The Destiny Maker.

She came, and I who linger'd there,
I saw that she was very fair;
And, with my sighs that pride suppress'd,"
There rose a trembling wish for rest.
But I, who had resolv'd to be
The maker of my destiny,
I turn'd me to my task and wrought,
And so forgot the passing thought.

She paused; and I who question'd there,
I heard she was as good as fair;
And in my soul a still, small voice
Enjoin'd me not to check my choice.
But I, who had resolv'd to be
The maker of my destiny,
I bade the gentle guardian down
And tried to think about renown.

She left; and I who wander fear
There's nothing more to see or hear;
Those walls that ward my paradise
Are very high, nor open twice.
And I, who had resolv'd to be
The maker of my destiny,
Can only wait without the gate
And sit and sigh: "Too late! too late!"

The Tired Mother.

Oh, who can tell the troubles,
The trials and the cares,
The heavy daily burden
That the patient mother wears?

In cooking, washing, sweeping, dusting,
All her days are spent;
No wonder that before she's old
Or gray, her back is bent.

She's up and sends the children off
To school at early morn,
And she had their dinner ready
When they at noon return.

When supper's over, and she's washed
Plates, knives and forks and spoons,
Then she must sit up half the night
Half-soling pantaloons.

So patient and unselfish,
She's as loving as she's brave,
But when she gets a rest, 'twill be
When she is in the grave.

THE CHOICE OF THREE:

A NOVEL.

The next fortnight was a busy one for all concerned. The organization of a colonial volunteer corps is no joke, as anybody who has ever tried it can testify. There were rough uniforms to be provided, arms to be obtained, and a hundred and one other wants to be satisfied. Then came some delay about the horses, which were to be served out by Government. At last these were handed over, a good-looking lot, but apparently very wild. Matters were at this point, when one day Ernest was seated in the room he used as an office in his house, enrolling a new recruit previous to his being sworn, interviewing a tradesman about flannel shirts, making arrangements for a supply of forage, filling up the endless forms which the Imperial authorities required for transmission to the War-office, and a hundred other matters. Suddenly his orderly announced that two privates of the corps wished to see him.

"What is it?" he asked of the orderly testily for he was nearly worked to death.

"A complaint, sir."

"Well, send them in."

The door opened, and in entered a curious couple. One was a great, burly sailor-man, who had been corporal-at-arms on board one of Her Majesty's ships at Cape Town, got drunk, overstayed his leave, and deserted rather than face the punishment; the other a quick, active little fellow, with a face like a ferret. He was a Zululand trader, who had ruined himself by drink, and a peculiarly valuable member of the corps on account of his knowledge of the country in which they were going to serve. Both the men saluted and stood at ease.

"Well, my men, what is it?" asked Ernest, going on filling up his forms.

"Nothing so far as I am concerned, sir," said the little man.

Ernest looked up sharply at the quondam tar.

"Now, Adam, your complaint; I have no time to waste."

Adam hitched up his breeches and began:

"You see, sir, I brought he here by the scruff of the neck."

"That's true, sir," said the little man rubbing that portion of his body.

"Because he and I, sir, as is messmates, sir, 'ad a difference of opinion. It was his day, you see, sir, to cook for our mess, and instead of putting on the pot, sir, he comes to me he does and he says, 'Adam, you father of a race of fools'—that's what he says, sir, a-comparing of me to the gent who lived in a garden—'why don't you come and take the skins off the—taters, instead of a-squatting of yourself down on that—bed!'"

"Slightly in error, sir," broke in the little man; "our big friend's memory is not as substantial as his form. What I said was, 'My dear Adam, as I see you have nothing to do, except sit and play a Jew's-harp upon your couch, would you be so kind as to come and assist me to remove the outer skin of these potatoes?'"

Ernest began to explode, but checked himself and said sternly:

"Don't talk nonsense, Adam; tell me your complaint, or go."

"Well, sir," answered the big sailor, scratching his head, "is I must give it a name it is this—this here man, sir, be too infarnal sagustic."

"Be off with you both," said Ernest, sternly, "and don't trouble me with any such nonsense again, or I will put you both under arrest, and stop your pay. Come, march!" and he pointed to the door. As he did so he observed a Boer gallop swiftly past the house, and take the turn to Government House.

