

him asleep with a bit of ravelled rope about his arm. Search and inquiry failed to reveal anything of Billy's escape or his whereabouts, and the incident, so far as the prisoners were concerned, ended in a volley of oaths and threats delivered to them second-hand by the guards from the officer of the day. They were not pleasant words to hear; but Richard only drew a deep breath, for he had feared Billy would linger waiting for him and so be taken.

CHAPTER XI.

FROM CAMP TO PRISON.

"My day is closed! the gloom of night is come!
A hopeless darkness settles o'er my fate."

—JOANNA BAILLIE.

"MANY times during the day's march did Richard turn his eyes wistfully toward the blue hills to the south, and wonder beyond which of them Billy was speeding to rejoin his command. The thought had in it such an element of bitterness that finally he thrust it from him lest it wax into selfish envy.

Finally they reached their goal, and the vast body of men and animals halted beside the bay whose waters sparkled under the blue and gold tones of the summer sky. In the offing lay the English fleet, which by the happiest chance for Clinton had arrived inside the Hook in time to convey his exhausted army to New York.

The quick, salt wind whirling Richard in the face, gave him a sense of vigor and reserve strength, which was speedily nipped by a chilling realization of his hopeless captivity. Mechanically he ate and drank when the guard bade him, for the prison bars were now inevitable, and he would lie rusting his heart and his manhood out while the fight went by outside. In an agony of despair he cursed the impetuous daring that had led him so far in advance of his column as to deliver him into the hands of the enemy. And he cursed both the moonlight that had flooded the road the first night of their march and the guard whose lynx eyes seemed ever upon him;

and, finally, he cursed himself more sorely than aught else because he had not followed Billy at all hazards and let a bullet end the problem forever.

But life is sweet to youth, and hope finds ever a place in the heart that is full of an unsatisfied love; and so by the time he had finished his spare meal he was ready to look at the future with more calmness. Outside in the free world Joscelyn would wait for him, and prison doors must sometimes yawn. The soldier who brought him his supper stayed for a few minutes to talk. He had a frank, friendly face that Richard liked.

"So we gave your sly general the slip, after all, and held to our march as we at first intended."

"Did Clinton originally and intentionally propose to make a night march at almost double-quick over such roads as we have traversed? Damned queer military tactics."

The fellow grinned. "Oh, a little change of programme mattered not, so we lost not a single wagon of our train. See, they are yonder as safe as a ship in port."

"Mayhap; but you saved your skins whole by stealing away from Monmouth like a thief in the night, and, leaving the foe you pretended to despise, camped on the battle ground."

"Oh, we begrudge not you fellows a camping ground—we are not that greedy."

"No; you wanted them, in fact, to have all the ground in the vicinity, even if you had to be so unselfish as to march all night to leave it to them."

"Come, your tongue's too sharp," the fellow said, irritably.

"Sharper than your general's wits if he took that night march out of anything but necessity. He has saved his baggage train, but, mark you, he has lost his cause. Our victory at Monmouth will hearten up the doubtful and send them flocking to our camp."

The man laughed satirically at the word "victory," and then said:

"Well, at all events, your part of the flocking is done for good. 'Tis not likely you'll see the outside of a prison for more