

YOUNG FOLKS.

SOMETHING ABOUT COWBOYS.

"Quite an exciting time occurred when the ferryboat went over the rapids ten days ago." This item appears in a paper of the Far West, and then follows an account of how the boat was captured. It says: "The cool-headed cowmen soon overhauled the runaway ferryboat, and, with their accustomed dexterity, landed it like a wild steer and tied it to the land. Mr. Starr, the only occupant of the boat, took the matter rather coolly, and the next day tried to pull the boat up the falls to its place, but the rapid and powerful stream was a greater motor than a span of mules, and, in order to save the latter from being taken down the stream, the ropes were cut and the boat again landed to be rebuilt above the rapids."

The two following accounts of the peculiarities and customs of cowboys will be of interest. They differ in one important point—the veracity of cowboys. This is the first.

They are unquestionably the finest horsemen in the world, and are constantly practising with rifles or revolvers in their endeavors to become dead shots, and they generally succeed. Living in the saddle, they worship their horses, and are perfectly happy when on the backs of their animals flying over the plains. During the herding season sixty or seventy miles is an ordinary day's ride. They are brave, will share their last ration with a stranger, never lie nor cheat, and hate a horse thief like they do the devil himself. It is a mistake to imagine that cowboys are a dangerous set. Anyone is as safe with them as with any people in the world, unless he steals a horse or is hunting for a fight. In their eyes death is mild punishment for a horse stealer. Indeed, it is the highest crime known to the unwritten law of ranching. Nearly every horse thief strung up last season in Montana (and there were fifty-nine casualties of that sort from April to October) was sent on his last journey by cowboys. The numerous vigilance committees were composed almost exclusively of cattle herders, who waged a never ending war of extermination against horse-thieving rascals, until all the bands were either broken up or driven from the territory. Their life, habits, education and necessities breed this feeling in them, and they delight in appearing rougher than they actually are. To a tenderfoot (all eastern men or new arrivals are called tenderfeet) they love to tell blood-curdling stories, and impress him with the dangers of the frontier. But no man need get into a quarrel with them unless he seeks it, and then he will find the cowboy is always prepared to shoot quicker than chain-lightning. They also have a slang peculiar to the range, and it is astonishing how quickly eastern bred and educated people will drop into using it. Cowboys often have interests in the herds they are watching, and very frequently become owners of ranches. It is the ambition of their lives to become herd owners themselves and employ on as large a scale as possible other cowboys to watch their cattle. Unless you want to insult him never offer a cowboy pay for any kindness he has done or for a share of his rude meal. They pride themselves on their hospitality and are exceedingly touchy on all matters relating to it. The rougher element of the class have been in the west nearly all their lives, and many of them are married.

The second account is taken from a letter written by a Westerner for a New York paper. In describing the mode of separating cattle the account says: "Cow-boys on specially trained horses were riding into the

herd, letting their horse's nose touch the particular steer they wanted out. A well-trained horse needs no further direction as to his duties. That particular steer must come out of the herd. Sneak as he will, dodge as he may, the horse knows him and him alone. One must be a good rider if he does not "go to grass," for a speed of ten miles per hour may be reduced to a dead halt, and the rider is likely to be projected. A sudden halt followed by a turn almost at right angles is a precarious evolution to the unskilled rider. He will think each particular joint in his spinal column is dislocated. Again, if the rope has to be used, the horse shows his intelligence in a way that amazes you. He watches the circling rope, and, the instant it falls upon the head of the steer, he stops and braces himself for the coming test of strength. He watches every movement of the steer, never diverting his eyes for an instant. He keeps the line of force parallel to the length of his body. It will be an accident if the line of resistance takes an obtuse angle. Such a horse, even if he does not weigh over 700 to 800 pounds, will hold a 1,000 pound steer, until his duty is done. Horses enjoy such work greatly; but it is very fatiguing, and they quickly die from overwork and inadequate food and shelter in winter. After the summer's work is done, they are turned out to seek their own feed through storms and snows just as the cattle are. A ride of 50 or 60 miles a day is an average journey; 70 to 80 miles is not infrequent.

It is not known with any degree of certainty what numbers of cattle occupy any given territory, as stock-men keep the amount of their "brand" as secret as possible. If a man has 10,000 head, he is liable to tell you 20,000 or 3,000 just as his "policy" may be favored this way or that by his statements. Be assured every cattle-man is a liar, either plus or minus, in the matter of his possessions. There is no surer evidence than an interlocutor is a "tenderfoot" than the query: "How many cattle have you?" The ethics of the plains forbid the question.

