At the Stile.

Oh! I know a little maiden,
She lived close to us at home;
When the air with peace is laden
In the evening she will roam.
In the evening down the meadow
To the stile upon the lane,
Where beneath the oak-tree shadow
She will meet her love again.

She has very many lovers,
Has this maiden, half a score;
She's a fortune to the glovers
With her twenty pair, or more.
There's the banker and the tailor
Who are looking out for wives,
And our parson's son—a sailor—
Will make love when he arrives.

Then the curate comes to prattle
All the gossip of the town,
While the captain talks of battle,
And besieges with a frown,
There's a farmer every Friday
Comes to market in our square,
Bringing with him, wet or dry day,
Posies gathered for the fair.

They implore her, till she blushes—
Says they do not know their mind—
So their vows and speeches crushes,
But she is not *all* unkind;
For she tells me of their going,
With a laughing sort of smile,
And I know what I am knowing,
And I learn it—at the stile.

—*Temple Bar*

THE CHOICE OF THREE:

A NOVEL.

"At the first break of dawn, so that they may have light to take the waggon away by."

"Good! we shall escape them. The moon will be up in an hour, and we can track away."

The lad's face fell.

"Alas!" he said, "it is impossible; there is a spy watching the camp now. He is up there among the rocks; I saw him as I brought the oxen home. If we move he will report it, and we shall be overtaken in an hour."

Mr. Alston thought for a moment, and then made up his mind with the rapidity that characterizes men who spend their life in dealing with savage races,

"Mazooku!" he called to a Zulu who was sitting smoking by the camp-fire, a man whom Ernest had hired as his particular servant. The man arose and came to him and saluted.

He was not a tall man; but standing there nude except for the "moocha" round his centre, his proportions, especially those of the chest and lower limbs, looked gigantic. He had been a soldier in one of Cetawayo's regiments, but having been so indiscreet as to break through some of the Zulu marriage laws, had been forced to fly for refuge to Natal, where he had become a groom: and picked up a peculiar language which he called English. Even among a people where all men are fearless, he bore a reputation for bravery. Leaving him standing awhile, Mr. Alston rapidly explained the state of the case to Ernest, and what he proposed to do. Then turning he addressed the Zulu.

"Mazooku, the Inkooshere, your master, tells me that he thinks you are a brave man." The Zulu's handsome face expanded into a smile that was positively alarming in its extent.

"He says that you told him that when you were Cetawayo's man in the Undi Regiment, you once killed four Basutus, who set upon you together."

Mazooku lifted his right arm and saluted, by way of answer, and then glanced slightly at the assegai-wounds on his chest.

"Well, I tell your master that I do not believe you. It is a lie you speak to him; you ran away from Cetawayo because you did not like to fight and be killed as the king's ox, as a brave man should."

The Zulu colored up under his dusky skin, and again glanced at his wounds.

"Ow-w!" he said.

"Bah! there is no need for you to look at those scratches; they were left by women's nails. You are nothing but a woman. Silence! who told you to speak? If you are not a woman, show it. There is an armed Basutu among those rocks. He watches us. Your master cannot eat and sleep in peace when he is watched. Take that big 'bangwan' (stabbing assegai) you are so fond of showing, and kill him, or die a coward! He must make no sound, remember."

Mazooku turned toward Ernest for confirmation of the order. A Zulu always likes to take his orders straight from his own chief. Mr. Alston noticed it, and added:

"I am the Inkoosi's mouth, and speak his words."

Mazooku saluted again, and turning, went to the waggon to fetch his assegai.

"Tread softly, or you will wake him; and he will run from so great a man," Mr. Alston called after him sarcastically.

"I go among the rocks to seek 'mouti'" (medicine), the Zulu answered with a smile.

"We are in a serious mess, my boy," said Mr. Alston to Ernest, "and it is a toss-up if we get out of it. I taunted that fellow so that there may be no mistake about the spy. He must be killed, and Mazooku would rather die himself than not kill him now."

"Would it not have been safer to send another man with him?"

