

By Authority of Congress.

U. S. Gov't Baking Powder Tests.

The report of the analyses of Baking Powders, made by the U. S. Government (Chemical Division, Ag'l Dep't), shows the Royal superior to all other powders, and gives its leavening strength and the strength of each of the other cream of tartar powders tested as follows:

LEAVENING GAS.	
Per cent.	Cubic in. per oz.
ROYAL, Absolutely Pure.	13.06 . . . 106.6
12.58 . . . 151.1	
11.13 . . . 133.6	
10.26 . . . 123.2	
9.53 . . . 114.	
9.29 . . . 111.6	
8.03 . . . 96.5	
7.28 . . . 87.4	

These tests, made in the Gov't Laboratory, by impartial and unprejudiced official chemists, furnish the highest evidence that the "Royal" is the best baking powder.

ROYAL BAKING POWDER CO., 106 WALL ST., NEW-YORK.

THE REWARD OF COLUMBUS.

To Christ he cried to quell Death's deafening measure,
Sung by the storm to Death's own charless sea;
To Christ he cried for glimpse of grass or tree,
When, hovering o'er the calm, Death watched at leisure;
And when he showed the men, now dazed with pleasure,
Faith's new world glittering starlike on the sea,
"I trust that by the help of Christ," said he,
"I presently shall light on golden treasure."
What treasure found he? Chains and pains and sorrow—
Yea, all the wealth those noble seekers find
Whose footfalls mark the music of mankind!
'Twas his to lend a life; 'twas Man's to borrow;
Twas his to make, but not to share, the morrow.
Who in Love's memory lives this morn enshrined,
—Theodore Watts in London Athenaeum.

THE LOST MAIL BAGS

It was evening in Vladivostok. Out on the harbor the dark waters of the sea of Japan reflected the twinkling lights from half a dozen vessels lying snugly at anchor, and westward behind the town the moon shone dimly on the snowclad plains and rugged slopes of the Sikota mountains, beyond which, across the frozen waters of the Amur, stretched for thousands of leagues the great Siberian desert. Vladivostok might almost be called the "jumping off place" of the world, lying as it does on the very eastern extremity of the great Russian empire.

A few years ago it was a barren spot of land, uninhabited and forlorn. Now the Russian drum beats at sunrise, and ships of all nations float their flags in the harbor.

On this particular evening, while in the narrow street of the town all was silent save for the occasional tread of a Russian soldier, sounds of mirth and laughter floated from the brilliantly lighted windows of the long, low garrison house, for the commandant of the station was giving a dinner.

It was quite a cosmopolitan gathering that filled the long table, for among the guests were Russian, French and English naval officers, and two or three Anglo-Indians who had come up from Shanghai on the mail steamer.

The last course had been removed, and the quickened conversation that comes with the cigars had just commenced, when the commandant was summoned outside, and, when he returned a moment or two later, the most observant of the guests detected a faint shadow in his face.

The assemblage broke up at a late hour, and as the guests passed out on the way to their vessels a young French officer cried out to the commandant: "What is the matter, mon capitaine? You look sad and depressed."

Captain Shanoff laughed. "It is nothing, Lieutenant Garceau," he replied—"nothing but the onerous burden of official duties. However, if you have on board your vessel a man with iron nerves and the bravery of an African lion you can send him to me."

The Frenchman, taking this in jest, laughed and passed on with a cheery "au revoir."

One young man, who had overheard this brief conversation, purposely lingered till the last, and as the commandant held out his hand to bid him good night he said:

"Captain Shanoff, pardon my intrusion. I heard your conversation with the Frenchman. I saw, though he did not, that you were in earnest, and now I offer you my services."

The captain looked at him in surprise. "You are one of the passengers by the mail steamer from Shanghai?" he said.

"You are correct," said the man. "My name is Luke Mowbray, of the Indian civil service."

"And what is your object in making this proposition?" asked the captain.

"I am fond of adventure and sport," replied Mowbray. "Since leaving India I have had a dull time of it, and my chance for excitement and change will be doubly welcome."