And now lest we should be responsible for influencing anyone to take to the wild, lawless, and dreary life of a cowboy we give the following decision of a gentleman who for a short time had participated in their work. "I was much taken," he says, "with the free and easy sort of life experienced by this round-up party, and enjoyed the trip and camping-out experience so hugely that I was almost tempted to give up the profession of a scribe and become a cowboy myself but thought better of it next day, and, although I have had lots of fun and enjoyment, I conclude that cowboy life must have its dark as well as its bright, sunny side."

WHY INDIANS LOVE THE WARPATH.

Colonel Royall of the United States army is one of the best known Indian fighters in the service. He is now on leave, his health being much impaired by many years' life on the frontier. Speaking of the present disturbances and the love for murder which every Indian seems to possess in a greater or less degree, he said: "I once asked a remarkably intelligent Indian who was known to have killed a white man some years ago, why it was that his race enjoyed so much going on the war-path and killing people. The conversation which ensued ran something like this, the Indian beginning: "Did you ever shoot a rabbit?"

"Yes."

"Did you ever shoot a deer?"

"Yes."

"Didn't you get more fun out of killing the deer than the rabbit?"

"Yes, I guess so."

"Well, there's a heap more fun for an Indian to kill a man than a deer."

"That was Indian logic, and pretty good logic, too, I should say," Colonel Royall remarked, and added: "My experience has been that the minute an Indian sheds human blood, it seems to affect the whole tribe in the same way that the smell of blood would affect a pack of wild beasts. It intoxicates them. They become devils. They are bereft of all reason. They must satisfy their lust for murder, and the settlers on the trail they take become their victims."

ELEGANT HANDS.

A pretty hand can no more be unfashionable than a pretty face, but just now, we are told, it is particularly "the fashion" to display a pretty hand. Some young ladies spend a good deal of time in polishing their hands with pink powder, cleaning their nails with implements to be found in little toilet cases, and in other ways seeing that there is not a blemish on their hands.

There is good in all this, but the thing may be carried too far. A young lady's hands should always be well-cared for and pleasing to behold, but there are some blemishes possible upon its beauty which no one should become unwilling to incur. Such is that roughness of the forefinger which is apt to follow much use of the needle.

Such also is the puckered appearance of the hand of a young lady who has recently washed dishes, or the stained fingers of the preserve-maker; and who would not regard the row of blisters along a rosy palm that has not disdained to grasp a flat-iron as honorable scars, no more to be considered a disfigurement than the sword-cut on the forehead of a soldier?

The prettier your hands the better, young ladies, until they become too pretty to be useful. The white, smooth hand with a ring upon it is a charming thing, but the hand that is redder and rougher, and does good work, has the first claim upon our admiration.

QUEER THINGS IN QUEER PLACES.

I have a trunk with two lids, so have you—eye-lids.

We have two caps—on our knees.

Two musical instruments that we mustn't touch—our ear drums.

We have two very playful little animals—our calves.

We have some weapons of war to crush those we love with—our arms.

And two lofty trees that we shake with anybody—our palms.

We have two scholars—our pupils.

And two travellers—two wrists (tourists).

We have a number of tools that carpenters must have—our nails.

And dozens of whips without handles—our lashes.

Any number of shell-fish—our muscles.

We have two lovely places for worship—our temples.

And a desert place—a waist (waste).

SMALL WORK, LARGE PAY.

All young folks will do us a pleasure and will certainly do themselves no harm, by canvassing for subscriptions to the *Weekly Messenger*, remembering that if they get us five yearly subscriptions at fifty cents each they will receive a large book of reprinted stories as a reward for their trouble.

HOW TO BE AGREEABLE.

MR EDITOR,—I am a reader of your paper and take a special delight in reading people's thoughts. Knowing their thoughts I can study their natures. I love reading and Nature and agreeable people. I should be obliged if some person possessing the knack of pleasing would kindly explain how to acquire the knack. We love and admire persons that possess the gift, (I think agreeableness must be a gift,) seek their companionship, which always affords pleasure like the pages of an interesting book, and study their wishes; loving them we always try to please them as they please and amuse us. They are never quite the same, they are ever changing. We never tire of their presence or conversation. Those who do not possess the gift are wearisome to the last degree, their presence intolerable, their disagreeableness breeding dislike in us for all that they may say or do. I have often tried to please such people and have as often met with failure. My dislike of them being distasteful, I dread to be like them. I think I cannot at present be agreeable or my efforts to please would be rewarded with success instead of failure and I should not have written these lines. I have a fear that this letter may be condemned as uninteresting and conveyed to the waste-basket. If so know that I shall try again.

ADA MAY THORNE, (age 15.)

Hancock, Wisconsin.

[This letter is written in the right spirit. We hope our friends will take up the discussion of this interesting subject. Let no one be afraid to write lest the letter should not be inserted. We will find room for as many letters as we can.—Ed.]

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