

The Corporal's Twenty Wives

"My son," said the veteran corporal to the recruit, as they sat together at the camp-fire, "don't trust them furrin girls. They're not happy unless they're making trouble betwixt men. I was in a heap of trouble once thro' my furrin wives."

"Wives?" the recruit suggested derisively.

"Shut your face," cried the corporal.

"Wives, I said, and wives it is, fur I was foolish as Solomon, an' one wouldn't satisfy me. 'Twas this way.

When I had been in the army but a short while a lo-n g time back, my old man—and he didn't know where I was, neither—he died and left me a little pile and his saloon. So, like a fool, I takes my discharge and proceeds like a bigger fool to blow in my little fortune, I did. When it was nigh gone I sorter wakes up an' finds I'd sold the property, saloon an' all. When I had kicked myself round the block onc' or twic't, I was ashamed to go back so soon an' re-enlist, an' I had a pal as had made a fool of himself, too. It was the time everyone was talkin' of the dimon' fields in Africa, an' he says to me, he says: 'Ril,' he says, 'we've got our passage money to the Cape. Let's go there an' make another pile, and have the laugh on folks,' he says.

It seemed good enough for me, for I was ashamed to pass the people in the town what knew me since a kid. So we went to Africa, we did, and up to Kimberly, and devil a dimon' saw we, an' the drinks was most extravagant dear. An' but we had a hard time of it, and no way to get out, when the blessed

hand of Providence purvided a ruction between the blacks and whites, and we was right in it, we was. It was the Zulu war, as maybe you've heard on.

Them English took things easy at first, thinkin' they had a soft thing, but the Zulus jumped in the first round an' did all the fightin'. They was ter rors, they was. They massacred a regiment and raised hell at Rorke's Drift and fought immense. So it took time for them Britishers to get men enough out to smother the savages, and in the meanwhile the whole of South Africa was in a panic, thinking they'd every one be massacred, to. They raised volunteers right an' let an' a lot of irregular cavalry. That's where me an' my side partner came in. When they knew we had sojered on the plains agin In-juns, they wanted us right away, an' we was willin', cause we was the dead-est kind of broke.

"That was fun. The discipline wasn't too severe, an' we had a feller in command who'd been run out of the English army for gettin' gay, an' then served with Turkey, an' was in no wise particular where he fought so long as there was fun an' boodle in it. We was off an' out over the country by our bloomin' selves, our troop, scoutin'—a free company. We went where we liked, n' we fought when we liked, an' we raided all the time, an' lived high. Ve see, rookie, the wealth of them Kaffirs is counted in cattle. Ye've so many cows, an' ye're a solid man; an' ye're so many more, an' maybe ye're a millionaire. We was after them cows, we was. We'd fight when it came, of course; but the fightin' we wanted was when we knew there was a neat bunch of fat cattle behind the enemy waitin' for us to drive them off. We weren't over careful neither to worry about the brand, an' maybe some Boer cows, an' Englishmen's cows on the Natal border came into our hands. War is war. The

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"Good times an' hot times don't last long enough in any old town. Just as we were enjoyin' ourselves to the limit the old gen'ral in command thinks it's time to let people know he's alive, an' starts in an' wallups the Zulus for fair at Ulundi, an' sends their big chief scootin' for his life. It was all over; there was no more kick lef in the Zulus.

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"Mister man, it's a fine country, an' the climate is 'way up. I'll say for them English that they know how to boss them savage peoples. Before the fightin' was well finished they had Zululand split into parts, an' over each part was a chief whom they could trust to keep the other fellows toein' the mark, an' things began to sizzle serenely as if nothing had ever been the matter. My pal an' me we prospected a bit, an' seen there was freightin' to be done into Natal an' up among the Boers, we hauled freight considerable. But them cows was on my mind—the cows we'd been raidin'—the fatness of them, an' the worth of them, an, the rich grass growing to feed them most bountiful, with lots of water an' nary hard winters to kill 'em off like it is on the plains.

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He jamed an' jawed a long time afore I tumbled, an' what think ye he wanted? Nothin' less than to sell me one of his daughters to wife for twenty cows. Fool that I was I laughed at him, an' off he went in a huff. I was soon soory. In a week I lost three of my best cattle, assagaied and cut up for meat. I went to the measly Scot Zulu for advice, for this was the first time I'd ever had trouble with them big, laughin' black fellers.

