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THE RUBY CROSS: Benedict Arnold's Amulet

> BY MARY W. JANVIN. CHAPTER I.

WITH eager, impetuous footsteps, Benedict | him ! Arnold paced the white sea strand of a quaint, strange old West Indian town, whose antique Moorish houses, with their pillared balconies. their arabesque work, their open courts and sparkling fountains, give to it such a foreign look, and that air of romance so peculiar to old Spanish cities-while his vessel lay anchored in the blue waters of the harbor of Havana.

For Benedict Arnold, in his youth, was a merchant, trading to the West Indies, and commanded his own vessel-the little sloop which then, with snowy mast and tapering spars, clearly defined against the blue sky, lay like a thing of beauty, idle and motionless, on the waves.

- This was not his first trip to the tropics; many a time cré this his vessel had plowed the waters of the Atlantic to those islands which lie seaward, came winds replete with odors almost like gems of beauty upon the occan's breast, shot past the frowning battlements of Moro Castle, and rode gallantly into the harbor of Havana, but it was to be his last one ; for already had the difficulties arisen between his native land and the mother country ; there was a call for America's brave sens, and every drop of the untamed blood of youth in Arnold's veins was roused at the trumpet tone of war.

Nor was it the love of country alone which impelled him to return and enlist under Freedom's banners, but that fierce, unquenchable passion for excitement which characterized his life from childhood, which had made him, in boyhood, a rover to the British camp, then as hastily brought him home again, sent him to the tropics as a merchant, where he won him great wealth, and in after life gave him that unparallesen oravery which distinguished him on the battle-fields of his country.

But why, as the first faint notes of war borne over the waters, fell upon Benedict Arnold's car, amid the luxuriance of those West India Isles, did he linger there ? Why did his good ship lie idle, with furled sail and drooping pennon, in the harbor of Havana ?

Ah, there was a struggle going on in his heart between this newly aroused feeling of patriotism and excitement, and another and tenderer sentiment! For Benedict Arnohl was reveling in the first love dream of his youth.

And this was why his sloop lay motionless upon the waters of the harbor : why, day after day, his brow was still fanned by tropic airs why, then, at nightfall, impatiently watching the sun dipping his weary head into the pur-





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air : indeed, it was a perfect wilderness of green and bloom, an intoxicating atmosphere of odors

O, these warm West Indian Isles, the Eden of the world, lying in " dark purple depths of sea !'

How Benedict Arnold's tropic heart reveled in the intoxicating richness everywhere about

And could he leave this magic clime, the sparkling waters, and the gleaming constellations which walked forth into the deep night skies with a glory unknown to his native north ern land ? and above all, could he gaze no more upon those eyes which beamed far brighter than the starlight for him ?

Yes, yes: his resolve was unchangeable he must go hence. What will not a proud, ambitious man do, and dare, and suffer, for his

own aggrandizement ! And still on he rowed, over waters darken ing into a deeper purple in the shades of gath ering night under the magnificent blaze of that southern starlight, a starlight so like day.

And still the long vines and green mosses trailed down into the water ; and floating out sickening in their sweetness : still on his head rained showers of crimson and snowy petals and on, on, he went past visions of beauty. which seemed more like glimpses of fairyland than any reality on earth.

An hour had clapsed since the rover left the harbor, and the full blaze of a tropic night lay over land and sca.

" A glorious land - a magic clime ! But this hot bleed in my veins must be cooled in north ern airs, ere long," murmured Arnold, as he drew his skiff ashore at an opening, beyond whose vista of arching vines might be caught glimpses of the white walls of a villa, and stood for a moment with bared head beneath the starlight.

"A glorious land to live, and dream, and love in : such a life would kill me. I must have action, the sterner strife, the combut," he exclaimed, as he parted the vines, strode up a flight of marble steps, and entered the flowery

wilderness beyond. There, 'neath the bright starlight, gleamed the white walls of an old Moorish mansion. built around an open, paved court, where a fountain played, and shimmered like silver in

the starlight. There, in a quaint-looking old garden, with rreen terraces and broad flights of marble steps, where the stately palm reared its turfted coronial high above all other trees, where the scarlet pomegranate tossed its scented blossoms on the air, had the first love dream of Benedict

Arnold's life begun : and there, too, were his own lips, that night, to speak the words which ended it. There, too, it died : but in after years, when

ALLENTOWN, PA., AUGUST 22, 1855.

