told you about it often enough," retorted Ben sullenly.

"What is thy business, friend?" inquired Job, patiently, the second time.

"It's my painful duty to pulverize you," answered Rowan. "So take off that ridiculous weapon and try to defend yourself like a man."

"Dost thou intend me personal violence, good Benjamin?" resumed Dawson, calmly.

"I intend to give you an all-fired drubbin'," exclaimed Rowan.

"What evil hast thou found in me?" asked Job.

"You're a humbug generally," responded Rowan. "Look out! I'm going to hit you in the left eye!"

"Cannot this thing be put off till a more convenient season?" interrogated Dawson.

"'Twould be sinful to put it off half a minute longer. So be careful of your lookers." And Rowan made a pass at Job's face, which he parried.

"Verily, if I must defend myself, I

have no power to gainsay thee; but my soul abhorreth contention, for I am a man of peace," he said quietly, turning aside Rowan's rapidly dealt blows without any apparent exertion.

"I bear thee no malice, good Benjamin, yet I will obey thee to the best of my humble abilities."

While Dawson was uttering these in his usual mild manner he raised his great fist and gave Rowan a blow under the ear that made him reel several yards and fall heavily at Forstall's feet.

"Verily, I am a peacemaker, and have no pleasure in contention," added Job, seating himself calmly upon the grass.

Frank and Henderson lifted up Ben Rowan; he opened his eyes, and in a few seconds appeared perfectly conscious of what had taken place.

"I have come to see 'iniquity rewarded,' and have 'kept my eye on you,'" remarked Forstall, ironically.

"Hast thou pulverized me enough, good Benjamin?" asked Dawson, with great simplicity.

Rowan sprang quickly to his feet and walked away without any reply. Forstall and Henderson returned to the parade ground, and presently the entire brigade, now numbering over one hundred, turned to drill. All fell into the ranks, and Job and Ben were seen side by side as usual; but the latter, it was observed, had a swollen head and face.

Nick Hawes rode up to Gen. Marion and remarked, for the second time, that the "Independent Fire-Eaters" made a most heavenly appearance now they were straightened up on horses, and the general smilingly replied that "they certainly did."

It was at this particular period that Kate Martin and Joe Sawyer rode into camp with foaming and panting steeds.

"The divine Kate!" exclaimed Henderson, involuntarily.

"There's that traitor feller," said Hawes.

"That's Gen. Marion," said the sergeant of the guard, who had conducted Kate on to the field.

Kate turned toward the general, and the latter, brave as he was, appeared somewhat bewildered and confused by her dazzling beauty. He gallantly doffed his leather cap and begged to have the pleasure of knowing how far he could serve so fair a maiden.

With a glowing cheek Kate related in detail the object of her visit, describing as well as she could the place of rendezvous, and making such remarks as her information would justify in regard to the numbers of the Royalists. Joe Sawyer did not leave Kate's side for a moment, and seemed to consider it a post of honor; and the gallant Mr. Henderson would have regarded it in the same light. He envied Joe his situation, and as soon as she had finished speaking with the general he advanced to address her.

"Stand back, and you can see just as well," said Joe, evidently deeming his approaches an intrusion. Miss Martin smiled, and gracefully acknowledged Henderson's salutation. The latter then formally presented her to the general.

"The brigade will have the honor of escorting you to Rocky Creek, Miss Martin," said Marion. "As you are so fortunate as to know Mr. Henderson, I will confide you to his care until the brigade is in readiness to move forward. I regret that you cannot find among us the comforts which you must necessarily need after so much exertion; we live as we can, and not as we would. Our enemies, should you visit them, could conduct you to a marquee, comfortable and even luxurious; but the friends of liberty are obliged to sleep on the ground, with no other canopy than that of the arching heavens. To my rough tent, Mr. Henderson will now conduct you, and no one will intrude upon you while there."

"Such courtesy well befits a brave chieftain and a gallant gentleman," replied Kate. "A cause so just makes any place endurable, and the post of danger honorable. I shall be as happy in your tent as the proudest Royalist in his luxurious marquee. Now, Mr. Henderson, I gladly accept you as my cicerone to the tent."

"I can assure you that he is well content," remarked the general, pleasantly.

"I confess to the charge," rejoined Henderson, and touching his cap, turned from the general and conducted Kate to the place designated; while Joe Sawyer followed with a sullen brow, jealous that another should occupy the place which he had assumed.