"What is up now?" he wondered.

Half an hour afterward another man passed the window, also at full speed, and also turned up toward Government House. Another half hour passed, and Mr. Alston came hurrying in.

"Look here, Ernest," he said, "here is a pretty business. Three men have come in to report that Cetywayo has sent an Impi (army) round by the back of Secocoeni's country to burn Pretoria, and return to Zululand across the High Veldt. They say that the Impi is now resting in the Saltpan Bush, about twenty miles off, and will attack the town to-night or to-morrow night. All these three, who have, by-the-way, had no communication with each other, state that they have actually seen the captains of the Impi, who came to tell them to bid the other Dutchmen stand aside, as they are now fighting the Queen, and they would not be hurt."

"It seems incredible," said Ernest; "do you believe it?"

"I don't know. It is possible, and the evidence is strong. It is possible; I have known the Zulus make longer marches than that. The Governor has ordered me to gallop to the spot, and report if I can see anything of this Impi."

"Am I to go too?"

"No, you will remain in the corps. I take Roger with me—he is a light weight—and two spare horses. If there should be an attack and I should not be back, or if anything should happen, you will do your duty."

"Yes."

"Good-by. I am off. You had best muster the men to be ready for an emergency—" and he was gone.

Ten minutes afterward, down came an orderly from the officer commanding, with a peremptory order that the officer commanding Alston's Horse was to mount and parade his men in readiness for immediate service.

"Here is a pretty go," thought Ernest, "and the horses not served out yet!"

Just then Jeremy came in, saluted, and informed him that the men were mustered.

"Serve out the saddlery. Let every man shoulder his saddle. Tell Mazook to bring out the 'Devil' (Ernest's favorite horse), and march the men up to the Government stables. I will be with you presently."

Jeremy saluted again and vanished. He was the most punctilious sergeant-major who ever breathed.

Twenty minutes later, a long file of men, each with a carbine slung to his back, and a saddle on his head, which, at a distance, gave them the appearance of a string of gigantic mushrooms, were to be seen proceeding toward the Government stables a mile away.

Ernest, mounted on his great black stallion, and looking in his military uniform and the revolver slung across his shoulders, a typical volunteer officer was there before them.

"Now, my men," he said, as soon as they were paraded, "go in, and each man choose the horse which he likes best, bridle him, and bring him out and saddle him. Sharp!"

The men broke their ranks and rushed to the stables, each anxious to secure a better horse than his neighbors. Presently from the stables there arose a sound of kicking, plunging and wohohing impossible to describe.

"There will be a pretty scene soon, with these unbroken brutes," thought Ernest. He was not destined to be disappointed. The horses were dragged out, most of them lying back upon their haunches, kicking, bucking and going through every other equine antic.

"Saddle up!" shouted Ernest, as soon as they were all out.

It was done with great difficulty.

"Now mount."

Sixty men lifted their legs and swung themselves into the saddle, not without sad misgivings. A few seconds passed, and at least twenty of them were on the broad of their backs; one or two were being dragged by the stirrup-leather; a few were clinging to their bucking and plunging steeds; and the remainder of Alston's Horse was scouring the plain in every possible direction. Never was there such a scene.

In time, however, most of the men got back again, and some sort of order was restored. Several men were hurt, one or two badly. These were sent to the hospital, and Ernest formed the rest into half sections to be marched to the place of rendezvous. Just then, to make matters better, down came the rain in sheets, soaking them to the skin, and making confusion worse confounded. So they rode to the town, which was by this time in an extraordinary state of panic. All business was suspended, women were standing about on the verandas, hugging their babies and crying, or making preparations to go into laager; men were hiding deeds and other valuables, or hurrying to defence meetings on the market-square, where the Government were serving out rifles and ammunition to all able-bodied citizens; frightened mobs of Basutos and Christian Kafirs were jabbering in the streets, and telling tales of the completeness of Zulu slaughter, or else running from the city to pass the night among the hills. Altogether the scene was most curious, till dense darkness came down on it like an extinguisher, and put it out.

Ernest took his men to a building which the Government had placed at their disposal, and had the horses stabled, but not unsaddled. Presently orders came down to him to keep the corps under arms all night; to send out four patrols to be relieved at midnight to watch the approaches to the town; and at dawn to saddle up and reconnoiter the neighboring country.

