

THE RED TRAIL

By GUSTAVE AINARD

CHAPTER III.

Don Martial gazed at the hunter in amazement.

"What do you mean?" he asked him. "I don't understand you."

"You will soon do so, my friend," said Valentine. "How long have you been roaming about?"

"Nearly two months."

"In that case you are well acquainted. I presume, with these mountains?"

"There is not a tree or a rock whose exact position I cannot tell, nor a wild beast trail which I have not followed."

"Good; are we far from a spot called the Fort of the Chichimeques?"

"I know the place to which you refer, and have often camped there on stormy nights, because there is a deep cavern, excavated by human hands, and divided into several passages, every turning of which I know."

"I was not aware of the existence of this grotto," the hunter said, with a glad start, "and I thank you for having told me of it. Are we any great distance from this terrace?"

"In a straight line, not more than five or six miles, and, if it were day, I could show it to you, but as we must ride round to reach the caravan road, we have about three hours' ride before us."

"That is a trifle, for I was afraid I had lost my way in these mountains, which are strange to me."

While saying this, Valentine had risen to explore the clearing. The storm had ceased, the wind had swept away the clouds, the deep blue sky was studded with brilliant stars, and the moon profusely shed his rays.

"This a magnificent night," the hunter said. "It is past midnight, and I feel no inclination to sleep. Are you fatigued?"

"I am never so," the Tigero answered with a smile.

"In that case, what do you think of a ride in this magnificent moonlight? Bravo; that is what I call speaking. We will go, if you have no objection, as far as the Fort of the Chichimeques."

"I was about to propose it, and, as we ride along, you will tell me in your own words the motive which compels you to come to these unknown regions."

"As for that," the hunter said, with a smile, "I cannot satisfy you; at any rate not for the present. But be easy, I will not put your patience to too long a trial."

"This happy meeting has already made a different man of me," the Tigero said, as he rose.

The hunter laid his hand on his shoulder. "One moment," he said to him; "before leaving this bivouac let us clearly agree as to our facts, so as to avoid any future misunderstanding."

"Be it so," Don Martial answered.

"Let us make a compact in the Indian fashion."

"Well said, my friend," Valentine remarked, as he drew his knife from his belt. "Here is my awajja, brother; may it serve you as it has done me to avenge your wrongs and mine."

"I receive it in the face of that heaven which I call as witness of the purity of my intentions. Take mine in exchange, and one-half my powder and bullets, brother."

"I accept it as a thing belonging to me, and here is half my ammunition for you; henceforth we cannot fire at one another, all is in common between us. My horse is yours."

"Mine belongs to you, and in a few moments I will place it at your service."

Then the two men, leaning shoulder to shoulder, with clasped hands, eyes fixed on heaven, and outstretched arm, uttered together the following words:

"I take heaven to witness that of my own free will, and without reservation, I take as my friend and brother the man whose hand is at this moment pressing mine. I will help him in everything he asks of me, without hope of reward, ready by day and night to answer his first signal, without hesitation, and without reproach, even if he asked for my life."

There was something grand and solemn in this simple act, performed by these two powerful men beneath the pallid moonbeams, and in the heart of the desert, alone, far from all human society. After repeating the words of the oath they embraced and finally shook hands.

"Now let us be off, brother," Valentine said; "I confide in you as in myself; we shall succeed in triumph over our enemies. By the bye, I must warn you, brother, that if you are not mistaken, and we are really following the road to the Fort of the Chichimeques, we shall probably meet several persons there; they are friends of mine, with whom I have an appointment and I will introduce them to you."

They set out again, still following the windings of the track, which gradually grew steeper; and, after a very zigzag course, reached the terrace half an hour later.

"This is certainly the place," the hunter exclaimed.

"But your friends—?" the Tigero asked.

The hunter without speaking discharged his gun, and at the sound three men appeared, though it was impossible to say whence they came. They were Belhomme, Black Elk and Eagle-head.

CHAPTER IV.