"Yes; but I was afraid that if the scout saw two men coming toward him he would make off, however innocent they might look. Our horses are dead, and if that fellow escapes we shall never get out of this place alive. It would be folly to expect Basutus to distinguish between Boers and Englishmen when their blood is up, and besides, Sikukuni has sent orders that we are to be killed, and they would not dare to disobey. Look, there goes Mr. Mazooki with an assegai as big as a fire-shovel."

The kopje, or stony hill, where the spy was hid, was about three hundred yards from the little hollow in which the camp was formed, and across the stretch of bushy plain between the two Mazooku was quietly strolling, his assegai in one hand and two long sticks in the other. Presently he vanished in the shadow, for the sun was rapidly setting, and after what seemed a long pause to Ernest, who was watching his movements through a pair of field-glasses, reappeared walking along the shoulder of the hill right against the sky-line, his eyes fixed upon the ground as though he were searching among the crevices of the rocks for the medical herbs which Zulus prize.

All of a sudden Ernest saw the stalwart form straighten itself and spring, with the assegai in its hand raised to the level of its head, down into a dip, which hid it from sight. Then came a pause, lasting perhaps for twenty seconds. On the farther side of the dip was a large flat rock, which was straight in a line with the fiery ball of the setting sun. Suddenly a tall figure sprang up out of the hollow on to this rock, followed by another figure, in whom Ernest recognized Mazooku. For a moment, the two men, looking from their position like figures afire, struggled together on the top of the flat stone, and Ernest could clearly distinguish the quick flash of their spears as they struck at each other, then they vanished together over the edge of the stone.

"By Jove!" said Ernest, who was trembling with excitement, "I wonder how it has ended."

"We shall know presently," answered Mr. Alston, coolly. "At any rate the die was cast one way or other, and we may as well make a bolt for it. Now, you Zulus, down with those tents and get the oxen inspanned, and look quick about it, if you don't want a Bassutu assegai to send you to join the spirit of Chaka."

The voorlooper Jim had by this time communicated his alarming intelligence to the driver and other Kafirs, and Mr. Alston's exhortation to look sharp was quite unnecessary. Ernest never saw camp struck or oxen inspanned with such rapidity before. But before the first tent was fairly down, they were all enormously relieved to see Mazooku coming trotting cheerfully across the plain droning a little Zulu song as he ran. His appearance, however, was by no means cheerful, for he was perfectly drenched with blood, some of it flowing from a wound in his left shoulder, and the rest evidently till recently the personal property of somebody else. Arrived in front of where Mr. Alston and Ernest were standing, he raised his broad assegai, which was still dripping blood and saluted.

"I hear," said Mr. Alston.

"I have done the Inkoosi's bidding. There were two of them; the first I killed easily in the hollow, but the other, a very big man, fought well for a Basutu. They are dead, and I threw them into a hole, that their brothers might not find them easily.

"Good! go wash yourself and get your master's things into the waggon. Stop! let me sew up that cut. How came you to be so awkward as to get touched by a Basutu.

"Inkhoos, he was very quick with his spear and fought like a cat."

Mr. Alston did not reply, but taking a stout needle and some silk from a little huswife he carried in his pocket, he quickly stitched up the assegai-gash, which fortunately was not a deep one. Mazooku stood without flinching till the job was finished, and then retired to wash himself at the spring.

The short twilight rapidly faded into darkness, or rather into what would have been darkness had it not been for the half-grown moon, which was to serve to light them on their path. Then a large fire having been lit on the site of the camp, to make it appear as though it were still pitched there, the order was given to start. The oxen, obedient to the voice of the driver, strained at the trek-tow, the waggon creaked and jolted, and they began their flight for life. The order of march was as follows: Two hundred yards ahead of the waggon walked a Kafir, with strict orders to keep his eyes very wide open indeed, and report in the best way possible under the circumstances if he detected any signs of an ambush. At the head of the long line of cattle, leading the two front oxen by a "rim," or strip of buffalo-hide, was the Zulu boy Jim, to whose timely discovery they owed their lives, and by the side of the waggon, the driver, a Cape Hottentot, plodded along in fear and trembling. On the waggon-box itself, each with a Winchester repeating rifle on his knees, and keeping a sharp lookout into the shadows, sat Mr. Alston and Ernest. In the hinder part of the waggon, also armed with a rifle and keeping a keen lookout, sat Mazooku. The other servants marched alongside, and the boy Roger was asleep inside, on the "cartle," or hide bed.