Ernest obeyed these orders as well as he could; that is, he sent the patrols out, but so dense was the darkness that they never got back again till the following morning, when they were collected, and, in one instance, dug out of the various ditches, quarry-holes, etc., into which they had fallen.

About eleven o'clock Ernest was seated in a little room that opened out of the main building where they were quartered, consulting with Jeremy about matters connected with the corps, and wondering if Alston had found a Zulu Impi, or if it was all gammon, when suddenly they heard the sharp challenge of the sentry outside:

"Who goes there?"

"Whoever it is had better answer sharp," said Ernest; "I gave the sentry orders to be quick with his rifle to-night."

"Bang! crash!" followed by loud howls of "Wilhemina, my wife! ah, the cruel man has killed my Wilhemina!"

"Heavens, it is that lunatic German! Here, orderly, run up to the Defense Committee and the Government offices, and tell them that it is nothing; they will think the Zulus are here. Tell two men to bring the man in here, and to stop his howls."

Presently Ernest's old friend of the High Veldt, looking very wild and uncouth in the lamplight, with his long beard and matted hair, from which the rain was dripping, was bundled rather unceremoniously into the room.

"Ah, there you are, dear sir; it is two—three years since we meet. I look for you everywhere, and they tell me you are here, and I come on quick all through the dark and the rain; and then before I know if I am on my head or my heel, the cruel man he ups a rifle, and do shoot my Wilhemina, and make a great hole through her poor stomach. O sir, wat shall I do?" and the great child began to shed tears; "you too, you will weep; you, too, love my Wilhemina, and sleep with her one night—bohoo!"

"For goodness' sake, stop that nonsense! This is no time or place for such fooling."

He spoke sharply and the monomaniac pulled up, only giving vent to an occasional sob.

"Now, what is your business with me?"

The German's face changed from its expression of idiotic grief to one of refined intelligence. He glanced toward Jeremy, who was exploding in the corner.

"You can speak before this gentleman, Hans," said Ernest.

"Sir, I am going to say a strange thing to you this night." He was speaking quite quietly and composedly now, and might have been mistaken for a sane man. "Sir, I hear that you go down to Zululand to fight the fierce Zulus. When I hear it, I was far away, but something come into my head to travel as quick as Wilhemina can, and come and tell you not to go."

"What do you mean?"

"How can I say what I do mean? This I know—many shall go down to Zululand who rest in this house to-night, few shall come back.

"You mean that I shall be killed?"

"I know not. There are things as bad as death, and yet not death." He covered his eyes with his hand, and continued: "I cannot see you dead, but do not go; I pray you do not go."

"My good Hans, what is the good of coming to me with such an old wives' tale? Even if it were true, and I knew that I must be killed twenty times, I should go; I cannot run away from my duty."

"That is spoken as a brave man should," answered his visitor, in his native tongue. "I have done my duty, and told you what Wilhemina said. Now go, and when the black men are pressing round you like the sea-waves round a rock, may the God of Rest guide your hand, and bring you safe from the slaughter!"

Ernest gazed at the old man's pale face; it wore a curious, rapt expression, and the eyes were looking upward.

"Perhaps, old friend," he said, addressing him in German, "I, as well as you, have a City of Rest which I would reach, and care not if I pass thither on an assegai."

"I know it," replied Hans, in the same tongue; "but useless is it to seek rest till God gives it. You have sought and passed through the jaws of many deaths, but you have not found. If it be not God's will you will not find it now. I know you too seek rest, my brother, and had I known that you would find that only down there"—and he pointed toward Zululand—"I had not come to warn you, for blessed is rest, and happy he who gains it. But no, it is not that; I am sure now that you will not die; your evil, whatever it is, will fall from heaven."

"So be it," said Ernest; "you are a strange man. I thought you a common monomaniac, and now you speak like a prophet."

The old man smiled.

