

HERALDRY ON THE PLAINS.

The Social Bearing of Cattle-Branding in the Western States.

Alice MacGowan in McClure's Magazine. The subject of the brand dis covers itself sooner or later, in one way or another, in most of the affairs of cattle-country life.

These brands may begin in a little bunch of cows or a few brood mares; but with no demands upon the "increase" they soon grow to very respectable herds of cattle or bunches of horses.

It sounds wonderfully picturesque and Western to hear a dainty little ninety-pound woman, speaking of some feminine or artistic luxury remark: "Well, I can have it if I can sell off some beef this fall" or to have a bright girl, discussing the relative desirability of a course at an art school or an Eastern pleasure trip, assure you that she can easily meet the expense of whichever she decides upon by selling her 1800 crop of colts, which are now 4 years old and just broken.

You would not suppose that the small, blind, insouciantly-clad deity of the bow and quiver would ever neglect his classic weapon to concern himself with so gross and barbarous utensil as a branding iron. Yet such things have been.

I have heard the tale how that, away back in the '70s, there appeared (along with the rest of her family, in one of the far-out plain counties of the Texas cattle country, a fair one by the romantic and melodious name of Lilybel Plunkett.

For the capricious and uncertain favor of this, the only marriageable young lady in the district, all the susceptible and unattached cowboys of which class the population almost wholly consisted) strove together eagerly and without ceasing, mavericking right and left everything they could lay their hands on, with a running brand L. I. I., until, when the tenderfoot she had all along been engaged to come out and married her, she brought him great herds of L. I. L. cattle with which they gaily set up a ranch beneath the roses of the forlorn celibate community.

Also, there was Buck Redmond, who, when he had quarreled with his sweetheart, (old Drake's daughter, known facetiously as "the duck"), proceeded to sing upon the hide of an incidental maverick his burning resentment of the scorn, gibes, and indignities she had heaped upon him in the heat of her anger and the immunity of her sex.

It was a delicate example of cowboy repartee, the retort bucolic, to catch up this unfortunate third party, brand it all over its helpless bovine side in great sprawling letters, B U C K, and turn the cowering ton mot loose where it could not fall of meeting the eyes of the cruel fair one.

The performance served its purpose of deadly affront, the Drake boys holding for some time that the obligation was upon them to kill somebody about it, as no fluid less expensive than heart's blood could properly wash out such an insult. And I think they did shoot to death—before anything like a reconciliation could be brought about—the calf.

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THE GARDENER'S BURIAL.

This is the grave prepared; set down the bier; Mother, a faithful son we bring thee here In living ones to be beneath thy breast, While many a year with loving toil bearest, His was the eldest craft, the simple skill, That Adam plied, ere good was known by ill; The throstle's song at dawn his spirit raised; He set his seeds in hope, he grafted, pruned, Weeded and mowed, and with a true son's care Wrought thee a mantle of embroidery rare.

The snowdrop and the winter acacia Came to his call ere frost had e'er laid on a bite, He tute the crocus flame as with a charm; The nesting violet bloom'd and fear'd no harm, For when he'd laid their skeins a clasp'd neck Did blossom battle with the weather bleak; But when the weather months with largesse came His blazon'd buds put heraldry to shame, And on the summer air such perfume cast, As Sabin for the typical lilies ever boast. The birds all loved him, for he wou'd not shoot Even the wing'd thieves that stole his fruit; And he lov'd them—the little fearless wren, The redstart, curious in the ways of men, The plume swallow, and the dearest guest; Their sets beneath our eaves her pinnet rest; The airy white throat, bursting with his song; Flatter'd with his speech and fear'd no wrong; And took her prey beside his stooping head. Receive him, Mother Earth, his work is done, His useless being out of thee to send, Blanches he died, forbidding us to throw Flowers on his grave, because he lov'd them so; But bloom among the grasses on his mound, He wou'd not have them stifi'd under ground, We that have loved must leave him; Mother Earth, a faithful watch about him in his sleep, —London Spectator.

"JUST TASTING."

Jane Craigin put down the morning paper with a laugh. I wish Mrs. Kenworthy would read that story. Read it, Cy. I think there's a hint in it for us.

"Hav'n't time; but give us the pint o' it 'n' let the rest go. What is it?" "Why, the jeweller when he stepped into his r-c'er's just tasted whatever he could put his hands on. The grocer got tired of that and the first chance he got he went into the jewellers to look at some unset diamonds and picked up the best looking one and threw it into his mouth, exactly as Mr. Jeweller always picked out the best strawberries and tossed them into his mouth. Of course, that made a rumpus, and when the grocer put back the diamond, he gave the jeweller to understand that he'd pay for his tasting after this or he'd know the reason why."