And so they travelled on hour after hour, till the dawn found them the other side of the wide-plain at the foot of the mountain-range.

Here they rested for two hours, and let the oxen fill themselves with the lush grass. They had travelled thirty miles since the yokes were put up n their necks, not far according to our way of journeying, but very far for cumbersome oxen over an almost impassable country. As soon as the sun was well up they inspanned again, and hurried forward, bethinking them of the Basutu horde who would now be pressing on their spoor; on with brief halts through all that day and the greater part of the following night, till the cattle began to fall down in the yokes—till at last they crossed the boundary and were in Transvaal territory.

When dawn broke, Mr. Alston took the glasses and examined the track over which they had fled. There was nothing to be seen except a great herd of hartebeest.

"I think that we are safe now," he said at last, "and thank God for it. Do you know what those Basutu devils would have done if they had caught us?"

"What?"

"They would have skinned us, and made our hearts and livers into 'mouti' (medicine), and eaten them to give them the courage of the white man."

"By Jove!" said Ernest.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A HEROIC COMBAT.

When Mr. Alston and Ernest found themselves safe upon Transvaal soil they determined to give up the idea of following any more big game for the present and to content themselves with the comparatively humble wilderbeeste, blesbok, springbok, and other small antelopes.

It was a wild, rough life that they led, but by no means a lowering one.

The result of Mr. Alston's observations had been to make him an extremely shrewd companion, and an excellent judge of men and their affairs.

Between shooting and philosophical discussion, the time passed pleasantly enough, till at length they drew near to Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal, where they had decided to go and rest the oxen for a month or two before making arrangements for a real big game excursion up toward Central Africa. They struck into the Pretoria road just above a town called Heidelberg, about sixty miles from the former place, and proceeded by easy stages toward their destination.

As they went on they generally found it convenient to outspan at spots which it was evident had been used for the same purpose by some waggon which was travelling one stage ahead of them. So frequently did this happen, that during their trek five or six outspans they were able on no less than three occasions to avail themselves of the dying fires of their predecessors' camp. This was a matter of lively interest to Ernest, who always did cook, and a very good cook he became. One of the great bothers of South African travelling is the fire question. Indeed, how to make sufficient fire to boil a kettle when you have no fuel to make it of is the great question of South African travel. A ready-made fire is, therefore, peculiarly acceptable, and for the last half-hour of the trek, Ernest was always in a great state of expectation as to whether the waggon before them had or had not been considerate enough to leave theirs burning. Thus, when it came to pass that one morning when they were about fourteen miles from Pretria, which they expected to reach the same evening, and the waggon was slowly drawing up to the outspan-place Ernest, accompanied by Mazooku, who lounged about after him like a black shadow, went forward to see if their predecessors had or had not been considerate. In this instance energy was rewarded, for there was a fire still burning.

"Hoorah!" said Ernest: "get the sticks, Mazooku, and go and fill the kettle. By Jove! there's a knife."

There was a knife, a many-bladed knife with a buck-horn handle and a corkscrew in it, left lying by the dying fire. Ernest took it up and looked at it; somehow it seemed familiar to him. He turned it round and looked at the silver plate upon it, and suddenly started.

"What is the matter, Ernest?" said Mr. Alston, who had joined them.

"Look there," he answered, pointing to two initials cut on the knife.

"Well, I see, some fellow has left his knife; so much the better for the finder."

"You have heard me speak of my friend Jeremy. That is his knife; I gave it to him years ago. Look—J. J."

"Nonsense! it is some knife like it; I have seen hundreds of that make."

"I believe that it is the same. He must be there."

Mr. Alston shrugged his shoulders. "Not probable," he said.

Ernest made no answer. He stood staring at the knife.

"Have you written to your people lately, Ernest?"

"No; the last letter I wrote was down there in Sikukuni's country, you remember I sent it by the Casutu who was going to Lydenburg just before Jeffries died."

"Like enough he never got to Lydenburg. He would not have dared to go to Lydenburg after the war broke out. You should write."

"I mean to, from Pretoria; but somehow I have had no heart for writing."

Nothing more was said about the matter, and Ernest put the knife into his pocket.