About five or six leagues from the spot where Valentine and the Tigero met, a caravan, composed of some ten persons, had halted on the same night and almost at the same moment as the

hunter in a narrow valley.

The caravan was lodged on the bank of a running stream, the mules had been unloaded, a tent raised, fires lighted, and when the animals were hobbled, the travelers began to make preparations for their supper.

One of the travelers appeared to belong to the highest class. The rest were only servants or Indian peons. Still the dress of this person was most simple, but his stiff manner, his imposing demeanor and haughty air, evidenced the man long accustomed to give orders without admitting refusal. He had passed his fiftieth year; he was tall, well built, and his movements were extremely elegant. His broad forehead, his black eyes large and flashing, his long gray moustaches, and his short hair, gave him a military appearance, which his harsh, quick way of speaking did not contradict.

Among the peons two men were especially attracted attention. One was a redskin, the other a half-breed, with a crafty, leering manner, who, for some reason or another, stood on most familiar terms with his master; his comrades called him No Carnero, and at times gave him the title of Capataz.

No Carnero was the wit of the caravan, the funny fellow—ever ready to laugh and joke. The redskin was tall, thin, dry man, with angular features and gloomy and sad face, illumined by two black eyes deeply set in their orbits. Like most Indians, it was impossible to form any opinion as to his age, for his hair was black as the raven's wing, and his parchment skin had not a single wrinkle.

He had engaged at Santa Fe to act as guide to the caravan, and, with the exception of his obstinate silence, there was every reason to be satisfied with him. The peons called him The Indian, or sometimes Jose—a mocking term, employed in Mexico to designate the Indian mansos; but the redskin appeared as insensible to compliments as to jokes, and continued coldly to carry out the task he had imposed on himself. When supper was ended, the master turned to the capataz.

"Carnero," he said to him, "though in these remote regions, we have but little to fear, still do not fail to place sentries."

"I have warned two men, mi amo," the capataz replied; "moreover, I intend to make my rounds to-night; eh, Jose," he added, "are you certain you are not mistaken, and that you really lifted a trail? Do you know to what nation the sign you discovered belongs?"

"Crow," the redskin answered hoarsely.

"Caral," the master exclaimed, "if they are Crows we shall do well to be on our guard."

"Nonsense!" Carnero remarked with a grin of derision, "Indians tell as many lies as old women."

The Indian's eyes flashed; without deigning to reply he drew a moccasin from his breast, and threw it so adroitly at the capataz as to strike him across the face. Furious at the insult so suddenly offered by a man whom he always considered inoffensive, the half-breed uttered a yell of rage, and rushed knife in hand on the Indian.

But the latter had not taken his eye off him, and by a slight movement he avoided the desperate attack of the capataz; then, drawing himself up, he caught him round the waist, raised him from the ground as easily as he would have done a child, and hurled him into the fire, where he writhed for a moment with cries of pain and impotent passion. When he at length got out of the fire, half scorched, he did not think of renewing the attack, but sat down, directing savage glances at his adversary, like a turnspit punished by a master.

"The Indian is right," said the master coldly, "this moccasin bears the mark of the Crow nation. My poor Carnero, you must put up with it, for though the punishment you received was severe, I am forced to allow that it was deserved."

"The dog will pay me for it with his traitor face," the capataz growled. "I am no man if I do not leave his body as food for the crows he discovers so cleverly."

"My poor lad," his master continued, with a leer, "you had better forget this affair, which I allow might be disagreeable to your self-esteem; for I fancy you would not be the gainer by reconquering the quarrel."

The capataz did not answer, but looked round to select one on whom he could vent his spite, without incurring risk; but the peons were on their guard, and offered him no chance. He then made a signal to two men to follow him, and left the circle grumbling.

The head of the caravan remained for a few moments plunged in serious thought; he then withdrew beneath his tent, the curtain of which fell behind him; and the peons lay down on the ground, one after the other, with their feet to the fire, carefully wrapped up in their serapes, and fell asleep.