Cy. laughed. "That's all right for a story; but what you goin' t' do in berry time to keep folks from eatin' a handful every time they go by? I can't stop 'em. There is that old man bakin' that'll come along any time 'n' claw into a tray of berries 'n' take a half 'n' eat at a grab—he's got a hand's big's the hand o' Providence—'n' what he don't take he'll mosh. Say anything, and in half an hour it'll be all over town that we made a fuss because Dawkins picked up one or two huckleberries while he was doin' some tradin'; 'n' Dawkins aint the only one that does it, by a long shot."

"Well, I should say not," Jim took the floor. "Old Lady Walker came balancing in here yesterday with her nose up 'n' the air. 'Havve you a ny su-per-i-or-prones?' the fellow imitated exactly the woman's tone and manner, 'some-thing-a-bove the av-er-ge?' 'n' she stuck up them speck's o' hers with her left hand 'n' squinted at the prunes, 'n' her right hand somehow got all tangled up with them tip-top strawberries that Wilcox brought over. It took her the longest time to make up her mind about the prunes, 'n' after she'd eat a dozen o' so of the biggest berries she didn't want the prunes. Then she happened to see the strawberries—'Oh, what lovely strawberries!' 'n' that hand o' hers have ed over the tray like a hawk over a chicken coop, 'n' then that thumb and fore-finger gave a swoop, 'n' 'I'll be dog-gone if she didn't take the biggest three berries there was. She smacked her lips as the last one went down. 'How much are these re-ally fine berries?' Fifteen cents, and mighty cheap.' 'n' that 'n' her hand's down bobbed her head like an old hen turkey and she yeped out: 'O my! I never could think of paying that price for straw-berries and these are not quite sweet yet!' an' off she teetered with berries enough in 'er maw to keep her alive for a fortnite! Buy anything? Of course not. She was full as a tick; what should she buy anything for?"

"Well, that's taking them one at a time, sail Jones; but when Mrs. Kenworthy comes in with the twins and the dog I confess I'm ready to give up. I think we shall have to draw the line right there. We simply cannot afford to let this thing go on. The other day Mrs. Kenworthy came in to look—she didn't want anything—and, of course, the other three came too. Zippy was promptly put out; for a dog in a store I can't abide and won't. The twins, you know, and the dog howled, but they soon got over that. Mrs. Kenworthy wanted an apron—that is, she said she did—and while we were busy with the prints the twins were making the most of thir adventag's. Amelia likes sweet things and Pamela hankers after the sour; so while one was up to her eyes in sugar the other was trying to h'ok up the biggest pickle. I kept looking over at them, that the mother might see that they were annoying me. Finally, I said that I was afraid that if Pamela should lose her balance, she would go head first into the pickles; and that woman with a 'n' I guess not," never so much as looked around. Well, I stood it awhile longer and throwing on the counter a new print, I took Amelia from the sugar and covered the barrel tight, and wiped Pamela's hands on her apron and covered the pickle barrel, and then went back to the mother. I got there about the time the twins found the peanuts. They ate what they wanted and filled their pockets, and they began to tease to go home. Of course where we can charge up their tasting on something else and it's all right; but take such a case now as Deacon Phelps. He doesn't have any charges. What he brings from the farm is always good

and just what we want in every way; and yet that man always goes for the crackers and cheese the minute he strikes the store. I wonder how he'd like it if we should start in on his butter and eggs or anything else that he brings in?"

"You can try, Miss Craigin, for here he comes. I dassn't I tell ye that 'fore hand. Why not let Cy see what he can do. Come now, You're the boss, Cy. Just 'gout 'n' most eternally do 'im up!"

Into Jane Craigin's face crept that little spot of pink—the unering tell-tale of things to come—and slipping from the high stool, she gave that portentous little flirt to the immaculate apron and with a cheery good morning went out to attend to wants of her thrifty farm customer. Already the screen cover of the cheese box was turned back and a generous slice was in the hands of the deacon who was peering over his spectacles for the crackers.

"The 'ill-fa-n' folks are all well this morning, I hope."

"The deacon managed to say with his mouthful of dry crackers and cheese that 'they was putty wal.'"

