Pack Train 13

It Was a Welcome Visitation to the Hungry Troops at Alphonso.

Slowly starving infantry, parts of two volunteer battalions, were sprawled about in the dusty moonlit plaza of Alphonso that night. A small group of fagged and famished war scribes were among them, and these men commented seriously upon the ugly and thankless proposition which life is. Now and then a commissioned officer swore loudly at his men, alternately calling them blood-thirsty devils and nerve-shattered young ladies. The enlisted men cursed back in half audible growls. In the air was that queer murmuring undertone which [illegible] always be heard in the midst of American troops [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] stripes [illegible] in the [illegible] and the Apache Kid [illegible] hard [illegible] grease, will tell you how he [illegible] gallons of Mexican [illegible] across the Rio Grande when nobody was watching but the man in the moon and about the wads of money he made out of the white soldiers on pay days. Dirty Ike, the cook of the train, went with Reno when the squadrons of the unlucky Seventh horse separated to corral Sitting Bull in the 70's. Dirty Ike will tell you how he helped to bury the dead of Custer's command in the circling shadows of vulture wings, and how the dead men looked way out in Montana that hot June day. Broken Foot Bill, my best of friends in pack train 13, will tell you how he hit an iceberg while rounding Cape Horn in a whaler and lost his personal profits of three years toil, $10,000 worth of sperm oil. He tells of dealing faro in the black reek of crime of Port Said on the Suez. Ah, the Broken-Foot has been a wanderer.

Yes, in a pack train you will see men whose natures have led them in all the dark places on the surface of the earth. They have found gold pickings in some of these places, they will tell you, and villainous whisky in all. In the desirable things of civilization—in the soft wiles of fair women, they are as little children; but if you are a white man and need a friend, a dollar a square meal, or all three, these packers will growl at you, give it to you, and tell you to call again. And you who would write books, procure a jug of good whisky if possible, but whisky at all events, strike a packer's camp at night, when the mules are quiet over their forage, and you will hear tales with the color of all lands, and the heart beats of rugged manhood. And do not forget to take the jug out to the lonely fellow whose trick it is to guard the herd that night, for he will not forget you if you fail to remember him.

But I was writing about that night at Alphonso. As each heavy pack was removed from the back of a mule, the sweating animal moved out of line, shook himself with many satisfied grunts, and then sank down noisily upon the turf of the plaza to scratch his [illegible] back in the only way he knew. [illegible]

[illegible] warm to me.

[illegible] kindly. I exclaimed [illegible] that I [illegible] that I didn't know the infantry [illegible] in town, that I was hungrier than the she-wolf of the Scriptures. In conclusion I asked hastily:

"Will I get some more water?"

The little camp-fires of the soldiers were embers now, and beside them the men from the States were lying in the moonlight rapturously rolling about in that big and general sympathy which is an adjunct of tobacco and strong coffee. At last the packers came in from the mules. The animals had been watered and fed, and only the herd guard was left with them now.

"Come and get it while it's hot, you savage," ordered the cook. Then he made me [illegible] observing [illegible] if you haven't got one." And by way of introduction he [illegible] "fellers, this is one of them short-handed guys as writes for the papers. He lost his mouth, and is out of grub. The only good thing about him I know is that he isn't one of them d—— soldiers."

Then I met Old Dad and Scar Face and Broken Foot. They made a man out of me with coffee and bacon, and treated me as if I had been one always, and they told me wonderful tales which I have yet to repeat. Ah, that was a marvelous night in the moonlight at dirty Alphonso! When most of the fellows were drowsy, Broken Foot Bill went out to the herd to take his trick at the guard. I went with him. Listen to the words Broken Foot said to me that night and you will see his big heart:

"See that big roan brute, with a hole in his side?" he asked. "Well, that's Mankiller, the dead ringer for old Moon Eye, who killed herself today. Don't go near that brute; he's wicked. Old Moon Eye was the shape of that brute, only she was a gentleman. He had a hole in his side. We haven't packed him for three days. This morning he was stiff and couldn't follow. He lost himself from the herd [illegible] and I saw him way up on [illegible] He was a pet of mine [illegible] His front feet were [illegible] on the edge. He looked at me [illegible] and then pushed [illegible]

[illegible] there is only one railroad and that is [illegible] by Russia and could be [illegible] an army [illegible]

Head of League of American Mothers.

To License Gambling.

[illegible]

Uses of Torpedo-Boats.