The Indian then looked searchingly around him, and, rising negligently, went slowly to crouch at the foot of a tree, though not before he had taken the precaution of wrapping himself in his buffalo robe.

Ere long, with the exception of the sentries leaning on their guns and motionless as statues, all the travelers were plunged in deep sleep.

An hour elapsed ere anything disturbed the silence that prevailed in the camp. All at once a singular thing happened.

The buffalo robe, under which the Indian was sheltered, gently rose with an almost imperceptible movement, and the redskin's face appeared, darting glances of fire into the gloom. In a moment the guide raised himself slowly along the trunk of the tree against which he had been lying, embraced it with his feet and hands, and with undulating movements resembling those of reptiles, left the ground, and raised himself to the first branches, among which he disappeared.

This ascent was executed with such well-calculated slowness that it had not produced the slightest sound. Moreover, the buffalo robe left at the foot of the tree so well retained its primitive folds, that it was impossible to discover, without touching it, that the man it sheltered had left it.

Before selecting as his resting place the foot of the tree in which he was now concealed, the guide had assured himself that this tree, which was very high and leafy, was joined at about two-thirds of its height by other trees.

After a few minutes' hesitation, the guide drew in his belt, placed his knife between his teeth, and with a lightness of movement that would have done honor to a monkey, he commenced literally hopping from one tree to another, hanging by his arms, and clinging to the creepers, waking up, as he passed, the birds, which flew away in alarm.

This strange journey lasted about three-quarters of an hour. At length the guide stopped, looked attentively around him, and gliding down the trunk, reached the ground. The spot where he now found himself was a rather spacious clearing, in the center of which blazed an enormous fire, serving to warm forty or fifty redskins, completely armed and equipped for war.

This detachment of redskins was certainly on the war trail, or at any rate on a serious expedition, for they had with them neither dogs nor squaws. In spite of the slight care with which the Indians were wont to guard themselves at night, the free and deliberate manner in which the guide entered their encampment proved that he was expected by those warriors, who evinced no surprise at seeing him, but, on the contrary, invited him with hospitable gestures to take a seat at their fire. The guide sat down silently, the chief standing by his side. This chief was still a young man, his marked features displaying the utmost craft and boldness. After a rather lengthened interval, doubtless expressly granted the visitor to let him draw breath and warm himself, the young chief bowed to him and addressed him deferentially:

"My father is welcome among his sons; they were impatiently awaiting his arrival."

The guide responded to this compliment with a grimace.

"Our scouts," the chief continued, "have carefully examined the encampment of the Yoris, and the warriors of the Jester are ready. Is my father Curumilla satisfied?"

Curumilla laid his right hand on his chest and uttered with a guttural accent, "Ugh!" which was with him a mark of the greatest joy.

The Jester and his warriors had been too long acquainted with Curumilla for his silence to seem strange; hence they yielded to his mania, and giving up the hope of getting a syllable out of his closed lips, began a conversation in signs.

The redskins have two languages, the written and the sign language. The latter which has attained high perfection, and which all understand, is usually employed when hunting, or on expeditions, when a word pronounced even in a low voice may reveal the presence of an ambush to the enemy, whether men or beasts.

It would have been interesting for any stranger who had been present at this interview to see with what rapidity the gestures and signs were exchanged between these men, so strangely lit up by the ruddy glow of the fire.

At length this silent council terminated. Curumilla raised his hand to heaven, and pointed to the stars, which were beginning to grow dim, and then left the circle. The redskins respectfully followed him to the foot of the tree by the aid of which he had entered their camp. When he reached it he turned round.

"May the Wacondah protect my father!" the Jester then said. "His sons have thoroughly understood his intentions, and will follow them literally. The great pale hunter will have joined his friends by this hour and he is doubtless awaiting us."

"It is good," Curumilla answered, and saluting for the last time the warriors, who bowed respectfully before him, the chief seized the creeping plants, and raising himself by the strength of his wrists, in a second he reached the branches and disappeared.

