

It is early dawn in the spring of '85, the stars are still shining brightly in a clear Montana sky, when the cook of a roundup outfit lights the camp fire at the rear of the "chuck-wagon," that is stationed on the flat just below Old Marino. The "night-wrangler" has the "saddle-bunch within the ropes," and the horses are resting leisurely after an all night's grazing. Soon the savory odor of hot coffee envelops the whole camp. Finally the cook announces "Bull's in the Pen!" meaning that breakfast is ready, and the whole camp is astir, as the twenty cowboys hustle into their shaps, buckle on their cartridge belts and gather around the camp-fire. Breakfast is ever a poor meal when taken at such an early hour. It is eaten hurriedly and often consists of a cup of coffee and a cigarette. Then the cow punchers proceed to pack their bunks and hurry to "rope out" their mounts from the bunch that are within the rope corral. Everything is hurry, hustle around the camp now, for in twenty minutes from the time the cow-puncher is awake he must have eaten his breakfast, packed his lunch, "roped-out" his horse, "cinched on the leather" and be off for the range, and to be the last to leave the camp was a disgrace that usually attached to the tenderfoot who was a novice with the lariat.

This general view of the start of the cow punchers on the day's round-up seems rather commonplace, but let us look at it more in detail, because it is only upon close inspection that the picturesque life of the cowboy is truly interesting. The cowboy is no longer the isolated figure, the adventurer, the wild, care-free, fringed giant of the plains as he is often delineated in art and on the stage by those who rely on imagination instead of intimacy. He does not overdress, because he cannot, and do the work that is expected of him. He wears boots and "shaps," leather pants that protect his legs from chapping

and from the severity of the weather, a cartridge belt, with a good six shooter in a leather holster, a soft woolen shirt, the inevitable loosely tied handkerchief around the neck, and usually a broad rimmed hat. His average salary is forty dollars a month. From this income he spends but little except to make for greater efficiency. He buys good boots, good spurs, a good saddle and he is always on the alert for the best six-shooter made. Up at three or four in the morning, he is in the saddle all day, changing horses three or four times before night. His work is not monotonous, but it is often strenuous, a cow stuck in the bog may mean a whole day's straining. His is the life of action, not of fancy garb and heroics.

Let us inspect the camp. While on the drive the chuck-wagon is the headquarters for the outfit. It is generally a large covered wagon, well stacked with wholesome provisions, and containing all the supplies in the way of ropes, tools and lace leather, that a cowpuncher needs on the roundup. The cook is master of ceremonies around the chuck-wagon, and woe be to the cowboy caterer who cannot "deliver the goods," for the cowpuncher demands the best of food, and he gets it. Potatoes are necessarily a luxury, but the best beef is ever at hand, and many are the bear, and deer and even buffalo, in the early days, that are brought to camp, as the results of the sure aim of the plainsman.

Next in prominence around the camp to the "chuck-wagon" is the "saddle-bunch" or "remuda," a herd of horses numbering from one hundred and fifty to three hundred horses, for each cowpuncher is supplied with about fifteen horses while on the roundup. The "saddle-bunch" is always kept close to the chuckwagon. They are watched during the day by a cowboy, known as the "day-wrangler," and at night by one known as the "night-wrangler."

In the "saddle-bunch" will be found "cut" horses, those that are used for singling out stock for any purpose, and who are "onto their job" better than most men; "rounders" that are best for the "drive"; and "rope" horses that, when a lariat is whipped around the legs of a "maverick," and then wrapped around the horn of the saddle, will brace itself and hold the "pesky critter" until the red hot branding iron is pressed against the quivering flesh. In each "saddle-bunch" there will inevitably be found an "outlaw," a horse that refuses to be rode, and become subject to the rule of man. This particular broncho has its duty. When any straggler comes to camp and boasts of his horsemanship, he is put to the test, and must prove his dexterity. If he can ride the "outlaw," he is a rider, but usually he suffers the humiliation of having the cowpunchers laugh themselves hoarse, as he picks himself up out of some sagebrush or cacti.

The "saddle-bunch" are brought "into the ropes" by the "night-wrangler" just before the camp is astir in the morning. Now, the "ropes" is an improvised rope corral. A rope fastened securely around the hub of the "chuck-wagon" and is then run to the "bunk-wagon," the wagon that carries the bedding and tents, and from there to two stakes, this forming a square about seventy feet by seventy feet, leaving an opening at the "chuck-wagon" for a gate. The rope is supported between the hubs of the wagons and the stakes by mere sticks placed under the rope. This corral, slight and flimsy as it may seem, is all that is needed, for raced and chased as the Montana horses might be, while in "the ropes," they will never jump over or break through.