The Russian captain stood in hesitation for a moment, and then leading the way silently to an apartment beyond the dining hall he motioned Mowbray to a seat and sat down facing him.

"Now," said Captain Shanoff, "I will explain my conversation with the Frenchman as briefly as possible. Thirty miles from here, among the Sikota mountains, there is a small detachment of Russians engaged in mining operations. Mail bags are conveyed to them twice a week by a native, who makes the return journey in two days. A month ago the carrier left Vladivostok for the encampment. He has not been heard of since. Two weeks ago a second carrier started, and he, too, has completely disappeared. For more than a month we have heard nothing of our companions. It is a profound mystery.

Tonight I learn that no one can be found who will undertake to carry the mail bag. The natives here are cowards, and what few men I have, while they are good soldiers, are not the men to unravel a mystery."

"What is your theory?" asked Mowbray. "Robbers? Wild beasts? Or could they have lost their way?"

"Wild animals are scarce," said the captain. "There are no robbers in this part of Russia, and the path, while difficult, is plain."

"When should the mail bag go?" went on Mowbray.

"It came by today's steamer, and should leave early in the morning," replied Shanoff.

"Well," said Mowbray, "the adventure promises well. I will undertake to reach the encampment with the mail bag."

Captain Shanoff at first refused to listen to his proposition; but Mowbray insisted so firmly that he at last gave a reluctant consent.

Although he hesitated to incur the responsibility that would assuredly fall on his shoulders in case anything should befall the brave young fellow, he was secretly overjoyed at his good fortune, for the strange disappearance of the two natives had produced such an effect upon both natives and soldiers that no one could be found in Vladivostok who would undertake the journey.

Moreover, the captain had a grave suspicion that the native carriers might have fled into the interior with the mail bag, for strangely enough the missing men were brothers.

This suspicion, however, was of the vaguest, for what possible motive could two ignorant natives have for stealing a lot of worthless letters and fleeing into an almost uninhabited desert?

Before day broke on the following morning Luke Mowbray slipped secretly and noiselessly out of Vladivostok, and turned westward toward the pine crowned ridges of the Sikota range.

He rode the commandant's horse and wore a huge pair of boots the Russian had lent him. Before him in the saddle rested the mail bag, and in his right hand he carried a loaded revolver, ready for instant use.

It was broad daylight when he crossed the plain and rode into the mountains. He had little fear of losing his way, for Captain Shanoff had impressed the road carefully upon his mind, and to further aid him the trees were marked with an 'x' at short intervals.

Luke was troubled with no misgivings as his horse slowly picked his way over the frozen ground. He was one of those adventurous fellows who roam the world over seeking out strange places and untrodden paths, and he was keenly enjoying this little Siberian excursion.

Captain Shanoff had truly declared the road to be bad. For ten miles it led up and down hill, over stones and fallen trees, and more than once Luke had to dismount and lead the horse over some unusually bad spot.

About noon he reached the top of the highest ridge and made a brief halt for lunch. The valley below him was thickly wooded and was deep and narrow. The road led through it for seven or eight miles, and then, the captain had said, it crossed a gap in the mountains at a point only three miles distant from the mining camp.

It had suddenly grown colder, and the air was keen and biting as Luke rode slowly down the mountain side. The valley was wild and desolate, and Luke had to admit to himself as he spurred on his horse that it was a very uncomfortable bit of country.

For the first time in his recollection a strange feeling of uneasiness crept gradually over him, and he tried in vain to shake off its influence. To make matters worse, a fine snow began to come down and the sky grew dark and gloomy, down and the sky grew dark and gloomy, down and the sky grew dark and gloomy.

Luke was by no means a possession of the idea now took form as approaching, and for a moment he wished that he had not volunteered for such an uncertain piece of business. Then he grew angry with himself.

"What nonsense!" he cried half aloud. And whipping up his horse he galloped at a swifter pace up the valley, skimming over the crusted snow, and leaping over rocks and bushes until the forest dwindled to the edge of a clearing, a long, low bit of ground, undulated with hillocks of drifted snow.

On the very edge his horse stopped and sniffed the air uneasily. Then he dashed forward with a start, almost unseating his rider.