The journey the Indian had made was very important and needed to be so for him an interview at this hour of the night with the redskins.

The chief recommended his aerial trip with the same lightness and the same good fortune. After a lapse of time comparatively much shorter than that which he had previously employed, he reached the camp of the white men. The same silence prevailed in its interior; the sentinels were still motionless at their post and the watch fires were beginning to expire.

The chief assured himself that no eye was fixed on him—that no spy was on the watch; and, feeling certain of not being perceived, he slid silently down the tree and resumed the place beneath the buffalo robe which he was supposed not to have left during the night.

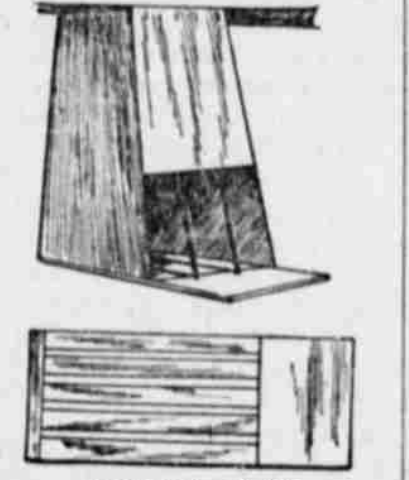
At the moment when, after taking a final glance around, the Indian chief disappeared beneath his robe, the capataz, who was lying athwart the entrance of the hut, gently raised his head and looked with strange fixity of glance at the place occupied by the redskin.



FARM AND GARDEN

Handy Hay Device.
The illustration shows a device for a hay box, which should be in every stable. This box may be made of any dimensions desired and reaches from the loft to just above the manger in the stall below, placing it at a height so that the horse can get at the hay readily. As shown in the cut the box should be wider at the bottom than at the top to prevent the hay from lodging. The open space below should be fitted with two or more light iron bars to prevent the animal from pulling out too much of the hay at a time and wasting it.

In the lower part of the drawing is shown the slatted bottom, which is used in this box so that the chaff and dust may sift through. The top of the box, in the left, should be covered with a heavy slatted arrangement for the purpose of ventilation. It should be made of slats sufficiently heavy to bear the weight of a man if he should step on it accidentally, and be hinged



ECONOMICAL HAY BOX.

at one end for easy handling. These hay boxes may be made of inch material, and will cost but a trifle, compared with the saving of hay and their convenience.

Plague of Field Mice.

The apple belt of Maine is suffering from a visitation of field mice, which have devastated the orchards, so that it will require several years of careful nursing before the apple crop will be up to standard. These animals are so tiny that it seems impossible that they could cause so much damage, but the seriousness of them is due not to their size but their numbers. They have been allowed to multiply very rapidly in the past few years by the destruction of their natural enemies, the crows, jays, shrikes, owls and hawks. These birds have been killed off in great numbers by the farmers because of the damage they are supposed to do to the crops and in thus disturbing nature's balance the farmers have brought down upon themselves an equally if not more serious trouble.

The mice attack the fruit trees, gnawing the bark from the base, so that the tree is seriously injured and often killed. The State agricultural experts are working on the problem, but they are unable to offer any solution, except that of protecting the natural enemies of the mice. Poisoning is not successful, for the reason that other animals are destroyed at the same time.

Taking Power from a Windmill.

If you have a windmill it can easily be arranged to run the grindstone, bone butter, feed grinder, etc. The cut shows a good device to convert the perpendicular motion of the windmill into a horizontal one. The bar, b, is connected to the windmill pitman, a, so that it may be attached at will. The wheel, c, and shaft, e, should be of iron or steel. The short pitman, b, may be of iron or hard wood. The axle bar, d, which holds shaft, e, rigid, permitting the pitman, b, to revolve wheel, c, should be of heavy iron, firmly secured, and braced to pump at platform.—Farm and Home.

