

singing, until finally the cattle become quiet, and after a time lie down and commence chewing their ends with apparent contentment. Still the vigilance of the men cannot be relaxed. At least half of them must continue riding about the resting herd all night. A stampede of cattle is a terrible thing to the cowboys, and may be brought on by the most trivial cause. These wild cattle away from homes are as variable as the wind, and when frightened are as irresistible as an avalanche. The slightest noise of an unusual nature, the barking of a coyote, the snap of a pistol, the crackling of a twig, will bring some wild-eyed steer to his feet in terror. Another instant and the whole drove are panting and bellowing in the wildest fear. They are ready to follow the lead of any animal that makes a break. Then the coolness and self-possession of the cowboy are called into play. They still continue their wild gallop around the frightened drove, endeavoring to reassure them and get them quiet once more. Maybe they will succeed after an hour or two, and the animals will again be at rest. But the chances are that they cannot be quieted so easily. A break is made in some direction. Here comes the heroism of the cowboy. Those cattle are as blind and unreasoning in their flight as a pair of runaway horses. They know no danger but from behind, and if they did, could not stop for the surging sea of maddened animals in the rear. A rocky gorge or deep cut canyon may cause the loss of half their number. Those in the rear cannot see the danger, and the leaders cannot stop for those behind and are pushed on to their death. A precipice may lie in their way, over which they plunge to destruction. It matters not to the cowboy. If the stampede is made the captain of the drove and his men ride until they head it, and then endeavor to turn the animals in a circle once more. A hole in the ground, which catches a horse's foot, a stumble, and the hoofs of three thousand cattle have trampled the semblance of humanity from him. He knows this. A gulch or gorge lies in their path. There is no escaping it. There is no turning to the right or the left, and in an instant horse and rider are at the bottom, buried under a thousand cattle. History records no instance of more unquestioning performance of duty in the presence of danger than is done by these men on every drive. Should the stampede be stopped there is no rest for the drivers that night, but the utmost vigilance is required to prevent a recurrence of the break from the frightened cattle. This may happen hundreds of times on a single drive.

"I remember one instance which, from the friendship in which I held the victim, has made a lasting impression on me. Two brothers were together on the drive. Both men had been educated in an Eastern college, but for some reason had drifted to the cattle plains of Texas and had become cowboys. The elder was the captain of the drive. Sitting about the camp-fire one night the younger was very down-hearted about something, and finally said: 'Charlie, let's throw up this drive. I don't want to go; I feel that one or the other of us will never go back. I am ashamed of this, but I cannot shake it

off.' His brother was impressed by his seriousness, but could only say: 'George, here are three thousand cattle in my charge. I could not leave them if I knew that I would be killed to-morrow.' 'A stampede!' cried one of the men. In an instant they were all at their animals, saddles were adjusted, and away they went. The captain gained the head of the drive, and had succeeded in turning them a little when his horse stumbled. In another instant horse and rider could hardly have been distinguished from one another. This is the class of men cowboys are made of, and I never knew of many instances where they failed to do their duty.

"There is another interesting period in the life of the cowboy, and that is the spring round-up. In the fall the cattle stray away, and in working away from the storms they sometimes get away a hundred miles or so. Each cattle owner has his own particular brand on his cattle. The ranchmen in some natural division of the country will organize a grand round-up in the spring. The cowboys will drive the cattle all in together in one big drove. Then the captain of the round-up will direct the owner of ranch A to 'cut' out his cattle. One of A's most experienced men will then ride into the drive until he sights an animal with his brand on. Deftly he will drive the animal to the outer edge of the herd, and then with a quick dash run the beast out away from the drove, and it is taken in charge by others of A's ranchmen, while the cutter goes back after another. After some fifteen or twenty minutes A's cutter will be taken off and B's man given a chance. This will be continued until each ranch has its cattle cut out. If any cattle are found without a brand they are killed for the use of the men on the round-up. This cutting is a work requiring great skill and experience, and frequently requires the use of the lariat. Often cattle with a strange brand are found. If any one recognizes the brand, a ranchman living nearest the owner takes charge of it and notifies the owner. If no one recognizes the brand the captain of the round-up advertises it, and if no owner is found, it is sold at auction for the benefit of the Cattlemen's Association.

"These things will go to show the responsibilities resting upon these men. I will tell you how they get the reputation for recklessness. We will suppose these men have been on a drive for six months and been paid off. Then they are just like any other body of men; they go in for some fun, and on their lark ride yelling through the streets of some little town, shoot a few street lamps out, or get into a saloon row. Some imaginative correspondent immediately sends an account of it to some Eastern paper, where it comes out headed 'Another Cowboy Outrage.' Now, I know of hundreds of cowboys who never carry a revolver. They have strict ideas of honor, and they stand upon their honor. They are off duty a lot of big-hearted, rough boys, but they are not outlaws or outcasts. They are not the class of men who rob trains or hold up people crossing the plains, and I believe that, taken for all in all, the American cowboy will compare favorably in morals and manners with any similar number of citizens, taken as a class."