CHAPTER II.

Years, thick, crowding, and full of strange. gallant daring deeds, unknown before in the world's history, went by. An infant people had thrown off their shackles, and proudly taken a place among the nations of the earth. There were brave words thrilling thousands of stout American hearts, spoken in Congress; there were tales of war and victory repeated over at nightfall beside every hearthstone in the land ; there were battles and the flush of con-

anest. But ah, the picture has a darker side !

There were sufferings which had no parallel in the people's annals. An army of men resolved to "fight to the death," lay at Valley Forge, almost naked and starving, in the dead of a severe winter. Mothers girded the sword to their sons' breasts, and sent them forth to the battle field with a "God speed" on their

But over all these suffering soldiers the agle spirit of a brave man held sway ; rank he had so fully won ; but their tardiness through all the toil and bloodshed of the eight years' war, his eagle eye saw the future glori- there. ous destiny of his country.

And he of the cagle spirit and eve, was that great, good man, George Washington ; and eside him, sustaining and helping him in his andnous toils, were brave and gallant aids, forth to fight his country's battles. foremost among whom stood Benedict Arnold.

And in those years of peril and struggles, by deeds of gallant daring, his star attained its zenith. Certainly, if ever man won glory by toil and bravery, that man was Arnold.

Through the dark pine forests of Maine, with his band of iron men, through deep wildernesses shrouded in snows, across rivers, old dark, and turbil, down steeps and rapids, and penetrating the tangled, unbroken fastnesses of an untrodden region, had he accomplished a peritous journey.

And then, when keeping guard by the watch fires without the city on the heights of Quebee, in the keen, piercing cold of a Canadian winter, on the victorious battle plain, the gallant deeds of this brave man attested that the tide of patriotism ran strong within his veins. An'l afterwar I, at Sarato ra, where his good right arm turned the tide of battle and won the victory -- at the glorious sea fight of Lake Champlain, where he was at once hero and general-America had no need of more daring men to fight her battles than the same Benedict Arnold.

For then that foul stain, which no hand can wipe away, had not settled down, like a cloud of blackness, up on his name. No, thank God, there were years when he was no traitor.

To his after life belongs this foul deed. Let us not talk of it now-only of his glory. Time r is when no truer, more patriotic heart beat in an American bosoin than his.

Who, then, looking down the dim vista of the futue, would have said :--... This man will betray his country

We say this, not to palliate the crime of his treason-Heaven forbid !-- there were no wrong great enough to drive a true heart to that-but to show how a brave man may sometimes be worried into madness.

Benedict Arnold had his glory and his crimes he had his wrongs, too. There were aspertions cast upon his hith-

erto fair fame. He had been accused of seizing certain goods at Montreal without law ful warrant. Congress had appointed five major generals, all his juniors in rank, without remembering in the distribution of her favors, the hero of Quebec and Champlain, and then sought by the paltry gift of a war horse, to recompense him for the blood he had shed in

the service of his country. And such proceedings as these terribly galled this impetuous man. True, af.erward his services were recognized, when the board of war declared that his character had been unjustly aspersed, and Congress gave him the and neglect had sunk into his heart to rankle

Chafed and stung, he had resigned his commission ; but when, at the instance of Washington, he was called to join the army in the north, he did not hesitate, but again went

And then a series of brilliant victories followed, wherein he honored himself and America : when he was junior in command, was at once leader and hero.

In May, 1778 Arnold joined the army at Valley Forge, and shortly afterward took up his residence at Philadelphia, where he married his lovely child wife, the beautiful Margaret Shippen, the friend and correspondent of Major Andre, the leader of fashion and gaiety. in the Quaker City, yet, withal, the friend and companion of her hero husband.