Redtop and alsike clover are best adapted to moist soils and will prove profitable crops on the low places in the farm where timothy or clover will not do well. If the ground is uneven or boggy, run a spading barrow or disk over it until it is brought down to fit condition for seeding. Then sow eight pounds of redtop and four pounds of alsike clover per acre.

By cleaning up the farm you will increase its value and when it is cleaned and cleared it will cultivate more easily and cheaply and give large returns.

Fall Beauty Apple.

One naturally expects a Kentucky product to be handsome. So it is no surprise that the name Fall Beauty has been selected as appropriate for a new apple which has originated in the Blue Grass country. The apple, according to the description by the State experiment station, is not only a beauty, but has other good qualities. The apples are sometimes deeper on one side than the other, but generally quite symmetrical. The weight seems to average a fraction above half a pound. Other points are:

Color, deep purplish red, sometimes completely so, again only or largely on the exposed side; striped, with deeper purple and pale waxen yellow; when fully ripe, with other yellow, the stripes contracting and extending into the cavity at the calyx end; marked with evident other yellow dots, these becoming especially conspicuous where the purplish red is deepest; region about the calyx end sometimes extensively waxen yellow.

Flesh white at first, becoming cressy when thoroughly ripe; flavor not striking, but pleasant; subacid; skin rather tough, thus calculated to protect it from insect and fungous injury and to render it a good shipper. Ripe Sept. 22. While it is adapted only for fall use, it ripens at a time when few apples as good are in a condition for the table, the early ones being long gone and the late ones not yet sufficiently ripe. It keeps very well, becoming finally in October mellow and agreeable as an eating apple. It cooks well before this final change, making good sauce, but proving especially acceptable when baked. Unfortunately the cut cannot show the richness of the coloring of the Fall Beauty. In bearing it is as regular as Rome Beauty or Ben Davis.

Lime-Sulphur-Salt Wash.

From experiments carried on with chemically pure lime and sulphur, it appears to the author of a government bulletin that solid sulphur is not dissolved by boiling fifteen minutes, but that the best results are obtained by boiling from forty-five to sixty minutes. A boiling period of one hour is sufficient to dissolve nearly all of the sulphur, but the thiosulphates are somewhat increased by a longer period.

Salt apparently has no influence upon the composition of the wash in so far as the sulphur compounds are concerned. The slight differences in the composition of the wash, as used by different investigators, have little or no influence upon the time required for boiling. When lime and sulphur are used in equal quantities there is more than enough lime to dissolve the sulphur. These substances may be used in the proportion of one pound of lime to one and one-quarter pounds of sulphur. About twenty-five pounds of sulphur to fifty gallons is a maximum quantity.

It appears that the use of air-slaked lime has no influence on the composition of the wash, and that there is likewise practically no difference in composition whether flowers of sulphur or flour of sulphur is used. Detailed notes are also given on the composition of lime-sulphur wash with particular reference to the different kinds of sulphur compounds. It is found that not all of the sulphur is dissolved by the heat generated by caustic soda, but the suggestion is made that a wash containing ten pounds of caustic soda and nineteen pounds of sulphur per fifty gallons of water without lime may give satisfactory results.

Selecting Milk Cows.

That one cow can be made to do the work of two has been found to be easily accomplished by the selection of the best individuals. A Vermont dairyman, whose cows produced 100 pounds of butter each per year, has succeeded in getting 200 pounds per year from each cow in the herd. Dairy men in other sections have done fully as well. It is claimed that if one cow gives as much as formerly did two, there is a saving in stable room, labor and care. This cannot be accomplished, however, unless the cows are reared on the farm, or purchased from improved breeds. Feed, of course, is an important matter, also, but a good cow will give more product from the food eaten than will an inferior cow that is fed in the same manner.

Land owners interested in establishing commercial forest plantations, shelter belts, windbreaks and snowbreaks and in planting trees to reclaim shifting sands and other waste lands, will be given practical assistance by the forestry service of the Department of Agriculture on application to the offices at Washington.