That evening they trekked down through the "Poort" that commands the most charming of the South African towns, and, on the plain below, Pretoria, bathed in the bright glow of the evening sunshine, smiled its welcome to them. Mr. Alston, who knew the town, determined to trek straight through it and outspan the waggon on the farther side, where he thought there would be better grazing for the cattle. Accordingly, they rumbled on past the jail, past the pleasant white building which afterward became Government House, and which was at that moment occupied by the English Special Commissioner and his staff, about whose doings all sorts of rumors had reached them during their journey, and on to the market-square. This area was at that moment crowded with Boer waggons, whose owners had trekked in to celebrate their "nachtmaal" (communion), of which it is their habit, in company with their wives and children, to partake four times a year. The "Volksraad," or local Parliament, was also in special session to consider the proposals made to it on behalf of the Imperial Government, so that the little town was positively choked with visitors. The road down which they were passing ran past the building used as Government offices, and between this and the Dutch church a considerable crowd was gathered, which, to judge from the shouts and volleys of oaths—Dutch and English—that proceeded from it, was working itself up into a state of excitement.

"Hold on," shouted Ernest to the voorlooper, and then, turning to Mr. Alston, "There is a jolly row going on there; let us go and see what it is."

"All right, my boy, where the fighting is there will the Englishmen be gathered together," and they climbed down off the waggon and made for the crowd.

(To be continued.)

Evolution in a Circle.

First Chappie—I say, Smythe, old chappie, howdy do?

Second Chappie—Aw, don't call me Smythe, y' know; call me Smith.

First Chappie—But, bah Jove, yer name was Smythe.

Second Chappie—Yeas, but I've changed it to Smith. Smythe is too doocid common, don'tcherknow.—*Harper's Bazar.*

It was on Christmas Day, 1786, the *Christian Leader* reminds us, that Dr. Coke and his three companions landed at Antigua to start missionary work in the West Indies; and by a remarkable coincidence it was in the same year—that is, exactly a hundred years ago—that Charles Grant, one of the founders of the Church Missionary Society, and William Carey first formally propounded their views on missions

The Redemptorist Fathers preaching the retreat at St. James' Church, Montreal, having invited those who attend to contribute towards having a brilliant illumination for a special service to be held, some scoundrel took advantage of this, and placing himself at the door of the church, after the sermon on Wednesday night, commenced to ask contributions for this illumination. After a few persons had given money, a large number of the congregation naturally followed suit, taking this individual to be an authorized collector. However, the fathers have not yet seen either the money or the individual, against whom those attending the church have been warned.

WOMEN AND THEIR FEET.

An Artist Thinks American Girls Ough Not to Wear Tight-Fitting Shoes.

"Women who pose as models have, as a rule, poorly-shaped feet," said an artist to a New York *Mail and Express* reporter. "If their feet are not poorly shaped they are apt to be out of proportion by being too small. The reason is obvious. Women are ambitious to have small feet and hands, and at an early age they begin to wear tight shoes. The result is that their feet are cramped and do not grow with the other members of the body. Of course, there are some professional models who began early in life and never cramped their feet with tight shoes. They have correct proportions. I speak generally of the mass of women who become models after they are 18 years old. Women imagine if they have small feet and hands they have all that is necessary to give them a shapely appearance. A worse mistake was never made. Women who are large should naturally have feet in proportion; from an artistic point of view they look better. But you cannot make them think so.

"A crusade ought to be waged against wearing tight shoes. The tight shoes in the first place cramp the toes all together, until they lose shape and become frescoed with corns. The foot doesn't get the free circulation of blood in it that it should have and falls behind in growth. The big toe usually bears the brunt of the sin for tight shoes, and manages to have a large lump gather just where it joins the body of the foot, The Americans are more prone to wear tight shoes than the English women. The French, outside of Paris, are not devoted to the semi-barbarous habit either, and some of our finest models come from the Provinces of France. The nobility are supposed to have small feet and hands, but that is an erroneous impression, as many noble families I could mention in England are noted for their large feet. All American girls feel their nobility, and hence they wish to have small feet. To produce a race of perfect shaped women a reform must be made in their shoes, even if we have to substitute the ancient sandal."