Alas that in all those long years since his ship sailed out of the harbor of Havana, and he turned its prow toward his native, land, in those five years of glory on the battle field with such men as George Washington, Ethan Allen, and Daniel Morgan for his companions, -in the brilliant saloons of Philadelphia, with bright eyes beaming upon him, and such a woman as Margaret Arnold for his wife,--with such honors as Congress eventually, though tardily, had heaped upon him .-- alas that Benedict Arnold had no memory of the promise his lips had spoken, no thoughts for the Spanish girl who long ere this had been laid to sleep under the gay green sod of her native Indian isle !

For sweet Inez Velasouez was dead. The hot Spanish blood of her sires flowed not so strong within her veins as the gentler tide caught from the heart of her blue-eyed English mother. Her pride could not crush her tenderness, hence her life went out in the

struggle.

NUMBER 46. But when midnight came, all arrangements were completed. Transfers had been made, deeds signed, large sums of gold deposited in his agent's hands, to meet the immense debts which he had incurred by his lavish prodigal-

ity and princely style of living : and when the bells from the old Sinte House pealed forth the hour of twelve, Arneld was alone quee more.

Slowly sitting himself in his arm chair, after the sound of his agent's receding footsteps had died along the hall, he leaned his clbow on the table, and his head upon his hand.

His face looked anxious, pale, and careworn : and well it might; for those last few months of his life had not only left their iron impress upon his brow, but in his heart.

His very attitude betekened weariness. He was weary, wearied to death, at the treasenable game he was playing : for it was no light thing, even for that daring, indomitable, rash man, to become a traitor.

He had an honored name : his country reposed trust in him: Washington was his friend ; and in the great wrong he had planned, and which seemed almost upon the eve of consummation-had he no cause for remorse?

And for fear too? for what if he should fail? It was no idle game he held in his hand : and the stakes were fearfully heavy.

Yonder, in his cabinet, lay the commission from Congress which had raised him to the rank of major general : before him, upon the table, lay the letter from the commander-inchief, which confirmed him in the command of West Point; and in that tiny inlaid rosewood writing desk, which stood upon the little table in the southern bow window, where Margaret Arnold came often to sit near her husband, and pen her friendly letters to John Andre, lay the replies to his offers of treason.

And General Arnold's youthful wife little knew that her lively letters, detailing the gaicties of her life in the Quaker City, and Major Andre's replies, which, tied together with a dainty blue ribbon, filled one corner of her writing desk, where the vehicles of her husband's treason-that, interlined between her delicate chirography, he had written his premises to deliver West Point over to the British. Arnold knew that the game was begun .-Sting his conscience ever so fiercely, it must be played through ; but in that midnight hour. when everything was arranged, and he seemed on the very verge of success, that hold, had man trembled.

Like a panorama, every scene of his eventful career passed before his mental vision-the dark pine forests of Maine, the walls of Quebec. the blue waters of Champlain, the battle field of Saratoga : and over and above all this brilliant scroll seemed written, in lurid characters; as with a pen of fire, the single word, " Traitor !

of your pale face haunted me, and so I order. ed the carriage home again. And now I find you, restless and excited, pacing the floor .---You have some trouble. This command to West Point involves you in some way. You are ill. perhaps. What is it. Arnold?" and the true-hearted wife clung to his arm.

" No : it is nothing. Margaret. You are frightened. I have been making the necessary arrangements for leaving Philadelphia, and am only fatigued : that is all," he replied, evasively.

" But these long night watches, after days of toil, are too much for you. Arnold, they are killing you. You must get sleep before you start on your journey."

"Sleep! I wonder if I will ever sleep again !" he echoed, wildly, shaking off her arm, and walking to and fro. "Yes, I will sleep, Margaret : but not until I reach West Point. There I must needs slumber soundly and sweetly-patriots a'ways do, do they not ?" and coming back and pausing beside her, he langhed nervously. "O, my sweet wee wife does not know what a true-hearted, loval patriot Benedict Arnold is !"

"I know my husband for a brave and noble. oldier," said Mrs. Arnold proudly.

Arnold groaned aloud in the bitterness of his humiliation, and covered his face with his hands. The iron fangs of remorse were beginning to fasten upon his soul.

"A braya and noble soldier." Alas! and that is all ! To a patriot's name he had no laim.