"You are right; I am both. Mostly I am mad. I know it. But sometimes my madness has its moments of inspiration when the clouds lift from my mind, and I, see things none others can see, and hear voices to which your ears are deaf. Such a moment is on me now; soon I shall be mad again. But before the clouds settle I would speak to you. Why, I know not, save that I loved you when first I saw your eyes open there upon the cold veldt. Presently I must go, and we shall meet no more, for I draw near to the snow-clad tree that marks the gate of the City of Rest. I can look into your heart now and see the trouble in it, and the sad, beautiful face that is printed on your mind. Ah, she is not happy; she, too, must work out her rest. But the time is short, the cloud settles, and I would tell you what is in my mind. Even though trouble, great trouble, close you in, do not be cast down, for trouble is the key of heaven. Be good; turn to the God you have neglected; struggle against the snares of the senses. Oh, I can see now. For you and for all you love there is joy and there is peace."

Suddenly he broke off, the look of inspiration faded from his face, which grew stupid and wild-looking.

"Ah, the cruel man; he made a great hole in the stomach of my Wilhemina!"

Ernest had been bending forward, listening with parted lips to the old man's talk. When he saw that the inspiration had left him, he raised his head and said:

"Gather yourself together, I beg you for a moment. I wish to ask one question. Shall I ever—?"

"How shall I stop de bleeding from the vitals of my dear wife?—who will plug up the hole in her?"

Ernest gazed at the man. Was he putting all this on?—or was he really mad? For the life of him he could not tell.

Taking out a sovereign, he gave it to him.

"There is money to doctor Wilhemina with," he said. "Would you like to sleep here?—I can give you a blanket."

The old man took the money without hesitation, and thanked Ernest for it; but said he must go on at once.

"Where are you going to?" asked Jeremy, who had been watching him with great curiosity; but had not understood that part of the conversation which had been carried on in German.

Hans turned upon him with a quick look of suspicion.

"Rustenburg (Anglice, the town of rest)," he answered.

"Indeed, the road is bad, and it is far to travel."

"Yes," he replied, "the road is rough and long. Farewell!"—and he was gone.

"Well, this is a curious old buster, and no mistake, with his cheerful anticipation, and his Wilhemina," reflected Jeremy aloud. "Just fancy starting for Rustenburg at this hour of the night too! Why, it is a hundred miles off!"

Ernest only smiled. He knew that it was no easy ride to Rustenburg that the old man sought.

Some weeks afterward he heard that he had attained the rest which he desired. Wilhemina got fixed in a snow-drift in a pass of the Drakensberg. He was unable to drag her out.

So he crept underneath and fell asleep, and the snow came down and covered him.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

MR. ALSTON'S VIEWS.

The Zulu attack on Pretoria ultimately turned out only to have existed in the minds of two mad Kafirs, who dressed themselves up after the fashion of chiefs, personating two Zulu nobles of repute, who were known to be in command of regiments, rode from house to house, telling the Dutch inhabitants that they had an Impi of 30,000 men lying in the bush, and bidding them stand aside while they destroyed the Englishmen. Hence the scare.

The next month was a busy one for Alston's Horse. It was drill, drill, drill morning, noon and night. But the results soon became apparent. In three weeks from the day they got their horses, there was not a smarter, quicker corps in South Africa, and Mr. Alston and Ernest were highly complimented on the soldier-like appearance of the men, and the rapidity and exactitude with which they executed all the ordinary cavalry manœuvres.

They were to march from Pretoria on the 10th of January, and expected to overtake Colonel Glynn's column, with which was the General, about the 18th, by which time Mr. Alston calculated the real advance upon Zululand would begin.

On the 8th, the good people of Pretoria gave the corps a farewell banquet, for most of its members were Pretoria men; and colonists are never behindhand when there is an excuse for conviviality and good-fellowship.

Of course, after the banquet, Mr.—or, as he was now called, Captain—Alston's health was drunk. But Alston was a man of few words and had a horror of speech-making. He contented himself with a few brief sentences of acknowledgment and sat down. Then somebody proposed the health of the other commissioned and non-commissioned officers, and to this Ernest rose to respond, making a very good speech in reply. He rapidly sketched the state of political affairs, of which the Zulu war was the outcome, and, without expressing any opinion on the justice or wisdom of that war, of which, to speak the truth, he had grave doubts, he went on to show, in a few well-chosen, weighty words, how vital were the interests involved in its successful conclusion, now that it once had been undertaken. Finally, he concluded thus:

"I am well aware, gentlemen, that with many of those who are your guests here to-night, and my own comrades, this state of affairs and the conviction of the extreme urgency of the occasion has been the cause of their enlistment. It is impossible for me to look down these tables, and see so many in our rough-and-ready uniform, whom I have known in other walks of life, as farmers, storekeepers, Government clerks and what not, without realizing most clearly the extreme necessity that can have brought these peaceable citizens together on such an errand as we are bent on. Certainly it is not the ten shillings a day or the mere excitement of savage warfare, that has done this" (cries of "No, no!"); "because most of them can well afford to despise the money, and many more have seen enough of native war, and know well that few rewards and plenty of hard work fall to the lot of colonial volunteers. Then, what is it? I will venture a reply. It is that sense of patriotism which is a part and parcel of the English mind" (cheers), "and which from generation to generation has been the root of England's greatness, and, so long as the British blood remains untainted, will from unborn generation to generation be the main-spring of the greatness that is yet to be of those wider Englands, of which I hope this continent will become not the least." (Loud cheers.) "That, gentlemen and men of Alston's Horse, is the bond which unites us together; it is the sense of a common duty to perform, of a common danger to combat, of a common patriotism to vindicate. And for that reason, because of the patriotism and the duty, I feel sure that when the end of this campaign comes, whatever that end may be, no one, be he Imperial officer, or newspaper correspondent, or Zulu foe, will be able to say that Alston's Horse shirked its work, or was mutinous, or proved a broken reed, piercing the side of those who leaned on it." (Cheers.) "I feel sure, too, that, though there may be a record of brave deeds such as become brave men, there will be none of a comrade deserted in the time of need, or of failure in the moment of emergency, however terrible that emergency may be." (Chers.) "Ay, my brethren in arms," and here Ernest's eyes flashed and his strong, clear voice went ringing down the great hall, "whom England has called, and who have not failed to answer to the call, I repeat, however terrible may be that emergency, even if it should involve the certainty of death—I speak thus because I feel I am addressing brave men, who do not fear to die, when death means duty, and life means dishonor—I know well that you will rise to it, and falling shoulder to shoulder, will pass as heroes should on to the land of shades—on to that Valhalla of which no true heart should fear to set foot upon the threshold."

Ernest sat down amid ringing cheers. Nor did these noble words, coming as they did straight from the loyal heart of an English gentleman, fail of their effect. On the contrary, when a fortnight later Alston's Horse formed that fatal ring on Isandhlwana's bloody field, they flashed through the brain of more than one despairing man, so that he set his teeth and died the harder for them.

"Bravo, my young Viking!" said Mr. Alston to Ernest, while the roof was still echoing to the cheers evoked by his speech, "the old Bersekir spirit is cropping up eh?" He knew that Ernest's mother's family, like so many of the old Eastern county stocks, were of Danish extraction.

It was a great night for Ernest.

Two days later Alston's Horse, sixty-four strong, marched out of Pretoria with a military band playing before. Alas! they never marched back again.

At the neck of the port or pass the band and the crowd of ladies and gentlemen who had accompanied them halted, and, having given them three cheers, turned and left them. Ernest too turned and gazed at the pretty town, with its white houses and rose hedges red with bloom, nestling on the plain beneath, and wondered if he would ever see it again. He never did.

The troop was then ordered to march at ease in half-sections, and Ernest rode up to the side of Alston; on his other side was the boy Roger, now about fourteen years of age, who acted as Alston's aide-de-camp, and was in high spirits at the prospect of the coming campaign. Presently Alston sent his son back to the other side of the line on some errand.

Ernest watched him as he galloped off and a thought struck him.

"Alston," he said, "do you think it is wise to bring that boy into this business?"

His friend slued himself round sharply in the saddle.

"Why not?" he asked in his deliberate way.

"Well, you know there is a risk."

"And why should not the boy run risks as well as the rest of us? Look here, Ernest, when I first met you there in France I was going to see the place where my wife was brought up. Do you know how she died?"

"I have heard she died a violent death; I do not know how."