Amusing Suit in Regard to Getting a Wife

A very amusing case was heard in the Toronto Division Court yesterday. The action was one brought by Mr. M. M. King, bailiff and detective, against Mrs. Peter Burton to recover $70, which he claimed to be due him for his services in arranging a marriage between Mrs. Burton and her husband. It appeared that the defendant fell in love with Mr. Burton, and was desiring to marry his wife. To bring about the marriage she secured the services of the plaintiff. The latter succeeded in arranging the desired marriage, but did not succeed in securing the removal of Mr. Burton's prepossessing housekeeper, who was felt to be in the way. The marriage came off as arranged, but the newly wedded couple did not agree, and the handsome housekeeper was put down as the cause, it being alleged that she was estranging Mr. Burton's affections from his spouse with the aid of an elixir of love. Mrs. Burton determined to test the potency of this compound, which she did by applying it to her husband's coat tails, which did not have the desired effect. The wife then using more forcible arguments with Mr. Burton, a separation followed. Mrs. Burton in the witness box denied that the plaintiff had rendered the services claimed. To her solicitor she gave the credit of arranging the marriage. Judgment was reserved.

An Able Financier.

"Mary," said an economical husband, "I want to make you a Christmas present this year, but I really don't know what to get. I guess I'll postpon it until next year and then get something nice."

"John, you said that last year."

"Really now, did I? Well, that proves that I never forget you."

"But, John, you may be dead by next year."

"Why, that's true, and if I don't waste any money on Christmas presents you'll be so much the better off. Really, Mary, I'm glad to see you look at matters in such a sensible light."

He Did Not Look Happy.

A dog with a tin can attached to his tail by a strong cord passed hurriedly down street.

"Is that dog mad?" inquired an anxious pedestrian.

"Well," responded another, "I caught a glimpse of his countenance as he passed by, and he didn't look the first bit pleased."—*Pittsburg Dispatch.*

The widow of the late King of Hanover is dying.

A shoemaker of Hamburg offers to fast 30 days, working the whole time.

The action of Mrs. Adams against her father, Lord Chief Justice Coleridge, has been settled privately.

In January all French employed on the Alsace-Lorraine Railway will be dismissed and replaced by Germans.

Lord Cranbrook has made a permanent reduction of 30 per cent. per annum in the rents of his farms in Kent county, England.

Lady Randolph Churchill has issued 2,000 invitations to a reception which will be held at the Foreign Office on January 12th.

There was a heavy snowfall in the west of Ireland yesterday. It seriously impedes and threatens to entirely stop railway travel temporarily.

Sir R. D. Morier, British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, has been summoned to London to confer with the Government concerning fresh disputes which have arisen regarding the Afghan frontier.

Valuable seams of coal have been discovered in the vicinity of Posen. They cover an area of 1,500 hectares, and are estimated to contain 750,000,000 hectolitres.

The Suez Canal Company and the Egyptian Government have agreed to the widening of the Suez Canal. From Port Said to the Bitter Lakes, the canal will be 44 metres wide, and from there to Suez 65 metres.

Emperor William makes daily visits to Unter den Linden stores for the purpose of purchasing Christmas presents for the Imperial household. For thirty years he has been accustomed to deal with the same stores. He goes at 8 o'clock in the morning in order to evade public curiosity.

HE STAYED.

The Young Man Who Did Not Go Out Between Acts and Why.

It is a very good story which genial Treasurer Prior, of the Chicago Opera House, tells about a young man of his acquaintance. This young man, it seems, is good-looking, of a nice family and a good deal of a favorite with the ladies. But he is altogether too fond of a little red liquor, neatly trimmed with lemon and things and served in cut glass—so fond, indeed, that some of the more careful girls have of late fought shy of his escort to places of amusement. One day last week he invited a young lady living on Indiana avenue to go and see "One of Our Girls." She wanted to see the play, and, the truth is, rather liked Tom—we will call the young man Tom for short—but she hesitated about accepting the invitation. Her friends advised her to decline, and warned her that if she accepted Tom would leave her alone a few minutes after every act while he was out interviewing the nearest barkeeper.

"Oh, no, he wouldn't do that," said the young lady.