"What have we here?—some of Mrs. Phelps's Dutch Cheese? Well, ain't that nice?" and reaching for the cheese-knife, she cut the biggest ball of snow in two and took a generous mouthful. "Well, that is good! Here Cy, you and Jim may have that half. This is mine. As long ago as I can remember, I used to tease for gingersnaps and Dutch cheese. When I have crackers—these are rather nice—don't you think they are, Deacon?—I just like to dip into a jar of Mrs. Phelps's butter and spread it on them. The Phelps butter—I call it—just salt enough to go with the e flaky white crackers in the box; here and if anybody is cracker hungry—Cy says I always am—and will slice the butter off like that—she suited the action of the word—with the time it gets melted in the mouth with the cracker, it's what I call good eating. A-ha! what have we here? Well, Deacon those are the finest radishes we've seen yet. Here Cy, just try that. Want one Jim? M-m! Are'n't they good?" And three of the best disappeared in a shower of praise. "Here! I guess I'd better get these things out of sight before they are all gone. Jim take the butter in and weigh it and weigh the cheese, too, and I'll count the radishes. Cy, I wish you would wait on the Deacon for I must get on with those books. You must remember me to Mrs. Phelps and just tell her from me that we want all the radishes and Dutch cheese she can possibly spare."

A minute later the high stool was occupied by the book-keeper, Cy, was filling the Deacon's orders, and Jim was sampling still further the radishes and the butter in the back store.

Deacon Phelps? O, yes. He didn't say anything; but he never after in the Milltown store helped himself to the crackers and cheese.—R. M. Streeter in Tri-State Grocer.

The Bashful Boy. What pangs the bashful boy suffers! How address a stranger, and how his limbs tremble under him when he is introduced to some one. But the climax of his trials is reached when he is called upon to do the introducing himself.

Shrinking from such tests may perhaps be natural from one who is constitutionally shy, but there are phases of bashfulness that seem not only inexplicable, but closely allied to pride rather than modesty. Timidity of this sort is that displayed by a youth in his teens who dreads to enter a dry goods store much frequented by ladies. He knows no one there, no one knows him, and yet forsooth he imagines that he is going to be singled out from the crowd of purchasers as though he were an Adonis.

After all, when one comes to analyze the trait there is not as much vanity as self-depreciation in the boy or man who is always wondering what people are thinking of him.

Time to Stop. Under the machinery of the law as at present administered a lawyer has great advantages over a witness. Recognition of this fact is probably the reason why people always enjoy seeing a witness get the better of his examiner.

An exchange reports a case in which the plaintiff had testified that his financial position had always been good. The opposing counsel took him in hand for cross-examination, and undertook to break down his testimony upon this point. "Have you ever been bankrupt?" asked the lawyer.

"I have not," was the answer. "Now be careful; did you ever stop payment?"

"Yes."

"Ah, I thought we should get at it finally. When did that happen?"

"After I had paid all I owed."

A Doctor's Dilemma. A bachelor physician, who maintains a splendid establishment on Diamond street, is in a dilemma. He bought the house in which he lives several years ago and made a five-year contract with a widow, with children, to furnish the house and board him and his man servant for the free use of the dwelling. Since then the widow has married. Now the doctor wants to wed. The erstwhile widow refuses to vacate the house; the bride to be refuses to move in until the other woman moves out, and the doctor is boarding elsewhere, while the man servant and the widow are in supreme possession. The contract has five years to run, and the doctor must either get another house, another woman for a wife or buy the housekeeper off.—Philadelphia Record.

THE UNSEEN GOLD SUPPLY.

IT MOVES IN A STEADY STREAM TOWARD THE MINT.

Keepsakes and Jewelry May Be Hoarded, But the Mint Gets Them—How Gold Is Melted.

"OLD Gold and Silver Bought Here," was a sign hanging in front of an Eighth avenue shop that attracted the attention of two passers-by a few days ago. One of the passers was a Sin reporter, the other was Mr. J. Robley Dunglison, Registrar of Deposits in the Philadelphia Mint, who probably knows more about the unseen supply of gold than any other man in this country.

The "unseen gold supply" is a term the mint people use to describe the tons of gold and silver that lie in the half-forgotten boxes in bureau drawers—old gold pencils, old watch cases, neglected pocket pieces, broken chains, spectacle rims, and a thousand other bits of metal that have intrinsic value. Most of these things are sure to find their way to the mint sooner or later, and when they do it is Mr. Dunglison who makes an entry of their weight in the mint's big books.

"There is one of our feeders," Mr. Dunglison said, as he read the sign. "You would be surprised to know how much of the gold and silver that we turn out in coin comes to us through such places. There are thousands of buyers of old bullion in this city, and tens of thousands of them throughout the country. In the aggregate they send us a great many tons of bullion every year, and so put a great deal of money into circulation that would otherwise lie idle.