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"I sold my horse an' deserted my wives, all twenty of 'em, and worked my way to Ameriky best I could. So I'm tellin' ye for a lesson, my son, if ye want a wife, don't hanker after furriners, neither Cubans nor Spanish nor Zulus, but wait until a decent American girl up and asks ye to have her."—N. Y. Sun.

HE NEEDED THE MONEY.

So the Justice Promptly Devised a Reason for a Fine.

A couple applied to a rural justice of the peace for total divorce. The justice called the baliff aside and asked in a whisper:

"What's the law on that pint?"

"You can't do it," replied the baliff, "it don't come under yer jurisdiction."

"We're willin to pay cash fer it," replied the husband, not understanding the nature of the consultation. "I've got the money in this here stockin'."

The justice looked grave. Then, adjusting his spectacles and addressing the man, said: "You knowed fore you come here that 'twarn't for me ter separate husband an wife, an yet, you not only take up the time o' this here valuable court with yer talkin, but ackchully perpose ter bribe me with money! Now, how much has you get in that stockin'?"

"Bout six dollars an a half, yer honor."

"All right, then. I fine you \$5 fer bribery, an a dollar an a half fer takin up my time with a case what yer jurisdiction is out of, an may the Lord have mercy on yer soul!"—Atlanta Constitution.

A Gentle Hint.

Man (hurriedly)—Are you Mrs. Lawson, mum?

Mrs. Lawson—Yes.

Man—Well, I've been sent to tell you that your husband's head has been broken, mum, and I'm to break it to you gently, mum.—Tit-Bits.

Two Kinds.

"John, I'd like to have \$50. I want to do some shopping."

"Maria, I haven't 50 cents. I went shopping yesterday myself."

"What?"

"Bucket shopping."—Chicago Journal.

A Model of Her Kind.

"Miss Doodle ought to be a pattern society woman."

"Why! Howso?"

"Because she has been cut out by all the best people."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

His Usefulness Ended.

Judge—On what ground do you apply for a divorce, madam?

Mrs. Hissier—Why, Mr. Hissier is entirely incapacitated—his fingers are paralyzed, and he can't sign checks.—Harlem Life.

Eagle milk, Highland cream, 99 cream, St. Charles cream, corn, tomatoes, peas, string beans, 3 cans for \$1, at Mohr & Wilkens.

Souvenir Xmas presents at Sale & Co.



IT IS A CUSTOM WE HAVE IN THIS COUNTRY.

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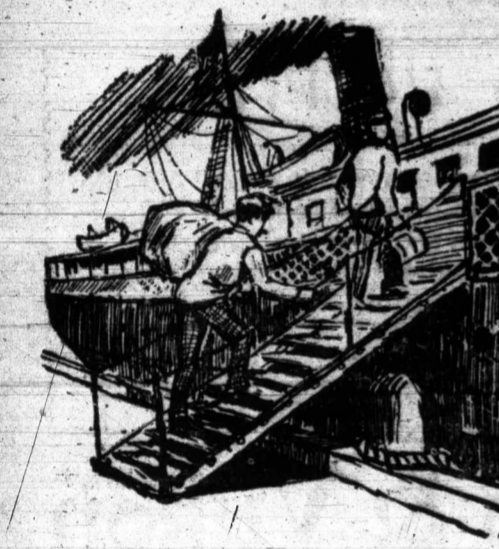
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THE PRICE OF TWENTY COWS.



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He jamed an' jawed a long time afore I tumbled, an' what think ye he wanted? Nothin' less than to sell me one of his daughters to wife for twenty cows. Fool that I was I laughed at him, an' off he went in a huff. I was soon soory. In a week I lost three of my best cattle, assagaied and cut up for meat. I went to the measly Scot Zulu for advice, for this was the first time I'd ever had trouble with them big, laughin' black fellers.

"I thocht ye'd be in trouble," says he, very grave. 'I've a great deal of influence with them, but I canna help ye if ye won't help yerself,' he says.

"Why dinna ye take the girl? It's the custom of the country. The chief's mad, nateral, 'cause ye think y'ere