On the frozen ground was some dark object, and as Luke with difficulty pulled his horse up short he saw, with a thrill of horror, that it was a mail bag similar to the one he carried.

It was lying half under the snow, and as he dismounted and tried to pull it loose he discovered dark red stains on the frozen crust. Horror stricken, he stood still in amazement, forgetting to

pull the bag loose, when suddenly the horse pricked up his ears and began to tremble violently.

With a sudden impulse Luke threw himself back into the saddle on the instant, far in the rear came a long, mournful howl that trembled and died away.

The mystery was solved. Like a flash Luke realized the fate of the two mail carriers—a fate that might ere long be meted out to him, for the howl he heard was the cry of hungry wolves. Again and again it rose on the wintry air, louder and more savage. Already they scented their prey.

Driving the spurs deep Luke flashed up the valley at a blind and furious pace.

He knew too well the nature of his foes. The commandant had assured him that no wild animals frequented that part of the country. So much the worse. The hungry brutes had been driven by starvation toward the coast, and having no taken devoured the two natives they had taken up their habitation in the valley.

Soon the howl was repeated and taken up on each side until the forest rang with their dolorous sounds.

They gradually came closer, though the brave horse was thundering onward with all his strength. A little while longer and he might be saved, for already dimly through the trees Luke could see the break in the mountains.

The forest became more open, and once, turning half around in the saddle, he saw the dusky forms leaping through the bushes. A terrific howl told only too plainly that they had sighted their prey. There was the gap before him now, with the path winding over its rugged slope. The brave horse dashed up at full speed, and in an instant he had gained the summit.

But the maddened brutes were almost at his heels, and turning sharply around Luke fired at the foremost, a great gaunt animal, with foaming jaws and bloodshot eyes. It was a good shot, for the beast tumbled over in the snow, and the rest of the pack turned on the wounded comrade and tore him to pieces.

Luke was able to gain some yards. In a moment they were after him again, full cry, as he turned down the opposite slope, and twice turning round he fired into the midst of the pack.

There was a furious snarl and a howl of pain, but they came on unchecked. His situation was now growing desperate, for the horse's speed was falling, and his strides growing feebler and feebler.

The wolves were a dozen yards behind and gaining fast.

Luke turned again and fired, and as he aimed to give them a second shot a dire accident befell him. The barrel of the revolver caught in the fur trimmings of his coat and dropped to the ground, leaving him absolutely at the mercy of his savage foes.

Sick with despair he made one last effort to escape, leaning forward on the horse's neck and urging the brave animal to greater speed. In a moment more horse and rider would have been overtaken and dragged to the ground, when suddenly the sound of running water reached Luke's ears, and some distance before him down the slope of the hill he saw a low, deep ravine crossing the path.

A little closer and he saw distinctly what was before him. A mountain stream, in ordinary times a mere babbling brook, but now swollen by rain to a rushing torrent, swept between two steep banks. Here was a chance for safety. If he could only leap the gulf his ravenous pursuers might be left behind.

Leaning forward on his horse's neck he urged him on with one last, despairing effort.

The brave animal thundered down the hill, still ahead of the howling pack, reached the brink of the gorge, rose without hesitation into the air and came down safely on the other side.

The wolves, rushing blindly on, plunged over the edge of the precipice, and though some of them perished on the sharp rocks, the remainder, struggling down into a deep pool some yards below, swam through the icy waters to the bank, and struggling to the top took up the chase again as though nothing had happened.

Luke, fifty yards in front by this time, looked back just as the topmost wolf came in sight over the bank, followed by half a dozen more in quick succession.

His heart sank within him, and for a moment he was tempted to give up the struggle.

As the horse, startled by the renewed howling of the pursuing pack, dashed off again, trembling and perspiring, Luke's eye caught the sight of a dark object lying on the snow ahead of him. It was a rifle, the lost property no doubt of one of the native mail carriers.

Guiding the horse directly toward it he leaped down suddenly from the saddle and as he rushed past made a quick snatch at it.

The horse swerving at this critical moment he missed his aim, and foolishly making a second attempt overbalanced himself, and with a cry of horror shot headforemost into the snow, while his riderless horse thundered on his course.