"There is no piece of gold or silver so large or so small," he continued, "that the dealers will not buy it. Do you know that gold filling out of extracted teeth make a considerable item in the mint's gold? They do. When a dentist extracts a tooth he is sure to extract also any gold that may be in it, and these tiny bits after a while make a little boxful, which is sold to a dealer. The idea seems unpleasant, but it is not, when you know how thoroughly all bullion is refined and cleansed in the mint before it is coined.

"You will find that all these dealers would a little rather buy old silver than old gold, because there is more profit in it. The price of silver fluctuates so much that they can always buy it for considerably less than its real value; but the price of gold never varies. An ounce of gold is worth \$20.67 always, in all civilized countries; and this is so well understood that the dealer must pay pretty nearly that much for it. He generally increases his profit a little by paying in goods instead of in cash. The dealer must be able to do a little crude assaying himself, or he is likely to make mistakes. Gold jewelry, for instance, is rarely made of pure gold. Our mint standard for pure bullion is 1000, and we rarely get a watch case or a ring or a chain that assays more than 500, showing that it is half gold or silver and half alloy. You think you are carrying a gold watch, but the chances are ninety-nine in a hundred that the cases are half copper. The cases will reach the mint some day, almost to a certainty, and then the copper will come out.

"The flow of old jewelry to the mint is almost as certain and steady as the flow of water down an incline. The old trinket is broken and useless, and you lay it away. Perhaps it is an heirloom, or for some other reason you are attached to it, and you would not think of selling it. But a rainy day may come, and you are glad to sell it. In any case, you are sure to die some time, and your heirs will not care for the chain; then we get it and turn it into dollars or eagles.

"We do not buy bullion in small quantities at the mint—nothing less than \$100 worth of gold or silver at a time, and then we do not pay for it until it has been assayed. If you bring us \$100 worth of metal that you suppose to be gold, we weigh it and give you a receipt for it, and three days later you can call and receive the money for whatever gold we find in it. No matter if the lot only contains a dollar's worth of gold, we will receipt for the weight and extract the gold for you and pay you for it. But you lose all the base metal, because in the refining everything but the gold and silver is destroyed. That is, it is practically destroyed, because our work is with gold and silver only, and we do not make any effort to save the base metals. It could easily be done, but it would not pay for the time and trouble. We could separate not only the gold and silver, but the copper also, and the lead and whatever else is present.

"When you take a quantity of old gold to the mint to sell, your metal is not mixed with any other metal. Each lot is kept separate until it has been assayed. Your gold is put into an iron box with two locks, and when its turn comes the box is taken to the melting room, where it is opened by two men, each of whom has a key to one of the locks. The metal is put into a crucible, with a little borax to prevent its sticking. The crucible is put into a furnace, and when the metal is melted it is moulded into a bar. That bar contains all the metal in your lot, whether it be gold or brass, and it is the assayer's business to find out how much gold it contains. While it is in the crucible it is stirred constantly and thoroughly, so that all its metals may be distributed equally throughout the bar.

"When the bar is returned to the weighing room the assayer chips from it a tiny piece that must weigh just half a gramme, or 7.7 grains Troy. The bar and the sample are numbered

to correspond, and the bar is locked up in the iron box again. But the chip is taken to the assaying room, where it is put through one of the most delicate mechanical processes in the world. No danger of visitors following the chip to the assaying room, for a man who is working with scales that will weigh the thirteen-hundredth of a grain cannot be talking to visitors.

"You are not familiar with the honse-ash cup? By the uniformed that is one of the wonders of the mint. It is simply a little, shallow cup made of bone ashes moistened and pressed, but it does some wonderful work. It will absorb any metals that are melted in it, except gold and silver. That sounds a little doubtful, but it is a fact that can readily be accounted for on scientific principles. You melt a lump of mingled gold and copper in this little cup, and every particle of the copper disappears, leaving the gold alone in the bottom of the cup. That is the first step in assaying gold, taking no account of a dozen minor operations that merely lead up to it.

"This melting in the cup does not give pure gold, however, for gold is often alloyed with silver. After the tiny button that remains in the cup has cooled sufficiently, it is flattened with a hammer and run between rollers till it comes out a little spiral that we call a cornet. This is put in a little vessel like a thimble with a slit in the bottom, and is boiled in nitric acid. The acid dissolves the silver, which runs out through the slit, but it cannot dissolve the gold. The tiny chip that remains in is pure gold."—New York Sun.

SELECT SIFTINGS.

Water lilies are unusually large this year.