Still his young wife stood beside him, pleading that he would try and sleep cre the lawn.

"I can find no time for rest. The hours of the night are precious. Much yet remains undone before my journey," was his reply. "1 go carly in the morning. You will join me by the 21st. Till then, adicu, Margaret, sweet wik, for I must bid you leave me now." And with the gallantry of a lover, he kissed her, and was leading her to the door of the apartment.

Margaret Arnold took her husband's arm.-As they passed bencath the high marble mantle, whereon a solitary candle burned and flickered in the tall branze candelabra, Arnold's eye caught the gimpse of something red and bright upon hi; wife's neck.

Rapidly thrusting his hand into his bosom, he as rapidly drew it forth again ; then bendng over her, and grasping the ornament, he sked, in a husky voice :---

" Margaret, how came you by this ?"

For there, suspended from her dainty white teck, by the slender chain of gold, and burnng red as fire upon her bosom, hung the ruby

"This ?" echoed Mrs. Arnold, taking the ross from her husband's fingers. " O, to be sure, I found it where General Arnold slyly deposited it-in my writing desk ! How kind und thoughtful of you to make me such a birthday gift ! but how queer to put it there ! But, pray, where did you procure it ? I assure you that, with my new jewels, I was quite the belle of the party to night, and was asked some half dozen times where they were purchased, or if they were family jewels. Indeed, one gentleman sought the privilege of examining them, and declared the ruby real. of immense value, and the antique workmanship of the chain exquisites. Pray where did you get them, Arnold ?" she playfully retorted.

General Arnold saw her mistake, for she had not noticed his quivering white lips, and he resolved to profit by it, and in as calm a voice as he could assume, he replied : "So my Maggie is pleased with her gift? Well, then, I am glad ; but go now--yet leave me the cross and chain. I would like to exmine their workmanship at my leisure, for it is a foreign trinket. There, go now." And receiving the cross from her hand, they parted, with a good-night kiss, at the door. General Arnold went back, and stood beneath the light upon the mantel, and gazed long and carnestly upon the trinket he held. "I must have drooped it from my neck into her writing desk," he murmured, remembering how, at dead of night, he had risen from his bed to write in his wife's letters his messages to Major Andre. " How strange that I did not miss it !"

ple western waves, he hastily strode to and fro on the wite sea strand.

And when the evening gun boomed from Moro Castle, he drew his little skiff from the deep cove where it lay sheltered, and with a few bold, vigorous dashes of the oar, pushed out of the harbor.

That was the hour when he kept trust with the beloved one : with her whose dark Spanish eyes had burned their way into his heart : whose tender love words and caresses woke in all its glow his own peculiarly ardent southern temperament.

But even this bold, determined man, loving, as he did, impetuously and strongly, could no longer linger there ; even his first love dream had no power to bind him always ; he was no man to loiter in his lady's bower, while that brave heart, panting for the rush of war and the glory of conquest beat within his breast.

And that day he had said :

" One more meeting in the shades of the old Moorish garden ; one last kiss upon Inez Velasquez's sweet lips, and then I must away." What Benedict Arnold's purposes for life tor."

were, he scarce knew then ; but with the one idea of change of excitement, he had exclaimed :

"I will no longer tarry here. The dream is sweet, passing sweet, but it must be broken."

And so on, on, out of the harbor he pushed with hasty oar dashes-the vigorous beat of the oars, the hasty strokes of his athletic arm. types of his whole life, impetuous, daring, free and spurning control.

on to the shore, where trailing vines, from the stone. Iuxuriant gardens lining the water's edge, dipped down into the tide.

From the very margin of the bay rose dense, tangled mass of rich vegetable life, varying in every shade of gold and green and crimson, the rank growth of the luxuriant soil.