"Yes, but he would," the advisers replied; "he took Em Johnson week before last and went out three times and came in chewing cloves and coffee, and Em was so mortified that she says——"

"But he wouldn't leave me alone in the theatre, I know," the young lady retorted, confidently, "and to prove it I will accept his invitation."

On the way to the theatre Tom was all gallantry, and the curtain once up he was greatly interested in Mr. Howard's neat drama. But at the end of the first act he made a brief apology to the effect that he wished to speak with a friend whom he saw standing in the foyer, and rose to go. But he didn't go. Something seemed to take hold of his coat-tails and pull him back into his seat. Imagine poor Tom's chagrin and surprise when a second's investigation showed him that his fair companion, who sat with such an innocent look in her brown eyes, had pinned his coat to the upholstering of the seat with a good, strong safety-pin. Tom's face felt as if it was on a broiler, and a cold wave or two ran up and down his spinal column, but he didn't say a word. Nor did he leave his seat until the curtain fell on the happy denouement in the play. The end of the little drama in the parquet seats was equally agreeable, for on their way out Indiana avenue Tom smilingly confessed that the joke was on him and the reproof a merited one. He also promised that if again given the pleasure of escorting his charming companion to the theatre, no safety-pins would be needed to keep him in his seat.

"I hope he'll marry that girl," added the genial Mr. Prior, "because if he does she'll reform him and make a man out of him, as sure as guns."—*Chicago Herald.*

A Girl's Leap for Life

Early this morning a fire broke out in a restaurant at the corner of Drury street, Dublin. There were nine servants sleeping in the house, seven of whom managed to get out safely with little other clothing than their night-dresses. But two young women appeared at a corner window of the second story, nearly forty feet from the ground, screaming for aid. They were immediately above where the fire was raging fiercely. One young girl named Annie Magann jumped from the window and fell on the footway, from which she was taken up in an unconscious state and conveyed to Mercer's hospital on a stretcher. The girl had only her night clothes on at the time. Immediately after Miss Magann had taken the leap for life the other girl, Mary Corcoran, a waitress, followed her example. She appeared to be anxious about her watch, which she threw to a man, but he missed it, and it was broken on the footway. As she was taking the leap, a constable called to her to jump toward him, and she fell into his arms. She had no other clothing than her night-wrapper. The restaurant was destroyed. The injured girl had her ribs fractured.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

A Well Worked Scheme.

"Don't you like jelly cake with frosting on top, Mr. Featherly?" inquired Bobby.

"Oh, yes," laughed Featherly, "but I thought that I had eaten about all the dessert I ought. However, since Bobby is so polite about it, Mrs. Hendricks," continued the young man, "I believe you may give me a small piece of the jelly cake."

"All right," said Bobby, "and I'll have some, too. Ma said I could have a piece if she had to cut into it."—*New York Sun.*

The idea of leaving the Canadian fisheries exhibit in England has been abandoned by the Dominion Government.

Sir John Rose, of Canada, is to be married in January to the Marchioness of Tweeddale.

Robert Gilpin, one of the Nile voyageurs, died at Ottawa on Saturday morning from consumption, the effect of a cold contracted on the Nile expedition.

The County Council of Grey on Saturday appointed Mr. Neil W. Campbell, of the township of Bentinck, to the office of School Inspector of South Grey, in the place of Mr. W. Ferguson, resigned.

At a meeting of the Quebec City Council on Friday evening a special committee was appointed, on suggestion of the Mayor, to consider the advisability of a proper celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the reign of Queen Victoria.

The only outpost duty deemed necessary for the Mounted Police this winter is the protection of the Prince Albert mail route. Detachments ranging from five to fifteen will be stationed at File Hills, Touchwood, Salt Plains, Humboldt and Batoche for the purpose.

Archie Livingston, a young man employed in Lucan's saw mills, on the tenth line, about five miles east of Petrolia, met with an accident some days ago. His leg got caught in the chain that draws the logs up to the saw in the mill, injuring it so badly that it was found necessary to amputate it on Saturday below the knee.

It is rumored that the Montreal Syndicate who purchased the Corriveau silk mills will sell the machinery to Montreal capitalists, who purpose to form a joint-stock company for the manufacture of broad goods, handkerchiefs, etc. The building will probably be employed for an entirely new industry in Canada.