Breakfast being swallowed hurriedly, and the tarpaulins having been pitched into the bunk wagons, the captain of the roundup, who is generally an experienced cowboy, and who is elected from the bunch at the beginning, as leader, gives his orders for the day's work. Some of the men are sent across the Musselshell, a distance of fifteen to twenty miles, with orders to "throw in everything that looks like beef," meaning that all stock found in the valleys and gulches is to be driven towards the Musselshell. The captain further states that the outfit will camp about fifteen miles east of Old Lavina. Similar orders are given to twelve or fifteen cowpunchers who range north of the river. Some may be retained at the camp for the purpose of finishing the branding of a few mavericks. Orders having been given the first interesting and often amusing task begins, that of "roping out" the horse for the particular job assigned. Each cowpuncher must rope his own horse, and if he is not handy with the lariat, he is up "against it," for if he should ask one more dexterous to rope his horse, he is very apt to be met with that commonplace, but emphatic command: "Go to h—l, rope it yourself."

The next task is to saddle, tighten

the cinch and then mount for a long gallop. Then the bunch are off amid a cloud of dust. Shouts, such as only the deep lunged cowboy can give, rent the air; horses are bucking and plunging, and the horse that does not buck or plunge is no good. Some will rear almost to a vertical position. They are known as "sun-fishers." Some will be pitching, coming down with stiff legs so as to give the rider a most racking

jolt, a pitching horse generally "swallows his head," that is tucks his head down so far between or toward his front legs that his rider can't see it. But the cowpuncher is "onto his job," he avoids a shaking-up by being loose and limber, his quirt hangs from the wrist that is outstretched for balance, he holds the reins in a limp hand, and he leans to one side, in that way the horse will tire more quickly, and if he

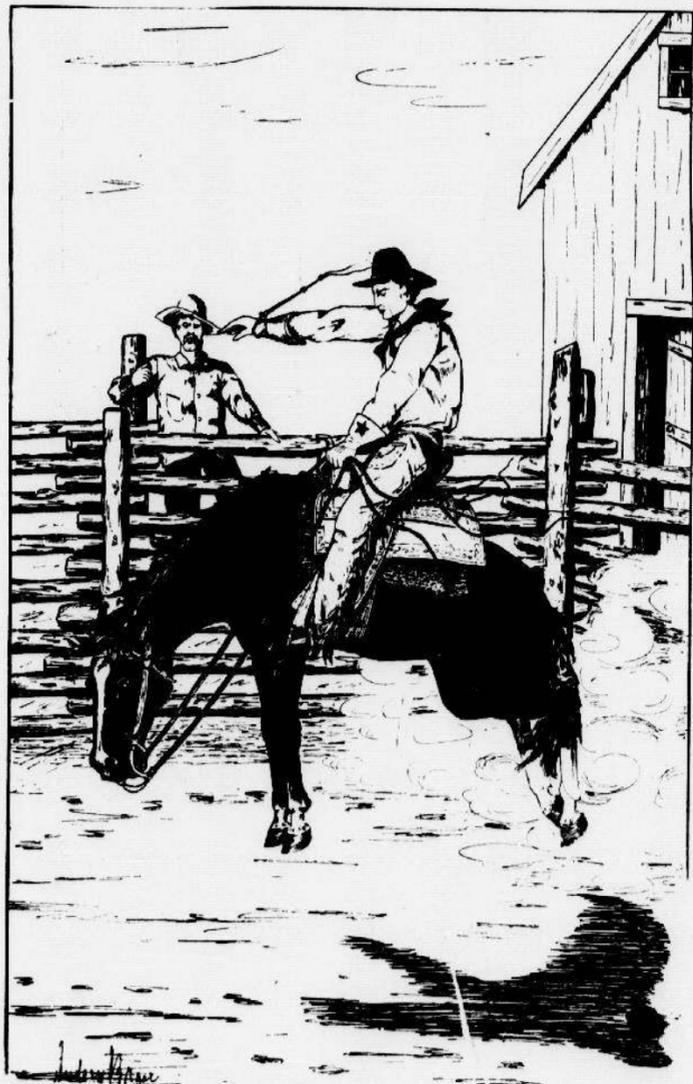
is thrown against the pommel of the saddle, the strong part of the inner thigh will get the blow.

While the cowboys are out on the range driving cattle found here and there toward the Musselshell, those attending camp move the wagons about fifteen miles farther down the river. In the evening the result of the day's drive is thrown together, and placed under the watchful eye of a guard. If it

(Continued on Page 3.)



Mounting an Outlaw.



Coming Down With Stiff Legs so as to Give the Rider a Most Racking Jolt.