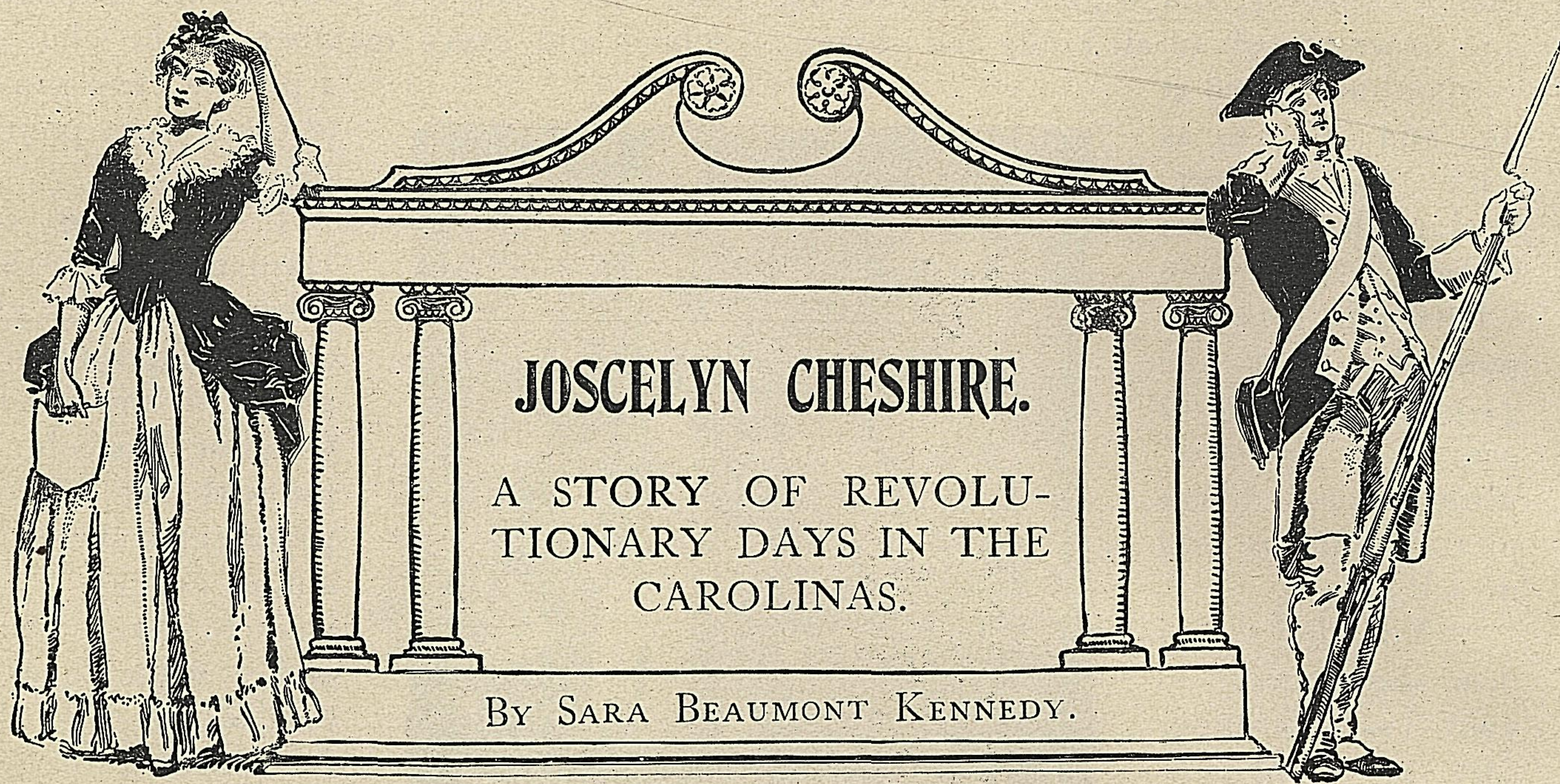




CHAPTER VII.

A DARE-DEVIL DEED.

"Thou fool, to thrust thy head into a noose."—ANON.

THE girl was leaning back with her hand over her eyes, evidently in deep thought.

"Ah, Captain," she said, as Richard paused, mistaking him for one of Mistress Hamlin's party from across the pavilion, "you have come to bear me company in Major Grant's absence?"

"With your permission," answered Richard gallantly, "and if Providence is kind to me, General Howe will find much to say to him."

"That is not likely, since the plans are all laid."

"Yes. The division marches to-night."

"So soon? I thought it was at ten in the morning?"

"No doubt, then, I was misinformed; I was not at the meeting with the couriers. If Major Grant said ten in the morning, then it must be so."

"I hoped it had been hurried up that it might the sooner be over."

"This French marquis is inclined to give us trouble and himself airs."

"Indeed, yes; but General Howe will have his revenge when, after this fight to-morrow, he sends the young upstart back to England in chains."

"That will he. It would be a glorious sight to see our gallant general capture him with his own hands."

"Oh, Major Grant will attend to that," she replied, loftily. "General Howe will do his share when he receives the prisoners at Chestnut Hill."

So Chestnut Hill road was to be their route. Richard mentally recorded it, while he said with incisive compliment: "Major Grant has the place of honor."

The pleasure in her voice when she answered told that the arrow had hit its mark. "Major Grant could have circumvented the rebels with half the five thousand men assigned to him."

"'Tis a large force for so skilful an officer, unless, indeed, the enemy should be very strong."

"Oh, I think they number not half that many."

Richard now knew all he had hoped to