day-dreaming and home-sick fancies. And yet wao more manly or more sensible on all points than honest Harry Raybourne? Again that keen chill seemed to pierce Clem to the heart.

At that moment, however, the sound of firing in the distance caused them to leap to their feet, and in an instant every thought but the peril and excitement of imminent battle was banished. A detachment of mounted Basutos, under Colonel Durnford, had gone out to reconnoitre, and coming unexpectedly on a Zulu regiment had immediately opened fire; and it then became evident that the whole body of the enemy was present in the state of t was present in overwhelming numbers, ready for action. When this message was brought into the impoverished, slender camp on Isandhlwana mountain, a feeling of utter dismay filled each heart, and made even the bravest quail.

"You were right, Harry; somebody's blundered here, just as somebody did at Balaklava," said Clement, as they hurriedly obeyed their Colonel's orders to prepare for instant action. "Well, old box our factors to bloody one. boy, our first taste of battle will be a bloody one. If we both fall it will go hard with them at home."

He rubbed his hand across his eyes, and under

his moustache his firm lip trembled.

"Clem, I'll be done for. I've known it all along," said Raybourne, quietly. "If you should ever reach England, tell Evy I died with her name on my lips, and that I loved her to the last. But say to her, too, dear fellow, that if the time ever comes when she can marry somebody else, she must not let any memory of me stand between.

"Hush, hush, I can't bear it. I won't go home without you. Our bones can bleach together, as you said on board the Tamar. Here are the black fiends pouring forward! God bless you, Hal, good-bye."

They clasped hands a moment, the last clasp, and looked into each other's eyes. The next moment they parted, to meet no more on earth.

It seemed as if, for the moment, officers and men became demoralized, and no attempt whatever was made to strengthen the camp, or even to concentrate what slender force they possessed to meet the enemy. At length, however, a battalion was sent to the wagon road to intercept and check the rapidly advancing enemy. The sight which met the eyes of that battalion, as they set themselves in the order of battle might wall have filled them with the order of battle, might well have filled them with dismay. The broken and undulating ground beyond the neck of the mountain was literally alive with Zulus, not scattered here and there in patches, but gathered in firm, solid masses, and advancing with a strange, determined steadiness, not in accordance with the usual methods of savage warfare. It might almost have seemed that the order of things was reversed, and that the discipline and careful concentration, thrown to the winds by the British, had been seized and taken advantage of by Cetewayo and his officers. Slowly, but with deadly surety, they crept round to surround the mountain and hem in the little camp. It was impossible to spare detachments to guard every approach, their efforts being chief and before the camp. efforts being chiefly required before the camp.

which a large regiment of Zulus was trying to Raybourne, on account of his intimate friendship with the Colonel who commanded the battalion guarding the wagon roac, volunteered to go with him and the lost Clament saw of his friend go with him, and the last Clement saw of his friend was when he turned round at the bend of the hill, and gave him a parting wave. After that each had enough to do looking after himself

I wish, my boy, you would keep back rather," said the Colonel, riding up to Raybourne as they neared the road. "From what I can see our changes her vou may chances here are small. Ride back yet, you may escape by the river. If you want an errand I'll send send a despatch by you to Rorke's Drift to warn Bromhead and Chard."

Raybourne shook his head. The excitement of battle was upon him, the thought of retreat hateful.
Yet he was upon him, the thought of retreat hateful. Yet he was grateful for his Colonel's thoughtful consideration, and said so in an earnest word.

"Your father would expect me to keep you from certain death at least," was all the Colonel said as he rode away, and in ten minutes more the fight began. From the first it was a forlorn hope; for, although the Zulu firing was ill-directed and in-



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effective in comparison with that of their opponents, still their immense numbers were bound to carry the day. They came pouring up the narrow neck and across the wagon road, which was already strewn with the dead, and throwing aside their guns and rifles used the familiar and deadly assegai in a fierce hand-to-hand conflict, which, however, could have but one ending. It was not "a fair fight on an open field," but simply wholesale butchery of brave men, who deserved a better fate. The battalion which had so nobly endeavoured to repulse the enemy's first advance was cut down to a man.

Meanwhile matters were but little better at the camp on the hill. The same lamentable want of cohesion was visible. Even a small force, if formed into an impenetrable mass, might have at least kept the camp until the General or other reinforcements came to their aid. But the companies were scattered about, and fell an easy prey to their victorious enemy. There was something gruesome in the strange silence with which the dark masses advanced, and in the deadly manner in which they literally hewed their way to the summit of the hill where the camp was situated. It was so different from the usual demonstrative and noisy fighting of savages that it appeared to help their success. But the moment they gave signs of retreating, and began to flee before them towards the river, their stolidity vanished, their pent up hatred and vindictiveness found vent in savage yells; and, throwing all military discipline to the winds, the naked hordes rushed on with their horrible assegais out in the air, and dealing death to every white man. Scarcely a soldier of the infantry escaped. It would not have fared much better with the mounted men had they not been quick to take advantage of a slight disjunction in the enemy's lin s, which enabled them to gallop across the open space and reach the Tugela river, to the very banks of which they were pursued, some, indeed, being killed on the way. The

Zulu firing was so badly aimed that they were enabled to ford it, and gain safety on the other side. Then they drew breath, and that melancholy handful stood still a moment and looked at the devastated camp and the hillside reeking with the

"Not a man rose who went to the wagon road with the 24th," said one, as he wiped the b'oody sweat from his brow. "They must have been cut down to a man. God knows somebody is to blame for this morning's work."

"Did any of you see Raybourne?" Clement Ayre asked, in a low voice, which had a ring of

hopelessness in it.

"Not since he went off with the 24th I expect he'll be lying among the rest yonder. Where are you going, Ayre?"

"Off to Rorke's Drift to warn them there. We can't forget that only one camp remains between yon victorious horde and the Colony. It must be held at any cost," he answered, and giving spurs to his horse rode rapidly away.

" Brave young fellow that; more forethought than some of them in higher places," said the man who had first spoken.

"Ay, he comes of a good stock. His father was killed at Delhi in the mutiny keeping the gate against awful odds. I've heard my uncle tell the story. Ayre will be right sorry if that chum of his is killed. Engaged to his sister, they say. But, I say, we'd better get out of this!"

Ay, poor Raybourne! In a stately English home, round a happy breakfast table, they spoke his name that morning in accents of love and hopeful pride, not dreaming that even while they were speaking he lay dead, with his face upturned to the leaden sky, and an assegai thrust through his honest heart.

(To be continued.)