

to move my eyes from it, forgetful ever of the rifle that was slung to my saddle.

The girl stood, lithe and willowy, one hand grasping the short eighteen-inch haft of the stock-whip, the long, thin, twelve-foot lash of green-hide held in coils between the fingers of her other hand. Her left foot was slightly advanced, and her weight rested on the right. There was a slight flush showing under the tan of her cheeks, and a purposeful determination in her hazel eyes. We realised that Round No. 1 was about to take place, and that the combatants were watching each other for an advantage.

Suddenly the girl raised her right arm and the long lash leaped out and swung round her as she circled the whip-haft over her head. The snake, taking time by the forelock, reared and threw himself at her as might a hand-rope whirl on a pier when thrown from an incoming ship. Our hearts stood still, and I heard Maitland give a cry of alarm. But the girl saw the snake coming, and sprang to one side; then, turning, her arm went up sharply, the long coil straightened out behind her; there was a quick forward motion of the wrist, and down came the lash like a living thing. It cracked like a pistol shot, and we could see a quiver run through the frame of the huge reptile as he winced under the blow. In a minute he had recovered, and gathered himself up as before to await Round No. 2.

Evidently the young lady did not believe in the rules of Queensberry when fighting snakes, for she gave him no time to recover from his discomfiture. Up went her lithe arm again, back flew the green-hide, and with a sharp, determined, downward