How Cowboys Brand the Calves.

As soon as all the brands of cattle are worked and the animals that are to be driven along have been put in the day herd, attention is turned to the cows and calves which are already gathered in different bands, consisting each of all the cows of a certain brand and all the calves that are following them. If there is a corral, each band is in turn driven into it. If there is none, a ring of riders does duty in its place. A fire is built, the irons heated, and a dozen men dismount to, as it is called "wrestle" the calves. The best two ropers go in on their horses to catch the latter; one man keeps tally, a couple put on the brands, and the others seize, throw and hold the little unfortunates.

A first class roper invariably catches the calf by both hind feet, and then, having taken a twist with his lariat round the horn of the saddle, drags the bawling little creature, extended at full length, up to the fire, where it is held before it can make a struggle. A less skillful roper catches round the neck, and then, if the calf is a large one, the man who seizes it has his hands full, as the bleating, bucking animal develops astonishing strength, cuts the wildest capers, and resists frantically and with all its power. If there are seventy or eighty calves in a corral, the scene is one of the greatest confusion. The ropers, spurring and checking the fierce little horses, drag the calves up so quickly that a dozen men can hardly hold them; the men with the irons, blackened with soot, run to and fro; the calf wrestlers, grimy with blood, dust and sweat, work like beavers, while with the voice of a stentor the tallyman shouts out the number and sex of each calf. The dust rises in clouds and the shouts, cheers, curses and laughter of the men unite with the lowing of the cows and the frantic bleating of the roped calves to make a perfect Babel.—Theodore Roosevelt in The Century.

Prisoners Placed on Parole.

In New York the court may send the prisoner to what is known as the state reformatory instead of the state prison, provided it is his first offense. He goes to the reformatory for the maximum time fixed by law as the penalty for his crime. For example, if the maximum term for burglary is twenty years and the minimum term one year, his sentence is fixed at twenty years. At any time after one year that the directors become satisfied that the prisoner will lead an honest life they may, after providing employment for him, either by the board or his friends, permit him to go out on parole. The conditions are something like this: He shall report to the warden at the end of each month what amount he has earned, what expended, what his associates have been and other matters pertaining to his life. This must be verified by his employer. If these conditions are faithfully observed during the term stipulated in the parole, whether it be six or twelve months or longer, at the end of that time he receives an absolute release, which restores him to citizenship.

If he violates the conditions of his parole he may be returned to the prison on an order issued by the directors and be compelled to serve out his full term, or if incorrigible may be transferred to the state penitentiary and there be compelled to serve out the maximum term. In Ohio the man may be paroled at any time after serving the minimum term, but the parole continues in force until the end of the maximum term is reached under substantially the same conditions as are in use in New York.—Chicago Times Interview.

The "Echo Maker" at Sea.

Another device, which may be called the echo maker, that of Mr. De la Torre, has been examined by a board of naval officers of which Commander Bainbridge Hoff, United States navy, was the head, and report was made to the navy department of a somewhat favorable nature. It may consist of a flaring funnel screwed on the muzzle of a rifle. It is operated by firing the rifle in the direction of the supposed obstacle, such as a rock, an iceberg, another ship or a cliff. If the obstacle is there, the beam of sound projected through the funnel strikes the obstacle and rebounds, and as the echo is more or less perfect in proportion as the obstacle is more or less parallel to the ship from which the gun is fired, and as it is near or remote, the position of the obstacle may thus be inferred.

The board reported that De la Torre's method was firing a blank cartridge from a rifle in the presence of objects as small as a spar buoy and as large as a fort, and catching the return sound or echo. He claims that a sharp sound projected at or nearly at an object, and only when so directed, will in every case return some of the sound sent, so that theoretically there will always be an echo, and the difference in the time between the sound sent and the echo will indicate the remoteness of the object. The board found that a return sound could be heard from the side of a fort a half mile off, from passing steamers a quarter mile off if broadside to, from bluffs and sails of vessels about the same distance, and from spar buoys 200 yards away.—Arnold Burges Johnson in Popular Science Monthly.

The Races of Australia.

The inhabitants of the continent of Australia have always been a stumbling block in the classification of the races, owing to their exhibiting in a mixed form some of the characteristics of two distinct races. Their complexion, features and peculiarities of the skeleton are distinctly negro like, yet the frizzly hair so characteristic of that race is not found in the Australian. The supposition is that they are not a distinct race at all, but a cross between two branches of two primitive stocks. It has been supposed that the frizzly haired Melanesians or Oceanic negroes, which include the Papuans of New Guinea and the inhabitants of the Western Pacific islands, originally peopled the Australian continent, and that a modification of their physical characteristics was brought about to some degree by the infusion of a low form of Caucasian, such as is now found in the interior of the southern parts of India, among the modifications being the change to straight hair.—Globe Democrat.

RAGS AND RAG PICKERS.

WHERE WORN RUBBERS, OLD TINS, RAGS AND WHAT NOT GO.

Visit to a Warehouse Heaped with Pickings of All Kinds—Sorters and Their Deftness—A Pile of Old Rubbers and Arctics.