Tracts are published in 209 languages.

Overeating is the greatest cause of disease.

Dramas in India are played in the open air.

Phonicians invented the first alphabet about 1500 B. C.

A sixty-pound boy hauled in a fifty-pound catfish at Winfield, Kan., a few days ago.

One of the largest sassafras trees in this country is in Central Park, New York City.

A recent Berkshire (Penn.) funeral was graced by the presence of a mourner on a bicycle.

The elephant is the chief beast of burden in Siam and Afghanistan. An "elephant load" is estimated at two tons.

Roasted coffee and ground coffee beans mixed with honey are, it is stated, used to restore broken-down horses in Germany.

Salvator Rosa's remarkable skill in painting brigands was due to the fact that in his youth he associated with the brigands of Southern Italy.

A New York undertaker displays, among other funeral emblems, a clock made of immortelles. The timepiece bears the inscription: "The sad hour."

Three widowers at Marvel, Ark., have married again. They have made love to and been accepted by three sisters. Their first wives were also sisters.

Paul Hubbard, of Palmyra, Me., is eighty-five, and began hunting sixty-nine years ago. He has averaged from forty to sixty foxes a year, besides other game.

In each wing of the ostrich twenty-six long white plumes grow to maturity in eight months. In the male these are pure white, while those of the female shade to cream or gray.

There are forty-eight different materials used in constructing a piano, laying no fewer than sixteen different countries under contribution and employing forty-five different hands.

In Gladeville, Va., a party of honey hunters treed a bear recently. They had no guns, but chopped the tree down and pitched into the bear with axes. He was killed after chewing one man awake.

The rushlight, or rush candle, which has been the "poor man's light" for many centuries, was prepared by stripping a dried rush of its bark, except one small strip, which held the pith together, and dipping it repeatedly in the tallow.

One of the curiosities of the Stinking-water Canon, Wyoming, is the alum cave. The cave appears to be an extinct geyser, and is about fifteen feet across and easily accessible. The alum is along the side and about six feet in thickness.

How Thermometers Are Made. A small glass tube, blown into a bulb at one end, is partly filled with mercury; the mercury is boiled to expel air and fill the tube with mercury vapor, and then the tube is hermetically sealed and allowed to cool. The graduations are found as follows: The instrument is immersed in ice water, and the freezing point is found and marked; then it is placed in water which is allowed to reach the boiling point, and so 212 degrees is found. The spaces between are marked by mathematical calculations.—New York Telegram.

IF THERE are any house-keepers not using ROYAL BAKING POWDER, its great qualities warrant them in making a trial of it. The ROYAL BAKING POWDER takes the place of soda and cream of tartar, is more convenient, more economical, and makes the biscuit, cake, pudding and dumpling lighter, sweeter, more delicious and wholesome. Those who take pride in making the finest food say that it is quite indispensable therefor.

When You Are Strongest. Vaughan Harley agrees with Dr. Lombard in considering that the amount of work done by the same set of muscles at different times of the day under goes periodical variations; so we may accept as a fact, says the Journal of Physiology, that there is a diurnal rise and fall in the power of doing voluntary muscular work, in the same way as there is a diurnal rise and fall in body temperature and pulse. It is remarkable, however, that instead of the greatest amount of work being done, as might have been expected, on rising in the morning, after a good night's rest, it is found that at 9 a. m. the smallest amount of work is accomplished, the powers of doing muscular work in Dr. Harley's case increasing each hour up to 11 a. m. Immediately after lunch there is a marked rise, followed an hour later by a fall, while again an hour later, or about 3 p. m., the amount of work accomplished reaches its maximum. Then, from some unexplained cause, there is a noticeable fall at 4 p. m., which is succeeded by a rise at 5 p. m., after which a progressive fall takes place during each successive hour until dinner. Even during a prolonged fast more work was capable of being executed from 11:30 a. m. to 4:30 p. m. than at 9 a. m.

PIERCE GUARANTEES A CURE OR MONEY IS REFUNDED. Disease follows a run-down system with the liver inactive and the blood disordered. Pimples, Boils, Sores, Carbuncles, Ulcers, and like manifestations of impure blood, should be driven out of the system with Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. Mrs. KURN, of 618 E. 10th Street, New York City, writes as follows: "It pleases me to state that I had a running sore upon my neck, and had it operated upon three times, and still it was not cured. I was also run down very much. There was a decided change after using Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery." I took a few bottles and was soon cured. Later my husband had a lump behind his ear; he tried your medicine, and one bottle cured him. I shall always recommend your cures.

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