[illegible] a great naval engagement, whatever their value in scouting and skirmishing. It was found impossible to approach a fortified post nearer than two miles without discovery, even when speed was so reduced that no smoke escaped unconsumed from the funnels of the torpedo-boats. At this range any unarmored craft would be speedily shot to pieces by an enemy possessing a rapid-fire battery.

Sillicus—There is nothing new under the sun. Cynicus—Then what would you advise me to do with the bill for my wife's new hat?

Mob Law at Mansfield.

[illegible] at Mansfield, O. [illegible] been repeated on an [illegible] train later in the day, the elders gave up their attempts and returned to Chicago. Mansfield had carried its point for the time being, but the procedure is not to its credit.

The little Grand Duchess Olga of Russia is the richest infant in the world. The week she was born $5,000,000 was settled on her, and it is said the sum was invested in British and French securities.

Duchess of Aosta.

[illegible] him for support. His death without making provision for her renders her penniless.

Education in England.

[illegible] act, which [illegible] on April 1, 1900, created [illegible] in education [illegible] technological, [illegible] the first step toward [illegible] and scientific [illegible] methods in England. [illegible] Contemporary [illegible] in detail the [illegible] England, comparing [illegible] system, to [illegible] variety and [illegible] English method, [illegible] hope that the new [illegible] result in a dead and monotonous uniformity, such as follows an over-centralized system."

During his rapid march from Rietfontein to Bloemfontein Lord Roberts noticed the sufferings of the bullocks as they toiled along with the transport wagons, their backs seamed with the lash of the Kaffir drivers. When the army moved on from Bloemfontein he issued a written order forbidding the Kaffirs from flogging the [illegible]

TASCA.

Alexander Basilwski looked moodily out of the window. It seemed as if all the world was covered with a vast white mantle, hiding its angularities and crudities, and presenting only a smooth, unbroken surface to the glowing skies above. In the streets below numbers of figures like puppets in a show ran to and fro in the mad strife of living. Afar off in the distance scintillated many groups of electric balls hung from high towers. This was St. Petersburg and mid-winter.

He tapped idly upon the pane of glass with his long, tapering fingers, and as he beat out in an impatient tattoo a rhythmic Slavonic melody, his mind was actively intent upon other [illegible] than this.

How he hated St. Petersburg and [illegible] How he hated wealth and despotic fathers! Why should he not have been free, like those young Englishmen with whom he had spent six months of his last year. They were all younger sons every one of them. Penniless and happy, they herded cattle on the Pacific slope of North America. How freely she came among them—fearless [illegible] with her clear [illegible] her bright eyes and her [illegible] the boys called [illegible] really was [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] that tyrant to live. [illegible] the chapel [illegible] had sent to [illegible] Siberia for [illegible] and [illegible] the altar, ready for [illegible] tomorrow.

[illegible] busy in another part [illegible] the pale mother listlessly [illegible] in which she had no heart [illegible] radiant and domineering [illegible] all things; the father [illegible] and overbearing, submitting everything to the judgment of [illegible] and the pale [illegible] her heart [illegible] Demidoff—all unhappy [illegible] of one, nay, two selfish [illegible]

He [illegible] the window—yet that [illegible] that broken chord—that wail! A child's voice and Tasca's! Yes, she was before him now. The short black skirt, the red robosso, the curved lips—but God! how white, how worn, how wearied she looked! What was it she held out to him? A babe—his babe—ah, thank God, they had come! The little Virgin in the chapel should have an apron full of gold pieces.

"Tasca!" he called and grasped—air.

For a moment he looked vacantly at the graceful figure of his bride, then out at the shrouded city, then turning again to grasp his loved ones, fell amidst pomp and luxury, dead.

In a little adobe hut on the Pacific coast of North America the housekeeper of the good padre, when she went to take some dainty to her charge, the pretty Tasca, found her and her new born babe, both dead.

Brer Rabbit's Advice.

Just follow the advice of Brer Rabbit in these days and "lay low" if you don't want to have the heat do you up. Follow that conservative line in eating and drinking, especially if you would come through this "spell" intact. Forget to season your salads very highly, take your lemonade sans sticks and almost sans ice, and you will not be so extremely sensitive to this upward tendency of the mercury as will your neighbor who prides himself on taking his "three square meals" every day, no matter what the weather is. "Good health is intelligence," every time, and there's no better opportunity to display one's possession of that quality than when even the ice jug seems to radiate heat.—Boston Transcript.