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A PLEA FOR THE OLD MEN THAT SMOKE. There, daughter, stop scolding! Don't worry and fret.

Let him smoke in the corner in peace, if he can. Though the clouds of tobacco may choke;

There is no one can tell, but a lonely old man, How much comfort there is in a smoke.

Like a free bird that flyeth from limb unto limb. Your routine of joys you go through;

And some of them look just as foolish to him As smoking looks foolish to you.

We're none of us perfect—all this you believe— Our lives should with charity shine.

Like the golden threads that the weavers weave In and out of the dark design.

Should you live to be old—though you may never smoke— Yes I'll wager a penny, or two,

You will have some strong habit to tease other folk. Bad as this that is worrying you;

Let him smoke in the corner in peace, if he can. Though the clouds of tobacco may choke;

There is no one can tell, but a lonely old man, How much comfort there is in a smoke.

Do I smoke? No, not I! Nor will I advise Any youth the habit to get;

But when one is old, and can't stop if he tries, Is it wisdom to worry and fret?

Let him smoke in the corner in peace, if he can. Though the clouds of tobacco may choke;

There is no one can tell, but a lonely old man, How much comfort there is in a smoke.

Not long will tobacco smoke daily annoy, Soon the pipe on the mantel way lay,

And father will rest where the worms shall destroy The tenacious body of clay.

Let him smoke in the corner in peace, if he can. Soon he'll fall before Death's sturdy stoker;

Then you'll miss the clay pipe, and the feeble old man, And wish you'd put up with the smoke.

MUFFLED.

"Rube, me boy, what's the name of this?" exclaimed Pat Linihan, as the last wagon of the mining outfit was hauled into position,

and the grizzled veteran he spoke to was dragging the harness from his favorite span of mules.

"The name of it? Do you mean this hollow we've pulled up to?" "Dad an I do, thin. Ye've put a name of some kind to ivery rock an' bush we've seen the day."

"Well, then, mebbe it's the Chico Valley. It's a place I'll be glad to git out of with all the hair on my head."

"It's a swate spot, for all that. It is near here him Wallopy red-skins live that makes it a bad boardin' house for white men?"

"Yes, this is just the place. But there isn't many of 'em and we didn't send 'em word we was comin'." Mebbe we'll find our way through the pass before they scent us.

They're venomous, they are. Worst kind." The two mules had been standing as if they were listening to him, but now, as old Rube cast them loose, the off mule suddenly threw up his heels and set out at a sharp trot into the grass, while his mate stretched his long neck forward in a sonorous Bray.

"That'll do, Governor," remarked Rube. "We all know you kin do it. You and the Senator had better jest feed yer level best while yer chance is good. Mebbe you'll be an Indian's mule yet, before you die."

"Saints preserve thin, thin. It's foine mules they are," said Pat, very soberly. "Misther Adams, was ye hearin' the character he gave the place we're in?"

"Is there an danger, Rube?—any real danger?" "Not if we can find our way through the pass, Charlie. It's more like the neck of a bottle than anything else. Hope they haven't corked it up with rocks for us."

A tall, slightly built boy was Charlie Adams, and his bright blue eyes were wide open, with a look in which there was more fun and love of adventure than fear of anything—even of Hualapais (pronounced Walappi) Indians.

He had been staring around the broad level valley while the miners were going into camp, and it did seem as if he had never looked upon anything more beautiful. The grass was so luxuriant and green; the scattered groves had been set down exactly in the right places; the mountains arose so grandly on every side; surely there could not have been imagined a prettier picture in a more wonderful frame.

He said so to Rube Sarrow, but all the reply he got from the grim old wagon-master was: "Ye-es, and the red-skins mean to keep it. That's been more than one outfit wiped out a-tryin' to squeeze through the Union Pass."

The wagons of the train were drawn up in two rows, about fifty yards apart, the light "ambulance," from which Rube had unhitched the Governor and the Senator, was pulled across one of the open spaces at the end, and a brisk fire had been started at the other. The ground so inclosed contained room enough to "corral" all the mules and horses of the train in case of an attack, and the members of that exploring party were likely to be able to defend such a fort against any ordinary band of red men.

Not a sign of the presence of Indians in the neighborhood had yet been discovered, and before the middle of the afternoon the scouts sent out came in with a couple of fat deer.

"That looks well," growled old Rube. "The valley hasn't been hunted out lately. Mebbe we'll git through all right."

The animals were watched pretty carefully, nevertheless, and they all had a good long rest and time to feed.

"They'd better make the best of it," said Pat Linihan to Charlie Adams. "It's a long pull and a hard one they've got before thin. Wud thin red-skins thake the skelp of a mule, do ye s'pose?"

"They'd give more for your's, Pat. They'd risk almost anything for hair as red as you have. Light their pipes, you know."

"That's more'n I kin do wid it meself. But thin ambulance mules, now. Luk at the ears of them. Did ye ever see the loike on any human being before?"

The Governor and the Senator were mules of the largest and ungalinest type, and they seemed to remember enough of what Rube had said about Indians to keep them pretty close to the camp all the evening. None of the others were permitted to stray to any great distance, and about midnight they were all silently collected.

They had taken the whole matter as quietly as had their four footed servants, eating and sleeping as if there were no Indians in the world, or at least in the neighborhood of the Hualapais Mountains and the Union Pass.

All the men, perhaps; but Charlie Adams was not a man yet, and the young blood was tingling through his veins at the thought of actual danger and an attack from Indians.

There was no need to wake him up or call him when the time came to get ready for another march. He was wide awake from head to foot, and seemed to be everywhere at once, with his repeating carbine in his hand.

It was a queer piece of work Rube and his teamsters were at for the next hour or so. They began by grappin' all the old blankets they had, and some new ones, around the circumference of the wagon wheels, and they greased the journals of the axles until there was no chance left for a squeak to come from them.

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