Leaving the brigade to march to Rocky Creek at their leisure, we will look after some of our other characters. Mary Adair and Ruth Strickland were on intimate terms. This being the case, that they should visit each other would be a natural result, and we find Miss Adair at Mr. Strickland's. The capture of Gaiety and Cunningham had given the former great pleasure, inasmuch as that event effected the liberation of her brother, and she hoped freed her from further impertinence from the colonel. As a consequence, she experienced considerable uneasiness when she heard of the escape of the latter. This feeling of anxiety was considerably increased by certain rumors, which had reached her ears, in regard to various remarks, relating to herself, which he had made in the presence of several persons. Those who had overheard these observations had repeated them again to others, and so they finally reached the ears of Miss Adair.

(To be continued.)

Not So Blind.

"Dis here Cupid chile may be blind," said Uncle Eben, "but it do seem to me dat he kin manage to spy out a heap o' beauty an' loveliness dat ain't visible to de disinterested bystander."—Washington Star.

Habit.

Brown—What is the matter with Jones? He is going around sideways.

Smith—He's living in a flat now and got that habit from slipping between the furniture.—Puck.

WIT OF THE YOUNGSTERS.

Teacher—Elmer, can you tell me what the largest diamond in the world is called? Elmer—Yes, ma'am. The ace.

Teacher—Johnny—Can you tell me what a hypocrite is? Johnny—Yes, ma'am. It's a boy what comes to school with a smile on his face.

Mamma—But, dear, the good book tells us to love our neighbors as ourselves. Little Ethel—Yes, mamma, but people didn't live in flats then.

Mamma—Are you asleep, Bobby? Bobby—Why do you ask, mamma? Mamma—Because if you are awake you must take your medicine. Bobby—Oh, I'm asleep.

Small Tommy—The teacher wanted to box my ears this morning, Grandmamma—How do you know he did? Small Tommy—'Cause he wouldn't have boxed 'em if he hadn't wanted to.

Some one asked Gale, aged nine, what she wanted for Christmas. "Nothing," replied Gale, "because I don't like anything but dolls and I've got two or three of them, and another one would just be another child to sew for."

Office Boy—Boo-oo! hoo-oo-oo! The Boss—What's the matter, Jimmie? Office Boy—My g-grandmama's d-dead. The Boss—Well, don't cry. We've all got to die sometime. Office Boy—But she's g-goin' t' be buried on a h-holiday. Boo-hoo-oo!

"Mamma," said little Elsie as she looked up from her book of Bible stories, "I don't believe Solomon was as rich as people think." "Why not, my dear?" asked her mother. "Because," replied the small investigator, "this book says 'he slept with his fathers,' and if he was so awfully rich I guess he would have had a bed of his own."

CAT'S ATTEMPT AT SUICIDE.

Its Real Efforts to Drown Itself in a Bucket of Water.

Do animals ever commit suicide? The point is raised by a correspondent who vouches for the following facts:

"A small tabby cat in our possession recently developed an affection of the eyes, which evidently caused it great pain. We did what we could for the cat, which is a great favorite with the junior members of the family. Pussy's eyes, however, continued to give her trouble, and she wandered about the house in a peevish, irritable frame of mind, rejecting all affectionate overtures. One day last week one of the maids left a pail of water at the foot of some steps leading to the garden. Two members of the family saw pussy deliberately walk down the steps straight into the bucket, and to all appearances calmly resign herself to drowning. She was rescued, dried and set in her basket by the fireside, to be warmed back to a more reasonable view of life.

"So long as a watch was kept upon her pussy stayed by the fire. The moment it was relaxed she again walked into the bucket of water, which was still in its original position. This time the cat would certainly have drowned had she not been observed in time. The fact that she deliberately went twice to the water would seem to indicate that even tabbies can tire of life and wish to put an end to an existence which has become more of a burden than a pleasure."—London Mail.

Familiar.

A large touring automobile containing a man and his wife in a narrow road met a hay wagon fully loaded. The woman declared that the farmer must back out, but her husband contended that she was unreasonable.

"But you can't back the automobile so far," she said, "and I don't intend to move for anybody. He should have seen us."

The husband pointed out that this was impossible, owing to an abrupt turn in the road.

"I don't care," she insisted, "I won't move if we have to say here all night."

The man in the automobile was starting to argue the matter when the farmer, who had been sitting quietly on the hay, interrupted.

"Never mind, sir," he exclaimed, "I'll try to back out. I've got one just like her at home."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Sentiments of the Schoolmaster.

It is difficult for the master of finance and the politician to look each other in the eye without winking.