There is a medium in feeding which it is best to follow. It gives to each animal just what its system can readily assimilate and make use of, no more, no less.



THE HOUSEHOLD

Pineapples and Strawberries.

To each medium-sized pineapple take one teaspoonful of granulated sugar. Pare and core the pineapple, cut in slices or in squares. Mix some sugar with the pineapple, adding enough water to melt the sugar. Boil briskly for fifteen minutes. Then fill the can almost full of fruit. Then pour on melted paraffin. Use new tops and rubbers, if possible. When the can has cooled sufficiently, dip the top of each can in melted paraffin.

Wash and stem the strawberries. To each quart of berries allow one quart of granulated sugar. Boil briskly for fifteen minutes. Then almost fill the can with the berries, pouring on top melted paraffin. Seal. When cool dip each top in melted paraffin. Strawberries canned in this way are delicious and will keep their color.

Sunderlands.

Warm two cups of milk and put in one-half cup of butter; let this butter soften, but not turn to an oil. Beat four eggs light as for cake and then add to the milk and butter. Add four heaping tablespoons of flour and beat all hard and furiously. Fill buttered cups three-quarters full and bake in a quick oven until they are puffed up well and browned. Turn at once out of the cups on to a warm dish, cut a gash in each and fill with a spoonful of jelly or jam. Close the gash and dredge the tops with powdered sugar.

Strawberry Ice Cream.

Scald one pint of milk in a double boiler; add one scant tablespoonful of flour blended in a little cold water, stir until slightly thickened and cook for ten minutes. Beat together five eggs and two cupfuls of sugar, add to the cooked milk and stir until thickened like custard, strain and set aside. Hull, wash and rub through a sieve one quart of berries. To the cold custard add one pint of cream, put into the freezer and turn for a few minutes until cold. Add the berries and one tablespoonful of lemon juice and freeze.

Sardine Salad.

Sardine salad is a delicious luncheon or tea dish. Remove the skin and bones from six big sardines and cut into tiny pieces. Place these in a salad bowl with six cold boiled eggs cut in quarters and one big firm apple cut into strips and three cold boiled potatoes cut into dice. If you like the flavor add half a teaspoonful of finely chopped chives and then fair tablespoons of French dressing. Serve very cold.

Concocting Eggs.

A fresh egg will sink when placed in water and rest on its side; if three weeks old it will incline slightly with the small end down; if three months old it will stand on the small end, and if older it will float with large end out of water more or less, according to age. Popular Mechanics having apparently made experiments with aged eggs, is responsible for these statements.

Lemon Cookies.

Four cups of sifted flour, or enough for a stiff dough; one teaspoonful of butter, two cups of sugar, the juice of one lemon and the grated peel from the outside, three eggs, whipped very light. Beat thoroughly each ingredient, adding, after all is in, half a teaspoonful of soda dissolved in a tablespoonful of milk. Roll out as any cookies and bake a light brown.

Chocolate Wafers.

One-half of a cupful of light brown sugar, one-half of a cupful of granulated sugar, one-half of a cup of grated bitter chocolate, one and one-half cupfuls of flour, one-quarter of a teaspoonful of salt, one teaspoon of vanilla. Mix to a soft dough, roll out—a little at a time—thin and cut into circles. Bake in a moderate oven.

Spiced Rhubarb.

To 2½ pounds of rhubarb, washed and cut in inch pieces, add one cupful of vinegar, 2 pounds of sugar and one tablespoonful each of cinnamon and cloves. Put all in a preserving kettle and boil steadily for half an hour. Put in jelly glasses, covering the tops with paraffin.

Preserved Strawberries.

Add to 1 pound well-cleaned and washed strawberries half cupful sugar, boil five minutes, put them in jars, close and turn the jars upside down every two minutes till cold. They will soak up a great deal of the juice and look fine.

Short Suggestions.

Pewterware should be washed in hot water with a fine silver sand and afterward polished with a leather.

A crust of bread put into the water in which greens are boiled will absorb all objectionable rankness of flavor.