Forth from the mated vines gleamed magnificent blossoms, swaying up and down on their long, pensile stems, like gorgeous, flame winged birds flitting to and fro ; bright crimson petals, loosened from ripened calixes, fell here and there about his boat upon the sea ; long feathery sprays plumed and nodded in the balmy talisman-his charm-his amulet.

the flush of glory was won-beside the watch fires of Quebec, in the rush of the battle, and the stillness of the calm night-tide, did no memory of that trusting Spanish girl, who had lavished her love on the gay, gallant, and chivalrie young Americano come to his heart ?-of the

girl who came there to meet him under the starlight, who cried, "O, do not go?" as standing there beside her, amid her carresses and her tears, he said "Inez, I must depart." "Nay, Incz. beloved," he whispered tenderly, " nay, it must be so. My country has need of all her sons to aid in her struggles, but when the victory is won, then will I come back

to love and thee." And there, in that hour Benedict Arnold.

meant what he uttered. In his first youthful love dream, that bold man was nearer the kingdom of heaven than he ever was again. Had he kept the faith he pledged : had he gone back to that Snanish maid when the battles of his

country were won : had he never woven for himself schemes of aggrandizement and ambition-he had been spared the name of a "trai-

But the voice of his mad, unquiet spirit was stronger far than that of affection : he crushed down all such thoughts, and said firmly, though tenderly :---

"Inez. I must go : but I will not forget .-We will meet again, beloved."

Net ere he went forth from her presence for ever, Inez Velasquez had flung about his neck a slight golden chain of antique but exquisite workmanship, from which hung suspended a Once out on the bay, his skiff sailed rapidly a blood-red cross, out from the sparkling ruby

> "Wear this when you fight your country's hattles." she cried. "Wear it next your heart ; 'twill guard you from harm. It was a gift to my sire by Granada's sovereign in his native Spain. He has often worn it in the fray of war, and it proved a talisman to guard him. When the ruby gleams red as blood, safety follows thy steps ; but if it pales, then beware, for danger is nigh thee. Wear it for my sake; and, looking upon it, remember Incz.

And this blood-red ruby cross, henceforth to be worn next his heart, was Benedict Arnold's

That man of foresight and prudence, George

Washington, did not look for such treason when, in a letter to Congress, recommending that Arnold should be sent to the northern army, he wrote :---

"He is active, judicious, and brave, and an officer in whom the militia will repose great confidence."

Arnold himself knew not to what depths he should fall, when, galled by the tardiness of his country in conferring the rank upon him he had so fully earned, he resigned his commission with these proud words :---

" I am ready to risk my life for my country ; but honor is a sacrifice that man ought to make."

O, no : his star, which had risen so brightly at Ticonderoga and Onchee, which had culminated at Saratoga, had not yet begun slope down the sky of honor, when, alas ! it was a star no more, but a brilliant meteor flashing down a darkening sky-a blazing ship, " with broken masts dismantled all," adrift, going down in a black, midnight sea.

There were five long years of glory granted to Benedict Arnold-five years, wherein he wrote the record of dazzling decds upon the scroll of fate-five years wherein his heart, warm and yielding as the fresh-molten lava, had he time to cool, and harden, and become like iron in the scoria of pride and revenge

which afterward encrusted it. And in those five years of glory, whether on and or sea, amid the burning heats of a south-

ern summer, or the rigors of a northern winter. he never once quailed before the foe. And even then, in toilsome march through

he wilderness, on the snow-crowned heights of Quebee, at Saratoga, Danbury, and Champlain, in conquest and in glory, still that bloodred cross had never dimmed, but lay like a sentinel of fire, guarding his heart-that heart which, amid its dreams of glory, had well nigh forgotten the giver of this ruby amulot-sweet Inez Valesquez.

CHAPTER III.

There came a time when, deny it as we may, Benedict Arnold received injury at the hands of the country he had so faithfully served.

traitor !" Month after month, year after year, rolled their weary circles into the eternity of the past,

and still the impetuous, gallant American, who had won her heart, came not. Then she knew that Benedict Arnold had

deserted her, and then she drooped and died. Truly for the heart broken Incz,-The quictest sleep was underneath the ground."

And thus it was that in that quaint old Moorish garden, washed by the ocean tides sweeping outward from the harbor of Havana, they laid her down to sleep ; thus it was that

where her life began it coded : where her heart was won; it broke, and over her white headstone the starry jasmines waved to and fro like

a cloud of hovering angels, and the searlet pemegranate blossoms fluttered down like a flock of flame-winged birds continually alighting upon her grave.