"Then I will tell you, though it costs me something to speak of it. She died by a Zulu assegai, a week after the boy was born. She saved his life by hiding him under a heap of straw. Don't ask me particulars, I can't bear to talk of it. Perhaps now you understand why I am commanding a corps enrolled to serve against the Zulus. Perhaps too you will understand why the lad is with me. We go to avenge my wife and his mother, or to fall in the attempt. I have waited long for the opportunity; it has come."

Ernest relapsed into silence and presently fell back to his troop.

(To be continued.)

Armies of Europe in a Nutshell.

(Edward Atkinson in the Century.)

Standing armies and navies of Europe and the United States compared in ratio with the number of men of arms-bearing age, assuming one in five of the population to be of that age:

Standing armies of Europe in actual service	3,854,752
Men in the navies	268,622
Total armed force	4,123,374
Reserves ready for service at call	10,398,163
Total	14,521,537

Substantially one in five of all men of arms-bearing age.

Proportion of men of arms-bearing age in the standing armies and navies not including reserves:

			Exempts
Proportion.			
All Europe	1 in	16.13	15.13
Italy	1 "	7.50	6.50
Holland	1 "	11.	10.
France	1 "	13.	12.
Russia	1 "	17.	16.
Germany	1 "	19.50	18.50
Belgium	1 "	23.	22.
Austria	1 "	25.40	24.40
Great Britain	1 "	26.	25.
United States	1 "	322.00	321.00

Men in active service in armies and navies, omitting reserves:

Russia	1,094,507
Italy	765,820
France	575,959
Germany	462,678
Austria	298,501
Great Britain	281,746
Turkey	180,404
Spain	116,256
Switzerland	113,368
Holland	77,689
Belgium	46,539
Sweden	43,174
Denmark	37,725
Greece	33,187
Portugal	29,920
Norway	22,250
Roumania	20,572
Servia	13,079
	4,123,374 or 1 man in 81 of population
Reserves	10,129,541
	14,252,915 or 1 " 24 "
United States	36,294 or 1 " 1,640 "

Glenbeigh, the Scene of the Evictions.

The Parish of Glenbeigh lies far away down in the extreme south of the kingdom of Kerry. It is as desolate a spot as can be found on all the western coast. The nearest town is Castleisland, notorious as the heart and centre of the most disaffected district in Ireland. To reach it from Killarney a long journey across country of twenty miles must be taken, and from Tralee the distance is only five miles less. The village which is the scene of the present evictions lies in a ravine among the hills, situated some height above the sea, in a bleak, exposed situation. For the tourist in search of a picturesque wilderness the locality is attractive enough, and there is plenty of shooting on the hills to satisfy the sportsman, but for the husbandman it is as undesirable a location as could be well imagined. Like many hundred thousand acres of land in the West of Ireland, it is a waste of bog and rock. But for the constant labor of the cottiers who are nestled among the boulders it would in a very few years relapse into a waste which might afford pasturage for snipe but for nothing else.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

—Whew! After all, there's nothing like an indoor, sedentary life.

—The Newfoundland Government want to reduce the subsidy given the Allan line for carrying the mails, and will terminate the contract.

—"Don't be a fool," she said, with a snap, to her husband. "Why didn't you tell me that when I asked you to marry me," he replied, and silence fell upon that house.

—Chinese daily papers have no local news, unless it is brought into the office with a request to publish. Chinese reporters have too much dignity to go sloshing around after scoops.

—"Does your husband call you pet names?" one married lady asked another. "Well, not quite. When we were first married he used to call me kitten; now he calls me old cat."

IF HE HAD A MIND.

The dude he would go a courting;
Then said his mamma kind,
"You must not go," and he answered,
"I'll go if I have a mind."

The mother smiled serenely,
Then said, in accents low,
"If that is the case, my darling,
You certainly will not go."

—It is announced at this late day that Abraham Lincoln never told a lie in his life. What excuse he made to his mother when he came home with his hair wet and his shirt wrong side out is not given. Perhaps she thought he had fallen off a haystack or been wrestling with a calf.

—A colporteur says he knows of four cases in which an alienated husband and wife were brought together by reading Miss Annie Swan's story of "A Divided House," which was originally published in the *Christian Leader.*

—Somebody claims to have discovered a way by which two persons can converse in whispers through a telephone. This would seriously impair the fun of the unconcerned outsiders who are compelled to hear one end of a telephone conversation.