A man may not be as bad as he is painted, but he looks bad painted that way.

Prosperity throws the fool into fits; adversity makes him melancholy.

There are some things even the president of a university may not know. Bargain counters are for the blind.—American Illustrated Magazine.

He Was Wise.

Young Bachelor—You made a funny error in congratulating the bride's father instead of the bridegroom.

Old Benedict—No, I didn't. I've a daughter of my own, and I know what they cost.—Illustrated Bits.

MARY'S HAT.

It Brought About a Great Change in the Ways of a Household.

It was such a pretty house; yet the visitor, a school friend long absent from the town, wondered a little. Everything was so simple, so cheap—frankly, daintily, unpretentious and charmingly cheap; but still, cheap. She had supposed her hostess could afford about the same kind of furnishings her other friends had. Her expression betrayed her.

"No, we haven't lost money lately, and Frank isn't parsimonious," said the mistress of the house, pleasantly, glancing about her. "I see what you're thinking of, Louise, and I can explain it in two words: Mary's hat."

"Mary's hat!" echoed Louise. "Why, what on earth—"

"Everything. Mary was my maid two years ago; a capable, neat, pretty girl and, I thought, a sensible one, for I knew she was saving money. Then she bought a hat—a large velvet hat, really handsome, and loaded with lovely long ostrich plumes. It was becoming to her, too, as far as looks went; she was a picture in it, but it took all her savings.

"Well, I spoke to her about it—cautiously, for, after all, it was her personal affair—but I spoke. She answered me respectfully, but quick as a flash:

"Yes'm, I suppose it was a bit extravagant; but then I've been wanting a hat like it ever since I was a girl, and I've earned it fair. Most of us are a bit extravagant for our families once in a while, I suppose, ma'am, but if we pay for 'em, I don't see but we're in our rights."

"Our rights," said I. "Oh, yes. But some things may be suited to our scale of living and some not. That's a really beautiful hat, Mary, but—"

"Well—I stopped there. One maid in a small house can't help hearing and knowing a good deal, and Mary's eye had wandered expressively to a new eight-legged mahogany table we'd just bought. We'd been pinching and planning and scrounging for months to buy it, too, and it was a beauty, but—but—"

"Mary's look was a revelation. Mahogany is permanent and velvet isn't; Frank's salary is more than Mary's wages; but, after all, does old mahogany furniture—since we're not lucky enough to inherit any—suit our scale of living? The incongruity was less flagrant, the extravagance less extreme, but, after all, wasn't it the same folly in essence? I couldn't lecture Mary on her hat!

"I told Frank how I felt, and he was delighted. And that was another revelation, because he'd been planning and pinching with me so willingly for the table we'd bought and the other things we meant to buy, that I'd never dreamed what a relief it would be to him to drop it all, and be contented with—"

she laughed again, and glanced about her again—"just this."

"Just this!" cried Louise, enthusiastically, from the depths of a deep basket easy chair. "I should think you might be contented with 'just this!' Your house is charming!"

"We like it, and we are contented; and if once in a while we're tempted to buy anything too expensive to be sensible, it's quite enough for either to admonish the other, 'Mary's hat!'"—Youth's Companion.

Not for Strangers.

"What in the world does that mean?" asked the traveler through a sparsely settled region on the Cape. "There's no such place on my road-map."

The man whom he addressed first took a leisurely survey of the traveler and his horse, and then turned his eyes toward the weather-beaten sign which bore the single word, "TOL-PIM."

"That in't a name," he said, with dignity; "it's just an indication. It means, 'To Long Pond one mile.'"

"It's plain enough to folks from near by that's hunting for the pond, and we don't reckon on strangers taking much interest."

Ostentation.

"I understand that Mr. Playneboy carries home a market basket with beef and eggs and all the rest of the day's dinner in full view!"

"Yes," replied Mr. Cumrox. "He seems to take great pleasure in a vulgar display of wealth."—Washington Star.

The Reason Why.

The flattered minor poet was fishing for compliments.

"But I can't see," he murmured, with affected modesty, "why you should ask me for my autograph."

"Because," said the dense collector, "you are the only one who can write it."—Cleveland Leader.

A Farce.

Bacon—I see they are playing a piece called "The Duel" in New York. Do you know what it is like?

Egbert—No; but if it represents one of those French duels I guess it's a farce.—Yonkers Statesman.

Pay a man of fifty a compliment, and when he winks away he will carry himself as if he were ten years younger.