'Poor Incz Velasquez !

And all the time, while the ruby life-tide was ebbing within thy heart, thy gift, the blood-red cross, had never paled upon thy lover's. Still, like a thing of fire, it burned upon his breast, while the fires of ambition were smothering within -those baleful flames, which, when wakened there, would lap up the very life-blood of his honor.

Step by step he was walking the path whose end was ruin. Slowly his star was sloping to its downward way.

And so they made the Spanish maiden : grave amid the richness of the tropies, and all luxuriant, Leautiful things. Better by far for Benedict Arnold had he died too, and been laid to sleep beside lier-he had not lived to become

Ever since the gray twilight set in, had General Arnold been closeted in the library of his mansion, then known as the Penn House, with his business agent, writing letters, and making the necessary arrangements for the disposal of his personal property in Philadelphia; for that day had he received from Washington the command of West Point, and the morrow's sun must see him on his journey thither.

The quiet of the night, and his rapidly rush ing thoughts, maddened him. He rose, and strode the room. ""Tis the infernal plot !" he muttered

huskily. " By heaven, had any man said to me at Ticonderoga or Quebec Benedict Ar

nold, you will oneaday play the traitor,' would have ground him back to dust beneath my heel ! But now-now," and he smote the air with elinched fist, " now what am I but that accursed thing ?"

Then his mood changed. His lips grew firm. as though cut from iron; his eye blazed with hate and scorn.

"Yet why," he went on, "why should it madden me so ? Have I not had cause for this? Were not abuses heaped upon me? Did not a lawless mob assault me, and surround

my dwelling ? Did not Congress treat me dishonorably, unjustly, shamefally ? Did not George Washington insult me at Morristown ? And shall I sit here weakly mourning because the hour of my revenge is nigh ? No ! This cursed country shall have cause for woe, as it has given me cause for the deed I have done .--Congress shall have reason for reprimand now. George Washington shall not have it to say that he rebuked me publically, and I tamely

bore the insult. .. I gave them the best years of any life -- the strength of my manhood. I shed my blood like water : but, by Heaven, they've had the last drop from my veins! Now-now, I can avenge myself! Ha! this should be a royal hour !" and, in his intense excitement, he strode to and fro with flashing eyes.

Suddenly a white hand, sparkling with jewels, was laid upon his arm, and a soft voice said : ---

" General Arnold -- my husband !" He turned, and his beautiful child-wife, clad n white fleecy garments, as though attired for a festival, stood beside him.

A soft beam lighted his eye, and a tender smile quivered around his lip. " Margaret, are you here ?" he said. " I thought you were at some brilliant levce to-

night." "I did go," she replied ; " but thoughts

" But, ha ! what is this ? What if her words, which I deemed but an idle superstition, should prove true ? By heavens, they are, they are true, and I cm lost !" And Arnold shricked aloud : for Inez Velasquez's gift, the ruby cross, had grown pale beneath his gaze.

Minutes, long to him as hours went by : and he only nurmured in a strange, hollow voice : --

"1 shall fail. . The warning canre, but tco late--too late !"

And then, as waters will sometimes bubble up clear and limpid from the deep black spring. o from the heart of that proud, passionate. imperious man gashed forth memories of that love dream of his youth.

And with tears in his eyes, he wandered in spirit along the terraced walks of that quaint, dd Moorish garden, under the blazing starlight of tropic skies, breathed airs fragrant of pomegranate and orange ; and, one by one, as monk counts his beads, he said over the broken yows uttered in that sweet, sweet springtime of the heart.

"Dead, dead !" he murmured sadly. "I know it all now. All these long years cannot have gone by, and her heart not broken ... my " Alas ! and thus it has been from thing I up ! Thus, every good and dow, now," he have crushed in my path with this warning of added in a hollow vgiI to look forward to but my doom, what far, contempt and scorn ?" death, or, " he hours of night wore on, and gray" And the hours of with a heavy heart Benodiet Arnold set forth for West Point.

CUNTINUED ON SECOND PAGE.

a traitor then.

CHAPTER IV. It was the noon of night.