'Twas in my golden age of childhood that there lived if indeed she does not yet a lent and withered woman, wrinkled as China crepe and merry as a lark's song. Methinks 'tis as far back as the third time the pussy willows purred for me when first I heard her shrill, cheery call, "Raks, raks!" From then till I was "quite a bik geri missey" old Mary was a welcome arrival upon the domestic scene. I was reminded of old Mary the other day by seeing a woman walking briskly under a heavy sack of rags. It was sunny. I was strolling insensibly and followed her. She entered a warehouse heaped with pickings of all kinds; after hesitating a moment I did the same. Things seemed novel, so when the proprietor looked at me in rather a surprised manner I explained I'd like to add to my slim stock of information regarding rags and rag pickers. Whereat the clerk inquired interestedly: "Are you the woman who writes?" and a rag peddler who had just dropped in leaned up against the wall and gazed at me fixedly and with much the same expression as he would wear in viewing a freak in the dime museum.

"Oh, it's a great business," he remarked—I mean the proprietor—as he glanced over some letters before conducting me over the establishment. "If it weren't for rags there would be no paper you would have no Bible, no romance no—love letters," he added in quite a courtly manner.

Of all the queer places that warehouse I clambered over the best hills of rags, separated by valleys rich with old iron, zinc sheets, lead piping, brass wire, and my eye rested upon Arctic mountains in the background. Perhaps I should say mountains of arctics. It seemed I touched rudely upon professional pride when I asked if that immense bulk and the many bales for stapping were brought in by rag pickers. I was informed that rag pickers are those that go about the streets and alleys or beg rags which they usually sell to small merchants. Then there are rag peddlers who own wagons and go about among houses buying what they wish; merchants buying from both these classes, and himself buying mostly from them.

I asked the proprietor what under the canopy he does with all this truck, and was told he had contracts with large factories all over the country. Old metals are returned to foundries, paper and rags to paper mills and also ropes which are used for manilla paper, vinegar and oil barrels to be refilled, bits of leather and old boots to soap factories, where the grease is extracted for soap for my elegant ladies; white hands; old bones to sugar refineries, where calcined they purify sugar and syrup or bones may be shipped for fertilizing. Old bottles are returned to brewers etc., new cloth rags from tailors back to cloth factories, and rubber, gums as the Anglomaniacs term them, to the factory in Massachusetts.

That pile of rubbers and arctics reaching to the ceiling did look odd. There were tiny baby arctics and large scows stranded side by side, those exasperating run down at the heel rubbers which people had lost in the street and plenty which had sprung a leak and been abandoned. You've walked from many directions, through many paths, upon feet shod in righteousness and those taking hold on hell, haven't you? They present a good illustration of reincarnation doctrines, they will be rid of the useless parts and the impurity and their best parts sent to the factory whence they will shortly issue again, shining and new.

I always used to deprecate throwing arctics, etc., into the alleys, but now I shall do all in my power to assist these rag pickers to a plentiful spring crop. They receive four cents a pound for them; besides quite a number of boys and girls get employment in cutting off the rubber. It's queer baling them. Hundreds of them are flung into a huge box lined with burlap. Then a man on each side pumps on a windlass—this may not be clear enough but that's what it looks like. When the box was opened, I saw the rubbers had been pressed out of all semblance.

The proprietor took me to another warehouse where the rags were being sorted. A long room was bordered with deep boxes in shape and size like tables, with bottoms of sieves for the dirt to sift through. On either side stood women rapidly sorting them, and unerringly flinging the rags into various barrels round about. They wore calico gowns reaching to their feet, and kerchiefs on their heads, to protect themselves from the dust. They didn't seem to be paying any attention to whether rags were linen, woolen, mixed, what not. I asked one of them how she tells. "By the feeling. We scarcely ever stop to tear it. We get so that we can tell anything by touching it, even with our eyes shut."

"Easy learnt? Well, for those as has the knack. Some girls pick it up in a couple of weeks; some never can learn it. Oh, it isn't disagreeable work when you're used to it. Most rags is pretty clean, Some," she pointed to a bin. It gave new meaning to men's righteousness being like "filthy rags."—"A. E. P." in Pioneer Press.

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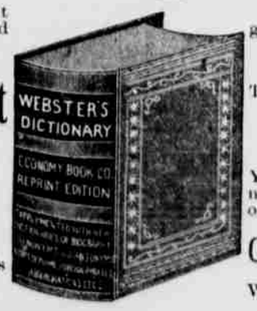

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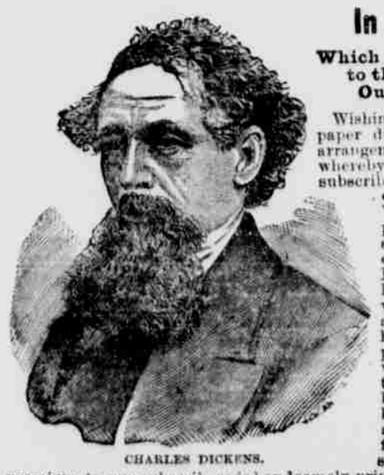

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