For a second Luke lay stunned and dizzy, the howling of the wolves ringing faintly in his ears. Then, pulling himself upright, he looked eagerly around him.

Horror upon horrors! The foremost wolf, a great, gaunt creature, with blood red jaws, was nearly upon him. Now, seeing his prey so still, defenseless—within his grasp at last—the brute came stealthily forward, with sneaking tread.

Luke shouted at him, but the wolf only growled. Picking up the rifle, he snapped it in vain, and then, seizing it by the barrel, he swung it around his body.

With a furious spring the wolf was upon him. He dimly saw the glaring eyes close to his own, felt the hot breath on his neck, and then heard a blinding, deafening report ringing close to his ears, after which he knew no more.

Strange faces were bending over him when he regained consciousness. His rescuers were the Russians from the mining camp, who had hastened to his aid when the first bullets were fired. A fortunate shot had killed Luke's assailant in the nick of time, and the remainder of the pack, cheated of their human prey, had gone on in pursuit of the horse.

Luke was carried to the camp—it was only two miles away—and by the following day he was feeling himself again.

The mystery was cleared up at last. The fate of the two natives was only too clear, and in addition one of the Russians from the camp had doubtless met

the same death, for he had made an attempt to reach Vladivostok a week before and had not been heard from since.

Half a dozen of them ventured out fully armed, and found all the mail bags and the bones of Luke's poor horse. No trace of the two luckless natives was discovered, and nothing was seen of the wolves either. Probably the remnant of the pack had been frightened out of the neighborhood.

Two days later, Luke was escorted back to Vladivostok, and was eagerly welcomed by Captain Shanoff, who was overjoyed to see him safe and sound.

The commandant wished the brave young fellow to spend some time with him, but Luke declined. He had seen quite enough of Siberia, and the next steamer took him back to Shanghai, for he was more than satisfied with his experience with Russian wolves.—New York Recorder.

The Horse Not Immortal.

A horse case in the municipal court recently turned on the phrase "warranted said horse to be free from disease."

The defendant's lawyer filed a demurrer saying that he never guaranteed the horse would live forever. The plaintiff's attorney tried to say that he meant to argue "disease," but his brother lawyer wrote that as the man who drew the plaintiff's declaration was a Harvard graduate, he knew what he wanted to write when he drew the pleading. Judge Forsyth decided that as the bill stated the demurrer would hold, but that an amendment might cure any defect if it existed. This arrangement was finally made.—Boston Herald.

A Fighting Squirrel.

Out of the half dozen squirrels turned loose in Blenville park during the last few months all are still there with one exception. This exception was there until yesterday, when Police Officer Cloud dispatched him with his club. The reason therefor is that the little animal had grown to be vicious and in the past two weeks had bitten eight different persons. He would jump on any one passing through the square. He bit a little girl in the face, several gentlemen on the hand and another one on the neck. This sort of thing kept up with such alarming regularity that the police thought it best to put a stop to it.—Mobile Register.

A Smart Dog.

Mrs. Roberts, of Waterville, Me., owns a dog which is entitled to rank with any of them in point of intelligence. During an absence of the owner from home the dog was left in care of neighbors, who in turn went on a vacation, taking the animal with them. This was not agreeable to his dogship, and he started overland from one of the coast towns in Knox county for home. Night overtook him at Liberty, and he went to the Sanford House, like any traveler, to put up. His collar revealed his identity, and he was properly cared for and in the morning sent on his way rejoicing, reaching home in due season.—Bangor Commercial.

Timely Warning.

Bob Stayer—Well, I believe I must be going.

Miss Weary—Perhaps you had better. The signal service predicts rain for tomorrow.—Kate Field's Washington.

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Sedatives and opiates won't do it. These nerves do not make the nerves strong, and failing to do this fails short of producing the essential of their quietude—vigor. And while in extreme cases—and these only of nervous irritation such drugs may be advisable, their frequent use is highly prejudicial to the delicate organism upon which they act, and in order to renew their quieting effect increased and dangerous doses eventually become necessary.

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